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Irving Kolodin wrote for Saturday Review, after hearing Berlioz' "Symphonie Fantastique" over a pair of HPM-200s: "...such towering presence that one could diagram the disposition of the Chicago Symphony just from the reproduced sound!"

We believe the HPM-200 represents a new standard of accuracy in loudspeakers. Its dynamic range, transparency and overall lifelike impact are without precedent.

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Editorially Speaking

By William Anderson

CRITICAL INFALLIBILITY

My fundament has for some ten years now been warming the leather of this editor's chair, a period long enough and a vantage point high enough to give me a probably privileged view of some of the goings-on in the arena wherein the worlds of music and hi-fi collide. One of the things I have noticed in that time is a steady decrease in the number of reader letters deploiring the "lack of objectivity" in our record reviewers. Though it is certainly possible that this decline means people have either ceased to notice or to care, I prefer to find it, incorrigible optimist that I am, a sign of increased sophistication in this much of the reading public.

A number of years ago the French novelist Gustave Flaubert made an intriguing observation about critics of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: whatever their theories about the play (*Hamlet* was/was not crazy, he was/was not in love with his mother and/or Ophelia), their observations boiled down to just one thing: rank subjectivity. This caused Flaubert to conclude (quite rightly, I think) that we speak of ourselves whenever we lack the courage to remain silent.

Critics, by and large, have no need of such courage, for they are paid to speak up. And most of them know that, when they do, it would be silly even to pretend to objectivity. Lately, however, I have noticed a budding tendency toward such pretense among record reviewers. It would be bad enough if it developed that they are misguided trying to please the least informed (though most vocal) members of their public; it would be absolutely scandalous if it means their ranks have been infiltrated by the Mensurationists, those misguided souls who delightedly reported discovering a "true pianissimo" (whatever that might be) in a recent recording (he did not mention a coincident discovery of his volume-control knob). And I was absolutely startled to find another squandering what might have been useful review space on an "objective" exercise that charted individual performance times (with totals, of course) of all twelve of Liszt's *Transcendental Etudes* for no fewer than six mostly obscure recorded performances—perhaps to lend an illusory credibility to other less focused observations that simply blurred with naked subjectivity (just what is a "fluffy" staccato?).

But learning that the Liszt *Etudes* have been played in as little as 58' 17" was not without its uses, for it inspired me to a little conjecture about what a *really* objective review of, say, a recorded piano recital might contain. The hall or studio, first of course—its dimensions and decor (wood or plaster walls), its reverberation and decay times for the significant frequency range (including harmonics). For the piano we might perhaps dispense with the specific gravity of the wood, the purity of the metal in the frame. But we would need the name of the maker (for type of action), the instrument's age (for both tactile and acoustic reasons), the material used in the keys (plastic is simply not the same as ivory to the touch), heat and humidity figures, and certain facts about the piano tuner (years of experience, results of his latest hearing test, whether he tunes by ear or with electronic aids). For the pianist, we would need some notion of his mood (up, down, or sideways), and perhaps the closest we could come to that objectively (we can't ask him—or his wife, mother, or lover) would be a note from his analyst plus his biorhythm chart for the day. We would also need some minimum *bona fides* such as names of teachers, contests won, earnings record for the previous year (we can skip this for debut artists), speed and accuracy in playing Chopin's *Minute Waltz*, and, finally, a fingernail check (we are looking for hangnails, of course). Next the number, type, and placement of the microphones, response curves on the tape to be used. . . . but you see what I mean. All of this information is perfectly objective—and perfectly useless. What we want from our critics is informed, subjective opinion, however fallible, accept no substitutes.

Stereo Review

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Awards

- Please accept my gratitude to the staff and critics of STEREO REVIEW for including a great jazz record by a most deserving band in the 1976 Record of the Year awards (February). The Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band has an astounding consistency in recording good arrangements and compositions with first-rate musicians. In the awards spread, however, though the album title ("Long Yellow Road") and the album number (RCA JPL1-1350) were correctly listed, the album cover shown was their second American release, "Tales of a Courtesan." I would like to assume that both were liked so well that you intended to include them both. I hope RCA can be influenced to release the other superb albums that Akiyoshi and Tabackin have made which are available only in Europe and Japan.

    JERRY L. ATKINS
    Texarkana, Tex.

- I would like to point out an error in your Best of the Year awards in the February issue: Honorable Mention, Patti Smith ("Horses"). According to James Goodfriend, "The standards were and are those of genuine musical and technical excellence, of real contributions to the arts, not of commercial success." Bullet slippers, torn shirts, obscenities, and heavy prom do not create 'genuine musical excellence,' just dollars and a few mini-cults! I saw Patti Smith in concert and all I did was see; I didn't hear anything! I hope Linda Ronstadt and Paul Simon can recover from association with Patti Smith.

    BOB STILHOU
    Southbury, Conn.

- As I proceeded on my cover-to-cover romp through the February issue I noted a slight error in the Record of the Year awards. Although the article lists Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band: "Long Yellow Road," the album cover shown is from the same group's "Tales of a Courtesan." This would seem to prove even STEREO REVIEW is not infallible (though always interesting).

    LARRY D. ARNOLD
    Russellville, Ark.

Booster Pops

- I was shocked to read in the February issue that the Boston Pops are without a recording contract. If no record company decides to make a contract with the Pops, can the Pops fans band together to form our own recording society? It'll probably take a lot to get it off the ground, but I, for one, would like to see Pops recordings on a regular basis encompassing its vast repertoire.

    KENNETH DZUS
    Dorchester, Mass.

Toy Trumpet

- I enjoyed reading Irving Kolodin's "Fiedler, Builder of America's Musical Bridges" in February. But I'm puzzled by the attribution of Toy Trumpet to Leroy Anderson. My 78-rpm Victor disc (4R5-A) shows Raymond Scott as the composer.

    WILLIAM B. FURMAN
    House Springs, Mo.

Music Editor James Goodfriend replies: Mr. Furman is absolutely right. We apologize.

Rubber Ducky

- It's about time a responsible voice in the audio field spoke up about the menace of CB (Ralph Hodges, "The Greater Good," January). Radio-frequency interference is not the audiophile's fault, and audiophiles should not have to pay the price of its elimination. RFI suppression devices cannot help but degrade audio quality. To solve RFI by putting a suppression device in audio equipment is akin to solving the problem of gun control by forcing everyone to wear bullet-proof vests.

The Goldwater-Vanick bill referred to in the column may have died in the last Congress, but it or something very similar is sure to be introduced again. It is very important that the serious audio fan write his congressman in opposition of such bills. The CB industry and its lobbyists are sure to put considerable pressure on Congress for such legislation. Our church, opposition from the audio field is simple self-defense. CB magazines and newspaper columns have urged CB'ers to write in support of Goldwater-Vanick, but I'm sure well-thought-out letters from serious audiophiles could balance out the letters expressing CB'er views.

Giving the FCC power to regulate the home entertainment industry is the last thing the industry needs. After all, the FCC created the CB mess and has been unable to clear it up. The FCC appears to have little sympathy for the interests of the serious audiophile. I shudder at the thought of what they might do if given the power to regulate stereo equipment unrelated to broadcast operations.

G. GERRISH WILLIAMS
Maple Shade, N.J.

- Hurrah! Ralph Hodges' January column, "The Greater Good," has struck a resounding chord of truth for audio listeners across the land. The CB radio-frequency interference onslaught is intensifying and ever widening into our homes. As I live close to a major interstate highway, the annoyance is especially acute for me and my stereo listening enjoyment. I hope Mr. Hodges' article and the forthcoming RFI feature in STEREO REVIEW will awaken enough readers to write Washington concerning this menace and have Congress act on it. Some types of silence are indeed golden!

    MIKE OURRE
    Crowley, La.

- Senator Goldwater and other hams should beware of making common cause with CB'ers in the matter of RFI in home audio systems unless they want to be lumped with those foolish players of Cops and Scofflaws and other childish games on our highways.

