It would be foolish to create a new line of speakers and not overcome these obstacles...
The HPM series.
Four radically new speaker systems specifically designed to beat the best.

You can't beat JBL, Advent, Bose and AR with me-too ideas. They're really good speakers.

So, instead of just trying to make better conventional speakers, we knew we had to come up with a totally different and superior design concept.

After years of research and development, our engineers found the answer. They created a whole new technology based on the electrical properties of High Polymer Molecular film. The result is a sound that's louder, clearer, more natural, lower in distortion than you ever expected to hear out of a speaker system.

HPM film technology requires no magnet, no coil, no cone or dome, no moving parts at all. The amplified signal is converted into sound waves directly at the surface of a thin, light membrane. And the entire structure housing the membrane can be curved for the best possible sound dispersion.

Pioneer's new HPM drivers combine high efficiency with amazingly accurate transient response. Distortion is virtually nonexistent even at very high sound-pressure levels. The principle was evolved mainly for tweeters, although a giant HPM woofer is at least a theoretical possibility.

In each of the new Pioneer models shown here, regardless of price, the top end of the audio spectrum is reproduced by an HPM driver. In the big HPM-200 system, so is the upper midrange.

The woofers used in the HPM series are almost as unconventional, even though they still have cones. But what cones! They combine low mass and high rigidity to an unprecedented degree, thanks to an exclusive method of reinforcement with carbon fibers. As a result, they move as true pistons, without any of the smearing of bass frequencies experienced with ordinary cones.

Of course, the proof of a new speaker technology isn't in the telling but in the listening.

If the new HPM speakers didn't have audibly more impact, more detail, more transparency than the best previous speakers at comparable prices, our engineering effort would have been a meaningless exercise. There are certainly enough speakers on the market today.

So we invite you to listen and compare very carefully. Match the HPM in the price range of your choice against the corresponding speaker on the far right, or anything else in your dealer's showroom.

We think you'll end up agreeing that a good new idea beats a good old idea every time.

U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp., 75 Oxford Drive, Moonachie, New Jersey 07074.

Anyone can hear the difference.
As the photograph above so eloquently expresses, these are not plain-vanilla loudspeakers. They're the new BIC VENTURI Formula 5 and Formula 7 Monitor Series speakers. And they embody the most innovative thinking, and the most advanced technology, in speakers today.

Beyond delivering exceptional clarity, bass response and dynamic range, these speakers perform a series of monitor functions that improve the rest of your system.

**Amplifier 'Clipping.'** Until now, there's been no way for the user to accurately identify amplifier distortion (clipping), or the precise point at which it takes place. But these new speakers come with a test record that lets you pinpoint the output level where your amplifier begins to clip the peaks of the waveform. (Its maximum 'clean' output.)

The CLIPPING INDICATOR (center-right, above) is then set to that threshold. Once matched to your particular amplifier, the indicator lights when clipping occurs.

And by observing that signal to lower amplifier volume, you eliminate a major source of distortion.

**Speaker Overload.** Where an amplifier has the power to overload speakers before clipping, this same circuit can be set to serve as an early warning device. However, if overload persists, both the Formula 5 and 7 automatically shut off the power to the stressed speaker component.

Individual OVERLOAD INDICATORS will identify the component affected, and help you trace the problem to its source.

**Tonal Balance.** Scientists have demonstrated that the ear is not a perfect musical instrument. As sound levels are lowered, the ear rapidly loses bass and treble tones.

So BIC developed the DYNAMIC TONAL BALANCE COMPENSATION circuit (patent pending). It automatically adjusts speaker frequency response, as volume changes, to compensate for what the ear can't normally hear.

Musical balance is thus preserved.

**Sound Pressure.** The Formula 7 can even let you see what you're hearing. That bank of indicators (left-center) displays SOUND PRESSURE LEVEL. As speaker output increases, they light in sequence. The chart interprets the readings, and relates them to the size of room and the listening distance.

The indicators can also be used to correct for channel imbalance in phono cartridges, amplifiers, tuners, tape decks.

**System Monitors.** What we have here, as you may have sensed, is a long-overdue role reversal. Until now, a speaker had to take whatever the system dished out, and make the best of it. Now we have speakers with the brains to control the system.

The Formula 5 and Formula 7 elevate the loudspeaker to a new and larger role in the stereo system. That of a system monitor, with the ability to make your entire system perform better.
NEW PRODUCTS
Roundup of latest audio equipment and accessories .................................................. 13

AUDIO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Advice on readers’ technical problems ........................................................................ 18

AUDIO BASICS
The Volume Control ........................................................................................................ 22

TAPE HORIZONS
Mixer Basics ................................................................................................................ 24

TECHNICAL TALK
A Good Word for Bureaucracy ....................................................................................... 26

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS
Hirsch-Hoek Laboratory test results on the Garrard GT55 automatic turntable, Advent Model 300 stereo FM receiver, Pickering XSV/13000 phono cartridge, and Yamaha NS-5 speaker system ................................................................. 27

THE TOKYO AUDIO FAIR
A report on breakthroughs, trends, and approaches .................................................... 54

WHO WRITES ALL THOSE ROCK LYRICS?
Including advice from an expert on how to write a hit ................................................... 60

RECORD OF THE YEAR AWARDS—1976
STEREO REVIEW’s critics and editors select the industry’s top artistic achievements .... 65

FIEDLER OF BOSTON
A profile of the builder of America’s musical bridges ...................................................... 70

PIANIST GARRICK OHLSSON
“In this profession you seem to travel too much or not enough” ................................. 78

BEST RECORDINGS OF THE MONTH
Opera: Bartók’s Bluebeard’s Castle
Vocal: Joan Baez’s “Gulf Winds” and Frederica von Stade’s French-aria recital
Instrumental: the Tokyo Quartet in Haydn’s Op. 50 and the ELO in “A New World Record”
Jazz: Bucky Pizzarelli and Bud Freeman ........................................................................ 81

POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES ...................................................................................... 86
Vicki Sue Robinson ........................................................................................................ 87
Preacher Willie Nelson’s “The Troublemaker” ............................................................... 88
A Valentine for Hammerstein from Ben Bagley ......................................................... 98
Patti Smith’s “Radio Ethiopia” .................................................................................. 104
The Electric Muse: Folk into Rock ............................................................................. 110

CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES ................................................................................. 112
Concert of the Century? .............................................................................................. 113
The Avant-garde: In Love with Easeful Death .............................................................. 124

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING ......................................................................................... 4
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ...................................................................................... 6
INSTALLATION OF THE MONTH ................................................................................ 46
GOING ON RECORD .................................................................................................... 49
THE POP BEAT .......................................................................................................... 52
ADVERTISERS’ INDEX ................................................................................................. 138

COVER: Caricature of Arthur Fiedler by Al Hirschfeld
I think it was W. H. Auden who said that the poetic nature thrives on natural disaster, that it exults in the flood, thrills to the thunderstorm, and embraces the hurricane. I have a friend (he must be very poetic) who agrees: he lives impractically astride the San Andreas fault and swears that the imminence of a disastrous earthquake lends life a certain edgy uncertainty, a piquant, zestful fatalism that quickens the blood, lightens the step, and sharpens the mind.

I am quite prepared to believe that there are those (I'm not one of them) who delight in edginess, a piquant, zestful fatalism, edginess. I think it was W. H. Auden who said that the poetic nature thrives on natural disaster, the edgy uncertainty, the edginess, the edginess, the edginess.

SEED MONEY, ETC.

As an adept of the arts will be allowed to topper—there are too many jobs involved, and the spectacle would seriously unbalance our international cultural posture, leaving us to cut a brutta figura in the eyes of (gasp!) Moscow and other capitals in a way we haven’t had to talk ourselves out of since Spunk.

One of the reasons I think so is the announcement in early December of a “match grant” program (an earlier, less urbanized society would have called it “seed money”) involving U. S. Pioneer Electronics Corp., their 2,500 authorized dealers throughout the country, the general public, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Between them, in formula yet to be worked out, Pioneer and the National Endowment will match every dollar contributed with three more; the goal is $100,000 in donations, $400,000 for the Met. A long way from $12 million, but it’s a start.

At the National Endowment’s Nancy Hanks makes clear in the announcement to the press, this is an excellent example of business and government working together in an area of joint concern; nourishing our cultural heritage is as much government’s business as safeguarding the political one, and no one needs a diagram to trace the relationship between the world of music and that of audio. Avery Fisher’s staggering precedent (how much is it now, $15 million?) with the New York Philharmonic aside, it is to be hoped others in the industry will find Pioneer’s example worth emulating, even at the risk of spoiling the fun of a few poets or Russians.

SEED MONEY, ETC.
Now you don't have to starve your treble to feed your bass.

Our KR-9600 Receiver puts independent power supplies behind each channel, so demanding musical passages in one channel won't cause distortion in the other.

At 160 watts per channel minimum RMS power at 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.08% total harmonic distortion, the KR-9600 is the most powerful receiver we have ever made.

What's more, the KR-9600 is loaded with special features. A mid-range presence control, MIC mixing and source fading, a deviation meter for perfect off-air recording and 2 big power meters, to mention a few.

Impressed? All this and more, on the KR-9600. At just $750* it's the best watts-per-dollar value around.

*Suggested resale price. Actual prices are established by Kenwood dealers.
Montreal Olympics

- A lot of us, I think, enjoyed the Olympic Games of last summer at Montreal. Among the enjoyments of the Olympics I would certainly include the music, written mostly by the late Canadian composer André Mathieu, together with Victor Vogel, and arranged by Art Phillips. It was stunning, exciting, and really contributed to the games.

Others who feel as I do will be happy to know that the music is available on a Canadian Polydor disc (2424 124), which is distributed in the United States by Peters International, 619 West 54th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. The list price is $7.98.

PHILIP DAVID MORGAN
Saint James, N.Y.

The Music Editor adds: Those who watched the Olympic Games on television and were attracted by the fanfare that opened each session should know that it does not form a part of the music mentioned above. It is, in fact, a work by Léo Arnaud called Olympic Fanfare, part of a larger piece called Bagle's Dream. It is available on record performed by the Concert Arts Symphonic Band under the direction of Felix Slatkin, Angel S-3693.

 Heloisa and Astrud

- In reference to Chris Albertson’s review of Stan Getz’s recent album “The Best of Two Worlds” in December: the reason Astrud Gilberto’s name does not appear on the album or liner notes is that she doesn’t sing on the album. All the English vocals on this album are by Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, who does a very creditable job. It is my understanding that Astrud Gilberto has not sung on a Getz album since the live album in 1968 or 1969 which introduced Gary Burton on vibes.

CHARLES J. SHEEDY
Woodhaven, N.Y.

Mr. Albertson replies: Mr. Malemud is probably right. I checked with Columbia Records, and they would neither confirm nor deny that Ms. Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda is the vocalist. Thus, Ms. Gilberto may well have made her last album with Getz in 1968 or 1969—but no such album “introduced” Gary Burton, who began recording as a leader in 1961 and with Getz as early as 1963.

CHARLES J. MALEMUD
Port Jefferson Station, N.Y.

More on Mahler

- Please advise Paul Samuel that it should be de mortuis nil nisi bonum, not bene as it appeared in his December letter. And, while we are at it, another good notion is de gustibus non disputandum est. I happen to like Mahler’s music very much, but I do not feel that everyone else should. I would have scant respect for a critic who tempered his judgment to conform to the current feelings of the majority. Of course, I concede that R. D. Darrell was unprofessionally intemperate.

CHARLES J. SHEEDY
Woodhaven, N.Y.

Mr. Albertson replies: They are Korats, a rare breed from Thailand. Silvery grey all over, they have very short hair. The eyes of young Korats are gold-colored, but they turn green in maturity. My tomcat, in the foreground of the picture at the column head, is Ernesto Leogrande, named for a character in the opera. Of course, I concede that R. D. Darrell may well have made such an album “introduced” Gary Burton, who began recording as a leader in 1961 and with Getz as early as 1963.

Critic’s Candor

- I applaud Noel Coppage’s review of Dylan’s “Hard Rain” (December). It is rare that such a revealing exposé of a critic’s motivating perceptions appears in print. I don’t agree with his conclusions, but I appreciate the opportunity to get outside my own manner of perceiving things and into someone else’s.

STEVE CORWIN
Monmouth, Ore.

Buyer’s Guide

- I’ve been striking a 90 per cent batting average lately by buying what Joel Vance dislikes. Although this technique has made me go broke, I’ve now a collection of records that I really enjoy. I don’t know anything about art, but I know what I will like, thanks to JV’s reviews.

JERRY CHAPMAN
DeKalb, Ill.

Hm. That makes Joel Vance about 90 per cent effective.

Steeleye

- A million thanks from a long-time Steeleye Spanatic for the faithful attention you have paid to each one of their recordings, the latest being Eric Salzman’s review in the December issue. I stumbled on the Span at a Procol Harum concert a few years ago in Pittsburgh, and Maddy Prior and the group’s extraordinary vocal abilities sent me on a wild hunt for any of their recordings I could find. Seeing and hearing them do “Gaudete” from “Below the Salt” was orgasmic! They just stood there in a line with hands cupped over their ears and did this glorious a cappella vocal. I urge anyone who hasn’t yet heard Steeleye Span to go out and buy some albums and listen to something really “solid” in folk-rock. If getting the imports means a trip to England—do it!

GARY SALAMONE
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Record Rating

- I’m afraid to even read your record reviews any more, for one day I fear this is what I’ll see:

NEARLY EVERY RECORD THIS MONTH. All pop recordings and one hillbilly bluegrass record.

All Labels, assorted prices.

Performance: Terrible, terrible

Recording: Excellent to like cosmic, man

All records this month were so bad that we couldn’t even bear to take off the shrink wrap. One record, however, was good: “The Inbred Mountain Boys,” and it was “good old nose-

(Continued on page 8)
The A-400.

"It should start designers at other companies rethinking many of the truisms of their craft."*

We went to a front-loading design for the A-400 not to make it pretty, but to make it more functional. *High Fidelity* Magazine called it "...the most thoroughly satisfactory front-loading well design we have yet tested: practical, easy to use, unencumbered by 'extra' mechanisms that are potential troublemakers."*

Proven reliability. And typically TEAC performance. Whether you want the twang of a country guitar or the smoothness of a slap bass, the mellow sound of a ballad or the thrilling power of an opera, audition the A-400. You'll agree with the critics. It is something to think about.

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TEAC®
The leader. Always has been.
TEAC Corporation of America, 7733 Telegraph Road, Montebello, CA. 90640 ©TEAC 1976
In Canada TEAC is distributed by White Electronic Development Corporation (1966) Ltd.

**Dolby** is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.
pickin' music," indeed a refreshing change from any of the utter trash from at least one year back. C.A., N.C., P.K., P.R., J.V.

The rest of the magazine remains typically superb, but a little more of the old objective view could be observed by the "record-raters." Joel Vance's poem on the new Aerosmith album in November was unnecessary, for example.

Gayle W. Raresheid
Lorain, Ohio

Otello

- In November Letters, John Clifton wisely requests a new complete recording of Otello with Carlo Bergonzi singing the Moor. For the past twenty-five years we have endured the coarse shouting and bawling of some and the overblown histrionics and exaggerated melodrama of others who have attempted to "sing" this greatest of tenor roles. Neither approach can begin to suggest the grand humanity of Otello. With Mr. Bergonzi's innate musicianship, dramatic sensitivity (and restraint!), noble expression, and his now thicker and darker sound, he would be an outstanding Otello. I, too, strongly urge Philips Records to record Verdi's greatest work with Carlo Bergonzi, Montserrat Caballe, Piero Capperi and darker sound, he would be an outstanding Otello. I, too, strongly urge Philips Records to record Verdi's greatest work with Carlo Bergonzi in November Letters. Nevertheless, I believe that Mr. Bergonzi surpasses even Carreras and Bjoerling because of the way he sings. His beautiful line, highly intelligent phrasing, and limitless breath control leave all others in the shade. A new Otello with Mr. Bergonzi would be most welcome.

George Kilens
Bayside, Wis.

Little Trips

- First, Steve Simels gave us Bruce Springsteen, then Patti Smith, and more recently he drooled all over Warren Zevon in August's "Best of the Month." What's the matter with this man? Has he no taste?! The aforementioned may have been different, may even have provided a moment's interest amongst the Velvetea, but they were never consistently good. And it was immediately obvious to those among us who swallowed Simels' line and bought the records that these people were not really interested in entertaining anyone or in even producing "art" but were on their own little trips to nowhere. At least I still have Noel Coppage and Paul Kresh to believe in.

W.A. Hill, Jr.
Tallahassee, Fla.

Monkees

- In reply to Noel Coppage's review of the Monkees' "Greatest Hits" in November, I would have to agree that the music is pretty simple, but I'd rather listen to old "bub-
FISHER INTRODUCES THE WORLD'S FINEST RECEIVER.

This headline from any other manufacturer might sound like just so many words. But, it's by Fisher, the company that started the high fidelity industry back in 1937. And the company who introduced the very first AM/FM stereo receiver 18 years ago.

In a sense, we've been building the RS1080 for 40 years...researching, engineering, inventing, and refining our technology to finally develop what is surely the world's finest receiver at any price.

Our RS1080 is rated at an enormous 170 watts per channel, minimum RMS into 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000Hz with no more than 0.1% total harmonic distortion. There is lots of pure, clean power to give you lots of pure, clean sound at any listening level. But power is only part of why the RS1080 is the world's finest.

Tuning. Precise, accurate tuning is a must for FM listening. And the RS1080 includes 3 separate tuning meters: signal strength, center-of-channel, and most important, a multipath meter with phase-locked-loop circuitry.

FM Dolby. For the ultimate FM listening experience, the RS1080 has built-in, factory calibrated FM Dolby decoder circuitry. This feature lets you hear the full dynamic range of Dolby broadcasted music. Another must if a receiver is designed to be the world's finest.

Other state-of-the-art features and specifications include 8-gang tuning, 1.7 µV FM sensitivity, plus all the front panel controls and rear panel input/output jacks you'll ever need.

Bass Extender. A major exclusive feature of the RS1080 not found in any other receiver is our bass extender and bass range level control. At a flip of a control you can boost bass response up to 12dB at either 45 or 80Hz. Electrically tuned circuits assure sharp roll-off characteristics, and a tremendously noticeable improvement in bass response without muddying-up the mid range or increasing hum or rumble. The result is a truly sensational improvement in sound quality in your listening room with any speaker system.

Sure, maybe some late-comer audio manufacturers have good receivers on the market, but at Fisher, we are convinced that our RS1080, priced at $900*, is the world's finest. Look at and listen to the Fisher 1080. Available at fine audio stores or department store audio departments.

©1977 Fisher Corporation, 21314 Lassen Street Chatsworth, California 91311

Dolby is trademark of Dolby Labs, Inc. *Mfg. suggested retail price.
Plug-in circuit board incorporating turn-on/turn-off muting and speaker protection components.

Plug-in printed circuit board controlling front panel power readouts.

Each channel's hermetically-sealed toroidal power transformer is designed for maximum efficiency and lowest possible hum leakage. The transformers are designed and manufactured by LUX.

The four filter capacitors have a specified capacitance of 15,000 microfarads each, double the value found in many other high-power amplifiers. This assures high-power stability under continuous large-signal conditions.

Plug-in drive stages, separate for each channel, built onto high-reliability circuit boards. Mirrorimage construction optimizes lead-length to adjacent inputs and outputs.

Output transistor terminal board. The output transistors themselves are mounted on a 3/8-inch metal plate, integral with the heatsinks for maximum thermal conduction.

Massive sand-cast honeycomb heatsinks designed to provide maximum heat dissipation.

Cabled harness wiring with terminal strips, plug-in circuit board sockets and direct point-to-point wiring, each used as appropriate to the overall design. This flexible construction approach optimizes layout and facilitates servicing.
LUX power amplifiers are designed to provide more than merely x watts per channel.

If your interest in a power amplifier is based primarily on its dollar cost per watt, you're not likely to give much initial thought to a LUX. We don't compete in that simplistic power game. Our concerns are with every aspect of amplifier design and construction—to assure your continuing satisfaction throughout what you can expect to be a very long period of ownership. If you share these concerns, you may then find the LUX approach to have special significance and value well beyond purchase price. Especially when it comes to sonic excellence.

As Radio Electronics neatly put: "There is much we still don't know about what makes one amplifier sound better than another—but LUX seems to have found some of the answers, at least."

These solutions now exist because the research that LUX audiophile/engineers conducted went far beyond the obvious questions about amplifier design to those subtle but sonically significant aspects of high-power circuit design usually bypassed or ignored by conventional thinking, test techniques, and instrumentation.

For example, ordinary protection circuits can introduce audible and unpredictable distortions when activated by certain types of loudspeaker loads. These are not disclosed, let alone cured, by the usual test procedures. LUX's solution: four separate sensing circuits sophisticated enough to distinguish the electronically subtle differences that can occur between normal high-level output signals and abnormal voltage/current conditions.

Models M-4000 and M-6000 have fully independent power supplies employing separate toroidal power transformers for each channel. These allow the full wattage potential and signal-handling stability to be individually realized by each channel even under continuous large-signal drive conditions. Massive honeycomb heatsinks provide the thermal dissipation necessary for overall reliability and long-term performance stability.

The LUX difference goes beyond this. Every power amplifier undergoes an extensive series of tests at our New York facilities. This assures that each unit will match or exceed fourteen different published specifications. A Performance Verification Certificate attesting to the specific measurements obtained is packed with each unit. (Your dealer also has a copy and another stays with LUX as a permanent record.)

With all this in mind, plus the features and specifications listed below and the revealing internal views at left, your selection of a power amplifier can best be made only at one of our carefully selected audio dealers where LUX and other fire components can be compared and evaluated. Assuming that you have the ability to distinguish the sometimes subtle—sometimes obvious—differences among high-power amplifiers, we'll be pleased to await your considered judgment.

Luxman M-4000 Power Amplifier. 180 watts per channel minimum continuous power, both channels driven simultaneously into 8 ohms. Total harmonic and intermodulation distortion no more than 0.05%. Frequency response 5-50,000 Hz, ±1 dB. Signal-to-noise ratio 108 dB. Features include separate power supplies for each channel, including output and drive stages. Two meter power output display in combination with LED peak-output indicators reveal dynamic range of program material. Output level set by precision potentiometer with 1-dB click stops. $1,495.00.

Luxman M-6000 Power Amplifier. Similar features and specifications, except 300 watts per channel. $2,995.00.

LUX Audio of America, Ltd.
200 Aerial Way, Syosset, New York 11791 • In Canada: White Electronics Development Corp., Ontario

Results of extensive comparative tests yours for the asking.

What is perhaps the most exhaustive tests of power amplifiers and preamplifiers ever made was recently conducted by Stereo Sound, Japan's leading audio publication. Among the many Japanese and American-made products tested were the Luxman M-4000 power amplifier and the C-1000 preamplifier. With permission of the publisher, we have translated and reprinted the complete report. We shall be pleased to send you a copy upon written request.
"I am the dancer, 
watch me move 
Wind to a feather, 
any heart that I choose."

Introducing the little Baron. 
Dedicated to the 
exquisite joy of music.

The little Baron is our finest technology in a loudspeaker that is remarkably beautiful and reasonably priced. But it's something else. It's a room filled with lovely music. It's a little girl dancing. It's fun. And a lot of happiness.

The little Baron. About $600 the pair. 
For technical information, write to KLH Research & Development Corp. 30 Cross St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139. Or, better yet, visit one of our fine KLH dealers.

KLH
30 Cross Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02139

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CIRCLE NO. 26 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Ortofon Moving-coil Phono Cartridge with "Fine-line" Stylus

Joining the SL 20 E and SL 20 Q in Ortofon's line of moving-coil phono cartridges is the new MC 20, the company's finest such pickup for the playing of stereo and matrixed four-channel recordings. The MC 20 is equipped with a "fine-line" diamond stylus presenting an edge radius of 8 micrometers and an elongated vertical contact span. Frequency response is 20 to 20,000 Hz and stereo separation is 25 dB at 1,000 Hz. The cartridge is designed for a load impedance of 47,000 ohms, and with Ortofon's STM-72 transformer or MCA-76 pre-preamplifier it has an output of 3.5 millivolts for a recorded velocity of 5 centimeters per second.

Compliance is $170; the STM-72 transformer is $37.50.

Circle 115 on reader service card

Phase Linear's Three-section Speaker System

The Andromeda III, Phase Linear's first loudspeaker, is a stereo system consisting of a single bass cabinet functioning below 100 Hz, a pair of outboard panels for the higher frequencies, and an electronic control/equalization unit (not shown). The system is electrodynamic with passive crossover networks, and it involves twenty drivers in all: two 12-inch woofers in the vented bass cabinet and—in each panel—two 8-inch low-frequency drivers, two 4-inch mid-range drivers, and five 1-inch cone tweeters. The tweeters are mounted vertically, radiating into the apexes of diffusion elements that provide horizontal omnidirectionality. Crossover frequencies for the Andromeda are 100, 300, and 3,500 Hz. Overall frequency response is 24 to 20,000 Hz ±0.3 dB.

The electronic control unit contains equalization for the bass cabinet as well as frequency contouring controls and unique circuitry intended to enhance the transient response of the tweeters. There is also "space imaging" circuitry (switchable) that provides for recovery and special processing of ambient information in the program material to enhance the sense of space.

The Andromeda III is 7 x 2 x 5 inches. Price of the complete system: $1,185.

New Kenwood Receiver Has Twin Power Supplies

At 160 watts per channel continuous into 8 ohms, 20 to 20,000 Hz, the Model KR-9600 is the top of Kenwood's present receiver line. Each of the two channels has its own completely separate power supply, ensuring fully independent operation. Harmonic and intermodulation distortion are both 0.08 per cent or less at rated output. Signal-to-noise ratios are 50 dB for the two phono inputs and 95 dB for the high-level inputs.

The KR-9600's FM section has a usable sensitivity of 1.6 microvolts, a capture ratio of 1.3 dB, and alternate-channel selectivity of 83 dB. AM suppression is 60 dB and spurious-response rejection is 115 dB. Stereo separation exceeds 37 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz, with harmonic distortion rated 0.15 per cent in mono and 0.2 per cent in stereo.

The KR-9600 has four front-panel meters for power-output level (one for each channel), FM channel center, and FM signal strength. This last meter can be switched to indicate the percentage of modulation of an incoming FM signal. The power-level meters have two scales calibrated up to 3 watts and to 200 watts; they are switchable between these sensitivities by means of a pushbutton. There are tone controls for bass, treble, and mid-range (defeatable by a front-panel switch), two degrees of switchable loudness compensation, and a front-panel microphone jack with its (Continued overleaf)
own mixing control. Up to two tape decks are accommodated, with dubbing possible from either one to the other. The two phono inputs have different sensitivities and overload points for best match to the phono cartridges being used. Approximate dimensions of the KR-9600 are 23 x 6/4 x 16½ inches. The front panel has two functional grab handles. Price: about $750. Circle 118 on reader service card

Bose 901 Speaker Becomes Series III

The latest evolution of the Bose 901 stereo speaker system, called the Series III, retains the Direct/Reflecting principle and many of the other characteristics of the original 901 design, but it is based on entirely new construction. The enclosure is now a one-piece plastic molding (with decorative walnut panels on the exterior) that provides a semi-isolated acoustic chamber for each of the nine drivers. The chambers are coupled to three tapered cylindrical structures ("Reactive Air Columns") serving as vents; these are said to control low-frequency excursions of the driver cones and their interaction, and to contribute to the very-low-frequency output of the system.

The drivers themselves are also new, incorporating unique molded-plastic frames and other assemblies manufactured to considerably tighter tolerances than heretofore. A direct benefit of all this is a substantial increase in efficiency. According to the manufacturer, the Series III requires less than one-third the amplifier power of the previous 901 system to achieve the equivalent output level.

The electronic equalizer used in the Series III has also been redesigned. It now incorporates a continuously variable high-frequency control with a range of approximately ±5 dB at 20,000 Hz and a mid-bass control operating over roughly the same range between frequencies of approximately 100 to 250 Hz. The equalizer retains a switch that reduces output below 40 Hz, as well as tape-monitor facilities to replace those its installation takes up.

Overall, the Series III has a nominal impedance of 8 ohms. Minimum recommended amplifier power is 10 watts per channel, although the system can be driven safely with amplifier powers up to 250 watts per channel. The equalizer has an input impedance of 60,000 ohms, a signal-to-noise ratio of 85 dB, and harmonic distortion of less than 0.1 per cent at a 1-volt output. Dimensions of each speaker unit: approximately 21 x 12½ x 13 inches. The equalizer measures 11 x 2½ x 5 inches. Price of the entire 901 Series III system, less stands: $749. Circle 119 on reader service card

B.I.C.'s Top-of-line Automatic Turntable

The Model 1000 "Electronic" now occupies the top of the B.I.C. turntable line. The twospeed (33⅓ and 45 rpm) design is belt-driven by a 300-rpm motor with electronically governed speed, permitting continuous variation of pitch over a 6 per cent range. A second, independent motor cycles the tone arm. Basic control functions are accomplished through electronic switching, which permits the Model 1000 to be remotely controlled through a choice of two optional control units, one of which is wireless.

Like other B.I.C. models, the 1000 accommodates a stack of up to six records in its automatic mode; a selector control "programs" the turntable for the number of records in the stack. The turntable can also operate in a single-play mode with automatic arm cycling and as a wholly manual player. The tone-arm with low-mass cartridge shell has an anti-skating adjustment calibrated for conical, elliptical, or CD-4 stylus. Stroboscope markings surround the edge of the platter which is illuminated by a strobe lamp.

The B.I.C. 1000 has wow and flutter of less than 0.04 per cent (weighted rms) and unweighted rumble of better than –55 dB. The tone-arm tracking-force scale is calibrated from 0 to 4 grams in 1/4-gram increments. On the de luxe wood base with dust cover the turntable has overall dimensions of about 17½ x 5½ x 12½ inches. A wood cabinet is available as an option for $35. Circle 121 on reader service card

Front-loading Cassette Deck From Marantz

The Model 5020 front-loading cassette deck ($269.95) represents the budget-price level in the Marantz line. The control panel situated below two large recording-level meters has sliders for input level (separate for microphone and line sources), a master recording-level slider, and pushbuttons for Dolby noise reduction, tape type ("normal," chromium dioxide, and ferrichrome), and for a limiter circuit that inhibits recording levels above 0 dB. The transport is mechanically switched by light-touch levers. In addition to the Dolby noise reduction, the 5020 also has 25-microsecond equalization for the accurate decoding of Dolbyized FM broadcasts.

Frequency response is 45 to 13,000 Hz with "normal" tape, 35 to 14,000 Hz with chromium dioxide, and 35 to 16,000 Hz with ferrichrome, all ±3 dB. Wow and flutter are 0.09 per cent. Signal-to-noise ratio is 50 dB without the Dolby circuits, 58 dB with. The dimensions of the deck are approximately 17½ x 5½ x 12½ inches. A wood cabinet is available as an option for $35. Circle 121 on reader service card

Hervic Receiver Has Digital Readout

An LED (light-emitting diode) numerical display of station frequency is the most prominent feature on the front panel of the new (Continued on page 16)
The Story of Great Music...a dazzling look-and-listen journey through

THREE CENTURIES OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

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Unlock the secrets of Richard Wagner's unparalleled music-drama achievement
Hervic HR 250 stereo FM receiver. The tuning system is otherwise conventional, with a tuning knob and signal-strength and channel-center tuning meters. The HR 250 employs sliders for all other variable controls including volume, balance, bass, mid-range, and treble. Program sources (selected by pushbutton) include two phono inputs, AUX, and TAPE. A second set of tape inputs and outputs appears as phone jacks on the front panel. Dubbing is possible between the two sets of tape-machine connectors.

Rated at 100 watts per channel continuous into 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz, the HR 250 has less than 0.1 per cent total harmonic and 0.25 per cent intermodulation distortion at full power. Signal-to-noise ratios are 72 dB for the phono inputs, 85 dB for high-level inputs. The FM section has a usable sensitivity of 1.7 microvolts, a capture ratio of 2 dB, and AM suppression better than 90 dB. Frequency response is 20 to 15,000 Hz ± 1 dB, and harmonic distortion is under 0.25 per cent. Image, i.f., and spurious-response rejection all exceed 100 dB. Alternate-channel selectivity is 100 dB. The HR 250 has a brushed black-anodized finish. Dimensions are 17¾ x 5¾ x 15½ inches. Price: $1,250, with an optional walnut cabinet costing $44.95.

Elpa Marketing, which distributes Watts record-care products in the U.S., announces a new version of the Watts Manual Parastat, the MK IIB. The Manual Parastat is specially designed for records that suffer from greater-than-average surface contamination by dust, dirt, or residues from record-cleaning substances or other deposits. It is a hand-held "brush" consisting of three active sections: two velvet-clad surfaces to remove loose debris and a central nylon-bristle brush that provides a gentle scouring action when desired. The bristles have an average tip radius of 0.25 mil, which is said to ensure good penetration of record grooves. The Manual Parastat is supplied with a cover and a dust-proof clear plastic container. Price: $14.95.

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Circle 123 on reader service card

Speakerlab manufactures speaker systems that can be bought as raw drivers and crossovers with enclosure plans, as complete kits with veneered cabinets ready for finishing, or as factory assembled and finished products. The company's latest offering is the Model S6, a three-way system with a 12-inch woofer, a horn-loaded mid-range with a mouth area of 44 square inches, and a smaller horn-loaded tweeter. The crossover frequencies are 700 and 5,000 Hz, and the network comes with controls that permit independent adjustment of the mid-range and tweeter levels.

The S6 is said to be drivable by amplifier powers as low as 15 watts per channel. Maximum recommended power is 100 watts per channel. Nominal impedance is 8 ohms. Dimensions of the enclosure are approximately 28 x 16½ x 12 inches. As a kit complete with cabinet, grille cloth, fiberglass lining, and finishing oil the S6 costs $215. The drivers and crossover network together with enclosure plans are priced at $161. The complete system, finished in walnut and ready to play, costs $289.

Circle 125 on reader service card

Elpa Marketing, which distributes Watts record-care products in the U.S., announces a new version of the Watts Manual Parastat, the MK IIB. The Manual Parastat is specially designed for records that suffer from greater-than-average surface contamination by dust, dirt, or residues from record-cleaning substances or other deposits. It is a hand-held "brush" consisting of three active sections: two velvet-clad surfaces to remove loose debris and a central nylon-bristle brush that provides a gentle scouring action when desired. The bristles have an average tip radius of 0.25 mil, which is said to ensure good penetration of record grooves. The Manual Parastat is supplied with a cover and a dust-proof clear plastic container. Price: $14.95.

Circle 123 on reader service card

Direct-cut Discs From Audio-Technica

Limited editions of disc recordings made by the direct-to-disc process will be distributed in the U.S. by Audio-Technica. The recordings, manufactured in Canada by Nimbus 9 Productions on the Umbrella label, involve bypassing the usual studio tape recorder and instead applying the output of the recording console directly to the disc-cutting lathe, thereby eliminating any technical limitations in the tape process. The discs will be limited editions, each with its own serial number.

The first U.S. release from Umbrella will be a rock album by the Toronto group "Rough Trade." The second scheduled release will be percussion performances of ragtime pieces by a group called "Nexus." Later offerings will also include classical works. The discs will cost $12.95 each. Further information available from: Audio-Technica U.S., Inc., Dept. SR, 33 Shiawassee Ave., Fairlawn, Ohio 44313.

Circle 125 on reader service card

NOTICE: All product descriptions and specifications quoted in these columns are based on materials supplied by the manufacturer. Recent fluctuations in the value of the dollar will have an effect on the price of merchandise imported into this country. Please be aware that the prices quoted in this issue may be subject to change.
According to TRUTONE RECORDS: "The Stanton calibrated 681 series is our total point of reference in our Disc Mastering Operation."

Trutone can be described as a family enterprise... but what a family! Father Lou Rowatti is the President; Son Carl is Vice President and Chief Engineer; and daughter-in-law Adrianne handles the business end of the operation. They have great pride in their family, in their family's enterprise and in their products. That's why they insist on using the best — always.

Trutone Records in Northvale, New Jersey always uses the Calibrated Stanton Triple-E for A-B comparisons between tape and disc. They also use the Triple-E to check the frequency response of the cutting head (they'll record a 1,000 Hz tone and a 10 kHz tone twice a day to check the condition of the cutting stylus and the high end frequency response of the cutting head).

They make test cuts and play them back, using the Triple-E for reference, as high as 15 kHz all the way down to 30 Hz. Carl Rowatti says "We use the Stanton Calibrated 681 series as our total point of reference in our disc mastering operation. Everything in the studio is judged — and we think perfectly judged for quality—with this great cartridge."