    J. GOMEZ
    Southampton, N.Y.

- Over the past few years ham and CB transmissions have been coming into my stereo system, TV, and even our church public-address system (during Mass it's not at all good to hear these people). I spoke to some local hi-fi manufacturers about what seems to me to be a strange FCC response to RFI problems. The manufacturers claim they are individually too small to do anything about the problems. Perhaps STEREO REVIEW can rally the audio manufacturers together and go after the FCC. I fear, though, that nothing will really be done because of the small percentage of people who have serious RFI interference. Our local church is in a congested area; the ham operator was 150 feet away, and the CB operator (80 feet away) comes in so clear one would think we had run a microphone line into his home. The ham operator turned himself out of the church PA with a huge filter he placed on his antenna wire, but within three months he was back in again. He came

    (Continued on page 8)
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through my stereo even after the manufacturer "fixed" my receiver for it. The problem was finally solved when the gentleman electrocuted himself, but we await another ham in the area with fear.

The CB'er put a filter on his antenna which did little—very little. The manufacturer of my PA amplifier recommended some changes, but we found them already built in. PA installers have told us they would charge over $18 per hour to find the place of RFI entry, but ers have told us they would charge over $18 per hour to find the place of RFI entry, but it's the poor design of ham/CB equipment that is at fault. The local FCC blames the hi-fi and PA manufacturers for not putting in anti-RFI circuits which they say will not degrade fidelity. In any case, we are not alone. People call in frequently to local station WBUR's hi-fi shop-talk program complaining about RFI.

Technical Editor Larry Klein replies: It is rare that a legally operating ham or CB'er can do anything substantial to his rig—or his antenna system—to minimize its potential for creating interference. A ham can redirect his antenna and/or cut down his radiated power, neither of which he can legally be forced to do no matter how much interference he creates. In some cases it may be harmonics of his radiated signal that are causing the trouble, but usually (if he is obeying the existing FCC rules) these harmonics are very weak. And, in any case, filtering out harmonics will be helpful only when there is interference with FM and TV. In short, I don't see how one can sort out RFI at a transmitter would help keep an r.f. signal out of an audio amplifier.

In truth, audio manufacturers have not taken all reasonable steps available to minimize their equipment's r.f. sensitivity. During the initial product planning, circuits should be designed, the chassis constructed, and the ferrite beads installed with a view toward minimizing the effects of r.f. fields. But when the impinging signal is strong enough, nothing short of a major (and expensive) redesign of the entire installation will be of any help.

Although anti-RFI circuits need not necessarily degrade fidelity, I would hate to leave it up to the FCC to make the design decisions as to which do and which don't. And in no case will such fixes be totally effective against a nearby ham who puts out a kilowatt of r.f. power.

To my way of thinking, the question of RFI is not totally susceptible to a technical solution but requires an ethical approach. Ralph Hodges made this point beautifully in his reply to a reader last month. At present, hams and CB'ers are legally entitled to do their thing. And the fact that they are doing it all over our Joni Mitchell, Mozart, or even Musak is not any concern of the law. I'm told that in the near future a Higher Authority is going to take a hand in the matter: sunspots, which strongly affect radio transmission and reception, will be with us starting some time in 1978 and perhaps peaking in 1981. There's a good chance that they may act to make much of the CB band unusable.

I enjoyed Ralph Hodges' article about RFI and CB users in January, especially the point about RFI being a form of invasion of privacy. But the Goldwater-Vanick bill is not my idea of a solution. If RFI is to be suppressed, it should be done at the source, in this case, CB radios. It is my decision as a free person to determine if I want to use a stereo that is immune to RFI, not the government's, and it is up to component manufacturers, not the government, to decide whether to offer equipment that is immune to RFI at the risk of impaired performance.

Maybe if the CB'ers had a taste of their own medicine they'd be a little more considerate. If electronics companies can manufacture CB radios for the illegal purpose of avoiding speed traps, why can't they also manufacture jamming devices that would scramble offending CB transmissions?

Ralph Hodges replies: Any attempt at jamming will get you into the biggest jam imaginable with the FCC. However, perhaps you can take some comfort from the fact that, in populous regions, the CB'ers seem to be doing a good job of jamming each other.

Ralph Hodges' discussion of the RFI controversy struck a nerve amid the ranks of the many sufferers facing mounting waves of rubber ducks. With federal intervention presently tenuous at best, there is little long-term consolation offered by Walter Mitty pipe dreams of electronic countermeasures. Because a congressional majority may not be
tuned in to these pages, I’d suggest the audiophile write a persuasive, informative letter to Washington, perhaps enclosing a copy of the "Audio Basics" column.

Brian G. Fette
Jackson, Mich.

* We at Advent Corporation would like to add a comment to Ralph Hodges’ January column on radio-frequency interference (RFI) and the pending legislation intended to deal with it. In our study of phonograph preamplifiers we were unable to design a circuit which was utterly effective in curing RFI problems without interacting with the cartridge source impedance so as to produce an audible frequency-response error. Legislation which dictates the susceptibility of phonopreamplifiers to RFI will have to take into account this apparent fact of life. Good practices such as shielded metal containers and good grounding and shielding are about all one can do to prevent RFI without audible consequences.

Tomlinson Holman
Research and Development
Advent Corporation
Cambridge, Mass.

Villainous Hisses
* In his February review of Al Stewart’s "Year of the Cat," Peter Reilly mentioned something about Stewart’s hissing of his "s’s." This situation has been driving me up the walls. I noticed it on his previous LP, "Modern Times," too, and I think I’ve pinned the cause down to two possibilities—either the way the record is produced and engineered in the studio or the way it is pressed. I tend to go for the second, but then it could be my equipment. I’m still not sure—maybe you have some ideas.

Arthur G. Niehaus
Jersey City, N.J.

Could be that Al Stewart hisses.

Musical Landmarks
* The January issue of Stereo Review with William Livingstone’s terrific story on musical landmarks has been preserved for posterity. It was chemically treated and sealed in a time capsule installed at the Kennedy Center on December 31, 1976—to be opened in January 2076. The capsule contains highlights of Bicentennial arts activities associated with the Kennedy Center, and we felt nothing better commemorated the National Historic Music Landmark portion of the Bicentennial Parade than Mr. Livingstone’s clear, concise journalism and the attractive layout of the article.

Marti Jones
Bicentennial Parade of American Music
New York, N.Y.

The Guitar
* I very much enjoyed Stephanie von Buchau’s "Music for Classical Guitar" (January). I was especially intrigued by the section in which she leaned on critics who accuse classical guitar music of having "no guts." The question occurs to me, however, of whether it is the technical style of play or the context in which the instrument is played that

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**Erroll Garner**
- The jazz world recently lost yet another "great" as a result of the untimely death of pianist Erroll Garner. He will always be remembered as a superb pianist, a delightful entertainer, and, most important, a remarkable human being. Erroll Garner will be missed but never forgotten.

D. R. Hendley
Milwaukee, Wis.

**Bee Gees**
- Few things infuriate me more than reading a review like that by Noel Coppage of the latest Bee Gees album (January). His self-appointed authority on the workings of the mind of Western man comes across sounding like one of those pseudo-intellectuals trying desperately to compensate for the fact that he simply cannot dance. The ridiculous pop about Marshall McLuhan and brain hemispheres is so irrelevant to the subject of the album being reviewed that I wonder if Coppage was more concerned about expounding his own trivial ideas than trying to say something about the creative work of a group of musicians. Personally, Mr. Coppage, I think you should be dancing.

Edward M. Grant
Boston, Mass.

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**Hawaiian Music**
- I think Steve Simels should pull his head out of the sand—it has affected his hearing. Don Ho ("The Pop Beat," January) represents Hawaiian music as much as Alice Cooper represents the girl next door. In the last five years there have been a rejuvenation of and an exploration into the roots of Hawaiian music. The young Hawaiians who disliked what "Tiny Bubbles" did to one of the few original art forms in the U.S. began melding the old styles with a new consciousness and came up with incredibly pure and startlingly rich musical forms.