Professionals can't afford to take chances with quality. That's why they depend on Stanton in their operations. Each Stanton 681 Triple-E is guaranteed to meet its specifications within exacting limits, and each one boasts the most meaningful warranty possible. An individually calibrated test result is packed with each unit.

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Speaker Isolation

Q. Like many other apartment dwellers who own hi-fi equipment, I have a little difficulty from time to time with my neighbors. Their main complaint seems to be that the bass notes "come through the ceiling." Do you have any suggestions other than turning down the volume and bass controls?

P. SMALLER
New York, N.Y.

A. First, it will be helpful to understand the nature of the problem before working on the solution. In general, high-frequency sound waves are reflected by hard surfaces and absorbed by soft ones. However, low-frequency sound waves tend to pass through wall panels and floorboards almost as though they weren't there. A substantial thickness (several feet) of sound-absorbent material is needed to absorb (rather than to reflect or pass on) frequencies below 100 Hz or so. In addition, the low-frequency energy usually couples to room surfaces or structural members, and these then serve, directly or indirectly, as transmission paths to adjacent rooms or apartments. There are three ways—aside from your developing an interest in compositions for the solo flute—to get around these problems of acoustical transmission.

Since acoustic tile or cork paneling will not stop the lows, what will? One effective (if somewhat impractical) technique would be to cover your listening-room floor with an inch or two of sand followed by new flooring resting only on the sand (if the new floor is in direct contact with the old floor or the walls, much of the isolation will be lost). The sand would provide decoupling of the bass through inertial and frictional loss. In other words, it would kill the vibration. A layer of tar or concrete an inch or so thick would also be quite effective, but before embarking on such a project make sure that the floor support beams are adequate for the load.

A more practical approach to the bass-transmission problem is to place the speaker on a compliant pad of some sort. A section of 2 inch (or thicker) foam should work well, assuming that it is not compressed excessively by the weight of the cabinet. If you want to get fancier, you might try putting together the foam-sandwich assembly shown in the accompanying sketch. Vibration tends to get decoupled at the interfaces of disparate materials such as the wood and foam layers shown. This is in addition to the transmission losses in the foam itself. Make sure that the 1/4-inch-thick decorative plinth (A) does not touch panel (B) or the floor. The parts labeled (B) and (C) are 3/4-inch plywood, and the foam is an inch or so thick.

Although an isolating base will do much to inhibit speaker-to-room—structure (floor or shelf) vibration transmission, it won't do anything about radiated acoustic energy. That is not usually the main problem, however. Note that if the bass reproduction in a particular room is unduly dependent on the coupling of the speaker cabinet's vibration to floor or walls, there may be a slight loss of low-end energy. However, if a permanent peace with nearby neighbors is achieved, that seems to be a small price to pay.

A while back (March, 1975) when I answered a question on studio soundproofing I included some material that may provide additional help to audiophiles with neighbor problems. For a free copy, send a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to: STEREO REVIEW, Dept. SP, One Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

Philosophical Fidelity

Q. With reference to the comment by Stephen Lucader in a recent issue of Stereo Review, what, no matter how good a sound system may be, what emanates from it will not be like real live music." I disagree most soundly. First, music is experiential and need not be "live" to be real any more than a painting is no longer alive after being recorded on canvas. Secondly, I will put my home sound system with Advent cassettes up against "live" any time, and all but the most obtuse would be more than pleased with the totality of the music that is produced. A $4,000 system is not required; mine cost less than $1,500, which seems to be about the absolute minimum expenditure to achieve adequate "live" sound reproduction.

JERARD W. THORNTON JR.
Brownsville, Tex.

A. Forget it from me to put down hi-fi reproduction—or the attempt to achieve it at a reasonable cost—but Mr. Thornton appears to be confused on the semantic level. Let's start with a basic conceptual definition. It seems safe to say that the essential goal of high-fidelity reproduction, expressed as simply as possible, is to make recorded (or transmitted) music sound as though it were being heard live. If that is the goal (and it seems to me it must be), it then becomes valid to criticize an audio system, including the program material, on the basis of how well that goal is achieved.

Mr. Thornton states (1) that anything that exists is "real" and (2) that he gets an enormous amount of pleasure out of listening to his components. Who can argue with either of those propositions? However, they have nothing to do with the case. For example, I'm sure the scores of the compositions Mr. Thornton listens to are available. And it is likely that someone out there derives just as much pleasure from hearing the music in his mind's ear simply from reading the score as Mr. Thornton gets from listening to his system. No one would deny that the musical score is real, but, on the other hand, no one would confuse that score with the "real live music" either.

My general point is that everyone is entitled to enjoy his music in any way he likes with any kind of equipment (or no equipment at all), but once the term "high fidelity" is invoked, certain agreed-upon—if ill-defined—criteria must be met. In practice, high-fidelity is not an absolute term, for there are obviously varying degrees of success in the simulation of reality. But the illusion of sonic reality is the goal. And if, with my eyes closed, I can't tell whether I'm listening to live or reproduced sound, that's high fidelity!

(Continued on page 20)
Audition free for 10 days Karl Böhm's superb Deutsche Grammophon recording of

**Mozart's Six Greatest Symphonies**

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Symphony No. 40 in G-minor  
Symphony No. 39 in E-flat  
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Automotive Rear Channel

Q. I understand that there was an article in Car and Driver magazine that told how to set up four-channel sound in a car that had a stereo FM radio. Do you know anything about it?

H. A. STANLEY
Chicago, Ill.

A. Yes I do, since I was the one who suggested the hookup to C & D after having already installed it in my car several years ago. It occurred to me that my stereo FM radio could provide a synthesized rear-channel using the stereo "difference signal" if I simply ran a pair of wires connected across the two "hot" leads from the front stereo speakers to the rear speaker installed in the rear deck. I wired in the rear speaker, and the results were consistently more impressive than one normally experiences with a difference-signal setup in a home system. This shouldn't have surprised me since, in respect to directionality, stereo itself is also usually more effective in a car than at home.

The wiring for the rear-speaker connections can be tapped in anywhere on the "hot" (usually red) leads going to the right and left front speakers. Most car stereo units will have a plug-in setup for loudspeaker connections. The sound enhancement achieved by the hookup operates, of course, both for stereo broadcasts and tapes. I have found that "live" recordings such as those of Peter Frampton or Joni Mitchell are particularly impressive since much of the audience reaction seems to come only from the rear speaker, putting the listener right in the center of things. And with large symphonic works, the hall reverberation is reproduced in a surprisingly satisfying way.

The necessary connections are shown in the accompanying diagram. Make sure to use only the two hot leads from the radio/tape player, and avoid grounding either of the leads going to the rear speaker. (Do not use a speaker that has a terminal grounded to its frame). The setup sounds best if the rear speaker plays at the correct relative volume in respect to the front units. You can help ensure this by using an efficient heavy-magnet speaker for the rear. If the sound from the rear is too loud, you can install a 25- or 50-ohm wirewound control (R1) as shown. In my setup, it wasn't necessary.

Because the number of questions we receive each month is greater than we can reply to individually, only those letters selected for use in this column can be answered. Sorry!
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No matter what system you own, a new Empire phono cartridge is certain to improve its performance.

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One, your records will last longer. Unlike other magnetic cartridges, Empire's moving iron design allows our diamond stylus to float free of its magnets and coils. This imposes much less weight on the record surface and assures longer record life.

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Three, Empire uses 4 poles, 4 cells, and 3 magnets (more than any other cartridge) for better balance and hum rejection.

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<td>26 cm/sec @ 1 Khz 1 gm</td>
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CIRCLE NO. 21 ON READER SERVICE CARD
THE VOLUME CONTROL

The lowly volume control, one of the simplest parts of an amplifier or receiver, is also one of the most misunderstood. Dozens of misconceptions have arisen and been applied to this little—or big—knob without their having any basis in fact. For example:

- The volume control on my amplifier (or receiver) is turned three quarters of the way up. Therefore the amplifier is delivering three quarters of its maximum power output.
- My amplifier plays as loud at a 12-o’clock volume setting as Fred’s does at a 2-o’clock setting. Therefore my amplifier is more powerful (no matter what the specs say).
- With receiver A, I have to crank the volume way up to get the music loud enough. With receiver B, I just touch the control and I’m deafened. Receiver B is obviously much more powerful (again, no matter what the specs say).
- My old speakers blew out when I played them at half volume. My new speakers are rated to have twice the power-handling capability. Therefore I should be able to play them at full volume with no problem.
- I paid $75 for this state-of-the-art phono cartridge and I have to turn the volume control up much higher than I did with my old cartridge. Obviously I got stung.

Any of the above conclusions could be true. However, all of the reasoning that led to these conclusions is completely false, because the setting of the volume control simply has nothing to do with any of these matters.

Let’s consider an amplifier as a signal-strength multiplier, which is what it really is. For the sake of argument we’ll take a hypothetical amplifier that has a multiplication factor (or gain) of 100. Any signal (from a tape machine, let’s say) that we apply to its input gets multiplied by 100, and the result is delivered at the output. All of this works very straightforwardly and reliably up to a point. That point is the amplifier’s maximum power-output capability, which we’ll arbitrarily set at 1,000 (not 1,000 watts, just 1,000). Therefore, any input signal up to a value of 10 (10 x 100 = 1,000) is okay, but if the input signal exceeds 10 at any time the amplifier can’t do its multiply-by-100 trick without going into overload or clipping—which is what normally happens to an amplifier that is being asked to put out more than it is capable of.

The volume control is merely a rather simple device that adjusts the amount of input signal that gets through the amplifier. When it is turned fully up, all of the input signal gets through. When it is fully down, none (usually) of the input is allowed to pass. For intermediate settings the control admits or inhibits signals to a degree that is determined by the control “taper” chosen by the amplifier’s designer. If he wants almost all of the signal passed at the barest upward twitch of the knob, he can select a volume control that does that. If he wants the level to go up smoothly and gradually as the knob is turned, he’ll choose another type of control taper. But these choices are only design preferences; they affect the intrinsic operation of the amplifier not one whit.

To refer back to our earlier example, if the input signal level has a value of 10, the amplifier will be delivering its full power at a full-volume-control setting. If the input signal is 15, the amplifier will deliver its full power well before the volume control is at maximum. If the input is 5, the amplifier will not deliver its full power no matter where the volume control is set.

And then, please, be kind and turn it down a notch or two. Loudness is one of the easiest things to satisfy; it is also, I suspect, one of the things least easily satisfied because it’s the one thing we can’t live without.

As for the speakers that should be able to withstand “full volume,” the assumption is incorrect—and hazardous to the health of your loudspeakers. Doubling the volume-control setting almost never has the effect of doubling the amplifier’s power output. In fact, it’s impossible to predict exactly what it will do unless you’ve studied the individual amplifier and the speakers it’s being used with. Also, there is no way to determine how much power is actually going to a speaker unless you sit down and measure that power with the appropriate test instruments.

And finally, the phono cartridge in the example above simply provides a weaker input signal to the amplifier and therefore requires a higher-volume-control setting to achieve the same loudness. This is a common occurrence. In designing top-quality phono cartridges engineers frequently sacrifice some output level to achieve other characteristics they want more. If you can get the loudness level you want from your cartridge without any marked increase in the electronic hiss you can hear from your speakers, then everything is fine, and you can forget about how high the volume control is set.

Confusion about volume controls doesn’t end here, however. Note, for example, that many audio systems have two or more volume controls: one main one and perhaps one or more subsidiary ones on tuners, tape decks, or even on power amplifiers if the system employs a separate preamp. What’s to be done with these? Usually the manufacturer of the component offers ample advice in his instruction manual. If he doesn’t, here are the general rules.

Volume or output-level controls on program sources such as tuners and tape decks are there primarily for convenience. With them you can match the typical level you get from one program source to that of another (the record player, for example), to permit switching between sources without having to make large adjustments in the main volume setting. Volume (or “gain”) controls on power amplifiers are usually set full up. However, if this results in very high sound levels for very small main-volume settings, it may be convenient—and also beneficial for the signal-to-noise ratio—to adjust the power-amp controls for your normal listening levels when the main volume control is about at mid point.

To sum up, if you want to impress some friends with your amplifier, don’t show them how loud it can play with a 12-o’clock volume-control setting; that doesn’t prove a thing. Show them how loud it can play period. And then, please, be kind and turn it down a little.
The Bang & Olufsen Beosystem 1900.
It's so simple, most people don't get it.

The turntable, taken to its logical conclusion. The Beogram® 1900 turntable's very low mass tone arm and MMC 4000 cartridge work magnificently with each other, because they are made to work with each other, by engineers who talk to each other, listen to each other, and design for each other. If that strikes you as overwhelmingly logical, you'd be surprised how other turntables are put together.

A scratched record is forever. (How to protect your investment.) No matter how little you've spent on your record collection, chances are some of it is irreplaceable, which makes it priceless. It makes sense to protect it—the way our MMC 4000 cartridge does with an effective tip mass of only 0.4 milligrams. (A tiny square of this page, this big square weighs 1.0 milligram.) This results in a touch so delicate that it's almost impossible to scratch your records while playing them. It also reduces wear considerably enabling your records to continue working well past normal retirement age.

It's not size that counts. It's performance. Can a speaker small enough to fit on an eight-inch shelf (or unobtrusive enough to hang on a wall) impress your audiophile friends? Yes, if they keep their eyes closed ...and their ears open.

The missing link: Our 100% solution. Phase distortion—a principal villain in speaker performance—was identified in 1973 by Bang & Olufsen engineers. The first practical solution to the problem was presented in London in 1975 to the international organization, the Audio Engineering Society, by Bang & Olufsen engineers.

Today that solution is an integral part of our Beovox® Phase-Link® Loudspeakers (Pat. Pend.).

If a child can operate it, will an adult buy it? Because usability is at the heart of the Beosystem 1900's design, it is true that a child can operate it. But only a very sophisticated adult can truly appreciate it. Welcome to us at Bang & Olufsen of America, 515 Busse Road, Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007, we'll be happy to send you our brochure and dealer list.

Bang & Olufsen

An alternative to the airplane cockpit school of audio design. It's not knobs and dials that make superb sound, it's superb engineering. In the Beosystem 1900, there is almost none of the former, and a great deal of the latter.

A few cases in point:

Your finger, the component. With the Beomaster® 1900, you become part of the system. All major controls are electronically activated by a light touch of your finger on the front control panel. The instant you touch it, an illuminated indicator appears for each function; you always know the operational status of the 1900, even in the dark.

For details, look inside. Secondary controls, for bass, treble, and FM tuning, are out of sight, literally—concealed behind an aluminum door that opens and closes in a manner reminiscent of the Starship "Enterprise."

Thanks for the memory. The Beomaster 1900 also allows you one unforgettable convenience. You may pre-set the volume level and pre-tune up to five FM stations. Then, at the instant you want it, you have the station you want, at the level you want. Why clutter your memory when the system has one?
Most tape decks have provisions for connecting one microphone and/or one high-level ("line") source per channel, and for most purposes this is usually adequate. But what if a particular recording task requires the use of two (or more) microphones per channel? Or, after you have recorded three synchronized tracks on a four-channel machine, how do you combine them to "mix down" onto the fourth track? In such cases the problem is that you have several more signal-bearing cables with plugs than you have signal-receiving jacks at your recorder's inputs.

Your immediate temptation is likely to be to reach for one or more "Y adapters" (the audio equivalents of the a.c.-line cube taps that let you plug several lamps—or components—into the same socket). True, you can sometimes get away with using this handy expedient, as many used to do to get a mono signal from a stereo phono cartridge. More often than not, however, the best use of simple Y adapters is at those times when you want to feed a single output simultaneously to two inputs—to make two tape copies at once, for example. In the opposite cases I posed, where sever-

Active mixers, by contrast, contain their own amplifying circuits to compensate for whatever losses occur in the mixing network and controls. Customarily they also contain preamplifiers that boost microphone signals up to nominal "line level" (about 1 volt) before mixing them. Thus the mixer bypasses your recorder's own microphone circuits entirely (this is a blessing for many recorders whose mike-input circuits are excessively noisy) and plugs directly into the deck's high-level or "aux" jacks.

A typical mixer might be described as a six-input, two-output unit, meaning that it can handle six signal sources and that it has a two-channel, or stereo, output. In most cases, each of the six inputs could be switched to accept either a microphone or a high-level source. On some models inputs may be permanently "assigned"—that is, put into fixed groups of three "left" and three "right" inputs. A much more flexible and desirable arrangement, however, is one that permits you to make your own channel assignments for each (or at least some) of the inputs. This is usually accomplished with simple pushbutton switching, and most mixers that offer this feature have the valuable capacity of allowing you to feed a single source to both left and right channels simultaneously. This is of great help to the live recordist, who frequently wants to be able to put a soloist in the center of the stereo spread.

There are a host of other helpful mixer features that I will discuss in upcoming columns.
Ever since the invention of the recorded disc annoying "clicks" and "pops" caused by scratches, static and imperfections have consistently disturbed the listening pleasure of music lovers.

Now, SAE introduces the unique model 5000, an Impulse Noise Reduction System which eliminates those unwanted sounds with no adverse effect on the quality of the recorded material.

This breakthrough in electronic circuitry is so demonstrably effective that the SAE 5000 is destined to become an essential part of any sound system.

The SAE 5000 is compact and sleek, built to SAE's exacting standards, and ready to enhance the performance of any system, from the standard receiver/turntable combination, to the most sophisticated audiophile components.

SAE is proud to add the 5000 to their broad line of Components for the Connoisseur.
A GOOD WORD FOR BUREAUCRACY: A couple of years ago, the Federal Trade Commission ruling on advertised amplifier-power ratings elicited some rather strong reaction from high-fidelity equipment manufacturers. The precipitating cause was the Commission's "preconditioning" requirement for published ratings: an amplifier had to be operated at one-third its rated power for one hour followed by five minutes at full power, both channels driven, before measurement of its power output and distortion could be made.

Although reasonable warning had been given to the industry by the FTC before the ruling was promulgated, this requirement managed to slip by the engineering departments of most manufacturers until it was too late to do anything about it. The difficulty was that amplifier output stages operating in class B or AB (such as are used in almost all high-fidelity amplifiers and receivers) have to dissipate the greatest amount of heat from their output transistors when operating at about 40 per cent of maximum rated power. Many manufacturers therefore found themselves facing the problem that their amplifiers overheated or blew up when they were subjected to the FTC's "preconditioning," in spite of the fact that these same units had already proved to be reliable performers in home music systems.

Some relief was eventually afforded by a liberalized interpretation of the ruling, but many manufacturers found it necessary to redesign their products (or those scheduled for the next year's line) to include enhanced cooling systems and, in a few cases, to derate their power output slightly to comply with the specifics of the regulations.

Somehow the industry managed to survive the FTC-induced trauma. As a matter of fact, there has been a proliferation of higher-power amplifiers—particularly in receivers, where one would least expect to find them. At the time of the FTC ruling, receivers delivering over 100 watts per channel were a rarity; today they are fairly common, and there are several available in the 160- to 180-watt-per-channel range. To me, the most impressive thing about this situation is not merely the huge power ratings of these receivers, but the fact that they contain superb, no-holds-barred amplifiers whose power outputs are rated as conservatively as those separate power amplifiers that might sell for the price of the entire receiver.

Having tested a number of these "super receivers" and comparable integrated amplifiers, I can assure you that these are very conservatively rated products, one and all. After their hour of torture, they are usually safe to touch (briefly, though, as they do get hot!). Certainly they get no hotter than any of the early vacuum-tube receivers rated at 25 to 30 watts per channel. Furthermore, they do not have to be pampered, and I have yet to experience a failure in such an amplifier. Best of all, manufacturers have not (at least so far) had to resort to cooling fans with their inevitable noise.

Contrary to some dire predictions, the prices of these amplifiers and receivers have not risen appreciably on a dollar-per-watt basis. For the most part they have remained stationary in spite of continuing inflation. It may be that falling costs in other areas have offset the additional costs brought on by the heat-dissipation requirements. Obviously, coping with the FTC requirements was not beyond the technical capabilities of the manufacturers, and cost increases, if any, have certainly not been severe. And, most important, the specifications have improved, are comparable, and are rigidly adhered to. It is fair to ask whether things would have turned out this way if the FTC had not gotten into the act. I suspect not—at least not to the extent to which things have progressed in the space of two brief years. In the normal course of competition we would surely have seen some impressive upgrading of power-output ratings, but probably not to the point where a receiver that can deliver upwards of 160 watts per channel across the full audio range, for virtually any length of time, with less than 0.1 per cent harmonic distortion.

For this we can thank the FTC, those "bureaucrats" in Washington whose actions raised the average blood pressure of the audio industry by several points (mine included, I freely admit). Today, when you see an amplifier advertised as delivering "100 watts per channel from 20 to 20,000 Hz, into 8-ohm loads, with less than 0.1 per cent total harmonic distortion," you know it will do just that, without equivocation. It could not be advertised or sold if it did not. Our laboratory tests since the FTC ruling took effect have indicated 100 per cent compliance with the rule. In addition, the manufacturers' specifications are so conservatively written (to ensure that their amplifiers can meet them) that such equipment would in former times have been advertised as delivering as much as 10 to 20 per cent more power than at present. And we have been effectively freed from the power-rating hanky-panky so prevalent since hi-fi was a pup.

So hats off to the FTC! In all too many cases government regulation has resulted in reduced product performance and increased cost, but in this instance it appears that everyone has benefited.

Tested This Month

Garrard GT55 Automatic Turntable
Advent Model 300 FM Receiver
Pickering XSV/3000 Cartridge
Yamaha NS-5 Speaker System
Garrard GT55 Automatic Turntable

The Model GT55 replaces the well established Zero 100 and its successors at the top of the Garrard automatic turntable line. It has the articulated "zero-tracking-error" tone arm originated for the Zero 100, but it is now constructed of magnesium alloy to reduce the arm mass to 14 grams (which Garrard claims is the lowest mass of any pivoted tone arm sold as part of an integrated record player).

The anti-skating compensation is applied, as before, by magnetic repulsion, using tapered magnets that reduce the anti-skating force as the arm moves inward (since its head offset angle decreases simultaneously, less skating force is created at smaller playing offset angle decreases simultaneously, less skating force is created at smaller playing). The ball-bearing arm pivots are said to have 30 milligrams of friction in the horizontal plane and 20 milligrams vertically, measured at the stylus.

An unusual feature of the Garrard GT55 tone arm is the location of its rear portion (consisting of the vertical pivot and the adjustable counterweight) below the axis of the tone arm sold as part of an integrated record player). It is so placed to adjust arm resonance with the XSV/3000 cartridge installed in its arm. (At first we attempted to use a heavier-than-average cartridge [9 grams] but found that the counterweight could not be moved back far enough to balance it. The counterweight will balance any cartridge weighing up to 6 grams, however, which should be adequate for the majority of cartridges.)

The calibration of the tracking force scale was accurate to within 0.05 gram, and the force on the top record of a stack of six was only 0.1 gram lower than on the first. The 4-pound cast nonferrous platter is belt-driven by a d.c. servo-controlled motor operating at 1,000 rpm. The motor speed is electronically controlled and regulated, and the illuminated stroboscope markings under the platter can be viewed through a window on the motorboard while a record is being played. The rubber record mat has concentric rings of raised rubber "dots" that provide good support while contacting a minimum area of the recorded portion of a disc.

The Garrard GT55 can be used as a multi-rate AUTO lever starts the playing cycle (in MAN the arm can be cued manually, of course).

The fourth lever is the CUR control, which raises the arm when moved to the rear and lowers it when moved to the front. The arm motion is well damped in both directions, and a small knob under the arm adjusts the rate of descent. At the left front of the motorboard is the speed selector (for 33 1/3 or 45 rpm) and a vernier adjustment with a nominal range of ±3 per cent. Both controls operate electronically through the motor servo system.

The key specifications of the Garrard GT55 include a -66 dB (DIN "B") rumble level, 0.05 per cent wow and flutter, and a minimum tracking force of 0.75 gram. An optional mounting base and plastic dust cover are available, as well as a combination of a base and cover (BDC-8). Price: GT55, $249.95; standard base, $15.95; dust cover, $9.95; de luxe combination, $39.95.

Laboratory Measurements. We tested the Garrard GT55 with a Pickering XSV/3000 cartridge installed in its arm. (At first we attempted to use a heavier-than-average cartridge [9 grams] but found that the counterweight could not be moved back far enough to balance it. The counterweight will balance any cartridge weighing up to 6 grams, however, which should be adequate for the majority of cartridges.) The calibration of the tracking force scale was accurate to within 0.05 gram, and the force on the top record of a stack of six was only 0.1 gram lower than on the first.

For all practical purposes, the "zero-tracking-error" arm lived up to its name. At a 6-inch radius (actually slightly larger than the maximum playing radius of a 12-inch record) we measured an error of about 1 degree, or 0.16 degree per inch. This minuscule error was the largest we found over the record surface. Elsewhere, down to a 2-inch radius, the error was zero, or at least below our ability to detect and measure it.

The arm resonance with the XSV/3000 cartridge fell between 6 and 7 Hz, with an amplitude of 11 to 12 dB. The Pickering cartridge is probably more compliant than most, and it has a slightly higher mass due to its integral record brush as well as the slight mass increase at the "hot" leads of the two channels. The lathe could adversely affect the contribution of Garrard's arm-mass reduction to the subsonic response of the player system. The arm and signal cable capacitance to ground was 135 pico farads per channel and 63 picofarads between the "hot" leads of the two channels. The latter could adversely affect the measured (but not the audible) channel separation at the highest audio frequencies with some cartridges. However, the measured capacitance of the GT55 appears to be typical of most record players.

The turntable speed could be varied over a ±3 per cent range at 33 1/3 rpm and from ±5.7 (Continued on page 29)
The Sensuous Speaker.

Yamaha's new two-way beryllium dome NS-500.
A very responsive speaker with a rich, luscious sound. A deep, involving sound.
Highly defined, finely detailed.
The NS-500 is created from the same advanced beryllium technology that's made Yamaha's revolutionary NS-1000 Series speakers, in the eyes and ears of many audio experts, the highest standard of sound accuracy. (Specific benefits of Yamaha's beryllium technology have been documented in a paper presented to the 52nd Convention of the Audio Engineering Society.)

With the NS-500, you get all of beryllium's advantages (transparency, detail, and lack of distortion that go beyond the best electrostatic speakers), but at a price roughly half that of the NS-1000. Only $500 the pair, suggested retail price.

The joy of beryllium.
The ideal dome material for a high frequency driver must respond instantly to changes in amplitude and frequency of the input signal. So the ideal dome material must be virtually weightless as well as extremely rigid.
Beryllium is the lightest and most rigid metal known. Its density is less than two-thirds that of commonly used aluminum, and its rigidity is almost four times as great - thus preventing dome deformation and consequent distortion. What's more, beryllium's sound propagation velocity is twice that of aluminum.

The beryllium dome found on the NS-500's high frequency driver is the world's lightest-about half the weight of one petal of a small forget-me-not flower. Which is one of the reasons for this speaker's exceptional sensitivity and response. And for its sensuous sound.

A closer look.
To be able to offer the sophistication of beryllium at a more affordable price, without sacrificing quality of performance, Yamaha designed the NS-500 as a two-way bass reflex system.
This gives the NS-500 a trace more emotion at the low end than the resolutely objective NS-1000. But it also gives the NS-500 more efficiency (91dB SPL at one meter with one watt RMS input). Which means you don't have to invest in the highest-powered amplifiers or receivers in order to drive the NS-500 to its full-rated output.
For an optimum match with the beryllium sweeter, Yamaha developed a very light, very rigid "shell" woofer. And a special hermetically sealed air core LC crossover with a carefully selected 1.8kHz crossover point.
As a result of these design parameters, the NS-500 boasts an insignificant 0.03% THD below 50 dB SPL, from 40 Hz to 20 kHz, making it the perfect complement to Yamaha's state-of-the-art low distortion electronics.
Underneath the sleek monolithic styling of its solidly crafted enclosures, the NS-500 is full of many exclusive Yamaha features and distinctive Yamaha touches of craftsmanship.
But to fully appreciate the beauty of the NS-500, you really should visit your Yamaha Audio Specialty Dealer.
Which brings us to something else.
Something more than just another speaker pamphlet.
Yamaha's Reference Handbook of Speaker Systems is a very thorough guide encompassing all aspects of speaker design, performance, and evaluation. Starting with a detailed explanation of speaker design principles, the discussion then turns to a solid base of objective criteria, written in easily understood language, to help you properly evaluate any speaker in any listening environment. Already a much sought-after reference work among audio professionals, Yamaha's Reference Handbook of Speaker Systems is available at your Yamaha Audio Specialty Dealer.
At $5.00 a copy, it's well worth the cost. However, if you clip out the coupon in the bottom corner of this page, take it to your Yamaha Audio Specialty Dealer and hear a demonstration of the exciting NS-500 or any other Yamaha speaker, the book is yours for half the price.
And if you're not familiar with the name of your local Yamaha Audio Specialty Dealer, drop us a line. In turn, we'll also send you a free preprint of the Audio Engineering Society paper on Yamaha beryllium technology mentioned above.

This coupon is worth $2.50 off the $5.00 suggested retail price of Yamaha's Reference Handbook of Speaker Systems, when presented to any participating Yamaha audio dealer, with a demonstration of any Yamaha speaker system.
Offer expires March 1, 1977.

YAMAHA
P. O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA 90622
CIRCLE NO. 53 ON READER SERVICE CARD
A receiver is a many-splendored thing. It is not simply a combination of a tuner, preamplifier and amplifier. It is the skillful matching of all the right elements in the most effective and satisfying proportion, which can only be achieved by the teamwork of highly experienced electronics and acoustical engineers.

That's why only a leader like Sansui can consistently offer you the finest receiver available in each category today. Look at the features and the specifications on these pages and you will agree. And, if you haven't listened to a Sansui recently, do. Put yourself at the controls of a Sansui. You'll know what it is like to be in complete command of your musical destiny.

Take Sansui's new top-of-the-line 9090DB, with power and then some. It offers the convenience of a complete built-in Dolby* system to decode Dolby-FM broadcasts and to add full noise-reduction facilities to any recorder that lacks them. Twin power meters permit instantaneous power monitoring, and convert at a button's touch to Dolby level indicators. Sansui's unique triple tone controls, with switch-selectable turnover frequencies, give you full control over both the ends of the audible spectrum and over the vital "presence" midrange as well. Truly one of the world's finest receivers.
MODEL 9090DB. (on front page)

AUDIO SECTION

Power Output: 125 watts per channel, min. RMS, both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz with no more than 0.1% Total Harmonic Distortion.

Phono 1, 2: 2.5 mV for full output, RIAA accuracy: ±0.3 dB, 30Hz to 15kHz. Input impedance 50kΩ.

Hum and Noise: better than 80 dB (Aux, Tape), better than 70 dB (Phono).

FM SECTION

IHF Sensitivity: 9.8 dBf (1.7µV)

Alternate Channel Selectivity: >85 dB

Signal to Noise Ratio: >70 dB

Stereo Separation: >40 dB

Freq. Resp.: 30Hz to 15kHz, +0.5dB, -2.0 dB

MODEL 9090

Twin power meters

Triple tone controls with turnover selector

Separate tuning and signal-strength

7-position source/dubbing switch

Pre-main jacks

20 dB tuning switch

3-system speaker selector

25µsec FM output for Dolby® adaptor

MODEL 8080DB

Complete built-in Dolby® Noise Reduction

Twin power/Dolby-level meters

Triple tone controls

Separate tuning and signal-strength

Freq./main jacks with additional preamplifiers

2 phono inputs

30 dB tuning switch

3-system speaker selector
### Specifications

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<th>FM Sensitivity</th>
<th>Dolby® Circuity</th>
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9090 and 9090 DB, walnut veneer. All other cabinets simulated walnut grain.

*Trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.*
Advent Model 300 Stereo FM Receiver

In the face of a trend toward stereo receivers whose power ratings, size, and weight rival those of many "super power" amplifiers and whose control panels combine the features of a recording console and the flight engineer's desk on a 747, Advent Corporation has chosen to develop a very basic, high-quality receiver—literally a "no frills" product. The Advent Model 300 is a low-power stereo FM receiver rated to deliver 15 watts per channel to 8-ohm loads with both channels driven, from 40 to 20,000 Hz, with less than 0.5 per cent total harmonic distortion.

The 300 is easily the most compact stereo receiver we have seen. In its black semi-gloss metal cabinet, it is approximately 16 inches wide, 9 inches deep, and 3 inches high, and it weighs a mere 11 pounds. The tuning dial is a round, silver-finish plate with a concentric black knob that operates a smooth vernier adjustment, although there is nothing in its markings to suggest that more than a single turn (or less) is required to cover its full range, turns through 3½ complete revolutions (the manual makes this clear). Minimum cueing time was about 4 seconds.

The isolation against externally conducted vibration through the de luxe BDC-8 base and cover combination was about average for automatic turntables. However, entirely removing the plastic dust cover reduced the GT55's susceptibility to vibration-induced feedback appreciably.

Comment. We noted some areas of subjective reaction to the GT55 worth mentioning. In contrast to the wide flat levers of its predecessors, the slender, rod-like control levers seemed less convenient to operate, and care was necessary—as it is with a number of competitive players—to avoid jarring the unit when operating some of the controls. Also, the styling of the unit did not, to our eyes, properly convey the image of the top-quality player the GT-55 is. However, everything worked perfectly, and with impressive silence and smoothness. Even the anti-skating calibration (which on many players bears little resemblance to the actual compensation required for equally effective tracking of both stereo channels) was accurate by our tests, as we had found it to be some years ago on the Zero 100. Rumble and flutter of the GT55 were consistent with what we would expect from a top-of-the-line automatic record player. In other words, the turntable does just what Garrard claims it will, and it does it very well.

Circle 105 on reader service card

(Continued on page 36)
Model 9090DB
MODEL 7070
Twin power meters
Triple tone controls
Separate tuning and signal-strength meters
7-position source/dubbing switch
2 phone inputs
20 dB muting switch
25μsec. FM output for Dolby* adapter
Mic mixing input with level control

MODEL 5050
Separate tuning and signal-strength meters
25μsec. FM output for Dolby* adapter
Mic mixing input with level control
2-system speaker selector
Pushbutton high filter
Mode and loudness switches

MODEL 6060
Separate tuning and signal-strength meters
25μsec. FM output for Dolby* adapter
Mic mixing input with level control
2-system speaker selector
Pushbutton high/low filters
Mode and loudness switches
The loudness contours showed a moderate than adequate and helps avoid the risk of ex-
0.1 per cent at 20,000 Hz. was lower still, typically between 0.01 and 
rc 
031- o.
STEREO REVIEW
0.09 per cent at 15 watts. It also rose somewhat at lower power levels, reaching 0.085 per cent at 0.1 watt (this reflects the residual noise contributed by the tone-control section, since the power amplifier alone has substantially lower IM at very small outputs).

At the rated power output, the THD was between 0.04 and 0.05 per cent from below 30 to above 1,000 Hz, falling to 0.015 per cent at 5,000 Hz and rising to 0.18 per cent at 20,000 Hz. Although Advent's full-power ratings for the Model 300 do not extend below 40 Hz, we measured its distortion at 0.67 per cent at 20 Hz. At half power and lower levels, the THD was lower still, typically between 0.01 and 0.03 per cent from 20 to 1,000 Hz and about 0.1 per cent at 20,000 Hz.

The RIAA phono equalization was as flat as our measuring equipment (±0.25 dB) from 50 to 15,000 Hz, and very nearly as good over an extended measurement range of 20 to 20,000 Hz (the low-frequency filter caused a slight rise of about 1 dB at 25 Hz). Measured through the inductance of typical phonograph cartridges, the phono response changed by no more than 0.5 dB up to 20,000 Hz.

The tone controls had conventional characteristics, with the bass-turnover frequency shifting between approximately 200 and 800 Hz as the control was varied and the treble response hinging at about 2,500 Hz. The maximum control range of about ±10 dB is more than adequate and helps avoid the risk of exceeding the amplifier's power capabilities. The loudness contours showed a moderate low-frequency boost and a smaller high-frequency boost as the volume-control setting was reduced.

To drive the Model 300 to a reference output of 10 watts, a 0.07-volt signal was required at the AUX input and 1.5 millivolts at the PHONO input. The respective unweighted S/N figures were 72 and 70 dB. The phono preamplifier overloaded at 110 millivolts, a perfectly safe level for any magnetic cartridge or turntable, with good quality.

The FM tuner had an IHF sensitivity of 14 dBf (2.7 microvolts, or µV) in mono. In stereo, the IHF sensitivity was 19 dBf (5 µV). More important than this figure is the 50-dB quieting sensitivity, which was 16 dBf (3.5 µV) in mono with 0.9 per cent THD, and 38.5 dBf (46.3 µV) in stereo with 0.5 per cent THD. The ultimate quieting, at 65 dBf (1,000 µV) input, was 70 dB in mono and 65 dB in stereo, with respective distortion levels of 0.21 and 0.24 per cent. The stereo distortion with out-of-phase (L–R) modulation of the two channels was 0.45 per cent at 100 Hz, 0.21 per cent at 1,000 Hz, and 0.2 per cent at 6,000 Hz.