Jonathan Moser
Honolulu, Hawaii

Mr. Simels replies: Good Lord, Moser, that was supposed to be funny!

**Salsa**
- Joel Vance's December review of the Fania All Stars album "Delicate and Jumpy" was great. It's about time somebody told Fania what salsa music is all about. I hope Fania get their act together and stop trying to be like everybody else.

C. Valentin
Fajardo, P.R.

---

**Simels**
- Steve Simels gone? He was a rock critic who lent an ear of rock respectability and balance to STEREO REVIEW. I feel some of the criticism directed at him was unwarranted. His reviews of the Springsteen, Smith, and Zevon albums were dead center. I will miss exploring "The Pop Beat" with him.

Stanley B. Dow
Altus, Okla.

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**Well, not quite gone; see this month's popular review section.**

William D. Thrush
Valparaiso, Fla.
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The AX-7500 is a high powered, low distortion AM/FM stereo receiver that can hold its own with the best. Even the toughest engineers have nodded their approval. It boasts 30 watts per channel minimum RMS at 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000Hz with no more than 0.2% total harmonic distortion. The advanced 3-stage direct coupled OCL and differential amplifier circuitry equalizer assures stability and excellent transient response.

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Pioneer's New Top-of-line Tuner

The TX-9500II has taken its place at the top of Pioneer's line of AM/FM stereo tuners. Among its features are switchable i.f. bandwidth (WIDE or NARROW) to provide a choice between maximum selectivity and maximum signal quality, a built-in test-tone oscillator to aid in setting tape-recording levels, and a choice of two degrees of FM interstation noise muting. Internally, the TX-9500II has a newly developed filter in its i.f. section that combines high effectiveness with phase linearity, plus a new 19-kHz pilot-signal "canceller" said to have much less effect on audio-frequency response than a conventional multiplex filter.

Usable sensitivity of the TX-9500II is 1.5 microvolts, with 50-dB quieting achieved at 2.5 microvolts in mono and 35 microvolts in stereo. Capture ratio (in the WIDE i.f. mode) is 0.8 dB, while alternate-channel selectivity is 35 dB in the WIDE mode and 85 dB in the NARROW mode. Other specifications, all for the WIDE mode, include AM suppression of 65 dB, 110-dB spurious-response rejection, and stereo separation of 35 dB over the range of 50 to 15,000 Hz. Frequency response (stereo) is 20 to 15,000 Hz +0.2, -0.5 dB. Distortion at mid-frequencies is 0.05 per cent (mono) and 0.07 per cent (stereo). The tuner has two pairs of output jacks, one set at a fixed level and the other variable by means of a front-panel control. A switchable circuit feeds multipath-signal products to the outputs, enabling the user to minimize them by means of antenna orientation. Approximate dimensions of the TX-9500II are 16 1/2 x 6 x 15 1/2 inches. Approximate price: $400, with an optional walnut cabinet costing $35. The next model in the Pioneer line, the TX-8500II, retains most of the features and much of the performance of the TX-9500, but at a price of about $275.

Elliptical Styli on Audio Technica's Latest Cartridges

To make its finest products available to consumers not requiring CD-4 playback, Audio-Technica is offering stereo equivalents of its highly ranked AT11SS and AT12SS phono cartridges with elliptical rather than Shibata styli. The new AT15XE ($100) has a 0.2 x 0.7-mil elliptical stylus, a frequency response of 5 to 30,000 Hz, and stereo separation of 28 dB at 1,000 Hz (23 dB at 10,000 Hz). The recommended range of tracking forces is 3/4 to 1 3/4 grams. Other specifications are identical to those of the AT11SSa, including the output of 2.7 millivolts for a recorded velocity of 5 centimeters per second.

The AT12XE ($60), an adaptation of the AT12S, has a 0.3 x 0.7-mil elliptical stylus and a tracking-force range of 1 to 1 3/4 grams. Frequency response is 15 to 28,000 Hz, and stereo separation is 24 dB at 1,000 Hz, 18 dB at 10,000 Hz.

Superex Headphones: Low Price, Light Weight

The Superex TRL-77 is a non-acoutically isolating stereo headset weighing only 1 1/2 ounces (less cable). With its augmented low end, the TRL-77 has an overall frequency response of 25 to 20,000 Hz. The phones employ Mylar diaphragms within compact molded earpieces with user-replaceable foam cushions. The padded headband is a single piece of stainless steel.

With an impedance appropriate for the headphone jacks of virtually any receiver or integrated amplifier, the headset produces a sound-pressure level of 100 dB with an input of 5 milliwatts. For a mid-range signal at that level, distortion is 0.65 per cent. The TRL-77's 7-foot cable terminates in a standard three-conductor phone plug. Suggested price: $30.

Digital-readout Heathkit Receiver

The top of Heath Company's receiver line is now the AM/FM stereo AR-1515, equipped with a half-inch LED/digital display to indicate the tuned frequency. Power output is 70 watts per channel into 8 ohms on a continuous basis, with less than 0.08 per cent harmonic or intermodulation distortion. The high-level inputs have a signal-to-noise ratio of 80 dB. The phono inputs, referred to a 2-millivolt input signal, have a 65-dB signal-to-noise ratio.

(Continued overleaf)
On FM the AR-1515 has a usable sensitivity of 1.8 microvolts, a capture ratio of 1.3 dB, and alternate-channel selectivity of 100 dB. Image rejection is 90 dB, and AM suppression is 65 dB. The FM frequency response is 20 to 15,000 Hz ±1 dB.

Only the main controls—tuning, mode, input selector, and volume—appear on the front panel. The rest are concealed behind a hinged trim section that flips down. These include main and remote speaker switching, balance, bass, and treble controls, FM interstation-noise muting, high-frequency blend (for FM), tone-control defeat, high-frequency and subsonic filters, and tape-monitor switching. There is also a stereo headphone jack and tape-dubbing inputs and outputs augmenting those on the rear panel, plus a pushbutton for a Dolby decoder for Dolbyized FM broadcasts.

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The Heathkit AR-1515 is available only in kit form. Approximate overall dimensions are 21½ x 6¼ x 15 inches, including the decorative wood end pieces supplied. Price: $549.95. The optional Dolby FM module costs $39.95.

Audio Research's First Solid-state Components

After a long history of building only vacuum-tube amplifiers and preamplifiers, Audio Research Corporation has announced its first solid-state components, the SP-4 stereo preamplifier and D-100 stereo power amplifier. Much of the circuitry in both is based on the manufacturer's new "Analog Module," a sealed "gain block" that—in keeping with Audio Research philosophy—exhibits a minimum of distortion even without negative feedback. In addition, the D-100 employs a total of thirty-two output transistors in two self-adjusting output stages. The D-100 is rated at a continuous output (into 8 ohms) of 100 watts per channel from 1 to 20,000 Hz. Harmonic and intermodulation distortion are less than 0.1 and 0.05 per cent, respectively, at any power level up to rated power. Signal-to-noise ratio exceeds 100 dB; nominal input impedance is 30,000 ohms. For an output of 2 volts rms into 100,000 ohms, the SP-4 has less than 0.005 per cent harmonic or intermodulation distortion. Maximum output is 10 volts into the same impedance. Signal-to-noise ratios are typically 95 dB for the high-level inputs and 84 dB for phono.

The SP-4 has knob controls for volume, balance, bass, and treble, and for mode and input selection. Switch-operated facilities include high-frequency filter, tone-control defeat, and tape-monitoring and dubbing facilities for two tape decks. The SP-4 has dimensions of 19 x 5¼ x 10¼ inches and weighs 40 pounds. Suggested prices: SP-4, $695; D-100, $895. Wood cabinets for both are optional, as is a "head amp" module for the SP-4 that will take the output of a moving-coil phono cartridge directly.