The FM frequency response was flat within ±0.6 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz. The stereo channel separation was more than 50 dB at 1,000 Hz, 30 and 27 dB at 30 and 10,000 Hz, and still a very good 24 dB at 15,000 Hz. The low-pass filter in the tuner output reduced the 19-kHz pilot carrier leakage in the audio output to a good -67 dB without impairing the high-frequency response of the FM section.

The capture ratio of the tuner at 45 dBf (100 µV) was 1.5 dB with 60 dB of AM rejection. At a higher input of 65 dBf, the capture ratio was nearly the same (1.6 dB), and the AM rejection improved to an excellent 70 dB. The image rejection at 98 MHz was 60 dB, and the alternate-channel selectivity was also excellent at 83 dB. Adjacent-channel selectivity, always much less than the alternate-channel measurement, was 5.5 dB. The muting threshold was set at 24 dBf (9µV) and the automatic stereo threshold was at 15 dBf (3 µV). The twin-LED tuning indicator was very accurate, providing minimum distortion when the two intensities matched. However, this called for some critical judgment by the user, as compared with the relatively simple task of centering a meter pointer.

Comment. Probably one of the factors contributing to our enthusiasm for the Advent Model 300 was its nearly flawless execution of the "no-frills" concept. We have always admired value engineering of the sort associated with products from Advent and a few other companies, in which a maximum of consumer-benefiting performance and features are provided for a minimum cost. It is relatively easy to make a "super" product if price is no obstacle, but it requires some ingenuity to achieve a high level of performance at a relatively low cost. This is exactly what Advent has done in the Model 300.

An economical approach to product design does have its negative aspects, too. For example, the tuning-dial scale, though quite accurate, is cramped over much of its range and widely spread out at the high-frequency end. Many times we had to guess which station was tuned in since 1 megahertz occupies about ¾ inch at most points on the dial scale.

The LED tuning indicator, as we have stated, was very accurate. As a matter of fact, it was more precise in its function than most of the meters we have seen on tuners and receivers, as well as being much smaller and probably less expensive. On the other hand, it requires more care than we suspect many users will give it in order to realize the full tuning accuracy of the receiver. Fortunately, a moderate amount of mistuning is not noticeable in use, and we assume that if anyone hears distortion or noise because of mistuning, he will (Continued on page 38)
Introducing an evolutionary idea.
The New Empire 698 Turntable

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

What we're introducing is improved performance.
The lower mass tone arm, electronic cueing, quieting circuitry and automatic arm lift are all very new.
The rest is history.

The Tonearm
The new 698 arm moves effortlessly on 32 jeweled, sapphire bearings. Vertical and horizontal bearing friction is a mere 0.001 gram, 4 times less than it would be on conventional steel bearings. It is impervious to drag. Only the calibrated anti-skating and tracking force you select control its movement.
The new aluminum tubular arm, dramatically reduced in mass, responds instantly to the slightest variation of a record's movement. Even the abrupt changes of a warped disc are quickly absorbed.

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

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

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

The Main Bearing
The stainless steel shaft extending from the platter is aged, by alternate exposures to extreme high and low temperatures preventing it from ever warping. The tip is then precision ground and polished before lapping it into two oilite, self-lubricating bearings, reducing friction and reducing rumble to one of the lowest figures ever measured in a professional turntable; -68 dB CBS AR11.

The Controls
Electronic cueing has been added to the 698 to raise and lower the tone arm at your slightest touch. Simple plug-in integrated circuitry raises the tone arm automatically when power is turned off.
A see-through anti-skating adjustment provides the necessary force for the horizontal plane. It is micrometer calibrated to eliminate channel imbalance and unnecessary record wear.

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

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

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

At Empire we make only one model turntable, the 698. With proper maintenance and care the chances are very good it will be the only one you'll ever need.
correct it on the spot. We also noted a slight warm-up drift, lasting a few minutes, in our sample. Although this drift was sufficient to extinguish one of the tuning lights, it was of questionable significance because it could not be heard as an increase of noise or distortion. In any case, if the tuning is set correctly after about 5 minutes of operation, it will remain as set indefinitely.

The Model 300 lacks such refinements as time delays in the turn-on and turn-off cycles to prevent speaker thumps. Of course, with a powerful amplifier these are vital for the preservation of one’s speakers. With the Model 300, the “thump” is audible but hardly disturbing, let alone dangerous. The FM muting is good, with enough time lag to permit a quick scan across the band in total silence. There is only a trace of a noise burst when tuning slowly through a signal, as would normally be done.

All of which brings us to the question of how a 15-watt receiver sounds in this day of 100- to 200-watt amplifiers and receivers. In a word, great! Critical A-B tests in FM reception between the Advent Model 300 and a receiver with more than ten times its power and three times its price revealed absolutely no audible difference between the two at any listening level within the sound output-level capability of the Model 300 (of course, the other receiver could play much louder). Even that limit is surprisingly loud, despite our use of fairly inefficient acoustic-suspension speakers. Obviously, this is not a receiver one would choose to play music at rock-concert hall levels, but at somewhat lower volumes it does as good a job as anything we have heard.

The phono preamplifier sounded first-rate, and as a demonstration of its low noise level, at maximum gain only a faint hiss could be heard within a foot or so of the speakers. We find it refreshing that this caliber of sound, combined with reasonable control flexibility, has been designed into a really small, light package, one whose installation does not call for the services of an Olympic weight lifter or specially reinforced furniture. Although one can buy less expensive receivers, some of which may have a few more watts or a couple of extra features, it is a safe bet that they will be two or three times the size (and weight) of the Advent Model 300, far more formidable for the uninitiated to operate, and will sound no better—probably not as good.

Circle 106 on reader service card

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**Pickering XSV/3000 Phono Cartridge**

During the development of the fine XUV-4500Q stereo/CD cartridge, Pickering evolved several new techniques, including a high-efficiency magnetic system and a new stylus shape, that were instrumental in enabling them to achieve their design goals. As often happens with technological advances, they are initially costly, but in time they can be adapted to lower-cost products with an overall uplifting of performance standards.

This was the background for the creation of the new XSV/3000, which heads the rather comprehensive line of stereo cartridges bearing the Pickering name. The internal magnetic structure of the XSV/3000 is quite similar to that of the XUV-4500Q, and externally the two are identical. Much of the credit for the performance of the XUV-4500Q went to its Quadrahedral stylus (Pickering's proprietary equivalent to the Shibata-shape stylus, which is able to trace very high frequencies over a wide area of the groove wall to minimize record wear). This stylus was also re-tapered, let alone dangerous. The FM muting is good, with enough time lag to permit a quick scan across the band in total silence. There is only a trace of a noise burst when tuning slowly through a signal, as would normally be done. All of which brings us to the question of how a 15-watt receiver sounds in this day of 100- to 200-watt amplifiers and receivers. In a word, great! Critical A-B tests in FM reception between the Advent Model 300 and a receiver with more than ten times its power and three times its price revealed absolutely no audible difference between the two at any listening level within the sound output-level capability of the Model 300 (of course, the other receiver could play much louder). Even that limit is surprisingly loud, despite our use of fairly inefficient acoustic-suspension speakers. Obviously, this is not a receiver one would choose to play music at rock-concert hall levels, but at somewhat lower volumes it does as good a job as anything we have heard.

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Circle 106 on reader service card

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**Laboratory Measurements.** In a typical tone arm of good quality, the Pickering XSV/3000 tracked our high-level test records easily at forces between 0.75 and 1.5 grams and to have a nominal output of 5 millivolts at a velocity of 5.5 centimeters per second (cm/sec). The replaceable stylus, like those of other Pickering cartridges, has a hinged "Dustomatic" brush that rides on the record to pick up surface dust. Accessory styli are available for playing mono LP and 78-rpm records. Price: $99.95.

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**Comment.** Judged by its measured performance, the Pickering XSV/3000 clearly belongs at or near the top of the most select group of contemporary phono cartridges. It will track higher velocities at lower forces than any other cartridge we have tested.

In the final analysis, the appraisal of a cartridge (Continued on page 40)
Credentials Like These Are Worth Reading

When you're buying speakers, you want to talk specs. And we don't blame you. In fact, we encourage it. Because when you invest your good money in a pair of speakers, you want more than just a pretty cabinet.

Consider the new Jensen Spectrums. These good sounds didn't just happen. They're the result of extensive engineering efforts and exhaustive testing. Testing that ranged from exacting measurements in laboratory "live" rooms and anechoic chambers to in-depth consumer surveys.

Examine our Spectrum Model 540. It's an excellent example of the superb specs you'll find throughout the Jensen Spectrum Series.

The Spectrum 540 is a 3-way, 4 element system that is so efficient it can be driven with as little as 10 watts continuous power. Its maximum power rating is 75 watts continuous.

The woofer is a 12" long-throw, high compliance design. Special acoustic suspension and infinite baffle enclosure give you extremely low distortion. And a high temperature voice coil affords high power handling. Magnet structure weight is a hefty 4½ lbs. with a Gap Flux Density of 10,000 Gauss.

Two 3½" cone midranges give excellent power handling and eliminate break-up in the critical midrange region. Tuned isolation chambers control response at the low end of the midrange spectrum. They also provide acoustical isolation in the cabinet between the midranges and the woofer. An edge damped rim suspension with specially treated molded cone offers sharp, clear, midrange reproduction.

A 1½" Mylar® rear damped hemispherical dome tweeter offers a dispersion of 170°. Its large, lightweight voice coil gives high power handling, yet maintains a low mass for good high frequency reproduction.

Tweeter and midrange controls allow you to adjust your Spectrum System to room conditions and listening preferences; controls are front mounted for convenience, continuously variable, calibrated in db attenuation from a maximum, or flat, response.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE

About as flat as you can get... and that's good. The Frequency Response Range is an admirable 25 to 25,000 Hz.

TONE BURSTS

"Blurring" and "Overshoot" are reduced to a minimum in this acid test of transient response. The Spectrum 540 reproduces each waveform accurately with low distortion.

TOTAL HARMONIC DISTORTION

Distortion is kept to a minimum in Jensen Spectrum Speaker systems.

The cabinet is built with solid walnut front moldings and walnut veneer on wood composition panels. All walnut surfaces are hand rubbed for a rich luster and beauty. The baffle is finished in an attractive, durable black pebble grain.

In short, Jensen Spectrum speakers aren't designed to put out the most amount of bass or the most amount of treble. They're designed to put out the right amount. We consider them to be the best speakers we've produced in 50 years. Simply because when it comes to sound reproduction, they're extraordinarily accurate. And that's what specs are all about.

For further information and name of your nearest authorized Spectrum Dealer, write to: Jensen Sound Laboratories, Dept. SR, 274136 United Parkway, Schiller Park, Illinois 60176.
In the graph at left, the upper curve represents the smoothed, averaged frequency response of the cartridge's right and left channels; the distance (calibrated in decibels) between it and the lower curve represents the separation between the two channels. The inset oscilloscope photo shows the cartridge's response to a recorded 1,000-Hz square wave, which gives an indication of resonances and overall frequency response. At right is the cartridge's response to the intermodulation-distortion (IM) and 10.8-kHz tone-burst test bands of the TTR-102 and TTR-103 test records. These high velocities provide a severe test of a phono cartridge's performance. The intermodulation-distortion (IM) readings for any given cartridge can vary widely, depending on the particular IM test record used. The actual distortion figure measured is not as important as the maximum velocity the cartridge is able to track before a sudden and radical increase in distortion takes place. There are very few commercial phonograph discs that embody musical audio signals with recorded velocities much higher than about 15 cm/sec.

The cartridge must come down to a matter of sound quality. To our ears, the XSV/3000 is one of the "sweetest," smoothest-sounding cartridges we have had the pleasure of using. If ever a cartridge merited the adjective "unstrained," this one does. After our tests revealed its extraordinary high-level tracking ability, we also listened closely for signs of distress when playing difficult records. We heard none. Unless there are some subtle characteristics of the XSV/3000 that you don't care for, or some in another cartridge that you prefer (tastes differ), we don't see how you can do better at any price.

Circle 107 on reader service card

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Yamaha NS-5 Speaker System

The larger Yamaha speaker systems employ advanced technology, such as beryllium domes, to achieve their high performance goals. Unfortunately, their prices are correspondingly high. In the new NS-5 speaker, Yamaha has attempted to capture the essential qualities of their finest speakers in a unit with a much lower price.

The NS-5, which is manufactured in the United States to Yamaha's specifications, is a compact, two-way acoustic-suspension system whose dimensions of 20¼ inches x 11¾ inches x 11¾ inches deep and net weight of 25 pounds make it a true bookshelf speaker. It has a 10-inch, long-throw woofer with a 1.5-inch diameter, a four-layer voice coil, a neoprene edge surround, and a 12-ounce ceramic magnet. There is a crossover at 1,500 Hz to a 1-inch tweeter with resin-impregnated soft cloth dome. The crossover network attenuates the tweeter response at a 12-dB-per-octave rate and the woofer response at a 6-dB-per-octave rate.

One of the major goals in the design of the NS-5 was high efficiency, so that the speaker could be used satisfactorily with amplifiers rated as low as 10 watts per channel. Its nominal maximum power is 50 watts, but, as Yamaha points out, it can be used with more powerful amplifiers if care is taken to avoid exposing the speaker to high-level transients.

The enclosure, including the speaker board, is finished in walnut-grain vinyl. A black cloth grille normally covers the entire front of the speaker, but it can easily be removed if the room decor is more compatible with a walnut-grain finish. Four flush-mounted plastic receptacles grasp the mating projections on the grille frame and present a finished appearance when the grille is removed.

Both the woofer and tweeter of the NS-5 are mounted flush with the front surface of the cabinet to minimize edge diffraction effects. The level balance between the drivers is set at the factory, and there are no external adjustments. The binding-post terminals are recessed into the rear of the cabinet. Price: $100.

Laboratory Measurements. The reverberant-field frequency response of the Yamaha NS-5 was notably smooth and free of contour irregularities. The close-miked bass response, almost perfectly flat from 200 to 700 Hz, rose at lower frequencies to a maximum of +5 dB at 50 Hz and fell at a 12-dB-per-octave rate below that frequency. Joining the two curves, we obtained an overall frequency-response curve varying only ±3 dB from 32 to 15,000 Hz (most of the variation was in the low bass; the response was within ±2 dB from 75 to 15,000 Hz).

(Continued on page 42)
One of a kind.

Where others seek mere wealth, he searches for experience.

He captures it in his own distinct way.

He smokes for pleasure.

He gets it from the blend of Turkish and Domestic tobaccos in Camel Filters.

Do you?

Turkish and Domestic Blend

10 mg. "tar", 1.2 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette. FTC Report APR. '76.

Yamaha NS-5
Speaker System . . .

(Continued from page 40)

Yamaha has a distortion specification of 1 per cent or less at all frequencies above 100 Hz with a 3-watt input. Our distortion tests normally cover the range from 100-Hz down, but the distortion at 100 Hz was only 0.56 per cent at 10 watts and 0.22 per cent at 1 watt, tending to confirm Yamaha's rating. At a 1-watt drive level, the distortion reached 1 per cent at 60 Hz, rising to 8 per cent at 30 Hz. At 10 watts input (based on the nominal 8-ohm system impedance) the distortion reached 6 per cent at 50 Hz and 13.5 per cent at 40 Hz. When we drove the speaker to produce a constant sound-pressure level (SPL) of 90 dB at a distance of 1 meter, the distortion level was between the 1- and 10-watt curves down to 50 Hz, but it rose somewhat more steeply at lower frequencies.

The efficiency of the Yamaha NS-5 was, as claimed, quite high for an acoustic-suspension system. Driving the system with 1 watt of random noise in the octave centered at 1,000 Hz, the SPL at a distance of 1 meter was 92 dB. This is about 3 to 4 dB higher than the output of most acoustic-suspension systems. The impedance of the NS-5 reached its minimum of 5 ohms at 100 and 5,000 Hz and its maximum of 18 ohms at 56 Hz. Over most of the audio range, the impedance was between 5 and 9 ohms.

The tone-burst response was good at all frequencies. Yamaha claims that the characteristics of the drivers and crossover network have been carefully matched to eliminate any response anomalies in the crossover region. There was nothing in our frequency-response measurements to suggest any deleterious effects of a crossover at any frequency, so we carefully explored the 1,000- to 2,000-Hz band with the tone-burst signals (which can often show up any phase or amplitude mismatch between the drivers). We found no evidence of such effects; the 1,500-Hz tone burst was typical of the response in that band. Dispersion—as implied by our other test results—was fine.

Comment. Insofar as our measurements can predict sound quality, we would expect the Yamaha NS-5 to have a very neutral, uncolored sound. It came as no great surprise, therefore, to find that this would be an accurate description. From the first, we could hear that it was "all there," without any significant emphasis or lack in any part of the spectrum. This was further confirmed in the simulated "live-vs.-recorded" listening test, in which the NS-5 was able to imitate the live source with high accuracy, especially in the middle and high-frequency ranges. The test does not operate reliably at low frequencies, and we often hear slight colorations in the lower middles that we suspect can be attributed to interactions between the speaker and the room. This is essentially what we found with the NS-5: a trace of warmth in the lower middles, but otherwise highly accurate rendition of the "original" sound in an A-B comparison.

It seemed to us that the NS-5 should easily hold its own in a comparison with any of the several very fine speakers in its price range. Since we did not have any of them on hand, we limited our direct speaker comparisons to several much more expensive units priced between $150 and $450. Except possibly in the low bass (and it is by no means lacking in that range, either), the NS-5 generally sounded as good to us as most of the others, and in some respects it seemed to outperform a couple of them. Since we had several speaker systems stacked on top of each other, we noted with interest that it was usually impossible to tell which one of the several fine systems was playing without standing very close to the group. When differences are that slight, we do not consider them to be very significant.

The high efficiency of the NS-5 was evident from the beginning. We drove it from a 15-watt receiver without difficulty, as well as from a 160-watt-per-channel receiver. Although the latter might seem like a risky pairing, we found that the NS-5 delivered such a high volume of undistorted sound with little power input that one would be most unlikely to overdrive it unwittingly in normal listening (as pointed out for those transients, though). Our conclusion is that Yamaha has hit its design target squarely. The NS-5 is a practical, handsomely finished, moderately priced speaker whose sound quality completely befits its modest proportions and price tag. Circle 108 on reader service card.

We at Altec/Lansing are very proud of our newest and best speaker system, MODEL 19. The key to the performance of MODEL 19 is an all-new high-frequency compression driver. It sports our exclusive new radial-design phase plug, The Tangerine™. With the Tangerine™ the driver produces greatly extended high-frequency response allowing our designers to employ a unique dual-range dividing network. This network permits variable equalization of mid and high-frequencies.

Photos taken at (left to right) 100, 1,500, and 10,000 Hz typify the good tone-burst response of the NS-5 system.

The dual-box design and tuned vent give MODEL 19 the proper internal volume and enclosure tuning to produce unprecedented low-frequency response.

MODEL 19 is available in oiled oak with removable brown knit grilles or oiled walnut with black knit grilles.

MODEL 19 turns your commitment to listening into a daring musical statement. Its solid beauty engulfs the senses as it bares the soul.

Altec/Lansing’s full line of bookshelf and floor-standing speaker systems start at under $100.

Send for free catalog: Altec Sound Products, a Division of Altec Corp., 1515 S. Manchester Ave., Dept. SR, Anaheim, CA 92803
*Patents Pending
Alone with sea sounds and sunlight
the senses are freely touched.
And whatever touches the senses
touches the soul.

Model 18

Speakers for people from
the people at Altec/Lansing

CIRCLE NO. 7 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Three Realistic® separates you should know about...

SA-2000 STEREO AMPLIFIER

SA-1000A STEREO AMPLIFIER

TM-1000 STEREO TUNER
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If you think it takes big money to enjoy the versatility and features of a separate tuner and amplifier, then take a look at Realistic® by Radio Shack. We don't play second fiddle to anyone when it comes to either innovation or value. And we'll give you a special package price on that "dream system" you only thought you couldn't afford!

Realistic SA-2000. Sensational value. Direct coupled high-level stages. Exclusive Quatravox®, synthesizer, 2-way tape dubbing, more. 55 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.3% total harmonic distortion. Only 259.95*.

Realistic SA-1000A. Superb sound and flexibility, modest price. Two auxiliary inputs, midrange control, tone flat switch, hi filter, Quatravox, and more. 25 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.5% total harmonic distortion. Only 159.95*.

Realistic TM-1000. The only tuner with instant Auto-Magic FM tuning. FM muting switch eliminates between-station hiss. Signal-strength meter, 75 and 300-ohm antenna inputs, and a gliding-light dial pointer that's also a stereo indicator. 2.0 μV sensitivity. Only 159.95*.

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CIRCLE NO. 37 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Installation of the Month
By Richard Sarbin

Flexibility, ease of access, and elegance of craftsmanship headed the list of priorities in the building of the highly efficient home audio installation designed and constructed by Hoffman's House of Stereo in Cleveland for Dr. M. Meshginpoosh of Madison, Ohio.

The handsome walnut cabinet is composed of three separate pieces—the center and two side sections—which, although bolted together, can easily be removed independently and transported to another location if need be. Housed in the center portion are Crown SX-700 and Teac 7010SL tape decks and a Switchcraft multiple-source selector. Each of the side sections contains six sub-panels covered in black vinyl which can be cut to accommodate components of varying size. The walnut facing of each of these sections swings open to facilitate the removal or replacement of equipment.

The display of well-chosen, high-performance stereo apparatus positioned within the compartments on the left side of the console includes a Sansui QS-1 four-channel decoder/synthesizer, Marantz 10-B FM tuner, Marantz 15 power amplifier, SAE Mark IIA power amplifier, Marantz 7T preamplifier, and an Advent 100A Dolby unit. At the right half of the complex are an SAE Mark IM stereo preamp, the electronic section of the Teac tape deck, a Lafayette SQ-W four-channel decoder, SAE 2700-B half-octave graphic equalizer, and Crown DC-300 power amp. The two platforms occupying the mid-section of the installation support an Empire 398 turntable equipped with an SME tone arm (left), Luxman D121 turntable with a Formula-4 tone arm (right), Southwest Technical Products CD-4 demodulator, and a Nakamichi 1000 cassette deck. Phono cartridges include the Shure V15-III, Sonus Blue, and Ortofon SL15.

Forming the base of the complete structure are several cabinets and slide-out storage areas that provide ample space for records, tapes, and such useful items as KMAL and Rabco tone arms (they go on the Lux turntable), ElectroVoice microphones, and Koss Pro-4AA headphones. The music, 99 per cent of which is classical, according to Dr. Meshginpoosh, is heard through a pair of Bozak Concert Grand Classics and Dalquist DQ10’s. An elaborate switching system permits the use of each component in combination with any others.

Dr. Meshginpoosh, a native of Iran, is an M.D. specializing in internal medicine and cardiology. He enjoys spending much of his time in his home audio workshop performing equipment checkouts and troubleshooting with test gear assembled from Heathkits. A perfectionist like many serious audiophiles, Dr. Meshginpoosh appreciates the superior quality of his system but asserts that “there is still room for improvement.”

As the letters column indicates, we are pretty much in touch with how our readers are thinking these days, but we’d also like to know how they’re looking. If you think your audio installation contains a wrinkle or two that might inspire or solve a problem for some others of our readers, drop us a line indicating what your system consists of, include a photo of the setup, and we’ll get back to you. Address Richard Sarbin, Installation of the Month, Stereo Review, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016, including return postage.
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Most dramatic, however, is the remarkable efficiency with which this level of performance is achieved: the new 901 Series III can produce the same volume of sound with a 15 watt amplifier as the original 901 with a 50 watt amplifier. This dramatic breakthrough in the basic economics of high-fidelity makes it possible to put together a high performance component system at a lower price than was previously possible, even though the 901 Series III is a more expensive speaker than its predecessor.

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To appreciate the spectacular performance of the Bose 901 Series III, simply ask a Bose dealer to play the 901 III in comparison to any other speaker, regardless of size or price.

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Patents issued and pending. Cabinets are walnut veneer.
For those whose principal experience of music is through records, the live concert provides a vital balance. For one thing, it enables the listener to compare a performer's concert personality with his recorded one. For another, it is a vital check on the actual abilities of the performer, a way of knowing whether he can duplicate, on a given occasion, the best of which he is capable in the studio. For a third, it keeps one up to date on the accomplishments of performers who may not, for whatever reason, have made recordings in several years. Not too long ago, it would have seemed the height of insolence to have to justify concerts in this way, but times have changed. Some of the most sophisticated and knowledgeable music listeners haven't been to a concert in years.

I have had the opportunity to go to quite a few recently, including ones by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (his voice sounded better in Carnegie Hall than it has on some recent discs) and the London Philharmonic led by Bernard Haitink (they seemed a first-rate orchestra, with a particularly wonderful viola section and excellent woodwinds). But three concerts in particular—all piano recitals—stand out, not only for their quality, but for the opportunity they provide to supplement the critical coverage this magazine has given over the years to the three artists involved.

The young Emanuel Ax, who records for RCA, gave a recital in the tiny (it seats about forty—on bridge chairs) ground-floor room of the Bloomingdale School of Music on New York's Upper West Side. It was an indication of the sort of following that Ax has already developed that people came from as far away as eastern Long Island to hear the recital. Ax had a rotten cold, and some of the tempos he chose could rightfully be put down to his desire to get things over with and get home to bed. Even so, it was a fascinating recital.

He began with a Mozart sonata, and none too auspiciously, for, like most young pianists, he didn't really know what to do with it. The notes, of course, were perfect, the dynamics reasonable; he did no violence to the music. But he totally missed its operatic qualities, the wordless arias and ensembles as well as the drama that lie beneath the surface of the music. A Beethoven Les Adieux was considerably better (with a beautifully judged, poignant opening), but the Ravel Valses Nobles et Sentimentales that followed was on another level of excellence entirely. I had expected his considerable abilities as a colorist to shine here, but what I hadn't expected was the sensuous warmth of the rhythms, the way Ravel's Viennese models glowed through the Liszt's Transcendental Etudes (misprinted in the program as the Transcendental Etudes after Paganini, a quite different set); two encores. It was a concert that, among other things, could revise one's comparative opinions of Schumann and Liszt, for the Schumann came across as an almost interminable torrent of notes and afterthoughts, the Liszt as incredibly great and expressive music (my opinion, of course). Schumann's work suffers from its title; lacking the poetic references of Carnaval or Waldscenen, it leads one to expect more formal drama—and one doesn't get it. Berman gave an impressive display, however, and he obviously likes the piece (he said so afterwards). I could not fault his performance (except for playing the thing at all), and I'm inclined to attribute my boredom to the piece rather than to the player.

Berman, who currently records for both Columbia and Deutsche Grammophon (older records may be found on other labels), made an absolutely stupendous recording of the Transcendental Etudes (Columbia/Melodiya M2-33928). Any doubts that might have existed about his being able to duplicate the feat in the concert hall were put totally aside that evening. He tore up the keyboard and he tore down the keyboard, he buckled the knees of the piano and his fingers wafted over the keys like a summer breeze, and what came out of the whole affair was not so much the greatest technical display anyone has heard for decades, as it was music. Some people need difficulties. What has happened to Berman since his earliest records is that he has so mastered the complex difficulties of technique that he can search for and expose the personality and the music that lie buried within it—provided they are there. In the Liszt Transcendental Etudes they are indeed there.

The Czech pianist Ivan Moravec appears relatively rarely in this country. His recordings are available on Connoisseur Society, Vanguard, and Supraphon, and while many of them received lavish critical praise in the past, there have not been too many new ones recently. He gave a recital in Boston's Jordan Hall and a drew a capacity audience that seemed to comprise at least as many record collectors as regular concertgoers. The seriousness of his program—Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Debussy, and five encores—might be inferred from the fact that only a single short piece was in a major key.

Moravec is a special kind of pianist, and I know few (if any) of that kind to equal him. He plays lyrically and he plays dramatically, but he is a perfectionist rather than a virtuoso, and his aim is not only to project the mood and sense of a piece, but to let you hear all those things that are in it that you perhaps hadn't heard before. Bass lines, inner voices, harmonic variations, subtle motivic relationships, all come drifting at you simultaneously. Listening to him play is like being immersed in the music; there is no hall, there is no audience; there is no pianist. There are only you and the music. His Brahms Capriccio was the most emotionally alive of that work I have ever heard—and, probably, the most satisfying. His Chopin A Minor Valse Brillante will sing its ghostly song in my head for many years to come.

Given the type of pianist he is, Moravec’s live performances are pretty close to his recordings, for they both aim at the same thing. He has, though, if anything, gotten even better with the years.
Some $5 blank cassettes have the nerve to tinker with Beethoven. We think it's outrageous.
Beethoven, even when he was deaf, knew exactly how a piccolo sounded in relation to the rest of the orchestra. Some cassette manufacturers would just as soon forget. Their cassettes give the piccolo and other high frequency sounds a distorted prominence. They appear to do this deliberately, regarding absolutely natural sound as raw material to be improved upon.

At BASF, we think this is an abomination. We're purists; we stake everything on total accuracy of sound reproduction. You will never encounter artificially enhanced high frequencies in our cassettes. We believe that if you care enough to buy an expensive audio system, the last thing you need is a cassette that imposes its own dubious tastes upon your sensitive ears.

Faithful reproduction entails more than miracle ingredients and fanciful initials on a cassette label. At BASF, we begin with the best quality ferric oxide. We mill it by a patented process to achieve maximum packing density and uniformity of coating. We use an exclusive chemically cross-linked polymer binding which will never deteriorate and cause head-related frictional noise or wow and flutter.

We use a unique multi-stage polishing process, and our slitting technique results in an edge that's clean even when viewed under a microscope. Even our cassette case is different, incorporating our patented Special Mechanics, designed to assure smooth tape feed for years of dependable performance.

Is completely natural sound worth that kind of effort? To people who know the difference, it is.

At BASF, we're purists. We've been obsessed with total accuracy since we invented magnetic tape back in 1932. There are no shortcuts to perfection. But you knew that when you planned your own audio system. We'll give you no reason to compromise when you buy our cassettes.

BASF The Purist

Our Promise: the purest, most accurate sound that tape can reproduce.
The Pop Beat

By Steve Simels

IT'S a strange time right now for pop music. Oh sure, lots of interesting things have been going on—the remarkable return of Brian Wilson, the Led Zeppelin film, the second (and I hope the last) Rock Awards TV show, and punk-rock festivals in (where else?) France—but it's hard to get a fix on what it all means. A new sensibility seems to be emerging out of the ashes of the Slowly Sickening Seventies, but there's a vagueness about it, a tentative, slippery kind of feeling that resists analysis. For myself, I find that most of the records I'm listening to now are retrospectives of one kind or another—the Faces' "Snakes and Ladders," a lovely memorial to a band that never really got it together the way they could have; Leo Kottke's "1971-1976"; even the latest reissue of Phil Spector's sublime Christmas Album—and that's got me muddled even more. So, rather than try to make sense of all this, I'm cribbing an idea from Simons Frith, who cribbed it from Charlie Gillet, who cribbed it from God-knows-who. Here is this month's Big Six.

1. Patti Smith Group: "Radio Ethiopia." Before Patti's new album came out, I was fortunate enough to stumble across an excellent live bootleg featuring some of her new songs as well as to catch an unannounced low-profile gig she did at a bar in Soho, and I think I've finally figured out why she gets to me. As knowingly as she comes on, she is really an innocent. It doesn't matter that most of the criticisms that have been leveled at her are true. Sure, her singing isn't much more musical than Yoko Ono's, her band isn't virtuoso, her poetry is at times laughably overripe—but she's still open enough to fit Smokey Robinson and Dolly Parton in among the fever dreams. "Radio Ethiopia," different as it is from "Horses," has just as many problems, but she's getting closer to whatever it is she's chasing, and for the moment at least the ride she's taking us on is the most exhilarating one in rock.

2. George Harrison: This Song (from "33 & 1/3"). That little old cringe-maker is back, but with a difference. Not only has he shaved his beard and started eating meat again, he seems to have regained both his sense of humor and his songwriting chops. I have not yet heard the whole album, so I will have to restrain my enthusiasm, but on the basis of the single—inspired by his recent loss in court, it's his first rocker in ages, and it works both as a novelty tune and as a love song—George may finally be about to demonstrate that his work with the Beatles was not the fluke the intervening years have indicated it might be.

3. Graham Parker and the Rumour: "Heat Treatment." R- & b lives! No sooner had I predicted that Southside Johnny's passion for Sixties Soul might be contagious than Mr. Parker and a fine group of refugees from the English pub scene show us that the English have caught it too. The Rumour isn't as flashy as the Asbury Jukes, nor is it as purist, but the groove is similar and "Heat Treatment" might just be the best original white r- & b-album since, oh, let's say the Beach Boys' "Wild Honey."

4. Elton John: "Blue Moves." Gosh, but it must be lonely at the top! It seems that it isn't enough for poor Elton that his records sell by the zillions, that he's adored by the pop stars and the fans—those nasty critics just keep picking at him, and it's ruining his breakfast. Insensitive barstids. The odd thing is that although "Blue Moves" is, if anything, even more numbingly turgid than anything he's done previously, it's also, in a peculiar sort of way, the most honest; it is full of the peevish petulance he demonstrated when, in a radio interview, he vented his spleen at a poor New York Times critic who had confessed to being only moderately enthused over his last concert. The Rock Star Self Pity Syndrome claims its least likely candidate. Can Peter Frampton be far behind?

5. Boston: More Than a Feeling. This song, of course, has been the left-field smash of the year, coming seemingly out of nowhere from a first album by an unknown group of musicians who have only just quit their day jobs. It really is good: a soaring riff out of Lou Reed by way of Joe Walsh, stunning playing and production, and the best job of adapting the George Martin/Beatles approach to heavy metal that anyone has come up with in ages. Todd Rundgren, not to mention Eric Carmen, must be reaching for the razor blade every time he hears it. But, like most left-field smashes, it's a one-shot. There isn't another song remotely as memorable anywhere on the rest of the album, and, unsurprisingly, the group's singing is as faceless as all the rest of the metal bands'. Still, in a period when imaginative rock-and-roll hit singles are getting harder to find than practicing Druids, it's nice they're around. File with The Boys Are Back in Town.

6. Bruce Springsteen: Rendezvous. It's been over a year since "Born to Run" put the Bard of Asbury Park on the covers of Time and Newsweek, and Springsteen, embroiled in a lawsuit with his old manager that prevents him from recording anything new, must be wondering if rock stardom is all it's cracked up to be. He doesn't act like it, though, or at least he didn't during his recent six-night stint in New York. Instead, he put on the most sweeping, ambitious, and deceptively spontaneous show I have ever attended, one that reduced several extremely skeptical friends of mine to actual tears. Two of the new songs he introduced are obviously still being worked out, but the third—a hypnotically compelling teenage lament called Rendezvous that is also the most English-sounding thing he has ever done—is clearly the Bruce Springsteen Song for the Eighties. No wonder the New York crowds resent him so much. Incidentally, he dedicated a tune at each performance to Patti Smith, and actually pulled her on stage during one version of Rosalita. If Springsteen is the New Dylan, perhaps this means that Patti is the Baez of the Seventies. Well, why not?—though I admit to being a little uncomfortable still with the idea of Revelations taking place in New Jersey.

Graham Parker: the English have caught it too.

Stereo Review
Sony's new, more powerful STR-6800SD receiver should get a warm reception. Because it not only looks different from other receivers, it is different.

It has some features found in more expensive separate components - and other features found nowhere else at all.

1. The most-used controls all in one place. The level control, muting switch, tuning knob and input and tape selectors are all in the upper right-hand corner.

2. A dial pointer that doubles in length when it's close to a station. Together with the signal strength meter and the center channel meter, this Sony exclusive helps you tune more accurately.

3. A stepped level control to keep both channels equal. It guarantees unprecedented accuracy - to within ½ db over the whole volume range.

4. MOS FET front end electronics unitized tuning. Because it's unitized, the receiver tunes the same whether it's cold or warmed up.

And MOS FET gives it a very wide dynamic range.

5. Dolby noise reduction system. So you can benefit from Dolby broadcasting. Instead of being an extra, it's built in - operated from the front panel.

6. Phase locked loop. It gives you better stereo separation and less distortion.

7. LEC (low emitter concentration) transistor. This Sony exclusive in the preamp phono stage yields tight RIAA equalization, low noise, low distortion and a wide dynamic range.

8. Sony's most powerful receiver: It delivers 80 watts minimum RMS continuous power per channel at 8 ohms from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.15% total harmonic distortion. It has a direct-coupled power amplifier with true complementary symmetry output stages.

And more. To these specifications remember, we state them conservatively), add Sony's proven reliability. And you get a receiver that produces a sound that'll make you understand why you have ears.

That's the STR-6800SD at $600. Or, for less power and a few less features but no loss of fidelity - the STR-5800SD at $500 and the STR-4800SD at $400 (all suggested retail prices). A sound investment.

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THE TOKYO AUDIO FAIR

A REPORT BY
TECHNICAL EDITOR
LARRY KLEIN
The 25th International Audio Fair was held in Tokyo late in October last year. I attended the Fair as the guest of Yamaha, who in the previous week had treated me to a whirlwind tour of their widely dispersed manufacturing facilities, music and recreational camps, furniture and audio display rooms, recording studios, five-story music stores, and more. I saw everything from the foundry casting of Yamaha grand-piano frames to the assembly under microscope of their V-FET power transistors, to say nothing of the non-Yamaha temples, shrines, and craft centers I toured.

Judging that I was properly overwhelmed, disoriented (it's Wednesday; it must be Hamamatsu), and almost—but not quite—recovered from jet lag, my hosts decided it was time to take in the Fair. A projected Sunday visit had to be put off until Monday when an advance check indicated that the premises were wall-to-wall with audiophiles; no one not blessed with X-ray vision or a barbed-wire business suit could hope to see anything but the backs of milling "audiomaniacs," as Japanese sound buffs call themselves.

The Audio Fair took place in two adjoining structures, the main one being a vast geodesic dome. A maze of display booths and rooms was installed on the open floor under the dome, and these had surprisingly effective sound-isolation properties considering the sound levels that were being employed. I was struck immediately by several differences between the usual U.S. hi-fi show and the Tokyo Fair. For one, there was a remarkable amount of live music to be heard in the various display rooms. Yamaha, for example, had built a small auditorium—a "music plaza"—in which they presented a constant stream of performers. The shows were being broadcast simultaneously on FM to an "air check" area outside the auditorium, where they were picked up by tuners and fed to fourteen cassette decks. Show-goers who signed up for the privilege were given a blank cassette and could make their own live recordings (on a Yamaha deck, naturally) of the musical proceedings inside. The other major live-music performance (there were a number of minor ones) at the Tokyo show was presented by Fuji Film. A good part of the audience there was also making recordings (Fuji tape, of course) on a variety of models and brands of cassette decks set up by Fuji.

For the more advanced audiophiles—and Japan seems to be full of them—there were ongoing technical demonstrations. Almost every electronics manufacturer had a test setup designed to demonstrate the virtues of his products by means of graph recorders, meter, and/or oscilloscope. Additional technical information was provided by explanatory wall charts liberally illustrated with schematics, block diagrams, waveforms, and graphs. In short, there seemed to be something for everybody—engineer, audiophile, and music lover.

As is true at any large consumer/dealer audio show, many of the models shown were pre-production prototypes that were not yet available (some of them may never be) in the form in which they were exhibited. And, since the Audio Fair is the place where manufacturers seek to establish or enhance their technical reputations, the emphasis was on high-end, prestigious—one might even say far-out—state-of-the-art products.

Many, if not most, of the major brand names whose advertisements appear in these pages could be spotted at the Fair, but my purpose in putting together this report was not to catalog the exhibits but to discover breakthroughs, identify trends, and point out interesting approaches to the audio art that haven't yet been widely seen on this side of the Pacific. You may therefore notice the absence of a few famous names whose 1977 product lines have already been discussed (see Ralph Hodges' September report on the Con-
greater rigidity. Yamaha, among others, will cantilever materials such as boron on the stylus -tip shapes. It apparently going strong. Denon, Fidelity Revolutionizing acoustic feedback and internal vibration trends in high-mass inert materials and are supported by very compliant mounting feet. Such high-speed read-out visible in the rim surrounding the turntable platter. I suspect that as far as wow, flutter, rumble, and speed stability are concerned, this new generation of turntables is, as a group, substantially better than the tone arms are a significant component on the Japanese audio market. Brands seldom encountered in the U.S. (Grace, Dynavector, Azden, Saec, Lustre, Denon) were on display as well as the more familiar Stax, Micro, and Audio Technica. If there were any major advantage of the technique is cooler transistors or hotter advertising copy. Japan's last generation of amplifiers had distortion figures that in my view were already well below the audible level. This year, as a group, they've "improved" their measurable performance even further. Impressive, but it does make me wonder what they are going to do for an encore five years from now. Finally, I detected what seems to be a trend toward D-C design in power amplifiers (D-C in this case stands for direct-coupled, meaning the elimination of coupling capacitors that could cause phase shift and low-loss—and capacitors also usually suffer original cut.

**Amplifiers**

The super-power amplifier, for years strictly a U.S. phenomenon, had by 1976 become a significant part of the Japanese market. At the Tokyo Fair, virtually every manufacturer showed a power amplifier—or two or three. Most were beautifully styled and adorned with meter readouts and LED decibel -increment indicators. At least one manufacturer (Optonica) showed a 250-watt-per-channel unit with a direct -reading, liquid -crystal, digital power -output indicator (liquid -crystal technology is responsible for those digital watches with the grey segmented numbers—as contrasted with the red ones of light -emitting diodes). The unit also had a high-frequency switching-type power supply that should reduce cost, size, and weight. And Sony was showing a prototype Class-D amplifier—the first, to my knowledge, from a Japanese manufacturer. Amongst the literature I collected was a folder describing a Denon integrated amplifier with a novel phono -crosstalk cancellation circuit. The text is in Japanese, but from what I can decipher from the curves and block diagrams it appears that the circuit can take a stereo signal with perhaps 20 dB of mid-range separation and enhance it to almost 40 dB. This is achieved by employing a combination of phase shift and channel cross-feed. Several possibly significant trends in amplifier external design were in evidence. "Cosmetically," as we say in the trade, the styling has gone strongly to long, low slimline silhouettes. These flat (physically, that is) preamps, tuners, and integrated amps stack nicely and are available in a choice of black or white—well, not actually white, but a kind of matte silver. There's no question that the pinball-machine look is out; basic black and matte silver are in—and they're beautiful. The long, flat format fitted nicely into installations of the "relay -rack" type at the Fair, but the U.S.-standard 19-inch rack is much too wide for them. Several manufacturers were therefore showing their own mini -racks and cabinets that would accommodate their equipment's 16-inch mounting width. Nakamichi, for one, has a lovely little rack on casters that holds cassette deck, preamp, and power amplifier. A number of companies, including Lux, were showing vacuum-tube amplifiers whose power -output tubes were unfamiliar—some seemed large enough to have been borrowed from the transmitters of the local radio station. In addition, there were several solid -state, class-A power amplifiers heating up the area and even a switch on some new integrated amplifiers that would convert the output stages from "normal" to class-A operation. The power-amp chassis of one manufacturer (Daytona) sported four large, black cylindrical objects that turned out to be the housings for pairs of output transistors. They were hermetically sealed in freon (or some similar gas -liquid) so that the entire assembly became a rather special kind of heat sink. At the moment, it's difficult to tell whether the major advantage of the technique is cooler transistors or hotter advertising copy.

**Cartridges & Turntables**

Despite the heavy competition from U.S.-made products, many of which are held in high esteem in Japan, the domestic moving-coil (MC) phono -cartridge industry is apparently going strong. Denon, Fidelity Research, Satin, Supex, and Onlife all showed their latest models, most of them available with a variety of stylus-tip shapes. It appears that we will be seeing a variety of new cantilever materials such as boron on the market in the next year or so—the industry is still looking for lower mass combined with greater rigidity. Yamaha, among others, will be serving the MC market with built-in "head" amps (otherwise known as preamplifiers) in some of their new preamplifiers and integrated amplifiers. The purpose, of course, is to provide the extra amplification needed by most MC cartridges without having to use external gain modules or transformers. Judging by the number of them available, tone arms are a significant component on the Japanese audio market. Brands seldom encountered in the U.S. (Grace, Dynavector, Azden, Saec, Lustre, Denon) were on display as well as the more familiar Stax, Micro, and Audio Technica. If there were any significant technical breakthroughs embodied in these arms, they were not reflected in their external appearance. But they were impressive—all of them looked like precision -tooled devices.

As you might suspect from recent ads, the Japanese are putting some effort into miniaturizing acoustic feedback and internal vibration in their turntables. There has been, for example, a sudden proliferation of turntable bases that incorporate, or are molded from, high-mass inert materials and are supported by very compliant mounting feet. Such bases were everywhere evident at the Fair, usually with beautiful-looking quartz -lock turntables installed. It appeared that every company with a single-play manual turntable in their line also had a quartz-controlled, direct-drive model or two as well. One I saw (JVC's) had a digital operating-speed readout visible in the rim surrounding the turntable platter. I suspect that as far as wow, flutter, rumble, and speed stability are concerned, this new generation of turntables is, as a group, substantially better than the turntable/lathe assembly on which our photograph discs are originally cut.
Among the sophisticated accessories were these peak/average rack-mounting meter assemblies. The three units, with different mode settings, are all responding to the same input.

One of the quartz-lock turntables shown was this JVC model incorporating a digital speed readout in the rim surrounding the platter. Pushbuttons provide incremental speed changes.

U.S. companies have had D-C amplifiers for years, but it appears to be big news just now in Japan.

Speakers

From my point of view, the Japanese loudspeaker situation continues to be as confused—and confusing—as it appeared to be during my last visit several years ago. Major segments of the Japanese audio industry continue to hold the view that speaker sound is a matter of taste and, further, that different nationalities have different tastes—after all, they listen to different kinds of music, don’t they? To complicate matters even more, they believe that, as far as national speaker “tastes” go, the U.S. market is divided between listeners who prefer “East-coast” sound and those who prefer “West-coast” sound.

Interestingly, the best-selling speakers in Japan itself have varied over the years from compact systems with clean, uncolored sound to large bookshelf units with strong upper bass and peaked upper mid-range—which, oddly enough, parallels rather closely the history of speaker sales in the U.S.

I don’t know what it indicated in terms of any design philosophy, but the sound I heard at various speaker displays at the Fair could generally be described as smooth and clean, with an l-db-per-octave slope centered at 1,000 Hz, falling in the low frequencies and rising in the highs. It’s not that the bass was missing; it just seemed to be thin and lacking in “warmth.” The highs, however, went way out, cleanly, widely dispersed, and in full measure. Some of the bass lack

from long-term deterioration). The D-C design also relates to direct current, in the sense that a true D-C amplifier will “amplify” the voltage of, say, a flashlight battery connected to its input terminals. This characteristic demands that the amplifier circuits be very stable, since a small unwanted d.c. “offset” voltage in an early stage can result in a large distortion-producing d.c. output voltage at the speaker terminals. Several

It’s not that the bass was missing; it just seemed to be thin and lacking in “warmth.” The highs, however, went way out, cleanly, widely dispersed, and in full measure. Some of the bass lack

ably more entries I missed hearing about. There’s no question that the Japanese have the technology—and the interest—to produce state-of-the-art speaker systems. As I see it, the reason we don’t have more fine systems coming from Japan is simply that many manufacturers have decided that “speaker sound is a matter of taste”—and they are not sure whose taste to cater to.

Tape Machines

The few examples of solid-state memory automation I noted were all devoted to locating selections on cassette and elcaset decks. Some units appeared to be completely programmable, while others simply counted blank areas between selections and stopped where required. Optonica, for one, provides different degrees of cleverness in their machines: in order of increasing
The Tokyo Audio Fair

"smartness" you'll find APLD, APFS, or APSS in various decks. These initials stand, respectively, for "Auto Program Locate Device," "Auto Program Find System," and "Auto Program Search System." The descriptive literature is all in Japanese, but and "Auto Program Search System." The APSS and APSS machines each have a single on-off button for the special functions. In addition, two of the machines have a SPACE button which presumably places a set amount of time between dubbed selections by advancing the tape a second or so.

Clarion exhibited a neat little cassette machine—no larger than some conventional decks—that you can load with both a recorded and a blank cassette to turn out duplicates. It was a fairly basic machine (no noise reduction or other extra features), and according to my yen-to-dollar conversion chart it was only about $210.

And JVC came up with a bright—bright red, that is—idea. One of their new cassette decks has a "multi-point peak-level indicator" that consists of five LEDs marked −10, −5, 0, +3, and +6. These operate in conjunction with the deck's standard VU/meter. Since the LEDs are peakreading meters, possibly to alert the user to the deck's standard VU/meter.

There seemed to be only one digital delay provision on their units. Technics showed a handsome matte-black, two-section, rack-mounted unit with transport and controls in one section, electronics in another. The machine is obviously intended to compete in the "professional" end of the cassette market.

Considering all the action in the cassette sphere, there were few new elcasets to be seen. Technics displayed a black rack model with a separately mounted fifteen-button "program control unit." And Aiwa showed a handsome, but basic, elcaset unit. I was told there were also new machines—which I didn't get to see—from JVC, Toshiba, and Sansui. There didn't seem to be too much open-reel equipment at the Fair either. Technics, however, displayed their new top-of-the-line professional-style deck with its new isolated-loop drive system and Pioneer had a very compact 7-inch reel deck whose styling might bring a nostalgic tear or two to the eyes of the old timers; it looked, in fact, like a nicely updated Magnecord PRO-AH.

Sony presented a continuous demonstration of pulse-code-modulation audio recording on a converted (through a special attachment) video tape recorder. It wasn't clear whether Sony intends to market a commercial product soon or whether this was simply a demonstration of what could be done. I doubt that the setup is intended for the audiophile market—even the most advanced segment of it—but it is certainly a harbinger of tomorrow's home tape machines.

Accessories

It seems that Japanese audiomaniacs love to record off-the-air (despite the problems discussed above). They refer to the practice (in English) as "Air Check," and it is a popular enough activity that high-end cassette manufacturers have difficulty selling machines that can't be automatically turned on by a timer. This, of course, has precipitated a host of really beautiful made-for-recording digital timers. Almost every manufacturer had one—some using a mechanical digital movement, others being totally electronic.

There seemed to be only one digital delay (reverb) system at the show. I didn't get to hear it, and I discovered its existence only when I went through my packet of Optonica literature.

Several manufacturers showed add-on amplifier-output monitoring units employing meters, LEDs, or both. Technics had three of their meter-readout units stacked with their respective mode switches set variously for peak hold, an VU meter, and a fascinating to watch the three meters as they responded differently to the same musical signal.

FM Tuners

It may sound strange, but I didn't get a chance to listen to any FM broadcasts while in Japan, though I saw and heard plenty of FM tuners. By U.S. standards, there are relatively few FM stations even in the major cities. In Tokyo, for example, there are one or two broadcasting very high-quality audio—the NHK chain—as well as several that, according to one engineer, averaged about 200 per cent (!) modulation. The only way to reduce the tuner distortion under such circumstances is to provide the option of switching to a very wide bandwidth—hence the wide-narrow switch seen on many Japanese tuners. In the U.S., however, such a feature isn't that important since the broadcasters have other practical considerations—such as the FCC monitoring of the crowded FM band—that tend to minimize broadcast overmodulation. Given the general state of Japanese FM broadcasting, the exhibitors preferred to demonstrate their equipment using their own low-power, highly-selective, across-the-room replications.

The lack of widespread FM broadcasts also accounts for the disproportionately high sales of integrated amplifiers and the relatively low sales (compared to the U.S. market) of receivers. However, this has certainly not put any viable discriminator on Japanese FM-tuner engineering; FM-tuner distortion figures, for example, are being driven even downward even at the lower-price end of the lines.

Several manufacturers were showing alternatives to the conventional slide-rule tuning dial. Aside from one or two liquid-crystal, digital-readout models, there were FM units (Diatone, for one) that seemed to have two large meter movements—until you noticed that one was actually a rotary dial calibrated in megahertz. There were a few other variations on that same theme, almost as though the manufacturers wished to disguise the fact that the device shown was a tuner.

A few of the tuners (Sony/Otto) had deviation meters, possibly to alert the user to the gross overmodulation discussed earlier. As with amplifiers, the tuners are undergoing constant technical improvement. Now, if only the sonic quality of the broadcast material would start to improve at an equal rate . . . . .
WHY MOST CRITICS USE MAXELL TAPE TO EVALUATE TAPE RECORDERS.

Any critic who wants to do a completely fair and impartial test of a tape recorder is very fussy about the tape he uses.

Because a flawed tape can lead to some very misleading results.

A tape that can't cover the full audio spectrum can keep a recorder from ever reaching its full potential.

A tape that's noisy makes it hard to measure how quiet the recorder is.

A tape that doesn't have a wide enough bias latitude can make you question the bias settings.

And a tape that doesn't sound consistently the same, from end to end, from tape to tape, can make you question the stability of the electronics.

If a cassette or 8-track jams, it can suggest some nasty, but erroneous comments about the drive mechanism.

And if a cassette or 8-track introduces wow and flutter, it's apt to produce some test results that anyone can argue with.

Fortunately, we test every inch of every Maxell cassette, 8-track and reel-to-reel tape to make sure they don't have the problems that plague other tapes.

So it's not surprising that most critics end up with our tape in their tape recorders.

It's one way to guarantee the equipment will get a fair hearing.

Maxell. The tape that's too good for most equipment.
Rock-and-roll lyrics have come a long way. They began, perhaps, when the Beatles said they wanted to hold our hands. Now some of the more flamboyant rock groups are on record as wanting to hold other parts of our anatomies.

Rock lyrics have certainly gotten more suggestive with time—when the rock group Bread sings I Want to Make It with You, you can be sure they don’t mean dinner. And at least some rock lyrics have gotten more grown up—consider nearly any of the literate lyrics written by composers Joni Mitchell by the same people who write all those greeting cards. You mean there are people who actually sit around and think up those words to those songs?”

Yes, there are, and they do. There is a new breed of professional rock lyricists—the “poets,” if you like, of this generation—who don’t perform in concert, who don’t make records, who are rarely heard even to hum. What rock lyricists do, simply, is write the words to rock music, but it is a whole lot less complicated to describe than to do. “The one thing you’ve got to remember,” says one long-time music biz observer, “is that a person who writes rock words has to come up with hits, hits, and more hits. They have to be dependable, consistent, and contemporary; they have to know how to write what people will buy.”

One of the things people will buy is a song that is attached to lyrics by Gerry Goffin, the dean of American rock lyricists. As a long-time collaborator with music writer-singer Carole King (they collaborated in marriage for some time as well), Goffin has written half of such hits as Will You Love Me Tomorrow, The Loco-Motion, Up on the Roof, One Fine Day, A Natural Woman, and...
WHO WRITES ALL THOSE ROCK LYRICS?

BY RICK MITZ

When Goffin and King got together in the early Sixties, though, it seemed as if they knew no limits. In just five years they created more than a hundred commercially substantial singles and at least a hundred more that didn't make it. Goffin's lyrics, reflective of the mood of the times, dealt with teen problems and simple emotions. One of his best was Up on the Roof:

When this old world starts getting me down And people are just too much for me to take I climb way up to the top of the stairs And all my cares just drift right into space.1

"I don't think my lyrics have improved any over the years," Goffin says. "I sort of like my old ones better. They were written from the perspective of a younger person with a better, more optimistic outlook on life. My lyrics were happier then. Today, the things I write about apply more to an older person [Goffin is thirty-seven]. I'm going to have to start thinking younger. Today I feel guilty if I haven't written for a while, but it's harder for me now—I'd like to be better."

He pauses and comes up with something full of the cynicism his old lyrics started out one day to answer an ad for lyricists in a London music-trade paper but changed his mind and threw the letter away. His mother retrieved it and, unbeknownst to Bernie, sent it along. The publishers were impressed and asked him to team up with another correspondent, a young composer named Reggie Dwight—who, as we all know, later changed his name to Elton John. And Bernie Taupin and Elton John went on to change the course of rock-music history.

Today Elton John is so successful he could sing the London phone directory—detractors insist he might as well be doing just that—but what he mostly sings are Taupin lyrics to his own songs. Those lyrics have been described as "rapidly vapid." (Taupin can write dozens of them in a day), filled with surrealistic non sequiturs. But, says Elton, "I wouldn't tackle any other lyrics apart from Bernie's. They're special to me. They've always inspired me. If Bernie suddenly said he didn't want to write any more lyrics or that he didn't want to write them for me, then that would be it—the end. I'd just have to stop; there'd be no sense in carrying on."

BERNIE is a little less melodramatic about the whole thing. "If Elton stopped writing, I'd still write lyrics."

Although he's at the top of this particular commercial heap, Taupin says he's not especially at ease. "There's a lot of uncertainty in my writing and some of my ideas are insecure. You can read what you like into my lyrics, view them from many different angles. I like to write songs more ambitious than most."

Some sample Taupin lyrics:

Inside of you I have formed a home, Outside of you I have cast a dome. A castle you conceived for me, Inside of you I have formed a home.

Oh, Daniel, my brother You are older than me, Do you still feel the pain Of the scars that won't heal?

Some music critics, however, would like to know what it all means. They aren't coming up with any quick an-

FEBRUARY 1977
"I often ask myself if people even listen to rock-and-roll lyrics. I'm not so sure they do."

"I know my lyrics aren't poetry . . . but success with my lyrics has improved my poems."

"I don't really like writing. I like having written."

GOFFIN

TAUPIN

SAGER

answers, but Bernie and Elton are coming up with a lot of quick hits. You can barely turn the radio dial these days and nights without coming across a John-Taupin collaboration. They have nine gold singles and twelve gold albums—but they have only eleven platinum albums (they must be slipping somewhere).

Even after all the success, Elton and Bernie still work together the way they always did—through the mail. Elton sets the lyrics to music and Bernie hears the whole thing when it's done. They've been known to churn out as many as twenty songs a day that way. But Bernie knows his limitations. "I know my lyrics aren't poetry. But I do write poetry too, and success with my lyrics has improved my poems. It doesn't make any difference if I'm writing in a garret in Finchley or on a beach in the Caribbean, because I've already had my struggles."

"You know," he says, pausing to push one leg under another, "the audience never realizes what it takes to get there. They don't realize the heartaches, they don't realize that you've had to pay your dues. But it's good to pay your dues."

AND now, of course, the dues are paying him. Just a little work on that and it would sound like a lyric Carole Sager might have written: "You've paid your dues. And now your dues are payin' you." Ms. Sager is another Very Successful Lyricist, and her best work is heavy with a sensitivity typical of what Tom Wolfe has called "The Me Decade." Better Days, Help Is on the Way, Good News, and Home to Myself are just a few of the lyrics she has written with a pop-sociological slant. For example:

Nobody's home when you need 'em
Even after you love 'em and feed 'em
-O Lord
Say do not disturb me
This lady's not home today..4

Or,

No more tears left to hide
We have made it through a long and lonely night.
Better days are on our side,
Oh it looks as though we're doing something right.6

Those are just two of the lyrics she has written with Melissa Manchester, whom she discovered ooh-ooohing out of Bette Midler's back-up chorus line, the Harlettes. The list of her other collaborators reads like a Who's Who of pop composers: Marvin Hamlisch, Peter Allen, Lucy Simon, Bette Midler, and, a long time ago, Neil Sedaka ("I was Neil Sedaka's 'Hungry Years,'" she quips, referring to a recent Sedaka album title).

Sager's lyrics are perfect for her collaborators and perfect for the times. She is also a very unselfish writer who is quite prepared to merge her own writing style into the style and personality of the composer.

"My roots are on Broadway," she says. "I even wrote a Broadway show, Georgie, that flopped. I was depressed for six months after that. The New York Times thought my lyrics were pedantic, pedestrian—and a few other p's. But then I recovered and met Melissa."

Her biggest commercial hit has been Manchester's Midnight Blue of a year or so ago. But she keeps trying for more. "All artistic points of view aside, if you don't have a hit, then your album becomes a collector's item."

"I'll tell you how to write a hit lyric. Make sure the title appears more than once in the song. Have a structured verse-chorus, something that someone can sing back to you on the second listening. Keep it simple. A radio programmer's got to like it even if he had a fight with his wife the night before. And make sure that the hook of the chorus comes before the DJ picks up the needle.

"But the melody has to get people first, because that's where they hear the hook. Even so, without the lyrics some songs would never see the light of day. If a song has already been written a thousand times—about love, hate, fear, all that—I try to write it a little differently. I don't try to be clever and look for strange rhymes for tomato. And I'm not Bob Dylan; I've never written political songs. If you can reach out to another person that's enough."
I like lyric writing because it's childlike and it's a puzzle.

BRACKMAN

Sager has a very special, intimate way of working with her collaborators. "Let's say we get together at two p.m. on a Wednesday. Well, then, from two to four we just talk about how we feel, where we're at, what's going on. From that talking, we'll get a common ground for a song that will be honest for both of us. We work together at the piano. I might sing a tune and they might suggest a lyric. We edit each other as we go along. The feedback is immediate. But my lyrics are written for me; they're cathartic and they make me feel better."

But does she like writing lyrics? She has to think a little about that. "I don't really like writing," she finally says. "I like having written."

JACOB BRACKMAN isn't so sure he likes even that. "I'm very critical about my work," he says. "I'm neurotic about writing lyrics. I always think of things afterward that could have been better."

One thing that couldn't be much better is Brackman's long-time collaboration with singer-songwriter Carly Simon. They met at summer camp years ago and have been friends and co-workers ever since.

"Lyrics are just something I stumbled on," says the thirty-three-year-old Brackman. "I had been writing magazine articles, stories, and essays, and Carly came to me because she needed help writing a lyric for a song. So I wrote it for her. It ended up being her first hit, That's the Way I've Always Heard It Should Be:

But you say it's time we moved in together,
Raised a family of our own, you and me.
Well, that's the way I've always heard it should be,
You want to marry me; we'll marry. 6

Since that hit, Jake and Carly have been more or less a team—"more when Carly needs help on the lyrics, less when she writes her own or has someone else write them."

Someone else? "I feel bad when she goes to other lyricists," Brackman says. "Maybe she does it to express her independence from me. But then she feels bad when I write for other composers."

Not only has Brackman written with others, he's written with himself—not music, but a screenplay (The King of Marvin Gardens) and a book (The Put On). He is also producing films and is now in the midst of his first musical-comedy project. But his heart—and his art—belong to Carly.

"It is, strange, you know, I'm a guy writing for a girl. But I know her really well and I know what will sit well with her. I try to write things for her that she might write for herself."

OST rock lyricists—most successful ones, anyway—agree that writing lyrics isn't exactly high art, but, as Goffin says, it isn't exactly hack work either. It is a commercially valuable craft, and those who practice it best reap a financial and (sometimes) critical reward. And who knows, perhaps those who put into their lyrics a little more than they know they are putting in will win a different, more lasting fame in the future, for their words, more than those of the history books, will be the ones that will tell later generations what it was like to be young in the Seventies.

"I don't know what's going on in Bernie's mind. But I never question his lyrics. I just sing them."

ELTON AND BERNIE

But Carly alone is not enough of an outlet. "She records only one album a year and maybe uses two or three of my songs. We have the standard fifty-fifty money arrangement most collaborators do, but I can't live off that. I can write more. I'd like to find more people to write with—like Burt Bacharach. I have a whole trunk full of lyrics."

Near the trunk sits a radio, which Brackman listens to a lot. "When I hear one of my songs on the radio, I feel a rush of energy," he says. "I do admire some of my work. I like lyric writing because it's childlike and it's a puzzle. I guess I can write a hit song as well as anyone."

Most rock lyricists—most successful ones, anyway—agree that writing lyrics isn't exactly high art, but, as Goffin says, it isn't exactly hack work either. It is a commercially valuable craft, and those who practice it best reap a financial and (sometimes) critical reward. And who knows, perhaps those who put into their lyrics a little more than they know they are putting in will win a different, more lasting fame in the future, for their words, more than those of the history books, will be the ones that will tell later generations what it was like to be young in the Seventies.
Even we were astounded at how difficult it is to find an adequate other-brand replacement stylus for a Shure cartridge. We recently purchased 241 random styli that were not manufactured by Shure, but were being sold as replacements for our cartridges. Only ONE of these 241 styli could pass the same basic production line performance tests that ALL genuine Shure styli must pass. But don’t simply accept what we say here. Send for the documented test results we’ve compiled for you in data booklet #AL548. Insist on a genuine Shure stylus so that your cartridge will retain its original performance capability—and at the same time protect your records.

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The criteria for these tests involved the eight standard production line inspections used for all Shure styli: Visual and mechanical inspection, tip configuration, trackability, vertical drift, 1,000 Hz output level measurement, channel separation at 1,000 Hz, channel separation at 10,000 Hz, and frequency response. Only genuine Shure styli have the name SHURE on the stylus grip and the words “This Stereo Dynetic® stylus is precision manufactured by Shure Brothers Inc.” on the box.
Stereo Review’s Record of the Year Awards for 1976

in recognition of significant contributions to the arts of music and recording during the 1976 publishing year

The balloting for these tenth annual Stereo Review awards for the outstanding records of the past year brought forth an unusually large number and variety of nominations. If there was any style of music slighted it was not apparent. Granted, most records received only one or two votes, but it was a powerful reminder of just how many fine records came on the market last year that the voting was spread so thin. The interested reader and record buyer, after examining this year’s winners and honorable mentions, really ought to go back to the twelve issues that spawned them and see just how many other records received unstinting (and well-deserved) praise.

The balloting was done in the usual fashion. Those eligible to vote were the critics and editors of Stereo Review; those records eligible to be voted for were any reviewed by us during the calendar year of 1976, or even, if the review section had unaccountably passed them by, other records actually released during that time. Critics were free to vote for anything that pleased them; within or without their own areas of special interest. But, of course, a critic tends to hear more music that is in his specialty than out of it; the votes, to a degree, reflected that. The standards were and are those of genuine musical and technical excellence, of real contributions to the arts, not of commercial success.

If the voting was biased in any way, it was (other things being relatively equal) in favor of the newer and younger artists over those already well established and widely appreciated. Of the twelve winners this year, only two, Montserrat Caballé and Joni Mitchell, have received such awards before, while at least four of the winning records were debut discs. The honorable mentions show a little backing and filling, but there is an ample number of previously untouted names there too.

Despite the range of the voting in both number and type of record, the decisions on the winners were clear-cut. Exactly how it came about that so many critics and editors, perhaps despite their own preferences in music, happened to have heard Toots and the Maytals or Montserrat Caballé’s new recording of zarzuela arias, for example, and were impressed enough to cast a ballot for one or both of them remains a mystery even around here. Yet, something like it happens each year; the standout records draw attention to themselves like magnets, and somehow they get heard and remembered and voted for.

It is the belief that something like that happens in the marketplace too that keeps good records coming out. It may prove to be unfounded in some cases, but there are enough instances of something of real quality achieving commercial success to inspire us to keep the faith. Faith moves mountains; it also makes records.

—James Goodfriend, Music Editor
Record of the Year Awards for 1976
SELECTED BY THE EDITORIAL STAFF AND CRITICS FOR THE READERS OF STEREO REVIEW

Honorable Mentions


CHOPIN: Piano Music (Emanuel Ax, pianist). RCA ARL1-1569.

DR. BUZZARD’S ORIGINAL SAVANNAH BAND. RCA APL1-1504.

GOTT SCHALK: Piano Works (Ivan Davis, piano). LONDON CS 6943.

EMMY LOU HARRIS: Elite Hotel. REPRISE MS 2236.

HAZDN: Sonatas Nos. 31, 32, 34 (Gilbert Kalish, piano). Nonesuch H-71318.

IANIS IAN: Aftertones. COLUMBIA PC 33919.

KE TH JARRETT: Köln Concert. 2 ECM 1064/65.

THE L.A. 4 CONCORD JAZZ CJ 18.

PEGGY LEE: Mirrors. A & M SP-4547.

GORDON LIGHTFOOT: Summertime Dream. REPRISE 2246.

MENDELSSOHN: Songs (Peter Schreier, tenor; Walter Obertz, piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 556.

MESSIAEN: Quartet for the End of Time (Tashi). RCA ARL1-1567.

MOZART: Arias (Margaret Price, soprano; James Lockhardt, cond.). RCA AGL1-1532.

MARIA MULDAUR: Sweet Harmony. REPRISE 2235.

NIELSEN: Saul and David (Lasch Horenstein, cond.). UNICORN RHS 343/35.

ROLLING STONES: Back and Blue. ROLLING STONE COC 79104.

LINDA RONSTADT: Hasten Down the Wind. ASYLUM 7E-1072.

DAVID SANCOUS: Transformation (The Speed of Love). EPIC PE 33339.


BEVERLY SILLS: Music of Victor Herbert (Beverly Sills, soprano; André Kostelanetz, cond.). ANGEL SFO-3716C.

PAUL SIMON: Still Crazy After All These Years. COLUMBIA PC 33540.

PATI SMITH: Horses. ARISTA 4066.

STRAVINSKY: Firebird (Pierrot Boulez, cond.). COLUMBIA M-33508.

VERDI: II Corsaro (Lambert Gardelli, cond.). PHILIPS 6700 0386.

Certificate of Merit awarded to
Arthur Fiedler
for his outstanding contributions to the quality of American musical life
JANE OLIVOR: *First Night*. COLUMBIA PC 34274.

MICHEL JEAN-PHILIPPE BEROFF & COLARD: Brahms: Twenty-one Hungarian Dances (Michel Beroff and Jean Philippe Collard, piano duet). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY/PATHS MARCONI CSQ 2083.

JONI MITCHELL: *The Hissing of Summer Lawns*. ASYLUM 7E-1051.

KATE & ANNA McGARRIGLE: WARNER BROS. BS 2862.

GERSHWIN: *Porgy and Bess* (Lorin Maazel, cond.) LONDON OSA 13116.

TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI/LEW TABACKIN: *Long Yellow Road*. RCA JPL1-1350.

CARLO BERGONZI: Verdi Arias. PHILIPS 6747 193.


This is about as simply and as clearly as we can describe this latest achievement by Dual engineers. We could also describe the CS721 as the ultimate expression of the principles that determine the performance of tonearms and drive systems in record playback.

The tonearm is straight-line tubular from pivot to tonearm head, for lowest effective mass and greatest rigidity. It is centered within a true, four-point gimbal in which the tonearm masses pivot at the intersection of both axes. This ensures dynamic balance throughout play, and turntable level is not critical.

Every initial tonearm setting has a special touch of precision.

Stylus overhang is adjustable for optimum horizontal tracking angle. Balance is vernier-adjustable. Stylus force is applied around the vertical pivot and remains perpendicular to the record even if the turntable is not level. Anti-skating is calibrated separately for all three stylus types and is self-compensating for groove diameter.

In addition to these refinements, the CS721 tonearm has an innovation to be found in no other integrated tonearm: Vertical Tonearm Control. A vernier height adjustment over a 8mm range allows this tonearm to parallel the record with cartridges of any depth and without the use of spacers. Thus, accurate vertical tracking is assured and the effective mass of the tonearm is kept at a minimum. Another benefit: changing cartridges is much easier.

The CS721 direct-drive system is the most advanced today for record playback. It features an all-electronic, low-speed, brushless, DC motor with Hall-effect feedback control and a regulated power supply. The motor's field coil design is unique. Two overlapping coils, each with eight coilless bifilar-wound coils, achieve a gapless rotating magnetic field. This eliminates the successive pulses of magnetic flux typical of all other motor designs.

Although the CS721 is Dual's most expensive model, it is hardly the most expensive turntable available today. When you make comparisons, as we believe you should, you may even consider the CS721 underpriced. Not to mention the even less expensive direct-drive CS704, with the same tonearm and drive system but with semi-automatic start and stop.

With either model, you will enjoy the advanced precision performance of the quietest turntable ever made.
True, four-point gimbal centers and pivots the tonearm mass at the intersection of horizontal and vertical axes. Tonearm is dynamically balanced in all planes. The four needle pivots are first hardened, then honed, a process which produces microscopically smooth surfaces.

Cueing descent speed can be set from slow to rapid, and tonearm cueing height is adjustable. Result: complete control of stylus setdown via cue-control.

Vertical Tonearm Control sets and locks tonearm height at any point over an 8mm range. Tonearm thus exactly parallels the record with any size cartridge. Result: accurate vertical tracking without the added mass of cartridge spaces.

Straight-line tubular tonearm provides maximum torsional rigidity and lowest effective mass. With the same effective tonearm length and tangential tracking error any other shape must either sacrifice rigidity or increase mass.

Rigid three-point suspension locks cartridge holder to tonearm head in identical position each time it is removed and replaced. Together with adjustable stylus overhang, this assures that correct vertical and horizontal tracking angle will be maintained.

Specifications (DIN B1): CS721, > 72dB; CS704, > 70dB
Wow and flutter: < ±0.03%

The unique counterbalance contains two mechanical anti-resonance filters. These are separately tuned to absorb energy in the resonance-frequency ranges of the tonearm/cartridge system and chassis to minimize acoustical feedback.