The Electroduster from the Audiotex division of GC Electronics takes a novel approach to record cleaning. A soft velour pad traverses the disc, removing dirt and dust particles. As debris accumulates, an endless, statically charged transparent belt, turned by the turntable platter itself, carries the dust off and deposits it onto a separate felt pad. The Electroduster has an adhesive base for easy installation on the motorboard. The main body of the device pivots upward to permit removal and replacement of records. The device also snaps off its base for complete removal. Price: $19.95, which includes replacement velour and felt pads.

New Guide to Imported Records

□ Euro-Disc Gazette is a bimonthly publication listing disc records from Europe that represent a high level of technical and musical interest. Reviews from the major English-language European magazines accompany the listings.

(Continued on page 16)
Loud without clean is just noise. If it's music you want, and you want it loud, it has to be clean. And that's just what the new AR speakers give you.

AR's long-throw acoustic suspension woofers not only reach down to the lowest notes in recorded music, they do it at loud levels without boominess or audible distortion.

Energy-absorbent materials in AR dome midranges and tweeters give you the musical transparency of well-dispersed, crystal-clear highs. And AR tweeters use a unique magnetic coupling fluid to drain away heat and increase power-handling ability.

The new AR speakers easily accommodate the loud levels required by today's modern music. Even AR's smallest and least expensive speaker system, the AR-17, will handle the power of 100 watt per channel receivers or amplifiers to fill almost any listening room with loud, clean sound. The moderately priced AR-14 will handle amplifiers up to 150 watts per channel, and our widely acclaimed AR-11 will handle the output of today's most powerful superamps.

Before you choose a loudspeaker, take your favorite record to your AR dealer. Ask him to play it through any of our new loud and clean speaker systems, using any amplifier or receiver you choose from his sound room. We think you'll find the new loud and clean AR sound the one you want to live with.

For complete product information and a list of loud and clean AR dealers, use the reader service card or write to:

TELEDYNE
ACOUSTIC RESEARCH
10 American Drive
Norwood, MA 02062
The Gazette also operates a mail-order service for subscribers. Any of the discs listed can be ordered (before a specified bi-monthly deadline) and received via fourth-class mail within the four weeks following the deadline. Prices include all charges within the U.S. The Euro-Disc Gazette is available only to those with mailing addresses in the U.S. or Canada. Write the Gazette c/o Jim Callihan, Dept. SR, P.O. Box 337, Peterborough, N.H. 03458.

Miniature Speaker, Hi-fi Performance

Braun's new Output C speaker system is described as a high-performance device small enough to fit the palm of one's hand. The diminutive, heavily damped aluminum enclosure contains a 4-inch air-suspension woofer and a 1-inch soft-dome tweeter along with a crossover network that divides the frequency range at 1,500 Hz. Frequency response is given as 50 to 25,000 Hz. The use of high-temperature materials results in a power-handling capability of 35 watts continuous into the system's nominal impedance of 4 ohms. Minimum recommended amplifier power is 10 watts per channel. The enclosure is finished in black with a black perforated-metal grille. Dimensions are 6 x 4.5 x 4.5 inches. Price $100 each. The Output C is sold only in pairs. Circle 123 on reader service card

Two Inexpensive Receivers from Sony

The Sony Models STR-3800 (shown) and STR-2800 AM/FM stereo receivers have respective power outputs of 25 and 20 watts per channel into 8 ohms, available on a continuous basis throughout the audio-frequency range with 0.5 per cent harmonic distortion. In operating features and appearance the two are very similar, providing controls for volume, balance, bass, and treble, switching between two pairs of speakers, signal-strength and channel-center tuning meters, and switchable loudness compensation and interstation-noise muting on FM. Prices are also similar: $280 and $240, respectively.

FM specifications for the two receivers include a usable sensitivity of 2 microvolts, 50-dB quieting (in stereo) of 50 microvolts, a 1.5-dB capture ratio, 50-dB alternate-channel selectivity, and stereo separation of 35 dB at 1,000 Hz. Ultimate signal-to-noise ratio is 68 dB. The STR-3800 has tape-monitoring and dubbing facilities for two tape decks; the STR-2800 accepts a single deck. Dimensions for both receivers are approximately 19 x 5 3/4 x 13 inches, including wood end panels. A less expensive receiver, the STR-1800 ($180), provides 12 watts per channel into 8 ohms over a frequency range of 40 to 20,000 Hz, with less than 0.5 per cent harmonic distortion. Circle 124 on reader service card

Dynaco Equalizer, Kit or Wired

The Dynaco SE-10, a stereo octave-band equalizer available as a kit or factory wired, has several features that enhance its versatility. Two sets of inputs and outputs are provided, switchable at the front panel, so that the unit can be set up to process either of two stereo signal paths—such as the front or the rear channels of a four-channel system, or the recording inputs or playback outputs of a tape machine—with no plugging or unplugging of cables. In addition, the SE-10 has the more usual tape-monitor jacks and switching plus an equalizer-defeat switch. The ten bands of each channel are governed by slider controls, as are the gains of each channel.

The Dynaco equalizer uses circuitry specifically designed for freedom from overload to achieve low distortion at large signal levels and extreme settings of the controls. The range of each control is ± 12 dB at its center frequency. Frequency response with controls centered is 10 to 35,000 Hz ± 1 dB. Hum and noise are 85 dB below a reference output of 2 volts. The input impedance is 50,000 ohms. Harmonic and intermodulation distortion are a maximum of 0.04 and 0.02 per cent, respectively. Dimensions: 13 1/2 x 4 1/4 x 11 3/4 inches. Price: kit, $249; factory wired, $349. The optional wood cabinet shown is $24.95. 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.
THE ADC CARTRIDGE
CAUSES NO
PERCEivable WEAR
OvER THE LIFE
OF YOUR RECORDS.

The ADC XLM-MKII is different, because our engineers found a way to detach the magnet and reposition it above the stylus, so the stylus applies less pressure against the groove. Less pressure means less wear.

The XLM frequency response is exceptionally flat, from 15Hz to 24KHz ±1.5dB. And for the ultimate in stereo reproduction, it has a minimum of 28dB of channel separation.

Think about it. In the long run you'll probably spend more on your record collection than you will on your whole stereo system. So it makes sense to buy a cartridge with proof that it makes your records sound better and live longer.

THE ADC LOW MASS CARTRIDGE.
It helps your records live longer.

THE PROOF:

This is a photomicrograph of a 20kHz record groove that has never been played before.

This is a photomicrograph of a similar 20kHz record groove played 75 times with an ADC XLM-MKII cartridge. As you can see there is no difference.

THE DIFFERENCE:

ADC XLM-MKII

SHURE V-15-III

AUDIO-TECHNICA AT-15-S

STANTON 681-EEE

The way to get the most accurate reproduction of sound is to lower the total effective mass of the moving parts of the stylus. And that's exactly what our engineers did. In fact, of all the leading brands, ADC cartridges have the lowest mass moving system you can buy.

Induced Magnet

Magnet

If you'd like your own personal copy of the test result, write to ADC at address shown above.

CIRCLE NO. 2 ON READER SERVICE CARD
INTRODUCING UD-XL I AND UD-XL II.

Maxell tapes have always been considered by many people to be the highest quality tapes in the world.

But instead of sitting back and resting on our laurels, we've spent the last few years looking for ways to move even further ahead.

The results of our efforts are Maxell UD-XL I and UD-XL II. Two tapes which are not only better than anything we've ever made, they're better than anything anyone's ever made.

To begin with, UD-XL I is an improved version of our own UD-XL.

More specifically, it's a ferric oxide tape designed for use with the tape selector switch in the normal position (120 microsecond equalization and standard bias).

Its performance characteristics include the lowest harmonic distortion level of any premium cassette on the market today.