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Wow and flutter: < ±0.03%

Fully-automatic, single-play/multi-play Duals: 1225, less than $140; 1226, less than $170; 1228, less than $200; 1249, less than $260. Semi-automatic, single-play Duals: 502, less than $160; 510, less than $200.

CIRCLE NO. 50 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Mr. Fiedler,” said the voice of the telephone operator in the New York Hotel where the conductor was staying on a recent visit to the city, “is in the King Cole Room.” No doubt, I thought as the call was being processed, with his pipe, his bowl, and his fiddlers three, preparing for a forthcoming bash in royal surroundings.

If the Nassau (Long Island) Coliseum may be construed as “royal surroundings,” then so it was—with the fiddlers three augmented by all the other strings, brass, and woodwinds that make up the Boston Pops Orchestra. By no coincidence at all, the concert was part of a week’s sojourn during which the parent Boston Symphony paid its first visit of the season to New York. The players’ time was divided between their Symphony commitments with the current music director Seiji Ozawa (two concerts in Carnegie Hall), and the Pops with the perennial Fiedler (the Saturday program on Long Island followed by a TV taping on Sunday).

By Irving Kolodin
Music was all around the first generation of Boston-born Fiedlers.

Such assignments have for so long been the pattern for the pink-cheeked, white-haired gentleman who has to be the liveliest octogenarian in the musical community that there are millions who think he has been doing nothing else all his life. And certainly among that group is the mass of individuals who have, collectively, bought more than fifty million records with Fiedler's name on them during the last forty-eight years.

Scattered among those fifty million discs, most of which are by the Boston Pops, are a comparatively small number marketed in the name of the Arthur Fiedler Sinfonietta, an aggregation whose surpassing performances of works by Bach, Boyce, Corelli, Felton, Handel, Mozart, Pachelbel, Telemann, and even Hindemith conjure up the possibility of quite another career for the conductor. They amply prove that America has given birth to very few musicians equal to Arthur Fiedler in talent, training, and that very necessary extra ingredient we try to describe with the word "temperament."

The question on my mind, when Fiedler had settled down for the visit that followed the phone call, was: "Do you ever look back and think of another path that might have taken you in quite a different musical direction?"

The answer came quickly enough to suggest that the thought had perhaps crossed his mind. "Well, you can't help thinking of that. But I am really very happy. I chose this way myself. I have been connected with the Boston Pops for forty-eight years and I am very glad to have had the opportunity. I like the diversity of the repertoire. I am not a specialist in anything, as some people are in Mahler, or Bruckner, or what not. I like to do all types of music. All Pops concerts, you know, are divided into three parts. The first section is rather good music. The second part is a soloist. The third consists of light music of various kinds—show music and music of the day."

"The question comes up," I elaborated, "among some of us who, being familiar with your varied—[small chuckle from Fiedler]—career in all its aspects, have long thought that your gifts were of a nature that, had you concentrated, could have led almost anywhere." "Well, yes,"
agreed Fiedler, "had I concentrated. I know, as an instance, when I began to conduct the Pops concerts in the Thirties and even before, that people approached me to take over this and that orchestra in smaller communities in the United States. Well, that would have gotten me involved in local politics, which I don't like, and I wouldn't have had the kind of orchestra I have in Boston—it was a great temptation to hang on to that. Furthermore, the whole idea of the Pops concerts needed someone really to give his whole devotion, time, and love to it. I don't care what I play, I try to do it all damned well. In any case," he added with a laugh, "it's too late to change now. After all, I have performed with almost every orchestra you can mention in America. Only last week I conducted the Chicago Symphony, which is, as you know, a great orchestra."

The mutually accepted, if unspoken, touch and even the frivolity that sometimes invades his Boston Pops work, there is the hand of a master musician and the mind of a man cultivated by long association with some of the greatest artists of his time. And the prime condition of the Boston Pops indeed shows the devotion, time, and love that Fiedler has lavished upon it.

THERE was another Fiedler in the Boston Symphony when the Pops were born in 1885. That Fiedler was the Vienna-born Emanuel, father of Arthur, who had been recruited for service in America by his friend Wilhelm Gericke, an honored name among the orchestra's early conductors. Pops concerts were then directed by Adolf Neundorf in the old Boston Music Hall on behalf of city-bound Bostonians who couldn't escape the summer toll of running off to Cape Cod or the White Mountains. They sat at tables, perhaps with an ice for refreshment, and responded to performances of Rossini's William Tell Overture and Strauss' Pizzicato Polka very much as their fourth-generation descendants do today.

In addition to Father Fiedler, there were brothers Gus and Benny in the violin sections, and they were eventually joined by a cello-playing relative whose family name (Zimblin, later associated with a Sinfonietta he organized) concealed an offspring of Emanuel Fiedler's sister. Music was therefore all around the first generation of Boston-born Fiedlers, which included Elsa, a fine pianist, and Rosa, a cellist, as well as Arthur. This was only as natural as the family name they had inherited. "After all," the conductor observed, "as a tailor came by the name of Schneider in the old country, and a woodcutter was a Schumacher, so we fiddlers became Fiedlers."

With violin studies in Berlin behind him, and a diploma from that city's Hochschule in his pocket, where else should the young Fiedler go but back to Boston (especially in 1915, with Europe locked in World War I)? No reception committee with offers in hand awaited him at the pier; he spent a summer playing at a resort on Nantucket before an opening occurred in the second violin section of The Symphony (there has been, traditionally, only one

Fire departments and universities across the land have honored Arthur Fiedler, but in the serious music community he has apologists. "The Pops are all very well," the condescending defenders will say, "but they help to subsidize the more significant activities of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Fiedler gives young artists their first opportunities to play as soloists with orchestras. And who knows how many people have been brought to appreciate greater music because they were introduced to it when they came to hear Arthur Fiedler conduct something else?"

The apologists are saying true things, but they are not emphasizing the right ones. The Maestro himself, for example, doesn't think his job is to so much as be a musical missionary among the quality-deaf heathen. "I just want people to have a good time," he will say, going on to quote Rossini's famous remark about how all kinds of music are good except the boring kind.

It has been Fiedler's great gift to the public that so few kinds of music are boring to him. In addition to the arrangements of current hits that turn his orchestra into the world's classiest jukebox, Fiedler has over the years conducted most of the standard repertoire, made significant incursions into areas of music that have since become standard thanks in part to his advocacy, and kept alive a whole tradition of honorable music that is both well made and entertaining.

And, of course, no music in a Fiedler performance ever seems boring—thanks to his taste in arrangers, his program-building abilities, his skill on the podium, his joy-communicating personality; Fiedler makes music reach people. On the Fourth of July this last year a crowd of more than 400,000 people gathered on the banks of the Charles River to hear Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops Orchestra. That crowd was about the same size as the one at Woodstock, combined with the television and radio audience it may have been the largest public ever assembled to hear a symphony orchestra. There were extra-musical reasons for that: there was a gaudy fireworks display to spangle the sky; the beautiful night invited picnicking and confidences; and it was, after all, the actual Bicentennial of our nation's birth. But the cheer that went up after every selection on the program reaffirmed the place music has in all the most important public and private moments of our lives as it reaffirmed Arthur Fiedler's long, loving, and lasting association with festivity.

Richard Dyer
Music Critic, Boston Globe
young member of the Pops came charging by. 'Hi, Arthur!' he yelled at me. Damned if I even know his name. Imagine what would have happened in the days of Muck or Koussevitzky."

The impulse to conduct began to stir in Fiedler as he approached his tenth year in the orchestra. In 1924 he organized a group of colleagues into the Fiedler Sinfonietta; the aggregation persisted and came in time to record, with E. Power Biggs, some of the first Handel organ concertos ever available in this country. Sitting on the banks of the Charles a few years later, Fiedler visualized an activity that would give additional employment to himself and members of the orchestra while providing Bostonians with free outdoor music of high quality. The Esplanade Concerts were born in 1929, and among the other things to which they gave rise was Fiedler's career as conductor of the Boston Pops. The Sinfonietta and the Esplanade Concerts demonstrated his rapport with his colleagues, his businesslike way of getting things done, and these were factors in his favor even if being born in Boston was not. In looking for a new conductor for the Pops, continentalists among the orchestra's directors had thought an Italian—Alfredo Casella, for example—could take the pulse of the public better. That experiment ended after a sea-

It's really not the money that keeps me going, it's the activity. But I have slowed down...."

 symphony as far as Bostonians are concerned.

"I have never had another job than the Boston Symphony," confided Fiedler. "I started with Karl Muck, as you know. It was a different world in those days. No guest conductors; one man did the whole damned thing. No time off to guest conduct elsewhere. It was severe, but it was rewarding." Asked if he could capsulize his recollections of Muck (who made the Boston Symphony's first recording ever, in 1917, with fiddler Fiedler playing in the finale of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony as well as other selections), he replied: "He was a very educated man. He had a Ph.D. . . . legally, not honorarily. He loved mathematics, as many musicians have. A very precise man. Never sentimental—something I hate in musicians—in my own immaculate hand."

DOUBTLESS Fiedler could furnish a similar word picture for every subsequent Boston Symphony conductor and music director. He played under three others—Henri Rabaud, Pierre Monteux, and Serge Koussevitzky—as well as being proconsul (for Brookline) for every music director since Koussevitzky: Charles Munch, Erich Leinsdorf, William Steinberg, and, now, Ozawa. "You know," said Fiedler, "we venerated the conductor in Muck's day. Doffed our hats if we met him on the street or backstage. The other day, as I was leaving Carnegie, a son or two; Fiedler got the job in 1930. However, it was not until the mid-Sixties that Fiedler became the first Boston-born musician to conduct the Symphony in a subscription concert.

Once given his chance with the Pops, Fiedler did what every productive person does with such an opportunity: he converted the orchestral programming into a mirror image of himself. If there is a Beethoven overture on a pops program, it is because Fiedler, in the days of recorded versions by Toscanini and Weingartner, did a better-sounding Weih des Hauses than either. And if the audience responds to a special kind of character in Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1, it could be for the reason I gave in a comment of mine on Fiedler's recording of it (c. 1940): "There is a suspicion of the Nikisch treatment in the vigorous grandeur of the first side." Over the years, new names and new pieces have taken their places in the Boston Pops repertoire because Fiedler is a man devoted to both.

As an instance, I asked him how Le-roy Anderson came into his life. "Le-roy Anderson?" cross-queried Fiedler. "He was a young man at Harvard Music School when I first got to know him, studying and leading the Harvard band. Very scholarly. I asked him to do a few arrangements for us. In return he asked to be allowed to attend Pops rehearsals, something we never permitted. I agreed, and he came regularly every day, listening very attentively, with ra-zor-sharp ears, learning everything about instrumentation. He came in one day, looking very sheepish, and said: 'I have here a little piece I have written. Look at it and tell me what you think.' I looked at it. It was called Jazz Piz-zicato. I liked it, and we played it. Very cute. People loved it, and we arranged to record it. As it was quite short, I sug-gested he write another piece to pre-cede it. That was Jazz Legato. Every-thing went on from there: Syncopated Clock, Toy Trumpet, Sleigh Ride, all charming, with wonderful titles that framed the music he wrote. He also did excellent show arrangements for us—Kiss Me Kate, things like that."

Not all such stories have happy end-ings, of course. Like the one that be-gins with Fiedler's discovery, while leafing through stacks of music in a
YEARS of evolution have brought changes of matter rather than of manner to Fiedler’s work. Did he wear a wig to dramatize his presentation of the Beatles’ music in the Sixties? Yes, he did. And in 1956 he had taken pride in welcoming his father, on his seventy-second birthday, as a playing member of the Esplanade Orchestra in a performance of Brahms’ C Minor Symphony. A doting son? Of course. But a news-minded showman as well, as a contemporary picture of the event in the Boston Traveler attests. Some of us winces just a little when a Fiedler antic—a bewhiskered Santa Claus at Christmas time, for example—is caught not only by local news cameras but by the vastly more public ones of TV. But the publicity is effective.

Asied to define his own attitude toward the present-day Pops repertoire, Fiedler, in effect, echoed the maxim attributed to the great Theodore Thomas in the 1890’s when he was creating America’s symphony-orchestra audience: “Popular music is familiar music,” Says Fiedler: “I continually add to the catalog music from current shows, music from movies, music people enjoy dancing to and might enjoy hearing in arrangements for our great orchestra—all as a supplement to the old favorites. Right now we are doing A Fifth of Beethoven, a hit record created by a man named Murphy. Very cute. Some people might call it immoral. I think it’s fun. You know, there should be fun in music. All the great composers wrote music for fun—

New York publishing house, of a piece called Jalousie. The composer’s name was Jakob (not Niels, of nineteenth-century fame) Gade, and Jalousie was to become the first Pops record to sell a million copies. Several years after this memorable success, the phone rang in Fiedler’s Boston apartment. “Here is Jakob Gade,” said the caller. “You have done so much for my Jalousie. I came from Copenhagen to thank you.” There was little Fiedler could do but invite the man up. When the doorbell rang he discovered a small, quaintly dressed, middle-aged figure with a package under his arm. “Here is my symphony,” said Gade, presenting the bundle. Years later, Fiedler remembers it as “one of the worst pieces of music I ever looked at.”

“...no reservations about the stunning performances or demonstration-quality sound”
Mozart, Haydn, Schubert. I also like to think of myself—some people, again, may dislike me for saying so—sometimes as a chef. I try to make a good combination of elements, beginning with an *hors d'oeuvre*, then a main course, and, of course, dessert—don't forget dessert. People love it. I like to think that we play not only things that are popular, but those that have the potential to become popular.

Fiedler’s relish for his own identity is not difficult to understand. He likes to be liked, of that there is no doubt. He enjoys living well, and that has its price. Young musicians have enjoyed his patronage on innumerable occasions, and that he enjoys too. The first time I heard Grace Bumbry was at a Pops concert conducted by Fiedler in the San Francisco Civic Auditorium in the early Sixties. "Right," he confirmed. "She was as nervous as a witch, but very curious, in an intelligent way, about everything connected with singing with an orchestra, the beginning her first time. She's gone a long way. So has Tedd Joselson, one of the more recent new pianists to play with me, and Horacio Gutiérrez.

"It's really not the money that keeps me going," says Fiedler, "it's the activity. But I have slowed down from the year in which I had 197 dates—not including rehearsals or recordings. I like to travel, but it takes me away from home too much. My wife doesn't like to travel, but it takes me away from home too much. My wife doesn't enjoy travel as much as I do; when she does, it's usually on a long (and expensive) trip—Hawaii, for example, where we'll be a week from now. Often on tours I run into colleagues. Recently I met up with Rubinstein. He said to me, "Arthur, why do you travel so much?" I said to him, "Arthur, why do you travel so much?" We both laughed. But if I didn't move around, especially if I had to give it up or—God forbid—retire, I think I'd just collapse. I really need the activity."

A number of tours that Fiedler conducts, partly as a conductor. "When I was growing up, I liked to play ball with the kids, but I spent most of my time practicing and couldn't get out. So, when I had a little time free, I'd go down the street to the nearby fire house, play with the dogs, pat the horses (they had horse-drawn trucks in those days), and make friends with the firemen. They were all nice fellows and let me slide down the pole from the room upstairs where they slept or played cards between calls. Then the alarm would sound, and off they'd go. I was left alone, wondering what they did at the fire. As I grew up, they called me 'Sparks' (I later owned a Dalmatian called Sparks). I was what now would be called a buff. Do you know how that term came about? No? Well, in the old days, here in New York, when the engine went out on trips in the winter, they'd be followed by fellows wearing buffalo coats, which were then popular. When the men got to the fire, one would say to the other, 'Look at the buffs.'"

"Sounds logical," I commented. "'Right,'" said Fiedler. "But my interest in firefighting goes deeper than that. A very good friend of mine when I was growing up was a man named Codman, who became Fire Commissioner of Boston. Knowing of my interest, he gave me credentials which allow me to be on the scene when the deputy arrives and begins to organize the strategy for fighting that particular blaze. It varies all the time, depending on the wind, the kind of building, the materials, all kinds of factors. The chief on duty has to make up his mind quickly and outline the plan to be put into action. It's much like conducting an orchestra. You go out and go to work immediately. No time for second thoughts or changing a tempo. You have to go to the heart of the matter instantly." He thought for a moment, then remarked, "You probably wouldn't believe it, but I am an honorary chief in over three hundred fire departments all over the world."

That includes not only Brookline, Massachusetts, and Tokyo, Japan, but Vienna, Virginia, the home of the Eugene Center at Wolf Trap, where Fiedler conducts regularly. I would not be surprised to learn that it also applies to the firefighting arm in Vienna, Austria, if only to honor Fiedler's long association with such incendiary matter of local origin as Josef Strauss' *Feuerfest*. Despite his imposing credentials as the only person remotely connected with classical music who has accumulated a sales total of over fifty million records, it will surprise most readers (it surprised me) to learn that, at this writing, neither Fiedler nor the Boston Pops has an ongoing recording affiliation. He deplores the situation, he says, more on behalf of the orchestra's personnel than for himself, because recording fees have become an anticipated part of their annual income.

*Record collectors* will remember that RCA gave up its long association with the Boston Symphony and the Pops because of the heavy investment it had to make in the Philadelphia Orchestra. RCA wanted, apparently, to retain the Pops, but Deutsche Grammophon, the company that was to sign the Boston, wanted all or nothing. Now, after five years with DG (on the Polydor label), the Boston Pops is freelancing. An affiliation with London's Phase IV produced some impressive records, but the bugaboo of high production costs makes it necessary to achieve astronomical sales in order to show a profit, the kind of sales that result from long association with a single label and consequent over-the-years promotion. So the future of both Fiedler and the Pops remains for the moment in doubt.

But whatever the vagaries of the remainder of his career, Arthur Fiedler's combination of musical distinction and vast popularity will be a tough act to follow. I have heard at least one American's name suggested as a possible Pops conductor if and when, but he'd better acquire a good many more humane attributes to go with his nice back and sprightly tempo if he wants to succeed in this line. They didn't name a span across the Charles River (beside the Esplanade) the Arthur Fiedler Bridge just because he went to a lot of fires. Arthur Fiedler has been building America's musical bridges all his public life.
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INTERNATIONAL piano competitions are in some ways like big international tennis tournaments. But though winning a major tournament may be a climax in the career of a professional tennis player, taking first prize in a prestigious competition is only the beginning for a young pianist. Garrick Ohlsson, who in 1970 became the only American ever to win the Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw, Poland, says, "It's a stepping stone, a way of letting people know about you."

A first prize puts a seal of approval on a young pianist, certifying that he has reached a certain level of professional attainment, and this is useful in getting him engagements. "Orchestra managers get so many brochures from pianists every day they don't even have time to read them, let alone listen to audition tapes or to the pianist himself," Ohlsson continued. "But if someone is a first-prize winner in the Chopin, they can say, 'We don't have to think about this guy—just hire him.' Once you arrive at those places, of course, you still have to play well enough so they'll like you and want you back. Winning the competition doesn't make it for you—it just paves the way."

When Ohlsson returned to the United States from Poland, he was immediately invited to play with the Philadelphia Orchestra at Avery Fisher Hall in New York and to perform at the White House. Over the next few years the number of his engagements increased as he toured America and Europe, and he signed an exclusive contract with Angel Records.

Another kind of seal of approval was put on the young pianist's career in 1975 by Harold C. Schonberg, the powerful critic of the New York Times. Reviewing one of Ohlsson's recitals, Schonberg said, "This was not merely a good piano recital; it was also an important one, and it put Mr. Ohlsson right up in the rank of major pianists." He praised Ohlsson's warm piano sound and his phenomenal technique and commented that everything he played was full of personality. Schonberg ended the review by saying, "Physically this young man is a giant, and if he continues to play and develop this way, he can also be a musical giant."

Interviewed recently at his New York City apartment, Ohlsson said, "I'm so obsessed with the idea of playing the piano and—I hope—getting better at it, that if I had a nine-to-five job doing something else, I'd still manage to practice a few hours a day anyway. Being a pianist, which really means having a job that permits one to work at the piano full time, is like icing on the cake."

For Ohlsson it all started in White Plains, New York, where he grew up and where he faced his first piano keys at the age of eight. "My parents felt that every kid should have piano lessons. After two weeks I was addicted," he said. "As soon as I started thinking about what I wanted to do with my life, it was definitely music. There was no choice involved—it was kind of inevitable."

He studied first with Thomas Lishman in Westchester County, New York, later with Sascha Gorodnitsky at the Juilliard School in New York City, and he says with pride that he also had a bit of coaching with the late Rosina Lhevinne. "But my most important teacher was Olga Barabini, the lady I studied with privately in Westchester from the age of eighteen on. I worked with her while I was at Juilliard, and the moonlighting trick of having two teachers was highly unusual—but very valuable to me."

He doesn't work regularly with a teacher now, but even at this stage in his career he occasionally wants the opinion of a coach. "Singers are always coaching, even some of the very greatest ones, and string players are always playing for each other. It's easy to become isolated if you're a pianist. It's a much lonelier existence. I have a few people I coach with, people who are a bit severe and who know me, including Olga. You need people listening, people who can help you."

On the subject of what motivates a person to become a concert pianist, he said, "When you're young, you don't even know. If you are talented, people encourage you to do things that get you a lot of attention, and you think of fame. You go on working, and then you get competitive about it. You realize there are a lot of good people in the field, and you want to be able to say, 'Well, I'm really better than most of them.' You have to come to terms with that at some time."

"When I was about seventeen, I went to concerts every day for a couple of weeks as an experiment, and at the end I thought to myself, 'Well, I've heard a good selection of pianists now, and if I'm not better than half of them, I can be in very short order. That's good enough for me. At least if I enter..."
the field. I won't be in the bottom half."

Unlike some pianists, Ohlsson has no obsession about his hands. "You can get awfully neurotic about it," he said. "Lots of pianists go around with their hands in their pockets and won't shake hands. But the real danger to one's playing doesn't come from immediate little things you do with your hands. Any physical problem beyond a cold will affect it.

"I don't happen to be especially interested in woodworking or anything like that, but if I were, I'd go ahead and do it. I'm careful. I don't do stupid things. I play tennis, but at the beginning of the season I don't go out on the court for two hours immediately and come back with an arm I can't move. I go out the first day for ten minutes, the next day for fifteen, then twenty, and in a week I am able to play just as long as I want."

Ohlsson is on the road giving concerts seven or eight months of the year, which he thinks is a little too much. ("In this profession you seem to travel too much or not enough.") But he says if he ever gets to the point that he doesn't know which town he's in, he'll quit touring for a while.

The French, German, and Spanish he learned in high school are useful in his travels. "I also speak Italian pretty well," he says. "I learned it because I wanted to—from operas and from my mother, who's Italian. I know a little Swedish—my father's Swedish. Languages are a kind of mini-hobby of mine. I'm not really fantastic at it like some musicians, but I can get along pretty much anywhere in Europe with ease. Every season I spend two or three months there. My mother is a travel agent, and I'm her best client. She figures up the mileage each year and it's colossal."

"I want to be influenced; everybody has been. Pianists have always stolen ideas from each other, and that's as it should be."

(Continued overleaf)
Because of his "race-horse nerves," Ohlsson has never been bothered by stage fright. "As far as nerves go, it's very easy to give two recitals a week. It's much more difficult to give one a month. And to give one a year, as conservatory students do, is holy hell. And yet to give five a week is inhuman. A well-balanced life would probably be about one concert a week, or maybe three in a week and then two weeks off."

According to Ohlsson, piano groupies are "mostly ladies over seventy-five," and ladies' committees are part of every recitalist's life. "It's understandable. A concert is an event, after all. I complain that they all ask the same things: how many hours a day I practice and where I'm going. But if I'm at a party and I see Alicia de Larrocha, for example, I say, 'Where have you been, where are you going, what are you working on?' And I realize I'm as bad as the rest of them."

Alicia de Larrocha is a pianist he says he admires immensely. "She's always been very encouraging to me. Whenever we're both in New York we spend an evening together." There are other modern pianists he admires but tactfully prefers not to discuss. He hasn't met Horowitz or Rubinstein, but would like to. Ohlsson is not afraid of being influenced by other pianists' interpretations of music he is adding to his repertoire. "If it is in the standard repertoire, I've already heard it, so I can't say that I'm starting with a clean slate because I've already been influenced. Besides, I want to be influenced; everybody has been. Pianists have always stolen ideas from each other, and that's as it should be."

"When I listen to records it's mostly those of Golden Age pianists: Josef Hofmann, Rachmaninoff, Ignaz Friedman. After I won the Chopin prize, an important critic in Poland took me aside and said, 'Now that you're going to be playing Chopin as an expert, you really ought to know how it's done.' I spent about four hours listening to his recordings of Hofmann, Friedman, and others, and my mind was bent backwards. I heard people play Chopin with conceptions I'd never dreamed of, and I realized there's more to this than just doing a nice job in a contest. This could be a whole style of life. Now that I'm out of my purist phase, one thing that will begin to show up in my work is ideas from those Golden Age pianists. If some striking conception really appeals to you, there's no reason not to try to adopt some of it—if it's true to your own way of musical thinking."

Although Ohlsson admits to an "ongoing affair" with the music of Chopin, he does not consider himself a specialist in the works of any single composer. Most of his repertoire is drawn from the standard piano literature of the nineteenth century. "It's what I was trained on at school. If I'd studied with a Mozart or Bach specialist, I would probably play more of that today."

Eventually, he would like to do some teaching himself ("transmitting, passing on it, that's important"), but he does not want to be a conductor. "So much of any musical career has little or nothing to do with actually making music, but when I see what conductors have to go through, I'm very happy to be playing the piano."

Does he still go to other pianists' concerts? "I loved what Leontyne Price said in the Stereo Review interview [January 1976] about being unable to go to the opera because she knows all the craziness that's going on backstage, and it makes her too uncomfortable," he said. "A concert isn't nearly as involved as an opera, but nonetheless, I know too much about it, and I almost can't enjoy piano recitals played by other people. I also know symphonic music too well. So my first choice, if I'm in New York, is always the opera. It's such a spectacle, and there's always the chance one of the many things that can go wrong will go right."

He also enjoys chamber music and would like to play more of it. "I love playing with people. Other repertoire. Just doing other things in my life. I don't have time to learn Chinese at the rate I'm going, and that's one of my big goals. And astronomy—I haven't done anything with that yet."

While waiting for the Chinese and astronomy lessons, what does he do between concerts? "I play tennis, swim, eat, cook, drink, go to the opera, run around, see people, take naps, pay bills—all the normal things. Food, music, and sex—in no particular order. They're all so nice. Those things are what most musicians are interested in. It's only the music that makes us unique."
At Once Fascinating and Unbearable": Bartók's Intense, Inward, Extraordinarily Coloristic Opera Bluebeard's Castle

BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE, written in 1911, is Bartók's only opera and, indeed, it barely qualifies for admission into that exalted and much-abused genre. It is a one-act work with only two characters and almost no action at all. Judith, Bluebeard's latest, comes into his castle and immediately demands to know what lies behind seven mysterious doors. She finds a torture chamber, an armory, a hoard of treasure, a secret garden, and a window on her spouse's realm, all stained with blood. Finally she discovers a lake of tears and Bluebeard's previous wives, alive and covered with jewels—a fate worse than death that Judith, for her curiosity, must now share.

What does it all mean? Are the seven doors seven chambers in the human mind? Something like that, no doubt. Bluebeard's Castle belongs to that small and remarkable group of psychological and expressionist works created (mostly) before World War I (Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire and Erwartung are others). For it, Bartók wrote a score that stands out in his work as intense, inward, and extraordinarily coloristic (most of Bartók's music is distinguished by rhythm and drive, but these are unimportant here, as is the use of folklore, which plays only a secondary role). The scenes are like a series of brushstrokes interpreting inner states, and they are connected by the somber mood of the whole. It is an agonizingly beautiful work, at once fascinating and unbearable.

Bluebeard's Castle is not unknown in the opera house, and it has been recorded several times in several languages, including the original Hungarian. But it has probably never had the all-round advantages of superb singing, original language, orchestral workmanship, superb conducting, expressive shape, and first-class sound it gets in its new recording by Columbia. How odd that this striking performance of a Hungarian opera in Hungarian should be produced by a Greek-American so-
prano, a German baritone, a French conductor, an English orchestra, and an American record company! I cannot vouch for the quality of the Hungarian sung here, but I will vouch without reservation for all the rest of it.

—Eric Salzman

BARTÓK: Bluebeard’s Castle. Tatiana Troyanos (soprano), Judith; Siegmund Nimsgern (baritone), Bluebeard; BBC Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Boulez cond. Columbia M 34217 $6.98.

JOAN BAEZ: Still a shimmering, satiny soprano web

**The Tokyo Quartet Returns with the Rest of Haydn’s Opus 50**

Now just where would you go about looking for an authentic interpretation of the wit and wisdom of an elderly eighteenth-century Austrian musical philosophe named Josef Haydn these days? Tokyo, perhaps? Well, why not? That’s where Deutsche Grammophon looked, and they evidently looked in the right place. The Tokyo Quartet received a 1974 Stereo Review Record of the Year award for an album containing the first two quartets of Haydn’s Op. 50, and DG recently sent the group back into the studio to do the rest of them (there are six in all) and has just issued the whole thing in a three-disc set.

**Joan Baez:** A Little Company To Help Us Through The Seventies

As I watched the recent Dylan TV debacle, suffering along with the drenched and (it seemed to me) excessively behatted audience, it came across strongly, unmistakably, that the real star of the show was the beautiful Joan Baez and not the baleful, posturing Dylan. That she has survived the Sixties and her initial fame (and/or political notoriety) and is now, in the Seventies, more of a performer, more of an interpretive singer, and more of a beauty than ever is testament to a talent that has deepened, broadened, and matured as the years have passed. While Dylan stood there uneasily, looking like a tempest-tossed Goodwill poster, snarling out his lyrics as if the Feds of the corrupt Sixties were still breathing down his bandannaed neck, Baez, dressed in a sort of outrageous burroso appropriate perhaps to a fur-loughed Carpathian archduchess, capped around the stage having, most of the time, an absolutely joyous ball.

And that, dear friends, is precisely what you will have too if you listen to her new A&M release “Gulf Winds.” She’s back in very secure stride as a composer (she wrote all the songs), and though none of her efforts will exactly knock you down with their originality or depth of insight, they are perfect material for her. The title song, Gulf Winds, the story of a young girl in a Mexican family living in the U.S., I found especially good. She sings it to her own guitar accompaniment, and it has all of the quiet, angry power of her best work in the past. Other highlights are O Brother!, a snappish, funny tale about a no-good who’s going to get his someday if Baez has anything to say about it, and Stephanie’s Room, a dramatic mood piece with a touch of odd ambivalence about it that the performance very carefully does nothing to clarify. Her voice seems to be in as good shape as ever—still the shimmering, satiny soprano web that has enchanted me with its tonal iridescence ever since I first heard it years ago.

But the most important thing is that Baez seems to be totally out of her activist bag and now, in the Seventies, more of a performer, more of an interpretive singer, and more of a beauty than ever. And that, dear friends, is precisely what you will have too if you listen to her new A&M release “Gulf Winds.” She’s back in very secure stride as a composer (she wrote all the songs), and though none of her efforts will exactly knock you down with their originality or depth of insight, they are perfect material for her. The title song, Gulf Winds, the story of a young girl in a Mexican family living in the U.S., I found especially good. She sings it to her own guitar accompaniment, and it has all of the quiet, angry power of her best work in the past. Other highlights are O Brother!, a snappish, funny tale about a no-good who’s going to get his someday if Baez has anything to say about it, and Stephanie’s Room, a dramatic mood piece with a touch of odd ambivalence about it that the performance very carefully does nothing to clarify. Her voice seems to be in as good shape as ever—still the shimmering, satiny soprano web that has enchanted me with its tonal iridescence ever since I first heard it years ago.

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Opus 50 is a fine set of quartets written in 1787 and dedicated to the King of Prussia, a good cellist and an avid quartet player. These works are situated on that steep slope that leads to the apex of Haydn’s career as a quartet composer. Our hero was a very great symphonist, but he was perhaps an even greater master of the string quartet, a medium he himself brought to perfection (he is challenged in this field, but not really surpassed, only by Beethoven). Although these quartets are not, on the whole, as well known as some of the later ones, they are full of the choicest expressions of Haydn’s wit and invention. Since the King of Prussia was a cellist, Haydn starts right out in No. 1 with a cello solo—on one note! Nothing to tax the royal talent, you know, but don’t think this royal Johann One-Note has been relegated to a mere accompaniment role. The entire movement is built on this one-note theme of repeated B-flats and the little cadential figure in the violins above it. Indeed, all the instruments have a wonderful freedom in these quartets; even the second violin gets a nice solo in the slow movement of No. 2. In No. 3 there is one of Haydn’s finest false endings, while No. 2 has a kind of false opening— it starts out in the “wrong” spot and bounces all over the place with consummate ease and clarity. The F-sharp Minor Quartet, No. 4, has a fugal finale, the masterpiece of its kind (often imitated, but never quite equaled—again, even by Beethoven).

The Tokyo String Quartet, founded in 1969, does not in truth come to us (or to DG) straight from Japan but via New York’s Juilliard School (where they studied with the Juilliard Quartet). They are also products of the Toho School in Tokyo, and their international fame is owing in large part to a sensational debut in a Munich competition where they took first prize. A recording contract with DG followed. This is a crack ensemble; they play with precision and virtuosity, of course, but also with delicacy, finesse, spirit, and insight. They have developed a wonderful Classical style of their own, balanced and elegant but not the least bit lacking in wit, fire, and expression. This is Haydn—via Tokyo or whatever—as he ought to be.

ELO: Lynne, Bevan, McDowell, Kaminski, Gale, Tandy, Groucutt

The United Artists album “A New World Record” has these elements cross-indexed in a glorious sound one can still with a straight face call rock. Among other things, it makes sophisticated stereo equipment worthwhile—which most rock records don’t do—as it sends out knee-bending (false classical) orchestral bass and a swirl of stuff that’s actually warm and musical though it comes from electronic instruments. Jeff Lynne’s taste in arranging is warmer (hell, it’s schlockier) than, but on a plane even with, Steeleye Span’s. He looks for other ways to do things, and he has found a fair number. The lyrics here do their job, too, which is to turn up a little something new and then but generally to avoid kicking up too much fuss about it. The emphasis is on the sound of music and not on the fury of it. It isn’t a complete “record” of how the “new world” really is, but a welcome affirmation of the suspicion that there’s still some good stuff left in it.

—Noel Coppage

Making Sophisticated Stereo Equipment Worthwhile: ELO’s Anthology of Rock Sound

RocK wouldn’t be in much trouble if a few more bands did their jobs as well as the Electric Light Orchestra does its job, a description of which is most likely on file in the great personnel office in the sky under the heading of Sound Enrichment. The ELO has quite a sense of history where sound is concerned, and in its work you hear echoes of the Beatles, the Moody Blues, the doo-wop groups, and Beethoven. Also Dylan, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and so on.

ELO: Lynne, Bevan, McDowell, Kaminski, Gale, Tandy, Groucutt

A Solo Recital
Debut: French Opera Arias by Frederica von Stade

Within a few years and with relatively few appearances on concert-hall and opera stages around the world (New York, San Francisco, Paris, Glyndebourne, Salzburg) in a fairly limited repertoire, Frederica von Stade has risen from her auspicious professional beginnings as a Metropolitan Opera audition winner to her present status as an international star. Her good looks and winning stage presence in part account for this phenomenal growth, but the main reason can be found on her new debut recital disc of French opera arias for Columbia (it follows one she shared with another charmer, soprano Judith Blegen, on Columbia M-33307).

This release reminds me of the time
more than fifteen years ago when I was reviewing the first recordings of Teresa Berganza in these pages, for here again we are in the presence of an attractive young singer who is already a mature artist, blessed with innate musicianship and sensitivity as well as an undeniable flair. Miss Von Stade's voice is a bright rich sound. and it is reproduced in ideally balanced but the orchestral playing is beautiful pacing a shade too leisurely at times, gram. I find conductor John Pritchard's bbling a refreshingly imaginative pro- ers-deserves special praise for assem- blyings and expressivity. Benedict comes across with fine shad- ed dramatic Bach vignettes. Even the somewhat un- dered as are the two delicious Offen- bach vignettes. Even the somewhat undramatic excerpt from Béatrice et Bénédicet comes across with fine shad- ings and expressivity. The artist—and producer Paul My- ers—deserves special praise for assembling a refreshingly imaginative program. I find conductor John Pritchard's pacing a shade too leisurely at times, but the orchestral playing is beautiful and it is reproduced in ideally balanced rich sound. —George Jellinek


Pizzarelli/Freeman: Jazz as Satisfying and Comforting as Fine Old Brandy

Flying Dutchman's teaming of guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli and tenor saxophonist Bud Freeman turns out to be a happy event. Freeman, a mem-

ber of the "Austin High Gang" of the slugging Chicago school of white jazz in the Twenties, is now near seventy, but his fire and bite remain undimin- ished, his jazz is still muscular and gener- ous. Pizzarelli is the present wearer of the crown in the royal line of jazz guitarists that began with Eddie Lang—a Freeman contemporary—and is traceable in the glorious careers of Carl Kress, Dick McDonough, Charlie Christian, Al Casey, Django Reinhardt, and other princes of the fretboard.

It is interesting to note that with all the often loony and self-destructive changes jazz has been through since 1940, the guitarists seem to have become more than most to maintain their sanity amidst the chaos. Elder states- man Pizzarelli, for example, still has the taste, the gentle but firm execution, the agile and lyrical solo ideas, and the real joy in playing he has always had. Maybe it comes with the instrument.

Saxophonist Freeman now lives in Ireland and works as much as he pleases throughout Europe; this album was recorded during a recent visit to America. I used to admire the solidity of his tone, but it now seems to me somewhat fuzzy and spitty. His musical thinking is still athletic, however, with just the right balance between common sense and whoop-te-doo.

Most of the selections on this "Buck & Bud" album are duets between the two instrumentalists, and the exchanges of experience, personality, imagination, sympathy, and sheer "clout" are wonderful to hear. The material is, of course, superb, drawn as it is from the hefty catalog of inspired, strongly built melodies devised in the decades between 1920 and 1940 when the consistent high quality of the American popular song set the standard for the world.

Veteran bassist Bob Haggart (it's good to hear him again), drummer Ronnie Traxler, and pianist Hank Jones provide smooth and neat support on the quiet selections. The album is as satisfying and comforting as a fine old brandy, and because of the talents of the people involved, the record is not only rewarding today but will remain so for (a conservative estimate) about the next hundred years. —Joel Vance

Bucky Pizzarelli and Bud Freeman: Buck & Bud. Bucky Pizzarelli (guitar); Bud Freeman (tenor saxophone); Hank Jones (piano); Bob Haggart (bass); Ronnie Traxler (drums). Way Down Yonder in New Orleans; Easy to Love; Tea for Two; Sweet Sue, Just You; Blues for Tenor; At Sun- down; I Could Write a Book; You Took Advantage of Me; Exactly Like You; Doin; Just One of Those Things. FLYING DUTCH- MAN BDL1-1378 $6.98, © BDS1-1378 $7.98, © BDK1-1378 $7.98.
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CIRCLE NO. 1 ON READER SERVICE CARD
PAUL ANKA: The Painter. Paul Anka (vocals); orchestra. Wildflower; The Painter; Happier; I'll Help You; Closing Doors; and six others. United Artists UA-LA653-G $6.98, © UA-EA653-H $7.98, © UA-CA653-H $7.98.

Performance: Glossy
Recording: Excellent

Here is Paul Anka in one of his glossier ego-trip albums—cover by Warhol, conducting and arrangements by Michel Colombier, super-production by Denny Diante. No grunts about having one's baby in these surroundings. Instead, there is a tasteful, and very good, adaptation from the French, Do I Love You? (Yes, in Every Way); a melancholy reflection on The Painter, one of those dedicated souls who will never live to enjoy the eventual high price a collector will someday pay for his work (he should have painted pictures of Diana or someone having his baby and just waited for the loot to roll in); and a couple of moody, slick ballads, Closing Doors and Living Isn't Living.

Anka is, of course, the complete pro in complete charge; his signature is all over everything in the album, and your own prejudices regarding the undoubtedly clever little devil will be the gauge of your enjoyment. Personally, I prefer him in a less grand atmosphere—one in which he can crank out the kind of mindless, but hugely communicative, frissons of soulful recognition and Something To Think About. P.R.

AZTEC TWO-STEP: Two's Company. Rex Fowler and Neil Shulman (vocals and guitars); instrumental accompaniment. Dance; Finding Somebody New; A Conversation in a Car; Isn't It Sweet to Think So; Pajama Party; Give It Away; and five others. RCA APL1-1497 $6.98, © APS1-1497 $7.98, © APK1-1497 $7.98.

Performance: Mostly good
Recording: Very good

A two-man, two-guitar act, augmented with bass players and whatnot when it records, does not have as many possibilities to work with as a three-to-five-person act, yet the duo is caught in a more rigid framework than one of its members would be as a solo act. Paul Simon has demonstrated the truth of this since the demise of the two-man, one-guitar act of Simon and Whatshisname. Rex Fowler and Neil Shulman give me the impression that two incompletes are being fitted together in an attempt to achieve a complete one. Sometimes I hear the third personality, the product they're trying for, and sometimes I hear their individual limitations refusing to be filtered out. When they're singing together they often sound like Loudon Wainwright overdubbing harmonies with himself, but Fowler's songwriting has produced at least three entries of substance here (in order of my preference, they are A Conversation in a Car, one the driver is having with himself, Isn't It Sweet to Think So, about how one doesn't give up on love simply because one can't; and Dance, which has a fetching minor-key tune and beat), and Neil Shulman now and then tosses off a brief guitar solo that's simply a gem. The arrangements, acoustic instruments at their hub, could use a little more zip, but there's no ugliness or noise in them. There are, however, too many songs like Pajama Party that are awkward about being shallow. Fowler ought to consider giving up Shallowness for Lent and see how it goes. The boys could also take advantage of the extra latitude a two-person act can find a girl with an "Oklahoma look" whose choice by his girl because "no woman wants a man that drinks too much" ("I'm not holdin' the bottle," he explains, "the bottle's holdin' me"); another unfortunate who "walks from bar to bar in worn-out shoes" after having fallen off some wagon or other. All this is delivered in a guileless country style more suitable for ballads describing bouts with bottles of 7-Up. Can it be that Mr. Bandy is a creature of the Nashville branch of A.A.? What this feisty fellow can do when he's allowed a chance to change the subject is indicated in a jolly ballad about a devotee of the rodeo who finds a girl with an "Oklahoma look" whose personality melts the brim of his hat and sends him into transports of wholesome outdoor rapture. Let's hope she keeps him sober until after he cuts his next platter. P.K.

MOE BANDY: Here I Am Drunk Again. Moe Bandy (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Here I Am Drunk Again; If I Had Someone to Cheat On; What Happened to Our Love; The Bottle's Holdin' Me; Please Take Her Home; and five others. COLUMBIA KC 34285 $5.98, © CA 34285 $6.98.

Performance: Bring the antabuse
Recording: Good

Moe Bandy is shown on his album cover curled up inside a beer glass, and his voice sounds as though it's coming out of one. Consider his subject matter: a drunk who's on the sauce because his woman is cheating on him; another alcoholic abandoned at the bar of his choice by his girl because "no woman wants a man that drinks too much" ("I'm not holdin' the bottle," he explains, "the bottle's holdin' me"); another unfortunate who "walks from bar to bar in worn-out shoes" after having fallen off some wagon or other. All this is delivered in a guileless country style more suitable for ballads describing bouts with bottles of 7-Up. Can it be that Mr. Bandy is a creature of the Nashville branch of A.A.? What this feisty fellow can do when he's allowed a chance to change the subject is indicated in a jolly ballad about a devotee of the rodeo who finds a girl with an "Oklahoma look" whose personality melts the brim of his hat and sends him into transports of wholesome outdoor rapture. Let's hope she keeps him sober until after he cuts his next platter. P.K.

TONY BENNETT: Life Is Beautiful. Tony Bennett (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Life Is Beautiful; All Mine; Bridges; Reflections; Experiment; and five others. IMPROV 7112 $5.98.

Performance: Too much horsepower
Recording: Very good

"Life is beautiful," sings Tony Bennett in his big voice, powered like the engine of a large, costly car that uses too much gas. "Beautiful," when Tony Bennett uses the word, has a tendency to conjure up images of a Las Vegas hotel lobby. Packaged ardor is his stock in
trade, as every ballad gears up for a big, synthetic climax and the oversized orchestral arrangements come heading at you like a fleet of souped-up Cadillacs. Actually, the song quoted is an affable item with lyrics by Fred Astaire and loudly recommended by Bennett. It would be lovely to hear him perform it in his special, offhand style.

In this album, the program is so topnotch that you keep thinking of the other singers who made famous the very ballads Bennett is busy running energetically into the ground. Cole Porter's "You Won't Change Me; It's All Right; Gypsy;" and four others. WARNER BROS. BS 2969 $6.98, @ M 2969 $7.98, © M 2969 $7.98.

Performance: Flat Recording: Good

Neo hard-rock bands tend to sound the same and to borrow frequently from one another. On this album, Black Sabbath starts out by impersonating Led Zeppelin, especially the high-decibel zip-zaps of Zeppelin's vocalist Robert Plant. They then go on to parrot Deep Purple and to ape groups like Aerosmith and Status Quo. Doubtless all these other bands will casually borrow from Sabbath when their next albums are due.

Programming—the sequencing of performances—also tends to be uniform for bands of Sabbath's species. The first two selections are invariably loud and pounding, the third is semi-acoustic, the fourth a mixture of the first three, the fifth a utilitarian number for dancing, etc. Enough is enough. It is all quite predictable and damned dull. I think a better title for the album would have been "Technical Competence."

DAVID BROMBERG BAND: How Late'll Ya Play 'Til? David Bromberg (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. Danger Man II; Summer Wages; Dallas Rag/Maple Leaf Rag; Whoopie Ti Yi Yo; Young Westly; Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues; Bluebird; Idol with a Golden Head; and eight others. ELEKTRA F-79007 two discs $8.98, © 8160-79007 Z $9.98, @ 5160-79007 Z $9.98.

Performance: Good instrumental Recording: Excellent

David Bromberg is an accomplished country/ folk and classic blues guitarist. Though his style is not original and his playing tends to be intellectual (he's never quite gotten over his student days at Columbia University), his technique can't be faulted: every note, every riff, every solo passage, every single-string run, every relaxation and tension comes at the right place at the right time. The most satisfying cuts on this double-disc album are the instrumental medleys, the Fiddle Tune medley, the Dallas Rag/Maple Leaf Rag segue, the country-
Paul Simon said God used to lean on him, and I know the feeling. That line of Simon's stuck in my mind, but what brought the feeling back was Willie Nelson's new "gospel" album, "The Troublemaker." Country stars routinely record albums of hymns, but they usually do so in a style radically different from this. I've suspected it was partly an act of penance on their part, that some feel better when such albums flop commercially, as they often do. The way such albums are usually recorded results in something sickly sweet, so inflated with angelic choruses and pious attitudes (go back and listen to Red Foley doing this kind of thing, or Tennessee Ernie Ford) that it must turn off the God-fearingest of Presbyterian deacons in his secret heart of hearts. But Nelson has given the old church songs the regular Willie Nelson treatment, performing them in the same existential way(s) he performs songs officially designated as "commercial" or "secular." His band, one of the jauntest and best bar bands in Texas, plays here the way it plays in honky tonks, plays Uncloudy Day with the same freewheeling aplomb it customarily brings to that old Nelson-written drinking-and-fighting-club favorite that goes, "Sometimes it's heaven, sometimes it's hell, and sometimes I don't even know...."

And the most important thing I may be learning—or realizing—in listening to it is that I wasn't being leaned on back there in the little Baptist church by the highway: not leaned on, but more like cleaved in twain, perhaps by something akin to that two-edged sword the preacher kept mentioning. In church was where I first got the notion that there were two forces inside us, and one couldn't embrace both at once but had to choose one or the other. These weren't, to my mind, "good" and "evil." One I thought of as the intellectual, or rational, or thinking part, which I dimly sensed was the key to autonomy (something a growing boy or girl feels imperative to assert), to self-reliance, self-control, responsibility, growth. The other I identified as the emotional, even superstitious force. Its official name, at least on Sunday, was Faith, but it seemed to me to have a dark side. Why else would the grownups let it come out only in church, a controlled environment, a holy place (they said), and try to keep it stomped down everywhere else? A big factor in the emotionalism of the church services was the music. The sharper preachers had a way of talking over the singing of the Invitation Hymn—some were slick as modern disc jockeys talking over the last bars of a Captain and Tennille single—talking the split either/or way we perceived this as kids. Just because you're "for" your mind, Willie asserts—and he asserts it not with content but with style—it doesn't mean you have to be "against" your emotions, or vice versa. What was then perceived as superstition can now be looked at as parapsychology; an intelligent person may conclude there's something akin to that two-edged sword the preacher kept mentioning. In church was something akin to that two-edged sword the preacher kept mentioning. In church was the nominal barndance piano style of Bobbie Nelson. So these aren't, after all and strictly speaking, purely secular performances (in America's interior perhaps none can be) any more than they are conventional Sunday performances. It's all one with Willie. Both forces are embraced at once, integrated. What he does here, at least for people with backgrounds something like mine and (I gather) Paul Simon's, is give us something good and solid to contrast against

**Demonstrating that you can't respond fully to life with either a turned-off head or a turned-off heart**
just that: to not differentiate, not divide up the inner life between thoughts and feelings.

Well! And you know what else Nelson demonstrates? He demonstrates that these old songs amount to good music. Just listen to the way the first cut takes to a relatively hot, beer-joint-perfected run on Willie's funny little guitar with a hole worn through the top. Listen to what a bluesy harmonica can energize Shall We Gather. These old melodies have great and (like Willie Nelson) deceptively simple staying power and an admirable elegance born of hardscrabble economy in the words, the verses.

That last one, incidentally, Shall We Gather ("at the river," which Willie pronounces the way my congregation did, "rilver"), is a great favorite with Baptists, a must at total-immersion baptism services the country churches still hold at rivers, or, in a pinch, at ponds. There is no real rouser of an invitation hymn here, although I have heard When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder and even the Carter family's Will the Circle Be Unbroken put to such uses (both work better at funerals), and I wonder if Nelson's failure to include something approaching Just As I Am in emotional fervor is itself a comment of some kind. Certainly his inclusion of the title song is. It's a different kind of song, a new, topical one by Bruce Belland and David Somerville. In it a hippie and the way he's persecuted are described, and of course it is finally revealed that the hip one is Jesus about to be nailed up; it's all told from the viewpoint of a "good" conservative conformist of the day who holds the prevailing view that something has to be done about these radicals and the way they have been threatening the establishment and the status quo.

Social comment? Yes, but again it can't easily be construed as strictly secular in nature—again, Nelson seems to be demonstrating that you can't respond fully to life with either a turned-off head or a turned-off heart, or listening to first one and then the other. You have to listen to the mix.

You really ought to listen to this album, too, regardless of whether you remember being leaned on or having your consciousness divided against itself way back when in the presence of these hymns. This piece of work froths with such music, such life, such spirit and such technique that surely it must be counted a success in purely objective aesthetic terms, whatever those might be. But if such exists—if we start cordonning that off—I'll have the feeling that this is where I came in, and from here it looks like just another Blind Entrance.

—Noel Coppage

WILLIE NELSON: The Troublemaker. Willie Nelson (vocals, guitar); Paul English (drums); Don Spears (bass); Larry Gatlin (guitar); James Clayton Day (steel guitar); Doug Sahm (fiddle); other musicians. Uncloudy Day; When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder; Whispering Hope; There Is a Fountain; Will the Circle Be Unbroken; The Troublemaker; In the Garden; Where the Soul Never Dies; Sweet Bye and Bye; Shall We Gather; Precious Memories. COLUMBIA KC 34112 $5.98, CA 34112 $6.98, CT 34112 $6.98.

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89
Why We Believe That Chromium-Dioxide Is The Tape To Buy For Highest-Quality Cassette Recording.

When we at Advent were developing the first high-performance cassette recording equipment, we applied two innovations that were crucial for making cassettes that could equal or surpass the quality of the best stereo records. One was the Dolby System of noise reduction. The other was DuPont's chromium-dioxide (CrO₂) tape formulation.

At the time, chromium-dioxide was being used (as it still is) for video recordings, for which its high-frequency performance was unparalleled. But no one was marketing it for audio cassettes. Since we felt it was a must for highest quality, we decided to market it ourselves—although we had never thought we would be in the tape business.

Since that time, other manufacturers have followed suit (as they have in making high-performance cassette equipment). And other tape formulations have appeared on the market, with claims of performance surpassing that of chromium-dioxide. Some claims have been, to put it kindly, very questionable. So it feels like the time for us to be very explicit on what chromium-dioxide has to offer. We think no other tape offers its combination of advantages.

Here are those advantages:

High Coercivity and Excellent High-Frequency Response.

Chromium-dioxide is a man-made oxide, “grown” very much as crystals are. Unlike iron (ferric) oxide, which has to be ground and milled to achieve an appropriate particle size for tape, CrO₂ particles can be grown to near-perfect size and shape for cassette recording.

One of their advantages is high coercivity. That is, it takes a very strong force to magnetize and demagnetize chromium-dioxide tape. One thing this means is that the bias current necessary for tape recording, which has a tendency to erase high frequencies during the recording process (especially at low speed), has far less of this effect on CrO₂ than on standard ferric oxides.

Low Noise and High Output.

The unique advantage of CrO₂'s total high-frequency capability for cassettes is the way it lends itself to the objective of a low-noise, wide-frequency-and-dynamic-range medium.

As we indicate in the diagram, chromium-dioxide's high-frequency response begins to rise at 1,000 Hz, and is up by 6-7 dB at 10,000 Hz. This rising characteristic allows an unusually steep equalization of the signal during playback (the “CrO₂" equalization now found on all good cassette decks for home use) to level out the overall frequency response. And in this equalization process, the tape noise under the high frequencies automatically comes down along with the signal by 4-6 dB. (That 6-7 dB is the correct amount when the signal level is 0 dB, which is the case for most cassette decks.)

A. Chromium dioxide's rising high-frequency response (up by 6-7 dB at 10,000 Hz).
B. When this response is equalized downward in playback for flat response, tape noise is automatically reduced by the same amount.
*Back in the days when CrO₂ was first coming into use, a whispering campaign—begun, we suspect, by someone with a lot to lose—began to spread the story that chromium dioxide wore heads excessively. This has never been true, and at least one manufacturer who recently asserted that claim in print has since retracted it. In six years of selling CrO₂ and Cassette equipment, we haven't received a single complaint of excessive headwear from CrO₂.

While other tapes have since claimed to have added new properties, we don't think they can contribute to a murky overall recording quality. Print-through can be a subtle kind of noise, not only magnetizes exceptionally to begin with but stays magnetized to an unprecedented degree, storing the signal with an absolute minimum of signal leakage (“print-through”) from one layer of tape to the next. Print-through can be a none-too-subtle form of noise, and can contribute to a murky overall recording quality. CrO₂ has the lowest print-through we know of in cassette recording, and this, along with its very low modulation noise, makes it an even more impressively low-noise recording medium overall.

Low Drop-Out.
CrO₂'s long, thin particles disperse very evenly over the surface of the tape (see photo), without the tendency to clump or leave bare spots. Their small and consistent size also allows them to be easily oriented the right way on tape.

These two factors add up to a highly uniform, consistent tape coating that avoids drop-out problems—either at first or after repeated playings.

A 5,000-time magnification of a very small section (less than half a cassette tape width) of Advent CrO₂ tape. The 1/2 micron marker under the photo indicates the width of a standard head gap in cassette recorders. The extremely even and almost perfectly longitudinal dispersal of the oxide particles makes for uniform response and freedom from drop-outs.

Low Head Wear.
Chromium dioxide's head-wear characteristics are satisfyingly low not only for audio cassette recorders but for operation (with heads of critically narrow gaps) in video cassette recorders. A home recordist can expect excellent head life with CrO₂.*

Compatibility.
The CrO₂ playback standard pioneered by Advent is now provided in all high-quality stereo cassette decks for home use. You can enjoy chromium dioxide's full capabilities on all of them.

Among premium tapes other than CrO₂, however, are some that require equalization and/or biasing that isn't provided by today's cassette machines. Whatever the theoretical advantages of these tapes (and we know of none that exceeds CrO₂'s sonic capabilities), you can't realize them in the right proportions in actual use. Using them on today's cassette recorders is like using a film with a camera that doesn't supply the right ASA number.

Most auto stereo recorders don't supply the right provisions for either CrO₂ or other premium tapes, and we know of no way you can enjoy their full advantages on the road. What you do get from CrO₂ on car cassette machines, however, is a high-frequency boost that in the usual circumstances (with equipment that isn't the ultimate in high-frequency response) is pretty welcome.

Uniformity.
The unique nature of CrO₂ particles makes for excellent coating uniformity from batch to batch in the manufacturing process. Overall results with any tape also depend on keeping other factors consistent, including the manufacture of the cassette housing. We at Advent take considerable pains to make sure of product consistency in tape as well as on other products, and we know that several other marketers of CrO₂ take similar pains. Not all brands of CrO₂ are the same in final quality, but the consistency that's made possible by CrO₂'s basic properties is at least as good as that of any other tape.

Price-Performance Ratio.
You can enjoy all of chromium dioxide's advantages for a cost that is generally less—sometimes by a very wide margin—than that of other "premium" tapes. Prices vary, so we can't do a brand-by-brand breakdown here. But you can generally expect to pay between $3.00 and $4.00 for a C-90 cassette of Advent chromium dioxide. And we think any check you care to make will quickly support Advent chromium-dioxide's price advantage relative to other "premium" formulations.

CrO₂ also doesn't cost more than standard lower-performanc ferric oxides. It does cost a good bit more than so-called "bargain" tapes, but those tapes are generally no bargain in performance, durability, and kindness to tape machines.

We at Advent aren't primarily in the tape business. We introduced, and continue to market, DuPont's chromium-dioxide formulation because we feel it is an unparalleled overall combination of the things that are important to people who are seriously interested in cassette recording. Chromium dioxide isn't the only excellent tape on the market, but it is the best combination we know of all the factors—including price—that determine the real enjoyment of real people in real situations. We know of no tape that's better for cassette recording.

Advent Corporation, 195 Albany Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.

©Advent Corporation, 1976
Clapton is not a freak with a guitar growing out of his side but a musician who's now made a little string of pretty good albums. *Sign Language,* incidentally, is a winner; it could be addressed to writers ("can't you even make a sound?"), or to urban life (and, by extension, civilization) with all its actual physical signs saying don't do this and that, or to the way we sometimes expect those close to us to read our minds, or . . . A good Dylan song, it is loose enough to fit your situation. Not all the fare here is that meaty, but the performances are rich yet fade-free; Clapton's affinity is for something that's lasted, the blues, and his goal seems to be music that never goes too far in or out of style. You can get a feeling for his self-respect here, and you can also get, as Gene Nobles used to say, some jollies.

N.C.

**BURTON CUMMINGS.** Burton Cummings (vocals, piano); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *I'm Scared; Your Back Yard; That's Enough; Is It Really Right; Stand Tall,* and five others. PORTRAIT PR 34261 $6.98, © PRA 34261 $7.98, © PRT 34261 $7.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Very good

Burton Cummings was the lead singer of the now-defunct Guess Who. This initial solo album is largely designed to show that he has a good voice and handles it well; to that end it succeeds. Unfortunately, the album also sounds like an application for employment, but Cummings gives no indication of what kind of job he wants—and the star market is rather overcrowded these days.

With few exceptions, the material is by Cummings, which is to say that it’s filled with murky references to persons and events that are never explained, so it is difficult for the listener to be interested. Several of the songs seem to have been written for no other reason than to show off Cummings’ voice, but a set of tomsils does not a singer make, and leaping nimbly from range to range is not the same thing as phrasing. Cummings attempts to pass himself off as an established artist, but it doesn’t work. At least not here.

J.V.

**EARTH, WIND & FIRE: Spirit.** Earth, Wind & Fire (vocals and instrumentals). On *Your Face; Saturday Nite; Imagination; Bylo; Burnin' Bush,* and four others. COLUMBIA PC 34241 $6.98, © PCA 34241 $7.98, © PCT 34241 $7.98, © CAQ-34241 $8.98.

Performance: Fatuous
Recording: Good

Earth, Wind & Fire is one of those mediocre groups that require the listener to accept, a priori, their possession of some deep, mysterious spiritual knowledge and strength that automatically make whatever they play valuable. The conceit puts the blame on the listener if he fails to catch and fawn over the supposedly indisputable emotional purity of whatever the band offers, and this type of psychological poker bluff is especially effective on a youthful listener who believes in whatever his peer group does and lives in terror that he will be left out of anything.

A television commercial running over New York stations shows film clips of Earth, Wind & Fire leaping about (literally) while the narrator asks what is supposed to be a rhetorical question: "Is this the finest group in America?" My answer: "Hell, no!" Maybe the members of the band are sincere in their beliefs, but they come across here as a sappy group with hackneyed arrangements, fey vocals, and songs loaded with the usual hey-baby-let’s-get-it-on-in-the-cosmos twaddle.

J.V.

**ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA: A New World Record** (see Best of the Month, page 83)

**FIREBALLET:** *Two, Too . . .* Fireballet (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Great Expectations; Chinatown Boulevards; Desire; Flash,* and three others. PASSPORT PPSD-98016 $6.98, © 8167-98016H $7.98, © 5167-98016H $7.98.

Performance: Preposterous
Recording: Very good

It is a mistake to approach music as an applied science, as this clinical quintet does. It is

(Continued on page 96)
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---

ELTON JOHN: Blue Moves. Elton John (vocals, piano); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Your Starter for . . . Tonight; One Horse Town; Chameleon; Boogie Pilgrim; Cage the Songbird; Crazy Water; Shoulders Holster; and ten others. MCA/ROCKET 2-11004 two discs $13.98; © MCAT2-11004 $13.98, © MCAC2-11004 $13.98.

Performance: Directionless
Recording: Good

Every now and then Elton John records something that represents the state of the art of pop-music craftsmanship—material, performance, arrangement, production—such as the superb Goodbye, Yellow Brick Road. But in between these happy occasions, though he is a star and has many hits, he tends to paddle about in a sea of sparse or puffy orchestrations, to sing beyond his range, and generally to sound busy.

This double-disc album could have been a single-disc album had John and his lyricist Bernie Taupin been able to get their technical ability into focus. But being technicians—their approach to music is quite as clammy and bloodless as that of any hack Tin Pan Alley duo of fifty years ago—they have to tinker endlessly to come up with something that appears well constructed and can give the impression of emotion. Lord (or Moloch) knows, they try hard enough here, but it’s still fuzzy around the edges.

J. V.

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JACKIE LOMAX: Livin’ for Lovin’. Jackie Lomax (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. More (Livin’ for Lovin’); Peace of Mind; Blue World; (Put Some) Rhythm in Your Blues; On the Road to Be Free; Our Love; and four others. CAPITOL ST-11558 $6.98; © RST-11558 $7.98.

Performance: Bland
Recording: Good

Jackie Lomax, as the press material accompanying this lackluster album stresses, is something of a cult figure. He was a member of the Undertakers, a British pop group of the Sixties who dressed in morticians’ outfits and rode to their engagements on putt-putt motorcycles. Lomax’s first solo album was produced by George “Where Have I Heard That Melody Before?” Harrison in the early days of Apple Records. He has had several albums out since then, some of them group efforts, some of them solo.

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LED ZEPPELIN: The Song Remains the Same. Original-soundtrack recording. Led Zeppelin (vocals and instruments). Rock and Roll; Celebration Day; Rain Song; Dazed and Confused; No Quarter; and four others. SWAN SONG SS 2-201 two discs $11.98; © TP-201 $9.98; © CS-201 $9.98.

Performance: So-so
Recording: Good

This is the soundtrack album of what a usually reliable source calls another boring concert movie, a good-quality recording job of a program that makes the chair seem awfully hard before it’s over. I suppose albums like this are of some use to someone, but there are plenty of better examples of what Led Zeppelin can do. Stairway to Heaven, the best piece the band ever came up with, is much better served by the exacting environment of the studio recording than by the looseness of this one. The band has enough taste and discipline problems under ideal conditions. There’s also the problem of their simply having played, say, Whole Lotta Love too many times; the version here doesn’t seem to say much of anything else. And, of course, the inevitable drum solo puts its usual pall on things. I may yet go to see the movie, but not with a whole lotta enthusiasm for listening to it.

N.C.

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ELTON JOHN: a bit fuzzy around the edges
Lomax is a fair songwriter (by today’s debased standards), a guitarist of some skill and technique, and a vocalist who resembles James Taylor in listless delivery and comatose tone. Why he should be a cult figure is beyond me, but cultism has a streak of lunacy that passeth all understanding.

J.V.

THE LOST GONZO BAND: Thrills. Gary Nunn (vocals, piano, bass, guitar); Robert Livingston (bass, piano, guitar, vocals); John Inmon (guitar, vocals); Kelly Dunn (keyboards); Donny Dolan (percussion). Write a Song; Relief; Wilderness Song; Sweet Little Lily; Dead Armadillo; Daddy's Money; and six others. MCA MCA-2232 $6.98, ® MCAT 2232 $7.98.

Performance: More like spills
Recording: Good

These are Jerry Jeff Walker's associates. Of course they have been dominated by his personality, and understandably they don't quite manage to define their own collective personality with which to front this thing. One might expect of them a bit of a songwriting showcase, and they seem to approach that but then fudge. The Last Thing I Needed, by Gary Nunn and Donna Ciscel, is a dandy spoof of country-song word play (“The last thing I needed the first thing this morning was to have you walk out on me”), but it works best as satire; nothing else is particularly impressive standing up straight. Some tunes are pleasant enough, but too many—of which the most blatant examples are Dead Armadillo and Ain't No Way—are built exclusively of parts from the pop-country junkyard. The playing doesn't show much sense of style either, following a lot of conventional decisions about what “type” a song is and digging into the corresponding bag of clichés. This isn't a physical or mechanical problem, exactly, but the presence of one strong, authoritative vocalist would have gone a long way toward easing it. As it is, it's useful mostly to those studying the pop history of Austin. N.C.

BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS: Live! Bob Marley and the Wailers (vocals and instrumentals). Trenchtown Rock; Burnin ' & Lootin'; Them Belly Full; Lively Up Yourself; and three others. ISLAND ILPS 9376 $6.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Outdoorly

All right, all right. Linda Ronstadt persuaded me to give reggae another try. I've been listening a little more carefully to Jimmy Cliff, and I've been impressed. But I'm still less impressed with Bob Marley and the Wailers. Part, that may be because the thing of theirs I'm listening to—this—was recorded live in a big place, the Orpheum in London, which has sopped a lot of brightness out of the sound. In part, it's something else. I don't mind Marley's being political—I don't mind anybody's being political—but there's cultural politics as well as political politics. It's the style he brings to the extra-reggae parts of the music that impresses me about Cliff, whose lyrics and melodies aspire to be graceful. Marley's seem to want to be accommodated by the greatest number possible, so that while he may not have emulated the most sure-fire commercial elements of the popular song, he might as well have in many cases. The part of the result that bothers me most is the slickness that creeps in around the edges. I like this version of I Shot

(Continued on page 100)
A Valentine for Hammerstein
(from Ben Bagley)

When Ben Bagley, the Emperor of Nostalgia, told Clive Davis, the president of Arista Records, that he was going to devote the next album in his “Revisited” series to songs with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein, Davis assured him that “a recording of Oscar Hammerstein songs would not be meaningful in 1976.” How wide of the mark, and how little Mr. Davis knew his man! Bagley, who at forty-two has already enriched the world’s record shelves with revisits to the lesser-known works of Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Frank Loesser, Harold Arlen, Arthur Schwartz, and a score of other popular masters of the past, including two volumes of Rodgers and Hart, went ahead anyhow, and our musical lives will be the better for it.

The enterprising fellow who produced his celebrated Shoestring Revues on a shoestring (but nonetheless never does things by halves) first set about assembling an incredible cast: Cab Calloway, Blossom Dearie, Alfred Drake, E. Y. Harburg, Dorothy Loudon, Patrice Munsel, Elaine Stritch, and Gloria Swanson! He got Norman Paris to do the arrangements and Harvey Schmidt, the composer of The Fantasticks, to do the artwork for the album cover. The liner notes he wrote assure him that “a recording of Oscar Hammerstein songs with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein, that’s Love, from the movie Nana, in which it was originally sung by Anna Sten—but you have the feeling that Oscar wouldn’t have minded at all.

From the celebrant of blighted love in his fledgling efforts as a lyricist to the skillful ballad-maker of Oklahoma, Carousel, and The King and I, Hammerstein found his way to a style that is still enduring, even if the corn on occasion grows a little higher than an elephant’s eye. Bagley has produced another winner (I still don’t see how he got that cast together), and if the results aren’t “meaningful” they are certainly altogether delightful. Collectors, to the counters!—Paul Kresh

OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN: Ben Bagley’s Oscar Hammerstein Revisited. We’ve Got Something (Gloria Swanson, Dorothy Loudon, and the Patios); Lonely Feet (Blossom Dearie, Alfred Drake); No Wonder I’m Blue (Dorothy Loudon); Totem Tom-Tom (Elaine Stritch); Somebody Wants to Go to Sleep (Patrice Munsel); Eleven Levee Street (Blossom Dearie); Sweetest Sight I’ve Ever Seen (E. Y. Harburg); I’m One of God’s Children (Dorothy Loudon and the Patios); Little Hindoo Man (Dorothy Loudon and the Patios); We Were So Young (Gloria Swanson); When I’ve Got the Moon (Blossom Dearie, Cab Calloway); My Best Love (Alfred Drake); That’s Love (Blossom Dearie); All in Fun (Elaine Stritch); Dance, My Darlings (Patrice Munsel, Alfred Drake); Grand Finale (Dorothy Loudon and the Patios). PAINTED SMILES PS 1365 $6.98 (from Painted Smiles Records, Inc., 116 Nassau Street, New York, N.Y. 10038).
NOW ONE TAPE GIVES YOU THE PEACE AND QUIET OF THE CHROME POSITION. WITHOUT THE HEADACHES.

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If you used any normal range bias ferric-oxide tape in the chrome position, you’d sacrifice a significant amount of high-end signal.

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the Sheriff, though, a song I'd underestimated, and I like this version of No Woman, No Cry, in which Marley shows that a clean but fairly ordinary rock guitar solo can fit nicely into his format. There's still too much repetition of what I'd call banalities through much of it, but I do see possibilities in Marley I hadn't seen before. Surely, for one thing, he's got more in the way of words to say—even if one does have to drum political slogans into people's heads—and maybe now that he's got the floor he'll say them. N.C.

GEOFF MULDAUR: Motion. Geoff Muldaur the floor he'll say them.

Oh, I suppose I like this for what it is. At least I'm not bored with it. It does sound, though, like a pause between commitments. At times, they fail to show Marley's versatility as a vocalist, which is the kind of thing that can happen when you don't have something better to do, such as putting across some songs you really like. This material swings from being relatively cold-blooded, emotionally uncommitted, to being too all-out sentimental as to seem stylized, as happens with Allen Toussaint's contrived but oddly affecting title song. (Interesting to compare Motion to the hit Ain't It the Meat, It's the Motion that Maria Muldaur had.) Muldaur does get his singing into the grain of a song now and then, as in I Don't Want Talk About It. In such moments his work compares to what for me are the album's best moments, provided by guest-singing Bonnie Raitt in Since I've Been with You Babe. Mostly, Muldaur seems to be fishing for the instantly recognizable Geoff Muldaur song and going a long time between bites. Sure, he's got a voice, and sure, it's versatile, but he doesn't have to play Captain Eclectic. Still, I sort of like it. N.C.

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN: Don't Stop Believin'. Olivia Newton-John vocal, orchestra. A Thousand Conversations; Compassionate Man; New-Born Babe; Sam; and six others. MCA MCA-2223 $6.98, © MCAT-2223 $7.98, © MCAC-2223 $7.98.

Performance: A bit of a bore Recording: Good

Although Olivia Newton-John has the aphrodisiac qualities of one of my fantasy airline stewardesses (the one on Air Gomorrah), she is a bit of a bore once secured to the turntable. She's still murmuring sweet nothings breathlessly into the mike, and that's okay for the likes of Hey Mr. Dreammaker or Love You Hold the Key. But when she girlishly attempts to "act in song" through such things as Every Face Tells a Story and Compassionate Man, the results have an itty-bitty, pouty quality in place of any real dramatic mood. Her fans love it all, of course, and she's such a complete pro at dishing out the glop that it's relatively painless and pleasant in a sugary sort of way. What happens when she hits thirty is anybody's guess. P.R.

ROBERT PALMER: Some People Can Do What They Like. Robert Palmer (vocals); orchestra. One Last Look; Keep in Touch; Hard Head; Off the Bone; Spanish Moon; and five others. ISLAND ILPS 9420 $6.98, © Y81 9420 $7.98, © ZCI 9420 $7.98.

Performance: Forced Recording: Fair

Robert Palmer tries mightily to force some excitement into this, particularly in such reggae-influenced things as Man Smart, Woman Smarter and What Can You Bring Me, but it just ain't here. Certainly it's not in his voice, which has the carefully uneven quality of distressed wood, and mostly it's not in the production by Steve Smith, which is generally shell—that is, when it isn't clumsily labored. An ungainly record. P.R.