An extremely flat frequency
response from the lowest to the highest frequencies.

And an exceptionally high resistance to saturation even at the highest recording levels.

UD-XL II, on the other hand, is a ferric oxide tape specially formulated for use with the tape selector switch in the chrome position (70 microsecond equalization and high-level bias). It offers the low noise advantage of “chrome” without the disadvantages. Its performance characteristics include extremely low modulation noise and a 5 dB signal-to-noise ratio improvement over ordinary premium tapes.

If you’d like to know more about UD-XL I and UD-XL II, stop into your local dealer and ask some questions. Not just about our tapes, but about our competitors’ as well.

We think you’ll soon discover something that we’ve always known. The best just keeps getting better.

MAXELL. THE TAPE THAT’S TOO GOOD FOR MOST EQUIPMENT.

Maxell Corporation of America, 130 West Commercial Ave, Moonachie, N.J. 07074

CIRCLE NO. 30 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Audio Q. and A.

By Larry Klein

Audio Careers

Q. I'm interested in getting a job in audio after I get out of school. Are there special courses I should take or other things I should know?

A. You'll probably find all the information you need in the twenty-one-page Guide to Careers in Audio Engineering published by the Audio Engineering Society. According to it, I suspect that the guide was prepared "to aid men and women who would like to know the nature of the audio profession, how they can become audio professionals, and what a career in audio would mean to them. The Guide suggests why such careers can be deeply satisfying to individuals of wide-ranging talents and interests. It describes the astonishing variety of fields open to the audio professional." For a copy, send $1 to Careers, Audio Engineering Society, Room 449SR, 60 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.

Dead Belts

Q. The service shop handling repairs on my ten-year-old tape deck sent me a note which read: "Rubber belts and tires dead from standing idle. To prolong belt life, recorder should be operated three or four hours per week."

A. "Dead" was perhaps the wrong word to use; I think the correct expression would be that they had "taken a set." If a rubber belt under tension is stretched over its pulleys in one position for a long period of time, it could end up permanently deformed, which would probably increase wow and flutter. For a belt this is the equivalent of a flat tire, or a no-luck recording. The designer may choose to make one input "more sensitive." This means that a given signal level from a phono cartridge will be amplified more through one input than through the other. Since the more sensitive input usually has the smaller overload margin, by providing a choice of two sensitivities the manufacturer makes it possible to use a high-output phono cartridge with the low-sensitivity, low-gain input and/or a low-output cartridge with the high-sensitivity, high-gain input. A low-output cartridge plugged into a low-sensitivity input will probably cause distortion of high-amplitude record signals. Of course, different gain characteristics do cause difficulty if you want to make rapid A-B comparisons between cartridges, but I suppose that most manufacturers didn't consider the making of such comparisons as the principal reason for having two phono inputs.

Adding Output Metering

Q. I've been wanting to add power-output or VU meters to my amplifier so as to get some idea what my equipment is putting out. Do you have any idea how I would go about connecting the meters?

A. Connection is easy: calibration is difficult. Any a.c.-responding voltmeter can serve as a power-output meter, but to cover the range of, say, 0.1 to 100 watts with an 8-ohm speaker load requires a meter that will indicate legibly over a scale of about 0.9 to 28 volts. Unfortunately, the below-5-watt area where much of the musical action occurs would be crowded into less than a quarter of the scale on such a meter. So, even if you could work out a point-by-point calibration correlation between watts and volts, you would still have the problem of severe scale cramping. In other words, if you simply want a meter needle to wiggle when your music plays, that's easy; if you want a meaningful numerical indication, that's another story.

Phono-input Gains

Q. When I switch from phono 1 to phono 2 and vice versa on my amplifier, a noticeable difference in music loudness results. Both turntables use the same model cartridge; however, the turntables themselves are different brands. I'd greatly appreciate a possible explanation for this difference in loudness.

A. I'm not trying to do myself out of a job, but I suspect that you would have gotten a faster answer to your question if you had consulted the instruction manual of your amplifier! You would have found that when an amplifier (or receiver) has two magnetic phono inputs, their characteristics will frequently differ in some respects. The designer makes it possible to use a high-output phono cartridge with the low-sensitivity, low-gain input and/or a low-output cartridge with the high-sensitivity, high-gain input. A low-output cartridge plugged into a low-sensitivity input will probably not play loud enough, and there may be excessive noise at the high volume-control setting that must be used. A high-output cartridge plugged into a high-sensitivity input will probably cause distortion of high-amplitude record signals. Of course, different gain characteristics do cause difficulty if you want to make rapid A-B comparisons between cartridges, but I suppose that most manufacturers didn't consider the making of such comparisons as the principal reason for having two phono inputs.

Incidentally, anyone seeking a replacement belt, idler, or drive wheel for an old or new tape recorder (or record player) will probably find it listed in the very comprehensive thirty-two-page reference catalog published by Projector-Recorder Belt Corp. (Dept. SR, 147 Whitewater Street, Box 176, Whitewater, Wis. 53190). The catalog costs $1, which is refunded with the first order. And even if your cherished audio heirloom doesn't show up (along with Pentron and Magnecord) in the fine-print listings, all is not lost. The PRB Corporation offers to examine your old belt— if sent along with brand, model, and function information—and either supply a replacement from stock, or make one up. Prices range from a low of $3 to a high of about $11.

Reel Static

Q. Recently, while rewinding my reel-to-reel machine, I turned the lights off and noticed static-electricity sparks around the reel.

A. I'm pleased to note, however, that Radio Shack has recently come up with a small, not-too-expensive product that solves such problems. As shown in the photo, it consists of two meters in a small plastic cabinet. Installation is simple: just connect the unit directly across the speaker terminals of each amplifier channel. No a.c. power source is needed. The meter impedances are high enough that neither the amplifier nor the speaker will know they are in the circuit. The meter scales are calibrated from 0.01 to 100 watts, and when I connected the unit across my rear-channel amplifier's speaker terminals they gave a reasonably accurate indication of the power delivered. The meters are heavily damped and tend to hold the peaks for easier reading.
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 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 ARLL.

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.

The Empire 698 Turntable
Suggested retail price $400.00

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

CIRCLE NO. 99 ON READER SERVICE CARD
SYNCHRONIC TIME ARRAY: now, time/phase aligning at a popular price...why should big spenders get all the breaks?

Call it phase linearity or linking. Time coherence or aligning. But what good is a new audio breakthrough, by any name, if only a privileged few can afford it?

You wonder, for the umpteenth time, why high technology always starts out so expensive.

Frankly, we don’t know why other famous brands run so high for speakers built to compensate time/phase differentials between drivers. But we do know it can be done for less. Because Ultralinear, the up-front, coast-to-coast loudspeaker company, is doing it.

Our new Synchronic Time Array ST550 system can match—or exceed—their sophisticated performance, for the same bucks a conventional system costs.

Now it’s plain you too can have it, why should you want it? Basically, time-sync techniques correct the split-second delay in getting sounds out of your speaker—in the same order they went in.

It’s particularly critical when the same note’s being reproduced by more than one driver at the same time. In conventional systems, one driver is always fractionally closer to your ear than the others, so you don’t hear a simultaneous attack.

Sure, it’s a tiny distortion you wouldn’t think matters. Until you hear the definition the Ultralinear ST550 system achieves through cross-over network refinements and driver repositioning.

An ad can’t do it justice. And since ads don’t carry sound tracks, there’s only one way to comprehend ST550’s unique characteristics: direct comparison against any conventional speaker system you’re familiar with (at any price).

To run your own one-on-one test, send for a list of Ultralinear dealers in your area, plus our brochure on the Synchronic Time Array ST550 system. Write to the up-front, coast-to-coast loudspeaker company: Ultralinear, 3228 East 50th Street, Los Angeles, California 90058.
Take home pigs, dogs and sheep.

Pink Floyd's "Animals," on Columbia Records and Tapes.
"...in the same class with a number of more expensive products, including many of the direct-drive record players we have seen."