MARY KAY PLACE: Tonite! At the Capri Lounge, Loretta Haggers. Mary Kay Place (vocals); Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris, Anne Murray (back-up vocals); other musicians. Vitamin L; Streets of This Town; Gold in the Ground; Settin' the Woods on Fire; Good Old Country Baptistin'; and five others. COLUMBIA PC 34353 $5.98, © CA 34353 $6.98.

Performance: Good-natured Recording: Good

Well, honey, ah wuz happy as a pig in a waller when ah heard that Loretta Haggers, despite trahl an' tribulation, had finally made the recording that would be her ticket to superstardom. Raht now, I mean right now, it's as difficult for most viewers of the TV soap opera spoof Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman to dis-
tistinguish the character, Loretta, from the person, Mary Kay Place, as it is for me to resist falling into the broad "Southern" accent I affect whenever speaking of her. The title of her group evokes Loretta in a way that suits to emphasize this con-fusion of identities.

And yet it's so goddarn difficult to take this record seriously, despite the impressive supporting cast of professional c-&-w musicians and Mary Kay's emphatic denial that "To-nite!!" is a novelty effort. Her delivery throughout is just as bright and good-natured as can be. Her pleasant voice with its authen-tic Southwestern twang (just love when she sings "sett'in the woods on fahr") bounces through these predominately up-tempo tunes with uniform affability, so uniform that all sense of emotional involvement is lacking. We might as well be a-whoppin' and a-hollerin' at the Capri Lounge on a Saturday night.

Ambivalence is the kicker here. The popu-lar Loretta image may sell albums, but it's the real Mary Kay Place who's got the talent. Well, ah'm jes gonna set back awhile and wait fer the real woman to come out. Honey, ah got faith 'n' tahm. —Pawiette Weiss

LOU REED: Rock and Roll Heart. Lou Reed (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. I Believe in Love; Banging on My Drum; Follow the Leader; You Wear It So

Performance: Comatose

Recording: Good

Lou Reed is touted in some quarters as a serious artist, but there is nothing on this album to support such a fantasy. He seems deliberately mediocre and dull. He is an anti-musician, much as his mentor and former employ-er Andy Warhol (from their Velvet Under-ground band association) was an anti -artist to support such a fantasy. He seems deliber-ately anti-anything. This is not to say that there is no success in his efforts. The tunes are the only lyrics, and they are re-told over and over to the accompaniment of a not more than competent band. It would be comforting to dismiss him as a rascal, but that cannot be done. Even as a con man he has no flair, and his contempt for his audience is ugly.

PHOEBE SNOW: It Looks Like Snow. Phoebe Snow (vocals, guitar); David Bromberg, Steve Burgh (guitars); Sonny Burke (key-boards); Reggie McBride (bass); James Gads-on (drums); other musicians. Autobiography (Shine, Shine, Shine); In My Girlish Days; Don't Let Me Down; Shakey Ground; Teach Me Tonight; and five others. COLUMBIA PC 34387 $6.98, ® PCA 34387 $7.98, ® PCT 34387 $7.98.
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Performance: Endearing
Recording: Good

Whenever I hear a Ringo Starr solo album I think of Billy Shears, a mild and modest entertainer who doesn't have much of a way with a song but who sings to please and takes life pretty much as it happens to him. The Shears character was invented by John Lennon and Paul McCartney when they wrote With a Little Help from My Friends as a speciality number for Ringo on the "Sgt. Pepper" album. Some years later, after the Beatles breakup, Lennon contributed I'm the Greatest, again about Shears, to a Ringo solo LP. The alter ego is, I think, very close to the original, and, since I like Shears, I like Ringo. His quavering baritone sometimes lists dangerously to either port or starboard of the tune he is singing, but his performances are fresh and zesty and straightforward, and his albums are consistently entertaining.

I have yet to hear any comment so poignant and openhearted on the Beatles smashup as Ringo's song Early 1970 (available on "Blast from Your Past," Apple SW-3422); he was sending a message of affection andconciliation while the other three indulged in petty squabbling. Today, he is the only ex-Beatle that the other three regularly write for and play with. This time out Lennon contributes Cookin'; McCartney offers Pure Gold, and the Harrison entry is I'll Still Love You.

Viewed over his past three solo albums, Ringo's own material (he is most often a collaborator) contains some very singable items; for example here is Cryin', which shows his fondness for American country music. The outstanding cut is You Don't Know Me At All, which has a vaudeville feel, and in which Ringo and good old Billy Shears are one. Billy may sing out of tune now and then, but this listener will never walk out on him. J.V.
AL STEWART: Year of the Cat. Al Stewart (vocals and guitar); orchestra. Lord Grenville; Sand in Your Shoes; On the Border; Broadway Hotel; Midas Shadow; and four others. JAEWUS DXS-7022 $6.98, © 8098-7022 $7.98, © 5098-7022 $7.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Here's a bunch of sentimental, softly packaged songs by Al Stewart. None of them are helped at all, however, by Stewart's hissing sibilant "s"s, which give even the elegiac Lord Grenville a prissily comic, Paul Lyndish quality. When he is set loose on something like the glowering melodramatic On the Border, with such lines as "Smuggling guns and arms across the Spanish border" to be gotten through, the results are downright hilarious. Aside from Stewart's distracting speech (or recording) defect, though, this is a nice enough low-key collection with a warm, easy atmosphere. And, luckily, he still plays dynamite guitar.

P.R.

STUFF. Richard Tee (keyboards); Eric Gale and Cornell Dupree (guitars); Gordon Edwards (bass, percussion); Christopher Parker and Stephen Gadd (drums, percussion). Foots; How Long Will It Last; Happy Farms; My Sweetness; and six others. WARNER BROS. BS 2968 $6.98, © MB 2968 $7.98, © M5 2968 $7.98.

Performance: Good Stuff
Recording: Very good

You may have caught Stuff on NBC's live Saturday Night show or at one of their many appearances in an Upper West Side New York night spot called Mikell's. If not, the odds are strongly in favor of your having heard the group's individual members propel onto the charts some of the most celebrated names in today's popular music. Stuff is a sextet of musically articulate East Coast session men, a super rhythm section hatched in the shadows of the great, the near great, and the ne'er great. Under the leadership of bassist Gordon Edwards, these men have now decided to step out of the shadows as a unit (guitarists Cornell Dupree and Eric Gale have previously recorded as leaders for the Atlantic and Kudu labels, respectively), and after listening to this, their first album, I think it was a wise decision.

Stuff's music is infectiously rhythmic, as one might expect, and often downright nasty in its funkiness. Sure, the guitars are electric, but they are in such capable hands that it is the players rather than the instruments we hear. There are no profound musical statements here, nor, I'm sure, were any intended—just good down-to-earth sounds that have the timeless flavor and spirit of what we used to call hot music.

C.A.

ROBIN TROWER: Long Misty Days. Robin Trower (guitar); James Dewar (bass, vocals); Bill Lordan (drums). Same Rain Falls; Long Misty Days; Hold Me; Caledonia; Pride; Sailing; and three others. CHRYSALIS CHR-1107 $6.98.

Performance: Derivative
Recording: Good

Robin Trower plays—and his bassist sings—very much in the style of Jimi Hendrix. Although the late Mr. Hendrix was an audacious and occasionally brilliant technician of the (Continued on page 105)
Patti Smith's "Radio Ethiopia"

As did Joplin, Morison, et al., Smith is attempting to be much more than a mere musician performing rock-and-roll: she seeks instant elevation to secular sainthood. It must be remembered, however, that it took death itself to so elevate Joplin and the others. Joplin's version of the mirage of the Sixties, built on aincinnati effort to revive yesterday's gospel. Joplin and Morison were rock idols who exemplified and personified the attitudes and the life style of a whole youth culture that tried desperately to get out from under the consequences of reality. They lived as their audiences wished they had the hell-with-it-all recklessness to live. Joplin both outraged and delighted with her revolt against the middle class. Morison's bizarre expressions of his own pain and anger mirrored perfectly his audience's pain and anger. Naughty Jim Morison. Devil-may-care, boozy Joplin. Both burnt out much too soon. Both trying, toward the end, to get out of the pact they had made with their audiences and neither succeeding. Smith's performance distance, her proscenium reticence, may be her defense against being consumed by the unfocused hungers of her admirers, but her driving ambition to place herself in the Rock Pantheon may also, paradoxically, lead to the same end. And there's no need for that in the Seventies. Human sacrifices have gone out of style—way out of style. Those times are lived-through and gone, and, no matter how often Smith runs through the room with her hair on fire, she won't be able to convince us they aren't. That said, it must be added that "Radio Ethiopia" is, on almost all musical levels, the kind of album we've been waiting to hear for a very long time. Smith's work has all of the vital, urgent excitement that caused the rock explosion to ignite in the first place. The quality of the "poetry" she's provided here will have to remain something of a mystery, at least until she picks up the rudiments of English-language communication. Her group performances—and her self-proclaimed lovers of surrogate self-destructiveness to you, will you settle for Patti Smith's second act in her drama of a lamb of the Seventies being led to martyrdom? Her second bid to become the King or Queen (whichever you feel comfortable with these days) of Rock is unquestionably a first-rate album. It is always professional to the nth degree and a thoroughly involving emotional and musical experience. What's lacking in the album is what's lacking in Ms. Smith's timing. She is attempting to re-hear the anger and narcissism of the Sixties in the cooled-off Seventies. The result is an eerie, uncanny nostalgia for a time that tragically burned out too many of the best.
electric guitar, there was more sound than substance to his music (as he realized shortly before his death), so that a Hendrix emulator—even one as skilled and comfortable in the role as Trower—doesn’t have much to build on. Hendrix intended to try playing jazz, and had he done so—as Jeff Beck has successfully done—his career might have been more artistically rewarding; at the least it would have been more challenging. But Trower is content to stay in the place Hendrix wanted to move away from: limbo. J.V.

TOM WAITS: Small Change. Tom Waits (vocals and piano); orchestra. *Step Right Up; Bad Liver and a Broken Heart; Pasties and a G-String; Small Change; The Piano Has Been Drinking*; and six others. ASYLUM 7E-1078 $6.98, © ETS-1078 $7.98, © TCS-1078 $7.98.

**Performance:** Actor-y  
**Recording:** Melodramatic

Tom Waits looks, on the cover of this album, as if he’s on the near side of thirty and caucasian, but he contrives, on the recording, to sound on the far side of sixty and black. His songs are uniformly designed to depress, something they succeed at completely. He’s dreary all right: *Bad Liver and a Broken Heart; Pasties and a G-String,* and the title song (“Small change got rained on with his own .38”) all have the *joie de vivre* of a tango with a corpse and the overpowering breath of a wino.

Waits’ delivery, unfortunately, is so crisply clear that he makes sure you don’t miss one obscene or one belching groan of disgust about all this Nelson Algrenish squalor. He recites in a deep, gravelly voice that sounds so artificially produced that all he needs to do is throw in a few “ho-hos” to be mistaken for a scatalogical Santa Claus. After about twenty minutes of wallowing around in all of this back-alley-derelict chit-chat, I realized that I was listening to a very silly album by a very untalented actor.

P.R.

WENDY WALDMAN: The Main Refrain. Wendy Waldman (vocals, guitar, piano); Ken Edwards (bass); Andrew Gold (guitar, keyboards, vocals); Michael Botts (drums); Waddy Wachtel (guitar); other musicians. *Eagle and the Owl; The Main Refrain; Soft and Low; Is He Coming at All; West Coast Blues,* and five others. WARNER BROS. BS 2974 $6.98.

**Performance:** Improving  
**Recording:** Excellent

This is more like it. I wasn’t impressed with the last Wendy Waldman album, but where that one seemed the indulgence of a self-declared creative person this one shows some interest in craft. Her voice is nothing special and her writing, especially in the lyrics, seems more concrete. She still has a tendency to take melodies through awkward, unmusical turns, but here you have a better feel for the elusive quality she’s trying for—particularly in *Is He Coming at All* and *Prayer For You*—and an inkling or two into her growth as a craftsman. She still has a tendency to settle on dull tunes, too, but here that’s softened by the fine back-up she receives, mostly from Linda Ronstadt’s people and from Ronstadt herself in no fewer than four songs. The instrumentation is at least clever everywhere, and sometimes it’s considerably more than that. *Eagle and the Owl* is my favorite, I guess, although it doesn’t color in the hues of her developing style as faithfully as some of the others. The album has some dull spots, but it also has some nice surprises.

N.C.

ANDY WILLIAMS: Cindy. Andy Williams (vocals); orchestra. *Sailin’; My Lonely Room; Since I Fell for You; Groovin’; The Poem,* and five others. COLUMBIA 34299 $6.98.

**Performance:** Very good  
**Recording:** Elegant, expensive

Andy Williams, who in personal appearances and TV shows always goes for the homespun projection and the boyish manner, returns here in another of his albums, an album which is, as always, and however paradoxically, as eloquently tooled and luxuriously crafted as a Cartier cigarette case. The arranging and conducting by Barry Fasman fold about Williams

**WENDY WALDMAN**

An album with some nice surprises

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as comfortably as a vicuna coat, and the production by Larry Brown keeps the keylight securely and flatly on the star at all times. Total pro that he is, Williams handles all of this fuss with a disarming ease and charm. Even in a gasping weeper such as The Poem he never loses his nice-guy appeal.

By now Andy Williams is really the Cary Grant of the record business (and oh, how the movie business needs a new one). No single piece of material that he does is ever all that interesting, much less innovative, but his enormous casual grace and style mark it immediately as his own—much in the way that any part Grant played became a Grant part. Those were not bad parts; neither are these.

P.R.

BILL WITHERS: Naked & Warm. Bill Withers (vocals); orchestra. Close to Me; Dreams; I'll Be with You; My Imagination; Where You Are; and three others. COLUMBIA 34327 $6.98, @ PCA 34327 $7.98, @ PCT 34327 $7.98.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Excellent

The best thing about any Bill Withers album has always been the expansive presence of the man himself. He has a big, roomy, cushiony voice and delivery, a facility for writing direct songs that keep simple ideas simple (Close to Me and Where You Are, in particular, in this album), and an easy, innate musicianship that glides him over any rough spots. For this album he's collected a dynamite back-up group that includes Don Freeman on electric piano and Jerry Knight, who is exceptionally good, on bass. His best effort here is the title song ("Heaven makes love to me and I feel/Naked and warm . . ."). It's a little heavy in the "expressiveness" department but still a fine, richly detailed performance. Withers is an Old Dependable who really is, album after album, dependable—and these days that's a lot.

P.R.

COLLECTIONS

SIDEWALKS OF NEW YORK. Music rolls played on the General, a Wurlitzer Model 164 band organ. The Natchez and the Robert E. Lee; Toot, Toot, Tootsie; After the Ball; Mother Machree; A Little Bit of Heaven; When Irish Eyes Are Smiling; Livin' Sam (Sheik of Alabam); Sidewalks of New York; and eight others. COLUMBIA M 34159 $6.98.

Performance: Too long at the fair
Recording: Good

On this disc of nostalgic music rolls ground out on an elaborate band organ known as the General, the band plays on—and on and on. Paul Torin, the gentleman who acquired this mammoth Wurlitzer, restored it, painted it red, white, and blue, and lends it out for openings of banks and supermarkets, is rather obsessed with it. He possesses twenty-five music rolls for it, with ten tunes per roll; the sixteen vintage samples on the record were quite enough for this pair of ears. Even so, the arrangements of Toot, Toot, Tootsie!, and Goodbye, Mother Machree, are so redolent of old-time carnivals, merry-go-rounds, and state fairs that it would take a flinty heart indeed to respond to the program with no affection at all. The organ, which weighs 2,500 pounds, is a formidable piece of machinery with 252 wooden pipes, 64 brass pipes, a 22-bell glockenspiel, a brass drum, a snare drum, and cymbal. All this for The Sidewalks of New York and Sweet Rosie O'Grady. Somebody ought to turn it loose on something more elaborate than After the Ball. Why, it might even replace the Moog!

P.K.

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Performance: Down but never out
Recording: Good restoration job

The blues is a peculiarly American form where melancholy sometimes merges with an undercurrent of subversive mirth. The women in these blues songs are beaten, abandoned, left to die; I've Been Treated Wrong is a typical title. But the singer has the last word. For Christmas, if she can't get a good one, she'd like at least a 'full-grown man.'

The collection of blues songs here stems from the South of the Twenties and Thirties. Most of the singers represent the lesser-known ranks of theater and club performers whose records never made it big but sold well enough to a substantial audience of mostly black customers. Some, like Bobby Cadillac, Emma Wright, and Bessie Tucker, favored a vocal style. Others, like Bertha 'Chippie' Hill and Memphis Minnie, made a measure of success in the big cities, and their voices have a harder edge. The influence of Bessie Smith is strong on most of them; a few, like Georgia White, have such strapping voices that it's hard to believe they were ever put upon the way it says in the songs.

Producer Chris Strachwitz has put this program together from old discs dating back all the way to the early Twenties; the dubbings are remarkably clean and preserve the quality of the well-played accompaniments. Even so, it's a little startling to suddenly hear, unblurred and full, the voice of Willie B. Huff, recorded in the Fifties when high fidelity had arrived; it had begun to seem by then that all blues singing had to be heard through a sonic haze. By the time Huff came along, the blues had quit the stage and slunk off to the bars. Still, like the women who sang it, down but never out, the blues always comes back. P.K.

JILLIAN GLINN: I wish it hadn't been.

Recording: Echo chamber

I am rarely bored by anything I hear on the ECM label, but I found it just as hard to sit through a playing of this album as I did to sit through a recent New York concert appearance of Abercrombie and Towner. Let me say that I have tremendous respect for both musicians, but as a combination sans colleagues they fail to hold my attention. As far as jazz recordings are concerned, ECM has established a technical standard that is higher than that of any other label I know of, but this album is a disappointment in that area as well; I don't know how all that echo was created, but I wish it hadn't been.

C.A.

BARBARA CARROLL. Barbara Carroll (piano); rhythm section. Feelings: Send In the Clowns; Baubles, Bangles and Beads; and six others. BLUE NOTE BN-LA645-G $6.98, © BN-EA645-H $7.98.

Performance: Spineless
Recording: Good

Barbara Carroll was playing Bud Powell-inspired piano at New York's Embers almost twenty-five years ago, but she was never an exciting pianist. Before she disappeared from the scene in the very early Sixties, Ms. Carroll had turned more to pop tinkles for the society set. Now she is back, and Leonard Feather—who annotated this album—seems very happy with what she is doing. I don't share his enthusiasm; I would even have
turned down the offer of writing the notes, and I’m sure the old Blue Note company would not have opened its microphones to Ms. Carroll’s pretty but invertebrate piano improvisations.

C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RAN BLAKE: Breakthru. Ran Blake (piano). No Good Man; Spinning Wheel; Bebopper; Bird Blues; Drop Me Off in Harlem; Tea for Two; and eleven others. IMPROVISING ARTISTS 373842 $6.98 (from Improvising Artists, Inc., 26 Jane Street, New York, N.Y. 10014).

Performance: Original

Recording: Excellent

Ran Blake is one of the most original pianists around, but few people are familiar with his work; he records only about one album every ten years, and his personal appearances are all but secret events. Like so many other American artists, Blake has been given a better reception overseas, particularly in the late Fifties and early Sixties, when he teamed up with various female singers for some compelling, pioneering piano/vocal improvisations. In recent years, however, most of his time has been spent working with Gunther Schuller at the New England Conservatory of Music, where he now holds a position as chairman of the Third Stream Department. A tireless listener whose ears know no stylistic boundaries, Blake’s repertoire is as unrestricted as his playing. Whether he draws his material from the dawn of jazz, a Forties musical, the bebop era, or the current rock scene, he is sure to transform it into a very personal and highly original statement in which only one influence—that of Thelonious Monk—is occasionally detectable. His statements are wonderfully concise, well structured, and imbued with his sense of history; there are fourteen of them here, each one a little gem. Let’s hope we get more before another ten years has gone by.

C.A.

JACK DEJOHNETTE: Untitled. Jack DeJohnette (drums, tenor saxophone); Alex Foster (soprano and tenor saxophones); Warren Bernhardt (keyboards, cowbell); John Abercrombie (guitars), Mike Richmond (bass). Flying Spirits; The Vikings Are Coming; Malibu Reggae; and four others. ECM ECM-1074 $6.98, ® ST1-1074 $7.98, ® CT1-1074 $7.98.

Performance: Six of one, half a dozen . . .

Recording: Excellent

This is an ECM record, but not very. Drummer Jack DeJohnette, one of the most talented and successful men to come out of the Chicago-based AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) movement has brought to ECM a side—one that is—that would draw applause at a Columbia Records a- & r meeting. Is that good? Only if you like the 110-volt treadmill that seems to have imprisoned Herbie Hancock et al. of late.

Side two of “Untitled” is another matter. The Vikings Are Coming, with DeJohnette playing tenor sax, has a nice ethereal quality about it (were my ancestors ever that delicate?). Struttin is slightly neurotic, pianist Warren Bernhardt’s Morning Star is the seven and a half minutes that make the album worth adding to your shelves, and Malibu Reggae is a wonderful bit of humor that ends the album in a spirit far removed from that which began it.

C.A.

HAMPTON HAWES: The Challenge. Hampton Hawes (piano). Tokyo Blues; My Romance; Bag’s Groove; Summertime; and eight others. VANGUARD VSD 79377 $6.98.

Performance: A dash of this and . . .

Recording: Very good

As I have stated in these pages before, I don’t feel Hampton Hawes has lived up to the promise of the recordings he made for the Contemporary label some twenty years ago. This album, made in Japan almost nine years ago, is Hawes’ only solo effort to date. It is a very pleasant excursion through mostly familiar material, but the material is not all that is familiar about it: the piano styles of Tatum, Hines, Powell, and Monk are great springboards, but Hampton Hawes isn’t doing any jumping.

C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

STEVE KUHN: Ecstasy. Steve Kuhn (piano). Prelude in G; Ulla; The Saga of Harrison Crabfeathers; and others. ECM ECM-1-1058 $6.98, © CT-1-1058 $7.98.

Performance: Excellent

Recording: Excellent

Steve Kuhn recorded this album in 1974 at the Bendiksen Studio in Oslo, which seems to be the studio for piano recordings these days. If Kuhn has had other albums of solo piano, I have not heard them; if he makes more I want to hear them, for he has never sounded more interesting to me than on this solo flight. Though he is normally regarded as a jazz pianist, his work here actually falls outside that category, lacking the element of rhythm necessary to jazz. It is, however, improvised music: impressionistic pieces, often delicate, sometimes dazzling. This kind of insight into the creative thoughts of the performer is worth a few hundred pennies any time.

C.A.

OREGON/ELVIN JONES: Together. Oregon (instrumentsals); Elvin Jones (drums). Le Vin; Lucifer’s Fall; Driven Omens; Teeth; and three others. VANGUARD VSD 79377 $6.98.

Performance: Winning combination

Recording: Very good

I have previously sung the praises of both Oregon and Elvin Jones, so I’m happy to be able to report that they work well together. The overall sound here is, quite naturally, more that of Oregon than of Jones’ own group, but—since Oregon in its make-up is less obtrusive than the Elvin Jones group—we are also able to hear the drummer’s work better in this context, and that experience is certainly worthwhile. As one might expect the program consists of original tunes, which—in this case—does not mean merely that they were written by the performers on hand.

C.A.

OSCAR PETERSON/JOE PASS: Porgy and Bess. Oscar Peterson (clavichord); Joe Pass (soprano and tenor saxophones); Warren Bernhardt (keyboards, cowbell); John Abercrombie (guitars), Mike Richmond (bass). Flying Spirits; The Vikings Are Coming; Malibu Reggae; and four others. ECM ECM-1074 $6.98, ® ST1-1074 $7.98, ® CT1-1074 $7.98.

Performance: Eclectic

Recording: Excellent

Paul Horn is joined by Egberto Gismonti on this album. Who is Gismonti? What does he play? Don’t ask me. The fact that the annotation consists of brief mutual pats on the back by Horn and Gismonti made me curious. As I had done on a previous occasion, I called Epic Records for the information. "Who? Gismo who?" asked the young lady in what I had been told would be the appropriate department. "Oh, a Paul Horn album. Give me the number and I’ll check the cover."

"I have the album, there’s no information on it."

"Oh, let me switch you to the product manager for this album." She switched, he answered. "I don’t know who the guy is, but I’ll give you Paul Horn’s telephone number."

He gave it to me. It was in Canada. I decided to skip the whole thing and just listen to the album. Lots of good flute, exotic instruments being scratched on, and rubbed, guitars, violins—you name it. It borders on schmaltz, but it’s beautiful, and I’m ready to wear my Egberto Gismonti button.

C.A.

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C.A.
were. Here, with an unsparring lasciviousness that makes it advisable to keep this particular acquisition high on the shelf out of the hands of little ones, they tackle such topics as the adventures of a dog tossed into the pound for assaulting a poodle; a scatological roundup of lewd cattle; the personality of Uncle Pervy, who teaches unspeakable practices to children; the adventures of a tactical force of female organs organized to foil sexual invasion; and a version of Sleeping Beauty that would feel at home on the screen of a porno house in Times Square.

Portraying Ralph and Herbie, two street-smart canines who meet in the pound and conspire a break (foiled at the last minute by the pink poodle who got Ralph into trouble in the first place), Cheech and Chong are droll and adept in a skit that is as entertaining as it is raunchy. The raunchiness turns rampant in several of the other sketches, but the full side devoted to Sleeping Beauty is worth the space afforded it. The updated tale of the Princess Squash who sleeps away the years on a mink-lined waterbed in a castle "overgrown with growth" until she is brought out of it by a swinging prince and his dissolute friends manages to sustain a mood of hilarity longer than one might think probable. A filthy record, but a funny one.

ERIC IDLE AND NEIL INNES: The Rutland Weekend Television Songbook. Eric Idle (narration); Neil Innes (piano, guitar, harmonica, arrangements); other musicians. L'Amour Perdu; Gibberish; Wash with Mother; Say Sorry Again; Rules for Sale; Twenty-four Hours in Tunbridge Wells; The Fabulous Bingo Brothers; The Children of Rock and Roll; The Song of the Insurance Men; Communist Cooking; Johnny Cash Live at Mrs. Fletcher's; Accountancy Shanty; Football; Boring; and nine others. Passport PPSD-98018 $6.98.

Performance: Hilarious

Recording: Excellent

Eric Idle is an alumnus of Monty Python, the bizarre and hilarious English comedy group. Neil Innes is the former captain of the departed Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band, a satiric musical group which provided an accurate and brilliant running commentary on the foibles of British and American pop music during the late 1960's and early 1970's. The starting point of this album is the hopelessly inept and fatuous programming of a provincial English television station—equal, in American terms, to a station for his name value, and he has only a few brief bits where he indulges in the stream-of-consciousness talk and university political humor that were his specialties with the Pythons. Innes' skewerings of British and American pop groups and solo performers are cherubic because of the way he appropriates their glitz while demonstrating the foil of media content of their lyrics and attitudes. Concrete Jungle Boy is a marvelous dismissal of the early Who's "anthems" to alienated youth. The Children of Rock and Roll is an autopsy of John Lennon, cruel but true. Protest Song is an Innes masterpiece—as anyone who saw him appear with the Pythons in their 1976 (Continued on page 111)
"Electric Muse (The Story of Folk into Rock)" is an ambitious four-record album from the British Island label that brings home a truth we Americans may tend to overlook: some pretty good British "rock" bands, including the Pentangle, Fairport Convention, and Steeleye Span, electrified the folk process almost as if there were no America. A bigger deal has been made, at least over here, of how the Yardbirds, Beatles, and Rolling Stones grew up with their ears fixed on American-made music, folk and pop. It therefore does something for your perspective to be shown that Dave Swarbrick and such a "pure" folkie as Martin Carthy can identify with each other enough to play duets and to have it suggested that a sense of community over there can link the classic, almost-anthropological Chieftains with a gang of rock-and-roll kids like Traffic.

An American performer of a certain folk-songs image—Leadbelly, Rambin' Jack Elliott—shows up in the collection now and then, but mostly "Electric Muse" demonstrates a folk-to-rock process quite different from ours. What makes it different mainly is the fact that so much of our own music was made by black people, and no sources feeding the British bands had experiences quite like theirs. Listen to this, then, and you'll find interval cordoned off in orderly half-step (or, in the modal pieces, mostly whole-step) increments. The folk consciousness that wants to slide from one note to another, and the techniques with which to do it (the way we play harmonica, saxophone, various types of slide guitar, etc.), developed on this side of the ocean. The bluesman's easy command of double-entendre (mostly sexual) metaphor did not occur to the white Western Europeans; self-consciousness did, and when they got force for the devil. My own Anglo-Saxon, Baptist grandmother believed that (so, as a matter of fact, did the Greeks). The thinkers this music had to contend with included the likes of William Cobbett, who is quoted as saying, "A great fondness for music is a mark of great weakness, great vacuity of mind—a want of capacity, or inclination, for sober thought." Opposing this, to be fair, you must balance Martin Luther's conviction that the joy of music is man's best armor against Satan. As I said, there's a lot to think about.

... when they got sexy, they got bawdy, which is to say crude.

Stereo Review
American stage tour will testify. In a conglomerate characterization of all the folkie kid whiners of the last ten years, Innes devastatingly portrays their snobbish, narcissistic, and relentless musical incompetence, complete with a simulation of Bob the Dylan’s infuriatingly bad harmonica playing. Ah, this is sweet surgery.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Good

The Grupo is composed of dozens of musicians and vocalists of different generations, styles, and backgrounds of Cuban, Puerto Rican, Jamaican, Brazilian, and Afro-American music. Within a given samba, guaguanco, rumba, or bolero they present an exciting fusion of the components of the disparate influences on Latin music, including flavorings of jazz.

The Grupo’s concept is not new, but it is one quite often difficult to put into practice; integrating distinctive elements of multiple styles into a workable whole sometimes results in the domination of one component by another, or, on the other hand, in compromising all the elements so much that the result is weak and thin. But the Grupo’s fusion is robust and flexible, whether the arrangements emphasize the simple folk aspect or demonstrate the power of a big Latin band with brass and reed sections.

There are, really, too many accomplished musicians and singers on the album to name all of them, but I must mention trumpeter Alfredo (Chocolate) Armenteros, vocalists Felix (Corozo) Rodriguez and Willie Garcia, violinist Alfredo de La Fe, Nelson Gonzalez of the tres, and trombonist Jose Rodrigues from Brazil. It’s obvious from the music that the elders and youngsters had a whopping good time together.

Performance: Really charming
Recording: Good

Paul Williams’ score for Bugsy Malone is the really charming result of what sounds like a sickeningly cute idea in concept: a gangster film with a Thirties setting, a cast composed completely of children, and an abundance of custard-pie shoot-outs, etc. If you’ve seen the film you know that the idea works wonderfully well and that the kids, particularly Florrie Dugger as the Joan Blondellish heroine, are pure delight. Williams’ words and music for this unselfconscious little caper—recorded separately by adults, Williams himself among them—are just right for his material. The put-ons, thank godness, are kept to a minimum, although Williams can’t seem to resist a couple of tries at petit-camp in such things as My Name Is Tallulah and Fat Sam’s Grand Slam. But in numbers such as Blousey’s I’m Feeling Fine and Ordinary Fool and Bugsy’s Down and Out, Williams writes with all of the slam-tastic toughness and tough naiveté that characterized the songs from Thirties musicals and have kept them in performance all these years. Very entertaining.

Performance: Crystalline
Recording: Excellent

Classical Spanish guitar music is characteristically elegant and restrained—music that concedes rather than exalts, mitigating the tensions of its style with contemplative stretches of lyricism. Flamenco can be elegant too, but in an angrier way. It is music that seethes and smoulders beneath the knife-sharp twang of the lightly constructed instrument on which it is played. This music might not even exist in Spain if Ferdinand and Isabella had not forbidden the gypsies to leave Andalusia in 1492. They stayed to mingle church, popular, and folk music into this unique form. Countless guitarists play flamenco, but only a few—Manitas de Plata and Paco Peña, among them—play it unforgettably. “Fabulous Flamenco” is the latest in a series of albums Peña has made for London. Like the others, it is marked by a kind of controlled ferocity in the playing and an exceptional clarity of recorded sound. To evoke the proper gypsy atmosphere, Peña’s guitar is augmented by the clicking of castanets, occasionally a second guitar strummed by Guillermo Basilisco, characteristic vocal cries, and the clapping of hands. Sevillanas, bulerias, zorongos, and granadinas make up the program, along with milongas and guajiras imported from Latin America. A fine successor to Peña’s earlier albums.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Good

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The chorale preludes copied as a group in the manuscript in the East Berlin Staatsbibliothek (Ms. Bach P 271) are affectionately known among organists as "The Eighteen." In contrast to the chorale preludes in the Orgelbuechlein, miniatures written for didactic purposes, these are full-blown compositions, revealing Bach's mastery of contrapuntal skills and instrumental technique. Playing the organ of All Souls Unitarian Church, Washington, D.C., Peter Hurford offers us a magnificently conceived reading of these wonderful works. The registration is carefully chosen to illuminate the complexity of Bach's part-writing and to feature the original chorale melody. Avoiding the almost cliché and annoying détaché techniques so frequently used in Baroque organ performances today, Mr. Hurford adopts a flowing legato style of playing that is nonetheless clear in its articulation and subtle in its rhythmic control. Over this plastic structure, the square chorale melodies form a stunning contrast of monolithic strength. Especially fine is Hurford's molding of those highly emotive and comforting chorale settings, here are earlier ones, presenting the melody in a simpler form and with a special freshness in their modality and an almost Renaissance concept of chordal progression.

The album also includes copious, interesting notes (by Stephen Darr) which are full of information on the source of the melodies, the various vocal settings, and Bach's settings for organ, and which include a brief analysis of the compositional technique used.

Performance: Stately
Recording: Thick

J. S. BACH: Suite in C Minor (BWV 997); Italian Concerto (BWV 971); Two-Part Inventions (BWV 772-786); Fantasy in C Minor (BWV 906). Lionel Party (harpsichord). DESMAR DSM 1008 $6.98.
Performance: Brilliant
Recording: Clear

J. S. BACH: Toccatas in D Major, E Minor, and G Major (BWV 912, 914, and 916); Preludes in A Minor (BWV 922); Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D Minor (BWV 903). Blandine Verlet (harpsichord). PHILIPS 6833 184 $7.98.
Performance: Rhapsodic
Recording: Bright

These three excellent discs of indestructible music by Bach will give the listener a fine introduction to the composer in terms of tempos or dance rhythms, has found a convincing affect for each piece rather than presenting them as a collective lump. We must also thank him for including a reading of the C Minor Suite, a rarely heard creation intended for lute. He brings it off superbly as a major harpsichord work.

Finally, there is the young French harpsichordist Blandine Verlet, who presents a youthful Bach at his most rhapsodic and reveals her penchant for the improvisatory style. The challenge of the toccatas is to achieve a balance between the free recitative-like sections and the highly ordered fugal writing. Ms. Verlet solves this problem with a disarming simplicity that contrasts her poetry and imagination with a keen sense of structure and form. Here is a new personality on the scene to watch and listen to.

S.L.
BARTÓK: Bluebeard’s Castle (see Best of the Month, page 81)

BEETHOVEN: Missa Solemnis in D Major, Op. 123. Heather Harper (soprano); Janet Baker (mez-soprano); Robert Tear (tenor); Hans Sotin (bass); New Philharmonia Chorus; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini cond. ANGEL SB-3836 two discs $13.98.

Performance: Devout
Recording: Box

In an age in which the term “artist” is used casually as a synonym for ‘performer,’ Giu-lini is one of the great figures who remind us of the word’s true meaning. His recording of the Missa Solemnis, which ought to have been an Event, has many moments of sublime beauty, but overall it is less persuasive than I had hoped and clearly less so than the Klemp-er and Bohm versions. As a shortcut de-scRIPTION: which century? If they mean the life of that Giulini emphasizes the work’s devotional aspect and plays down the dramatic; the trou-ble with that is that there seems to have been no separation of the two in Beethoven’s con-cept, and here the sections that should be the most stirring are for the most part barren intermezzos between the more meditative ones, which are most affecting indeed. The exultant quality of the Gloria, which should open like a sunburst, is dissipated by Giulini’s deliberate pacing, and so is that of the fugal section at the end of the Credo. Everyone sings and plays very well—Heather Harper especially—but the whole seems somehow less than the sum of its parts. The sound itself is not of much help.
R.F.


Performance: First-rate
Recording: Likewise

These three discs among them offer not only the five most popular Beethoven piano sona-tas, but, in terms of interpretative style, something for every taste. You can choose between the Schnabel-like ruggedness and intellec-tuality of Firkusny and the unabashed romanticism of Gelber, or, if you are looking for a near-ideal synthesis of the two approaches, there is the well-nigh invariable musicality and fleet-fingered virtuosity of Ashkenazy.