This quote, from the Hirsch-Houck Labs' report in Stereo Review, refers to the Dual 510, a semi-automatic belt-drive turntable. Considering that direct-drive models (especially our own) are widely accepted as the standard of performance, Hirsch-Houck's comparison is not to be taken lightly.

The 510 also benefits from comparison with other semi-automatic turntables.

**We'll let someone else tell you how good our belt-drive turntables really are.**

Dual's unique sensor locates the 12-inch and 7-inch lead-in grooves for you. You don't have to guess where they are. And there's no way to drop the tonearm accidentally; the cue-control lifts it automatically at the end of play and supports it until you release it. Every Dual tonearm benefits from comparison with curved tonearms. Even though the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, some designers are more concerned with appearance. Hence, the curved tonearm—whose departure from a straight line between pivot and stylus simply adds mass, reduces rigidity, and increases the likelihood of resonance. And fails to take advantage of the high compliance of the finest cartridges.

You might keep all this in mind when considering your next turntable. Chances are you'll want it to be a Dual.

---

**Dual United Audio Products, 120 So. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10553**


Dual 502. Similar except less sensor and strobe. Less than $160.

Dual 1249, fully automatic single-play/multi-play. Less than $280.

Specifications (DIN B): Rumble, >66 dB; Wow and flutter, <±0.005%.
True four-point gimbal centers and pivots the tonearm mass at intersection of horizontal and vertical axes. Tonearm is dynamically balanced in all planes. The four needle-point pivots are first hardened, then honed: a process which produces microscopically smooth surfaces. The precision ball-bearing races are only 0.157-inch diameter. Bearing friction: vertical, <0.007 gram; horizontal, <0.015 gram.

The curved tonearm may appear longer than the Dual tonearm, but both actually have the identical effective length and horizontal tracking angle.

Speed changes can be made while platter is rotating; belt is never twisted or distorted. Precision-grinding of belt maintains speed constancy and eliminates weak spots that shorten life.

Vario-pulley is individually machined for perfect concentricity and balance. Speeds are adjusted by expansion and contraction of pulley.
Audio Basics

By Ralph Hodges

THE CUSTOMIZED TUNER

With its single main control and easily interpreted meters, the tuner has traditionally been one of the simplest audio components to operate. But of late there has been a realization among tuner manufacturers that complexity in pursuit of better performance is sometimes no vice, and their current products reflect this attitude more and more. In today's tuners (and in the tuner sections of receivers) we're seeing a proliferation of knobs and switches that do things that could not be done with older products. Furthermore, in many cases these facilities can tailor and even augment the audible FM performance (as opposed to providing convenience and ease of operation), and frequently they require a decision by the user as to what compromises he will or will not accept in his reproduced sound. Hence these new controls are— or can be— useful adjuncts to listening pleasure. But before they can be used effectively they must be understood.

Since few of us really know how an FM tuner works (and those of us who do are prone to forget at any given moment), pitching this discussion on the theoretical plane would probably be unwise. Therefore, what follows will be a largely pragmatic treatment of what these sound-altering controls do, and why.

- The mode selector (frequently incorporated into the input selectors of receivers) is hardly a new control facility; it is virtually as old as stereo FM. However, its function places it squarely within this category of control. The usual position for the selector is FM AUTO, and in this mode it switches the tuner's circuits automatically between stereo and mono according to what the program is. Sometimes there is a STEREO ONLY position, in case you hate mono so much you can't stand to hear it even for the brief moment it takes to tune past a mono station (STEREO only causes the tuner to pass up all mono stations). Invariably an FM MONO position is also provided. This is not in case you hate stereo with equal fervor. Instead, the position is there to enable you to switch a weak and noisy stereo broadcast into mono for the purpose of reducing its noise. Combining the two channels of any stereo program source to create a mono signal will electrically cancel some of the noise components and result in a quieter pre-

- High selectivity is what a tuner has when it is able to reject interference occurring very close to the frequency to which it is tuned. Low distortion is what it tends to have when it will accept a wide band of frequencies above and below the nominal center frequency of the broadcast signal. Both characteristics are desirable, but beyond a certain point of design sophistication either one is achieved only at the expense of the other in current tuners. Usually it is the product's designer who decides the trade-off between these two parameters. But if the tuner has an LF bandwidth switch—as some de luxe units do—the user can take a hand in the compromise too. With the switch in the WIDE position the tuner favors low distortion at some moderate sacrifice of selectivity; the opposite is true for the NARROW position. Except under the most difficult reception conditions, WIDE would be the logical position of choice; but NARROW is there when audible interference requires it.

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- One of the components of a stereo FM (but not a mono FM) broadcast signal is a 19,000-Hz tone that will appear at the outputs of the tuner unless it is somehow removed. Since 19,000 Hz is within the audible range for some people (and within the reproduction range of some loudspeakers), especially since a tone of this type will play havoc with many tape machines when they try to record from the tuner, eliminating this tone effectively has been a high priority concern in stereo tuner design. The usual removing agent is the multiplex filter, which attempts to introduce a very steep cut-off slope above 15,000 Hz. But, of course, there are filters better than others, and the majority of them probably still give some (slightly audible) "dulling" effect below 15,000 Hz. It appears that not everyone is happy about this situation, because there has recently come into existence a multiplex filter switch that will banish the filter at the push of a button. Naturally this restores the 19-kHz whistle but, ears and loudspeakers being what they are, there is a good to excellent possibility that you won't be able to hear it. Presumably you will be able to hear a slight increase in the program's high-frequency content. (It is very likely that tape recording will be impossible with most machines when the multiplex filter is switched out, however, and Dolby circuits, when used, will not work properly.)

No single tuner I know of has all the above features (in fact, I've encountered the multiplex filter switch only once, but who knows what will happen next month?). Probably some of the newer features will prove superfluous to most consumers and succumb to disuse in the marketplace. But it would be a shame if they disappeared merely because no one knew how or why to use them.
"...the Sansui tradition: solid, well thought out... right up there with the best... a fine value..."

High Fidelity Magazine, Dec. 1976

"SANSUI Model 7070, a stereo FM/AM receiver... under $520."

"Here is yet another receiver in what we have come to think of as the Sansui tradition: solid, well thought-out, neither barebones nor feature-encumbered, delivering performance that is right up there with the best..."

"Some 'extras' are immediately apparent when you lay an inquiring finger on the controls. The tone knobs are stepped... and include a MIDRANGE as well as the usual BASS and TREBLE... two phono inputs... mono/mike input with its own mixing level control... there also is output-power metering...

"One special feature of the 7070 is its provision for outboard decoding of Dolby FM broadcasts...

"The amplifier section is rated at 18dBW (60 watts) per channel and actually will pump out 1/2 dB (10 watts) more before exceeding the distortion rating at any audio frequency. More impressive, harmonic distortion is far below Sansui's 0.3% rating at all tested power levels, exceeding 0.5% in few measurements... intermodulation too is low...

"...if your expectations are high, there's very little about the 7070 that we think might disappoint you. Feel and finish of the parts is excellent, as we have come to expect of Sansui. The capable amplifier section has enough power for use with two pairs of speakers... the tuner section is among the best... the ancillary 'functions' are comprehensive and efficient. All in all, a fine value for the money."

In every price and power range, Sansui offers you a receiver in their tradition of excellence. Visit your nearest franchised Sansui dealer today and select the model that is right for you — from the new luxury Model 9090DB with full Dolby capability, at less than $750... to the no-frills Model 221, at less than $180."

"If your expectations are high, there's very little about the 7070 that we think might disappoint you. Feel and finish of the parts is excellent, as we have come to expect of Sansui. The capable amplifier section has enough power for use with two pairs of speakers... the tuner section is among the best... the ancillary 'functions' are comprehensive and efficient. All in all, a fine value for the money."

A whole new world of beautiful music.
Noise-Reduction Ratio

Q Most cassette decks claim that their Dolby system improves the signal-to-noise ratio up to 10 dB, but one specification I saw recently said the machine had a 50-dB S/N without Dolby and 60 dB with Dolby "above 5,000 Hz." What does that mean?

A The full noise-reduction potential of the Dolby B system is available only at frequencies of approximately 5,000 Hz and up. Lesser amounts of quieting are available at lower frequencies, down to about 1 or 2 dB at 500 Hz, this latter being a typical frequency where non-Dolby S/N measurements are made. A cassette deck with a 50-dB non-Dolby specification at 500 Hz will not have anywhere near that good a rating at 5,000 Hz, however, since the maximum undistorted signal that can be obtained from the cassette declines very rapidly in the high-frequency area.

Head Demagnetization

Q My dealer told me not to try to demagnetize the heads on my machine, since if I did it wrong I'd do more harm than good. What do you say?

A Unwanted magnetism does build up on tape heads (and guides and capstans), and if it isn't removed by proper demagnetizing it will tend to erase the highest frequencies from every tape you play on the machine. In the time it took to scare you, your dealer could have shown you how to degauss the heads safely.

1. Obtain a standard inexpensive "head" demagnetizer such as is sold in most audio stores. If the demagnetizer tip is hard and sharp, cover it with electrical tape so it can't scratch anything.

2. Remove all tapes from the immediate vicinity and turn off the recorder. Hold the demagnetizer several feet away from the heads and turn it on. Then slowly bring it up to the heads, guides, and capstan(s) and slowly move it up, down, and around the exposed surfaces. Then slowly withdraw the demagnetizer, being sure to wait until you are several feet away (arm's length) away before turning the demagnetizer off. This is important, since the turn-on and turn-off surges in the degaussing coil could magnetize the head if it is near them. That may be what was worrying your dealer.

Conspiracy of Silence

Q I notice that you and the other hi-fi magazine editors talk about cassettes and open-reel tapes; but all of you seem to ignore the eight-track format. What's wrong with cartridges?

A Several years ago, 3M made a last, valiant attempt to revive interest in high-quality eight-track cartridges by showing a technically advanced deck at the Consumer Electronics Show. But it never achieved the hoped-for popularity. My files are full of reader letters asking me how to salvage jammed cartridges, and in my replies I've cited the words of an industry spokesman who once described the eight-track cartridge as "a self-destruct mechanism." Sooner or later the demagnetizer tip is going to rub against the heads in more or less normal use, but, in my experience, the motor bearings are likely to go first, making any possible difference in the oxide formulations academic. And the latest findings I've seen (no doubt to be contradicted, then re-confirmed, then contradicted again) place the wear factor between good chrome and ferric cassettes about even.

CrO₂ Tape and Head Wear

Q I have a large number of chromium-dioxide cassettes, but I've hesitated to use them on my new recorder because I've been told they'll wear out the tape heads faster. Is this true?

A The relative abrasiveness of CrO₂ and ferric-oxide cassettes has been debated back and forth for years, and when a group of dealers recently asked me for the latest research findings on the subject I countered with a question of my own: "When was the last time your service technician had to replace a worn-out cassette tape head, regardless of which type of cassette was used?" The silence was eloquent.

All tape is abrasive, of course, and at open-reel and duplicating speeds head wear can be and is a problem. No doubt someone, somewhere, has managed to wear out a cassette head in more or less normal use, but, in my experience, the motor bearings are likely to go first, making any possible difference in the oxide formulations academic. And the latest findings I've seen (no doubt to be contradicted, then re-confirmed, then contradicted again) place the wear factor between good chrome and ferric cassettes about even.

On the Dull Side

Q A number of my prerecorded cassettes sound okay on one side, but dull (no highs) on the other side. Since the cassettes I record myself sound fine on both sides, I don't think there's anything wrong with my deck. Is it just another case of sloppy duplicating?

A The problem you describe is quite common. I once measured a 15-dB difference in the 10,000-Hz playback level between the two sides of a full-track test cassette intended for consumer use, and a 4- to 5-dB difference at that frequency is not unusual even with professional test cassettes. The explanation is that sometimes minute imperfections within the plastic cassette shell can cause the tape to skew, so that it contacts the playback head at slightly varying angles, depending on which side is playing. The resulting azimuth error, even if only a fraction of a degree away from the proper 90 degrees, will cause significant treble losses.

Since your prerecorded tapes play well in at least one direction, it is probably safe to say that your tape head is properly aligned; you'll just have to live with the occasional second-side vagaries. The reason your own tapes don't show the problem is that even if there is a slight skewing in one of your cassettes, you're using the same head on the same machine for both the record and playback, so there is no relative azimuth error. And, of course, the shells of good quality consumer cassettes are generally better than those used for mass duplication.
Who said you can’t see the quality of a speaker?
Look closely at the Sansui SP series.

The SP-7500X
In a great speaker, quality can be seen as well as heard. When you look at the Sansui SP series—you’ll see what we mean.

Go to your Sansui franchised dealer and ask for the SP-7500X.

Let your salesman remove the handsome, hand-carved Kuniko grille. The size of the woofer is impressive—a massive 16”—for a rich and full bass. And for clean, transparent super-highs the SP-7500X speaker system features three tweeters—two 2” “super-tweeters” and an additional horn tweeter.

Notice the unusually large 8” cone mid-range driver which adds a sense of presence and creates a smooth transition between the highs and lows. The four-way crossover network is built around a ferrite-core inductor with high-voltage capacitors to keep distortion way down over the entire audio range.

Now listen to the SP-7500X. Turn up the power. This speaker can handle lots of it. (130 watts peak). And always with unusually high efficiency.

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Before you do something extravagant, audition the Realistic® LAB-300 at the nationwide supermarket of sound.

Common sense never sounded so good! Turntables are sporting lots of "revolutionary" features these days — electronic eyes . . . mini-computers . . . hydraulic suspension systems . . . About the only things they have in common are knob appeal and a high price. The Realistic LAB-300 is different. It offers one very down-to-earth attraction: flawless performance at a price that's way below other top-of-the-line models. So you do the seeing and thinking, and we'll save you a bundle. Here's how:

Single-play design for better sound per dollar. By avoiding the noise and cost of a changer mechanism, Realistic can concentrate on getting maximum music and life from your 33⅓ and 45 RPM records. The S-shape tone arm, 8½" long from point to stylus, tracks accurately even at ¾ gram. Belt-driven by a powerful synchronous motor. Wow and flutter: less than 0.1%. Rumble: better than -60 dB (DIN B).

With semi-automatic convenience. You touch the tone arm only to start the record. At disc's end, an independent mechanism returns the arm and shuts off the motor, saving cartridge and turntable from needless wear. Damped cueing, direct-reading tracking force adjustment, variable anti-skate.


All “extras” included. The cartridge is the heart of your turntable, and Radio Shack doesn't think it should be treated as an accessory. So the LAB-300 comes with a Realistic-by-Shure model performance-matched to the tone arm. It's our finest magnetic elliptical, a $44.95 value in itself! The sturdy, friction-hinged dust cover is included, too.

We're near you. No searching around for a small-brand dealer who might not be there when you need him. With over 4800 Radio Shacks in the USA and Canada alone, you won't have any trouble finding the LAB-300 or getting service and original factory parts at any time. Come by for a demonstration. First class sounds even better — when you can afford it! Just 159.95*.

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You've heard about Infinity's landmark Quantum Line Source, of course. Musically accurate—the critics agree—beyond any speakers ever made before.

They cost $1200* Each. Ouch. The Quantum 3 pictured here costs less than $500* It uses all the same advanced Infinity technology: Same Infinity-Watkins Dual-Drive Woofer** with a combination of cleanliness and power throughout its astonishingly-wide bass range.