In terms of recorded sound, the Ashkenazy disc is just fine for my taste, with body, brilliancy, and a comfortable room ambiance. Firkusny gets a fairly close-up miking job that turns out well within its particular frame of sonic reference. Heard in the Melodram playback, the Gelber recording seems distant in comparison with the others, but there is a more effective instrumental presence when the two rear channels are brought into play.

Ashkenazy’s dramatic, yet disciplined, traversal of the Pathétique and the fine sense of atmosphere he brings to the opening pages of Les Adieux (Beethoven preferred the German Lebewohl to the customary French titling) are very impressive. The nimble virtuosity of the latter’s final movement reminds one that this music came from the same period that saw the creation of the brilliant Em-peror Concerto and the Harp Quartet. But, fine as Ashkenazy’s reading of the Waldstein is, it doesn’t measure up in imaginative quality to Alfred Brendel’s recent version on Philips.

(Continued overleaf)

Pater Noster. The Rachmaninoff movement was a last-minute replacement for a Mozart aria which had to be canceled because of the illness of Martina Arroyo. And with Menuhin and Stern on the podium what could be ex-pected except the Bach Double?
The recording has class and more than a bit of the excitement of the event; the charisma comes rattling off the platters. The boxed set includes the Carnegie Hall program for the event. Concert of the Century? Well, perhaps the occasion excuses the hyperbole—and the discs are a treasurable souvenir.
—Eric Salzman


Handel: Hallelujah Chorus from Messiah. The Oratorio Society; Bernstein, Fischer-Dies-kau, Horowitz, Menuhin, Rostropovich, and Stern; members of the New York Philhar-monic, Lyndon Woodside cond. COLUMBIA 34256 two discs $15.98. © 2M7 34256 $15.98.


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Firkusny scores in the way he works out developments, as in that of the first movement of the Pathétique, which fairly explodes into its reprise. Superbly urgent, too, is his treatment of the opening movement of the Appassionata, and his emphasis of contrast in expression and dynamics throughout the finale lingers in the mind long after hearing.

For all the immediate sense of drama and coloration Gellner achieves, I find his readings wear the least well. His hyperdramatic handling of the final movement of Op. 27, No. 2, is a prime instance in point. But matters of personal taste are involved here, and others may feel differently. I, though, would make a point of acquiring the Ashkenazy disc—judging from this as well as the earlier three in the series, I believe his sonata cycle when completed will be an outstanding achievement.

D.H.
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CIRCLE NO. 3 ON READER SERVICE CARD
and Jacob Avshalomov leads his young players in vigorous performances that come off better in the sharper and more refined Trombone Symphony than in the massive sonorities and intricate polyphony demanded in the suite. The sound is good, considering what seems to have been a somewhat limited acoustic ambiance. D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CHARPENTIER: Louise. Ileana Cotrubas (soprano), Louise; Placido Domingo (tenor), Julien; Jean Berbié (mezzo-soprano), the Mother; Gabriel Bacquier (bass-baritone), the Father; Michel Sénéchal (tenor), Noctambulist Charpentier’s Louise, something of a shocker in 1900 with its exultant praise of “free love” in the face of bourgeois values, is hardly more “modern” today than Puccini’s La Bohème, which depicts the same Paris milieu without any crusading undertones. And yet there is something about the conflict of generations that lends Louise a certain timeliness. It is an opera that lacks the musical magic of La Bohème, but it yields riches of its own kind: a libretto of considerable literary merit, free of bombast and all artificiality, characters that are recognizably human and real, and a passionate tribute to Paris—at least the Paris of 1900—and its irresistible magic.

Columbia’s new recording, the opera’s first in stereo, supersedes the classic but incompletely and sonically overstated version by Ninon Vallin and Georges Thill and a long-deleted good mono set under Jean Fournet (Epic 6018). Both older sets were Paris-made products, imperfect but thoroughly idiomatic. Those challenges are only partly met by Columbia’s otherwise fine and thoughtful effort. I certainly have no quarrel to the Louise of Ileana Cotrubas, who is a sensitive and musically artist, whose singing is pure in tone and affecting throughout, and whose command of French ought to please all but the most chauvinistically inclined. Placido Domingo brings his characteristic ardor to the role of Julien, but his rich tenor sound is Italian, not French, despite a satisfactory way with the language. A leaner, more pointed, more Gallic timbre would have been a better match with Miss Cotrubas’ tones—but then operas are cast with at least one eye firmly fixed on sales potential. The Gallic ingredients, however, are abundant in the richly characterized Mother of Jean Berbié, who is just about perfect, and in Gabriel Bacquier’s moving portrayal of the Father. Equaly convincing in anger and tenderness, Bacquier here accomplishes a triumph of singing-acting feat, a few effortful notes in the top register notwithstanding.

Michel Sénéchal excels in his double role. The numerous supporting characters represent the fanciful Charpentier creations of Puritan night life are done with varying degrees of competence by what I presume to be members of the Ambrosian Chorus, but the seasoned hand of Georges Prêtre assures a smoothly flowing performance. The recorded sound is good and atmospheric, though the guitar accompaniment in Julien’s Serenade is virtually inaudible.

G. J.

DANIEL-LESUR: Andrea del Sarto (excerpts). Gabriel Bacquier (baritone), Andrea; André Esposito (soprano), Lucrèce; Danièle Perriers (mezzo-soprano), Spinette; Alain Vanzo (tenor), Cordiani; others. Ensemble des Chœurs de I’O.R.T.F.; Orchestre National, Manuel Rosenthal cond. Excellent singing—Impressive Recording: Excellent

Daniel-Lesur—the hyphenated form is correct, and the composer never uses his actual given names, Jean Yves—is almost unknown in this country. Born in Paris in 1908, he was with Messiaen and Jolivet in the group called Jeune France. Like so many of his confreres he is (or was) an organist. He has also been associated with French radio and television for many years.

These credentials might suggest some sort of modernism, possibly ultra. Nothing of the sort. Andrea del Sarto is an operatic version of a highly fictionalized account of the life of the Italian painter by the French Romantic playwright Alfred de Musset, and it is—in both words and music—heart-on-sleeve thund-blunder Romanticism of the most unabashed sort. The tragic intensity is a little overheating but otherwise effective in this excellent performance and recording from the archives of French radio. No texts. E. S.

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RECORDERING OF SPECIAL MERIT
Performance: Magnificent
Recording: Virtually perfect

Performance: Well-played but dryish
Recording: Quite fine

That DG intends to give us the complete cycle of Dvorak's quartets with the Prague Quartet is good news indeed, for their incomparable recording of Dvorak's big Quartet in G Major, Op. 106 (DG 2530 480), still strikes me, as it did when released two years ago, as "simply one of the most stimulating chamber-music recordings yet offered from any source." Certainly, there has been a real need for an authoritative account of Op. 105, which is actually the final work in that cycle (though assigned an earlier opus number than the G Major), and this is unquestionably it. As they did in the G Major, the members of the Prague Quartet delight in the music's earthy qualities without allowing the slightest hint of the earthbound; they convey a sense of spontaneity and happy urgency which carries with it an undercurrent of nervous excitement bordering on abandon—but always under the most subtle control. The real surprise, though, is the totally unexpected freshness with which the more familiar work in F Major comes across: there are not, as there were in this group's Op. 106, conspicuous departures from traditional notions of phrasing, but there is, again, that undercurrent of demonic excitement that makes every phrase glow with life, and the whole coheres more convincingly than ever. Since the recording itself is just about perfect, I cannot imagine a valid reason for denying oneself the extraordinary pleasure this record affords.

The Guarneri performances are quite handsome and accomplished, but they are several degrees cooler than the ones from Prague. The adjective that still pops into my mind when listening to this ensemble's recordings is "dry," which in this case applies more to the way they play than ever. Since the recording itself is just about perfect, I cannot imagine a valid reason for denying oneself the extraordinary pleasure this record affords.

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RECORDED OF SPECIAL MERIT

LOEFFLER: Deux Rhapsodies for Oboe, Violin, and Piano.
MOZART: Quartet in F Major for Oboe and Strings (K. 370), John Mack (oboe); Daniel Majeske (violin, in Mozart); Abraham Skernick (viola); Stephen Geber (cello, in Mozart); Eunice Podis (piano, in Loeffler).

Performance: Superb
Recording: Exceptional

Of the few works of Charles Martin Loeffler we hear at all, none seems more original or more generally intriguing than the Deux Rhapsodies. This music has been missing from our catalogs far too long, and it is a pleasure to welcome it back in so expert and persuasive a presentation as it receives here. From the sound of it, Mack, Skernick, and Podis have been in love with the work all their lives and must have performed it together many times; it is an extremely beautiful and well integrated performance, and Skernick's marvelous "real viola" sound is a special pleasure in itself. The overside account of the Mozart quartet by the four first-chair members of the Cleveland Orchestra is similarly distinguished, and the exceptionally fine sound and utterly silent surfaces achieved by the Cleveland-based company justify the "import" price. A superb production.

R.F.

NYSTROEM: Songs at Sea (see ELGAR)
PETTERSSON: Concerto No. 1 for String Orchestra.

LEVENE: MACBETH

Wienee Cassette: Cernac/Hammond New Philharmonia Orchestra

R.F.

LIDHOLM: Nausicaa Alone (see PETTERSSON)

STEREO REVIEW

118
Performances: Splendid
Recordings: Very good

Swedish symphonist Allan Pettersson (b. 1911) made his first major impact on American listeners in 1972, when London Records issued the Antal Dorati/Stockholm Philharmonic recording of the haunting and unsettling Symphony No. 7 (1968). The present brace of discs gives us a chance to view Pettersson's work in a more formative stage.

The Concerto No. 1 for String Orchestra and the Second Symphony exemplify two major strains in Pettersson's work. The sinewy, athletic aspect is represented in the string-orchestra piece. The slow movement has something of the feel of Benjamin Britten, and the work as a whole reflects to some degree the influence of Pettersson's study with Milhaud, Honegger, and Leibowitz. The Second Symphony marks a breakaway from athletic objectivism and toward an eruptive, frankly confessional outpouring. It has pages of Kafkaesque phantasmagoria and promises of redemption in which we encounter the ghosts of Alban Berg, Mahler, and Bartók.

Ingvar Lidholm (b. 1921) is ten years Pettersson's junior, but he has been a major force on the Swedish musical scene since the end of World War Two. Nausicaa Alone, a brilliant scena for soprano, incidental chorus, and orchestra, finds Lidholm in full command of every technique of advanced twentieth-century musical language, but also still endowed with the intensely poetic flair that has always distinguished the best of his work.

Soprano Elisabeth Soderstrom is absolutely gripping in her portrayal of Homer's princess as envisioned in the poetry of Nobel Prize laureate Eyvind Johnson. Stig Westerberg and the choral forces provide excellent support in their realization of Lidholm's exacting requirements in the realm of color, dynamics, and rhythm. No less fine is Westerberg's handling of the Pettersson works, especially the String Orchestra Concerto. Excellent recording work throughout.

D.H.

Performances: Excellent period style
Recordings: French radio


Performances: Excellent period style
Recordings: French radio

P.D.Q. Bach lives! Or at least he really lived. Apparently he quarreled with his family and left Germany for France where he took the name of Jean-Ferry Rebel (an obvious nom de plume if ever there was one). We all know P.D.Q.'s famous work The Seasonings, but few know about The Elements. This ballet be-
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CIRCLE NO. 6 ON READER SERVICE CARD
out the Amadeus Quartet performance of the Quartettsatz.

All things considered, though I do like the Beaux Arts' Trout, I'm not about to give up my Serkin/Schneider record, which offers the homiest and bounciest reading of all. D.H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SMETANA: Memories of Bohemia, Opp. 12 and 13; Reveries. Antonin Kubalek (piano). Citadel CT 6010 $6.98 (from Citadel Records, P.O. Box 1662, Burbank, Calif. 91507).

Performance: Evocative

Recording: Good

Smetana's piano music has been so roundly neglected that many who love The Bartered Bride and Má Vlast are quite unaware that he wrote any at all, let alone important works for keyboard. He wrote quite a bit, enough to fill eleven discs in a Supraphon series that circulated briefly some fifteen years ago. Rudolf Firkusny recorded some of the polkas and Czech dances for Capitol before that, but that disc, too, is long gone, and—surprisingly—no one has had the imagination to get Firkusny to do more Smetana. The Musical Heritage Society has given us one valuable record of sixteen polkas, played superbly by Radoslav Kvapil (MHS 1373), and that would seem to be all we've had available here in the last several years. Antonin Kubalek's new release is enormously welcome, even though it duplicates Kvapil's Opp. 12 and 13 (sets of two somewhat Chopinesque polkas each). Reveries, a set of six contrasting pieces composed in 1875, is certainly a major work, filled with frequent touches of poetry and exultant originality; it culminates in an especially exuberant "Bohemian Festival" whose first theme may recall Liszt's Second Hungarian Rhapsody but whose character is thoroughly and unmistakably Czech.

Kubalek plays with assurance and evident commitment, and his evocative performances have been realistically recorded (though not without a bit of pre-echo and surface crunch). One minor complaint: because the two sets of polkas are short, the first of the six Reveries follows them on side one, and the enumeration of the bands on side two makes it appear that they contain pieces Nos. 1-5 instead of Nos. 2-6. Buy it anyway. R.F.

STOCKHAUSEN: Ceylon; Bird of Passage. Harald Bojé (electronium); Peter Eotvos (carnel bells, triangles, synthesizer); Aloys Kontarsky (piano); Joachim Krist (tam tam); Karlheinz Stockhausen (Kandy drum, chromatic rin, lotus flute, Indian bells, bird whistle, voice); Markus Stockhausen (trumpet, flugelhorn); John Miller (trumpet); Tim Souster (sound projection). Chrysalis CHR 1110 $6.98.

Performance: Composer-supervised

Recording: Composer-supervised

These are rather typical pieces of Stockhausen's work in recent years with their mixture of ethnic and natural sound sources projected in terms of electronically modulated live sound—mostly percussion with some wind and brass mixed in. Unlike much earlier work of this kind, in which the sounds are highly distorted and junked up, the sounds here are, on the whole, pleasant: bell-like and ritualistic for Ceylon, walk-in-the-woods sound-environment-style for Bird of Passage. Ceylon is a West German Radio recording and has excellent sound. Bird of Passage, apparently a tape produced by the composer, is a little less impressive but perfectly adequate. Chrysalis, basically a pop company, provides very little information about these works outside of the statement that Stockhausen wrote Ceylon in 1970 immediately after a visit to a Hindu ceremony. Someone has, however, thoughtfully provided reviewers with a copy of Jonathan Cott's interview-book with the composer which contains a detailed description of the ceremony along with a list of Stockhausen's work up to 1973; Ceylon is not

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CALENDAR OF CLASSICAL COMPOSERS

Back by popular demand and updated from its original (1966) printing, Music Editor James Goodfriend's Calendar of Classical Composers is a listing of the most important composers from the year 1400 to the present, grouped according to the stylistic periods—Renaissance, Baroque, Classic, Romantic, etc.—in which they worked. This 12 x 24-inch aid, guide, and complement to your music listening is printed in color on heavy, nonreflecting stock suitable, as they say, for framing. A key to the calendar, consisting of capsule accounts of the principal stylistic characteristics of each musical period, is included. The whole will be sent rolled in a mailing tube to prevent creases; we pay postage. All you do is send 25¢ to:

Calendar of Classical Composers
Stereo Review, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

STEREO REVIEW
mentioned (neither is Bird of Passage). A bigger problem: the labels of the two works have obviously been reversed. But what the hell. Stockhausen on a pop label and it even got written up in the New York Times. What more can you ask?

E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Superb
Recording: First-rate


Performance: Verges on the perverse
Recording: Sonically rich

If Arturo Toscanini in his prime had chosen to add Stravinsky’s epoch-making masterpiece to his repertoire, the result might have been much akin to Claudio Abbado’s reading here. There is no question in my mind regarding Abbado’s respect for what Stravinsky wrote, and to the music’s rhythmic aspects he brings unerring precision, abetted by comparably unerring ensemble work from the London Symphony players. But it is the refinement of line and texture Abbado brings to the introductory sections of Le Sacre’s two parts that gives this performance special distinction—that and a wonderfully detailed and powerful recording from the DG production staff. This record belongs right up there with those of

Solti and Monteux (in the out-of-print Boston Symphony version of 1951) and with the unique documentation by Stravinsky himself. Lorin Maazel’s way with Le Sacre is one that reinforces the often-made observation that Stravinsky’s score, like Richard Strauss’ Zarathustra, has become for conductors of the 1970’s what Rimsky-Korsakov’s Scheherazade was for those of the 1920’s—a mere virtuoso vehicle. Maazel offers what most Stravinsky buffs would consider inconceivable—indeed, impossible, given what is written in the score—a rubato Sacre. If you doubt it, lend an ear to the trombone glissando bits in the “Round Dance” or the odd phrasing of the very opening of the work; or sample the really odd tempo of the timpani ostinato that sets the stage for the “Glorification of the Chosen One.” Even London’s fine recorded sound, noteworthy here for its stereo depth illusion, can do little to make this reading palatable to me.

D.H.


Performance: Spirited
Recording: Powerful

Dorati’s third complete Nutcracker (which happens to be the most expensive recording of this music to date) finds him, as before, both elegant and spirited, favoring a crisp line, making the most of the score’s dramatic episodes, and never yielding to what must be powerful temptations to sentimentalize here and there. The great Dutch orchestra seems to me somewhat less flexible than the London Symphony was in Dorati’s 1962 Mercury recording—there is a little squareness in the Spanish Dance, the Mere Gigogne number, and the Waltz of the Flowers—but this impression is possibly created by Philips’ powerhouse recording, which tends to be downright overpowering at times with excess emphasis on the drums and the low end in general. For the most part, though, one appreciates the exceptional clarity with which details of the enlivening performance come through, and it is good to have the boys’ choir Tchaikovsky specified in the Snowflakes scene in—

(Continued on page 129)

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FEBRUARY 1977  
CIRCLE NO. 24 ON READER SERVICE CARD  
123
LAST summer, I wrote an article for STEREO REVIEW on “The Great American Symphony” which provoked a fair bit of reader response. Not about what was in the article, but about what was not. Every single one of the letters was written to plead the case of a composer who didn’t get mentioned.

Of course, a short survey cannot possibly include everyone, and there are many reasons why Distinguished People’s Composer X, Maverick Modern Musician Y, or Avant-Garde Astronaut Z might have been omitted. But the real message from those letters was that there are lots of composers out there and lots of contemporary music that does not get the hearing or the recognition that it deserves. Still, there are a few recordings around, and recent releases from CRI, Odyssey, and Opus One demonstrate the quality of some of this music.

Ralph Shapey (who was mentioned in the article) is as important and influential in new music as, say, De Kooning or Kline is in modern painting. Yet, his music has been little played outside contemporary-music circles, and only two or three works have been recorded. A number of years ago Shapey announced that he was not going to write any more music and withdrew all his earlier works from circulation. The CRI recording of Praise, with Shapey conducting, apparently represents a reversal of that decision.

Praise is, like many of Shapey’s works, big in conception. It was begun in 1961 and appears to have been his last completed work before the silence. It is a kind of very unorthodox Hebraic service expressed in strong, modern language. Shapey’s music is hard—not hard-edged but firm, strong, and difficult—and it has to be met on its own terms. At least it is here to be met!

A great deal of recent new music is religious or meditative in feeling and searches for a certain suspended, timeless quality. George Crumb’s music, like Shapey’s, is both static and ecstatic. Makrokosmos, Vol. II has the composer’s now familiar array of unusual sounds, including singing, whispering, whistling, plucking and scraping inside the piano, and quoted fragments from Boris to Beethoven to the Catholic liturgy. The twelve pieces are meditations on the signs of the Zodiac with titles like The Mystic Chord, Ghost-Nocturne for the Druids of Stonehenge, and Litany of the Galactic Bells, and there are such playing directions as “Like a Nirvanarance,” “Dark, fantastic, subliminal,” and “Prayer-wheel . . . as if suspended in endless time.” Well, you get the idea. Robert Miller’s performance on Odyssey is superb.

The music that results or denies music’s most apparently fundamental quality—time—that is—originated in New York in the early 1950’s in the circle around John Cage, an early Western disciple of Zen Buddhism and the ancient Chinese book of divination prophecy called the I Ching. Probably the principal exponent of this idea of timelessness is Morton Feldman, who, with Earle Brown, David Tudor, and Cage himself, has developed ideas of chance and open form which have been enormously influential in the avant-garde. The Rothko Chapel was built in 1971 in Houston, Texas, by John and Dominique de Menil and is filled with giant canvases by Mark Rothko. The simple, floating music of Feldman’s Rothko Chapel, one of his best works, was written for this space. For Frank O’Hara is dedicated to the memory of the New York School’s poet laureate, who was killed in an accident on Fire Island in 1966. Like everything of Feldman’s, it creates a beautiful, motionless, passionless musical surface. This music comes from nowhere, commissioned by the Fromm Foundation for performance at Tanglewood in 1972; they are recorded here with Schuller’s Contours as an in memoriam for Maderna, a pianist-composer-conductor who died in 1973. Il Giardino Religioso has some of the suspended, meditative qualities of the New York School, with time out for one dramatic, driving middle section, it is an effective, intimate work. In contrast, the Schuller compositions—one recorded by Schuller himself and the other taken from a live performance by Arthur Weisberg—are nervous and intense in their odd blend of European and American modern styles.

A very different sort of homage is represented by Andrew Thomas’ The Death of Yukio Mishima. It is a theatrical piece in which the Japanese writer Mishima is portrayed by a woman. The work provides a rather ambiguous commentary on Mishima’s garish and widely publicized samurai suicide. Thomas juxtaposes fragments of Mishima’s writings in Japanese and English with a Shakespeare sonnet, and the whole is set in a Western, modern version of gagaku. Whew! Dirge in the Woods is still another in memoriam—for Thomas’ Juilliard teacher, Hall Overton. Set to a text by George Meredith, it is a deeply felt but magically depressing work. The air of gloom is not dispelled by Lawrence Widdoes’ bright, biting From a Time of Snow.

All these in memoriam (memoria?) and meditations on death and eternity—Zen Buddhist, astrological, or otherwise—cannot be a sign of health in the modern-music body politic. What is healthy is the fact of the recordings and the quality of the performances and the sound reproduction, which are, where I have not already mentioned them specifically, exceedingly fine.

—Eric Salzman

SHAPEY: Praise. Paul Geiger (bass-baritone); Contemporary Chamber Players and Chorus of the University of Chicago, Ralph Shapey cond. CRI SD 355 $6.95.


FELDMAN: Rothko Chapel. Karen Phillips (viola); James Holland (percussion); Gregg Smith Singers, Gregg Smith cond. For Frank O’Hara. Members of the Center of the Creative Arts, State University of New York at Buffalo, Jan Williams cond. ODYSSEY Y 34138 $3.98.

WOLFF: Lines for String Quartet; Accompaniments for Piano. Nathan Rubin (clarinet); Joan Plata (violoncello); Nancy Ellis (viola); Gregi Kubby (cello); Fred Stillman (guitar). CRD 357 $6.95.


THOMAS: The Death of Yukio Mishima; Dirge in the Woods. WIDDIES: From a Time of Snow. Jeanne Ommering (soprano); Notes From Underground, Peter Leonard cond. Opus One 28 $4.98 (from Opus One, Box 604, Greenville, Me. 04441).
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clarity and definition, as you listen with
The music comes through with an effortless
fatigue" to the vanishing point. As you lis-
ten, you discover that the emotional tension
formerly caused by this distortion is gone. The
music comes through with an effortless
clarity and definition, as you listen with
more attention, more relaxation, and far
more pleasure than ever before.

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about 15 minutes of a complex, musically
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ten, you discover that the emotional tension
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music comes through with an effortless
clarity and definition, as you listen with
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Possible.

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27 Sugar Hollow Rd., Danbury, Ct. 06810

CIRCLE NO. 42 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Sonic Carriers (tenor); Royal Philharmonic Orches-
tra, Roberto Benzi cond. PHILIPS 9500 203
$7.98.

Performance: A vocal treat
Recording: Excellent

Aria recital discs sometimes follow a new artist's
tourist's meteoric rise too soon, before the artist
has had time to become familiar with the rep-
ertoire, before he has reached a certain artist-
ic consolidation. José Carreras did not hurry,
and the present debut recital disc—following the
tenor's successful participation in several
complete operatic recordings—was well
worth waiting for. A look at his program
testifies to the care and imagination that went
into it: unacknowledged Verdi combined with a
string of unfamiliar excerpts, five of which are
entirely new to records.

Carreras has come a long way since his ear-
ly successes with the New York City Opera.
In demand everywhere in the world, he inhab-
its the top tenor hierarchy with Pavarotti and
 Domingo (not to forget the unforgettable Ber-
gonzzi), and the present recital substantiates
his eminence. The voice has a sunlit quality
God apparently bestows only on Italians or
Spaniards who choose Italian opera for their
livelihood. It is a natural lyric spinto, brilliant
in timbre, well-seasoned, and equalized with
a healthy ring up to the A-natural and a hint of
tightness above it (a freely produced high C
may not be within his range, but neither was it
within Caruso's . . . ). His singing is pure in
intenion, with passion and drama built into
it but not at the expense of the musical line.
He projects the texts clearly and meaningfully,
occasionally with an ardent over-empha-
sis, but never in a tasteless or vulgar manner.

Anyone seriously interested in Italian opera
would want to hear an excerpt from Bellini's
student opera, or Donizetti's last one, or from
the opera Ponchielli wrote after La Gioconda,
the first half of his life and by Verdi in the sec-
ond. Needless to say, they are all performed
admirably here, with solidly competent
 orchestral support, and the recorded sound is
excellent. G.J.

Recording: Of Special Merit

JACQUELINE DELMAN: Song Recital. Shos-
takovich: Seven Songs on Poems by Alexander
Pergament: Who Is Playing at Night? Martin:
Three Christmas Songs. Head: A Piper.
Jacqueline Delman (soprano); Emil Dekov
(violin); Ake Olafsson (cello); Guilla von
Bahr (flute); Lucia Negro (piano). Bis LP 37
$7.98. From HNH Distributors, P.O. Box 222,
Evanston, Ill. 60204.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Very good

The adventurous and thoughtfully produced
Bis label (Swedish imports) has come up with
another winner: a recital centered on English
songs. Other winners: franz Schubert's Ein
Feste Burg is the raspiest sound around except
for my neighbor's bad doorbell. The recording engi-
neers have done an excellent job, and specialist-
ss will be particularly delighted to hear such
extramusical sounds as the chiph on the Ci-
dad-Rodrigo instrument.

The repertoire Chapela has chosen demon-
strates that the organ was not limited to reli-
gious functions. Besides the dignified tientos
and versos (time fillers during Mass), here are
secular dances, transcriptions of French chansons,
and two rousing battle pieces. The exciting
performances reveal the organist as
scholar as well as performer. M. Chapet is
not afraid of rhythmic alterations, free em-
bellishment, or that notorious specialty of
Spanish organ music, the double trill in con-
tary motion. Let us hope there will be more of
his tours.

S.L.
Straight talk about direct drive

The DD75 is our first direct drive turntable. It reflects a lot of what we've learned in half a century of building quality turntables.

The heart of any direct drive turntable is the motor. Since it is in direct contact with the platter, it must be as steady—and as free from vibration—as a pacemaker. The performance of the motor is measured by these specifications: rumble, wow and flutter.

But without a lightweight tonearm, unrestrained by friction, the best motor can't deliver high quality, high fidelity sound. After all, the only thing that moves the tonearm is the minuscule stylus tracing the record groove. If the tonearm is heavy, or drags, the sound will be distorted. The specifications which determine tonearm performance—mass and friction—are as important as rumble, wow and flutter.

Direct drive turntables can be manual or automatic. The difference has a direct bearing on record safety. With a manual turntable, you risk scarring your records or damaging your stylus, particularly when lifting the arm off the record. That's because the human hand can't always be steady and accurate. The risk is minimized with a system that lifts the arm precisely, automatically.

Motor. Tonearm. Record protection. Convenience. These essentials directed the design of the new direct drive DD75.

The Garrard DD75 delivers rock-steady speed with a DC motor, governed by an electronic servo system. It is totally immune to fluctuations in household current. The specifications are impressive: rumble -70dB (DIN B), wow and flutter 0.03%. The same electronic system provides variable speed control, ±3%, monitored by an easily-read, illuminated strobe.

Unlike the tonearm in most direct drive turntables, the slender arm of the DD75 is extremely low in mass—just 16 grams. It rides effortlessly on jewel bearings, with friction so low that it will track the finest cartridges at their minimum rated stylus pressure.

In addition to fully damped cueing, the DD75 automatically lifts its tonearm and shuts off the motor at the end of play. This is done non-mechanically by a reliable photo-electric circuit. You never have to leap across the room to stop playing the lead-out groove. You can even use this system in mid-record, by lightly touching the Stop button. Play can be resumed at the precise point where it was interrupted.

The appearance of the Garrard DD75 fully complements its performance. It is mounted in a base of genuine teak veneer, with shock-absorbent feet to insulate the turntable from external vibration. The tinted dust cover has special friction hinges: it stays where you raise it.

Garrard's first direct drive turntable yields some very direct benefits. Not the least of which is the price: a straight and sensible figure—under $230.

For an illustrated, detailed folder on the DD75, please write: Garrard Division, Plessey Consumer Products, 100 Commercial Street, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

Garrard
Turntable specialist for 50 years.

CIRCLE NO. 17 ON READER SERVICE CARD
JOZSEF SIMÁNDY: Songs from Operettas. Songs from Lehár's The Land of Smiles and Friderike, Kálmán's The Violin of Montmartre and Countess Maritza, Zeller’s Der Vogelhändler, and Oscar Straus’s Ruß um die Liebe. József Simándy (tenor); Marika Németh (soprano); Chorus and Orchestra of the Hungarian Radio and Television, Andras Sebestény cond. QUALITON SLPX 16581 $6.98.

Performance Stylish Recording Very good

József Simándy is a leading dramatic tenor of the Hungarian State Opera with such roles as Don José, Don Alvaro, and even Otello among his regular assignments. Like many Continental singers, he seems completely at home in operetta. Though he does not command the melting manner of a Wittrisch or a Wunderlich, he nonetheless sings these excerpts with full involvement and a sure mastery of the style. The tenor is now sixty, and his voice is not as pure as it once was, yet it is still capable of nice dynamic effects, and only one of the selections (the Hungarian equivalent of "O Mädchen, mein Mädchen") is less than acceptable.

All selections are sung in Hungarian, a language quite appropriate to the operettas of Hungarian-born Lehár and Kálmán, who regarded these versions as “authentic.” As a matter of fact, "Komm Zigańy" sounds just perfect in this paprika treatment, while "Gruss mir mein Wien" loses none of its charm when the lyrics say “Embrace my Budapest.” The truly Viennese melodies of Zeller and Straus, of course, are a different story, but the singer’s stylistic command easily joying the languorous strains of a medley from Victor Herbert’s The Fortune Teller, the aforesaid Serenade, Drdla’s once ubiquitous Souvenir (first jotted down, we are informed, on the back of a streetcar ticket in Vienna), Alice Blue Gown from Irene, and even The Glow-Worm, which, the liner notes disclose, was once danced by Pavlova. This listener was roused from the tranquility of a deep trance at a certain point by music that seemed strangely associated with another source. It turned out to be the theme from Upstairs, Downstairs. For a moment I could see Mrs. Bridges plain. Then the fans turned slowly again in the old palm court as the thirteen members of Mr. White’s ensemble played on in an endless twilight of musical dénouement. The ambiance is all there.

P.K.

This sort of music has been scathingly revived in a period program by Albert White and His San Francisco Masters of Melody, a spin-off of their salon-music broadcasts over San Francisco radio. Here is music to which you can relax to the point of stupor while enjoying the languorous strains of a medley from Victor Herbert’s The Fortune Teller, the aforesaid Serenade, Drdla’s once ubiquitous Souvenir (first jotted down, we are informed, on the back of a streetcar ticket in Vienna), Alice Blue Gown from Irene, and even The Glow-Worm, which, the liner notes disclose, was once danced by Pavlova. This listener was roused from the tranquility of a deep trance at a certain point by music that seemed strangely associated with another source. It turned out to be the theme from Upstairs, Downstairs. For a moment I could see Mrs. Bridges plain. Then the fans turned slowly again in the old palm court as the thirteen members of Mr. White’s ensemble played on in an endless twilight of musical dénouement. The ambiance is all there.

P.K.
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Introducing the Staff...

When a personal opinion, particularly a publicly expressed one, grates on our nerves, one of the commoner responses is to ask, either under or at the top of our voices, just who that so-and-so thinks he or she is. The question is asked of STEREO REVIEW with respect to our regular contributors and staff many times each month, and in this column we endeavor to supply the answers. —Ed.

Contributing Editor

Igor Kipnis

Music almost literally surrounded me as a child. My mother's father, Henriot Levy, a pianist, composer, and head of the piano department at the American Conservatory in Chicago, gave me some early lessons. My uncle Hans Heniot, who was a harpsichordist, I went free-lance. There was also a fair amount of harpsichord continuo work available, including a number of Baroque trumpet albums for Kapp Records. There were also writing assignments for the New York Herald Tribune, and I joined the STEREO REVIEW roster of record critics. I was extraordinarily lucky with my own records: my first solo discs for Golden Crest were followed, in 1964, by a CBS contract and eight years later by one from Angel, and I have now made twenty-six solo albums.

In 1971 I left New York for Redding, Connecticut, where I live with my wife Judy and our son Jeremy, who is almost twelve years old. For four years I taught full time at Fairfield University, but my concert schedule now includes more than fifty recitals and orchestral dates a year and involves tours of Europe, Australia, Israel, and South America as well as the United States and Canada, and that has necessitated cutting back on other activities. I have also become artist-in-residence at Fairfield, and readers will have noticed that my contributions to STEREO REVIEW have therefore dwindled considerably. I still like to keep my hand in, though, so that my reviewing hat will never have to go back into permanent storage in the attic. And although I have a lot of bass time for it now, I just cannot get rid of that terrible habit of collecting records. That even includes searching out old 78's, which I enjoy transcribing onto cassette so that I can play them in my van while hauling my harpsichord to the next concert. —Igor Kipnis

Cord ofing of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, complete in five volumes at a total price of some ninety dollars. I was disgusted when I found that the final volume contained, in addition to the last four preludes and fugues, two other 78's included as filler. One of these the second English Suite was played not on the piano by Fischer but on the harpsichord by Wanda Landowska. As it turned out, this apparent rip-off soon fascinated me more than any of the many Bach piano discs I had, and I longed to try a harpsichord in the flesh sometimes.

At Stanford, where I majored not in music but in social relations and dreamed of winding up in either radio or TV production or doing a-a-r work with a record company, I finally had my chance to try a harpsichord as part of a project in Randall Thompson's Handel course. I was thoroughly smitten. Nothing happened, however, until 1957, when my parents imported a small instrument for me to fool around with after work.

Work up to that time included two years in the army teaching signal communications to basic trainees, a few months selling books and records at a Doubleday store in Grand Central Station, and a few months as assistant record librarian at New York's top-forty station WMCA. When I got my first harpsichord, I was art and editorial director of Westminster Records, which meant that I was in charge of all covers and liner notes. I began reviewing records for the American Record Guide at that time as well.

In 1961, two years after my debut as a harpsichordist, I went free-lance. There was a fair amount of harpsichord continuo work available, including a number of Baroque trumpet albums for Kapp Records. There were also writing assignments for the New York Herald Tribune, and I joined the STEREO REVIEW roster of record critics. I was extraordinarily lucky with my own records: my first solo discs for Golden Crest were followed, in 1964, by a CBS contract and eight years later by one from Angel, and I have now made twenty-six solo albums.

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STEREO REVIEW

Contributing Editor

Igor Kipnis

Music almost literally surrounded me as a child. My mother's father, Henriot Levy, a pianist, composer, and head of the piano department at the American Conservatory in Chicago, gave me some early lessons. My uncle Hans Heniot, who later became one of the first conductors of the Utah Symphony, took care of the vocal end. The family phonograph loomed large in my early years, partly because of my father's many 78-rpm discs of lieder and operatic arias.

Before the age of eight, I had traveled with my parents virtually all over the world. We finally settled in the United States just before the outbreak of World War II, when my father joined the Metropolitan Opera. I spent my teens in Westport, Connecticut, where I had a normal sort of schooling, took further piano lessons (without any particular thought of becoming a professional performer), and madly collected records.

I had one project: trying to earn enough money to buy Edwin Fischer's piano re-
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Sony Elcaset System

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