Quantum 3 also uses the same Electromagnetic Induction Tweeter (EMIT) stacked in multiples. They deliver smooth and utterly natural highs with excellent dispersion. Same high-definition ventilated dome midrange drivers, too.

Slightly fewer of them, that's all. And the same meticulously-phased midbass coupler.

What is the difference, then? Come see. For one thing, the Quantum Line Source stands a towering 5½ feet high; Quantum 3, a more companionable 3½ feet.

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Infinity's QLS delivers every musical nuance from 18 through 32,000 Hz ± 2 dB.

Compare the Quantum 3 range:

28 to 32,000 Hz ± 3 dB.

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Quantum Line Source is certainly the finest; Quantum 3, very probably the finest value. Choose.

In fact, bring a stash of favorite records in to your Infinity dealer. Introduce them and yourself to the whole Quantum Series of speakers by Infinity.

Whether your taste runs to chamber-style delicacy or sledgehammer impact, they will reveal more of it—and more depth and spatial imagery—than you ever knew were in those familiar grooves.

We promise you quite a turn-on.

**Manufacturer's suggested retail price, optional with dealer. **Manufactured by Infinity Systems, Inc., under license from Watkins Engineering.

We get you back to what it's all about. Music.
WILL QUADRAPHONICS RISE AGAIN?

The winter Consumer Electronics Show is a smaller, quieter, and chillier (remember last January?) counterpart of its gigantic summer relative. Instead of McCormick Place, the venue becomes the Conrad Hilton in downtown Chicago, with plenty of unofficial spillover into neighboring hotels. As the secondary show, the winter CES does not present the overwhelming numbers of new products that are to be seen in the summer. Instead, manufacturers emphasize the marketing possibilities of existing products in their lines, and dealers have another chance to take on a product they passed up or failed to see seven months before.

**New Products.** There were, of course, a few new products here and there. For example, Marantz presented eight, all of them stereo receivers, and one of them (Model 2385) raising the high-power mark for receivers to 185 watts per channel. Adding to the seven months before. on a product they passed up or failed to see lines, and dealers have another chance to take on a product they passed up or failed to see seven months before.

- **Other Developments.** In amplifiers, Sony displayed a prototype of the first Class-D power amplifier to utilize vertical field-effect transistors. Power output is presently 150 watts per channel, projected price is approximately $1,000, and availability is scheduled for a year hence. Hitachi’s first Class-G power amplifier, the HMA 8300, was introduced; it has a continuous-power rating of 200 watts per channel (400 watts “transient music power”) and a price of $275. It was accompanied by a new preamplifier, the HCA 8300.

Larry Klein’s write-up of the Tokyo Audio Fair (February) noted the Japanese use of meter-like tuning dials on some radio products. The first exponent of this possible trend to arrive on these shores is the Rotel TX-7707 receiver. In its case, an actual meter is used. This is a logical step, since the receiver has five FM-station presets activated by pushbuttons. The voltages that tune the station-selecting circuits also drive the meter, which is calibrated in megahertz. A conventional tuning dial would have to be motorized to work with the preset system.

It is rare that a tone arm makes headlines, but the Dynavector arm is unusual enough to rate a mention. Involving a design intended to minimize vertical effective mass (for good performance on record warps) and maximize lateral mass (for stability), the arm employs magnetic damping and a number of other novel features. It and the moving-coil Dynavector phono cartridges, all made by Onlife Research, are currently distributed here by Audioanalyst.

The Burwen people, reorganized under the name Burwen Research, have a new dynamic noise filter, the Model 1201A, with improved time constants. The show also coaxed forth a few new turntables, but I saw nothing in the way of new tape equipment. As always, however, new loudspeakers were everywhere. Dynaco has an entire new line of five models, the LMS (“Laboratory Monitor”) series. And the Sharp/Optonica people have created the first new speaker system with a ribbon tweeter (the CP-5000) in quite some time. I could go on almost forever about speakers, but I see the bottom of the page coming up fast. We will pass this way again in September for the summer show report, at which time we’ll get in as many speakers as we can.


**Technical Talk**

By Julian D. Hirsch

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**FTC POWER RULING REVISITED:** I have received the following interesting letter from Robert Orban, chief engineer of Orban Associates, a concern well known for its commercial sound recording and broadcast equipment, and would like to share part of it with my readers for its viewpoint on matters that are still a long way from being resolved.

Dear Mr. Hirsch: This letter comments on your praise of the FTC power ruling for audiophile power amplifiers; I feel that your argument and broadcast equipment, and would like to share part of it with my readers for its viewpoint on matters that are still a long way from being resolved.

In a free market, the manufacturer devotes himself to giving the customer what he wants. He must do so to survive competition. While he has the opportunity to try to affect the customer's desires by advertising, his competitors have the same privilege. If one manufacturer tries to deceive potential customers, another manufacturer can take out an ad denying the deception, and in fact capitalizing on his "honesty." The list of scenarios is endless, but as long as free competition prevails, things settle down. Only when manufacturers collude to fix prices and/or systems in the ability to affect the customer's desires by advertising, his competitors have the same privilege. If one manufacturer tries to deceive potential customers, another manufacturer can take out an ad denying the deception, and in fact capitalizing on his "honesty." The list of scenarios is endless, but as long as free competition prevails, things settle down. Only when manufacturers collude to fix prices and/or

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**Tested This Month**

- Audio Pulse Time-delay System Shure M24H Stereo/Quad Cartridge Realistic SA-2000 Amplifier Avid 101 Speaker System

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There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch. Sure, this may result in higher reliability. But would you argue that therefore the consumer should be forced to buy a heavy-duty restaurant-type stove or an industrial vacuum cleaner? Reliability should be his choice.

The power-output specification is even more absurd, in that it has only the vaguest and most casual correlation with how the amplifier sounds and with how loudly it can play music into real loudspeakers. The consumer is being sold a bill of goods by the Federal Government. Average power is now Best by Government Test, despite the fact that it tells us only how good an amplifier might be as a power source for an incandescent lamp or a toaster. The IHF's Music Power, for all its faults and abuses, was at least an honest attempt to specify an amplifier's performance reproducing high peak-to-average program material like music. And the further problem of how an amplifier deals with frequency-dependent reactive loads (Mr. Consumer's loudspeakers, that is) was just beginning to be attacked by certain innovative manufacturers when the FTC effectively shut the whole thing down.

In addition, I am sure you are aware that once THD goes below about 0.5 per cent it stops having any effect in predicting the sound quality of an amplifier. THD is such a crude measurement psychoacoustically that about the best it can do is differentiate between an unlistenable amplifier and one that is mediocre or better. The fact is that despite the exercises you go through each month to verify or disprove manufacturers' specifications, neither you nor I nor anyone else has the foggiest notion of how to make measurements which will correlate psychoacoustically with the subtle differences in the sound of today's component-grade amplifiers. However, Total Harmonic Distortion is now Best by Government Test, and the lid is effectively clamped on developing new and improved ways to measure consumer amplifiers. Fact is, the government should have specified the clipping point as the reference level for power measurements if it wanted to use anything at all.

Let us sum up: The FTC, in the guise of protecting the consumer, has applied an unlegislated tax on all amplifiers, has restricted the consumer from choosing the degree of quality and reliability he wants to pay for, and has cast in stone two measurements which have only slight correlation to how good an amplifier sounds when playing music through loudspeakers.

Until the American people give up the idea that the Federal Government can redress all grievances, solve all problems, and generally take responsibility for their lives, we will have more and more excesses like the FTC ruling. This disturbs me greatly, because I see a strong correlation between this attitude and the general decline in the quality of American goods, in the output of American innovation, and in the ability of the United States to compete successfully in world markets on the basis of technological leadership. This leadership can come only from strong, individual entrepreneurs who can innovate without being crushed by the weight of government regulation and who can reap the financial benefits of their ideas without being robbed by excessive taxation. As for the consumer, a bit more caveat emptor and a lot less hand-holding seem to me to be the healthiest roads to take.

—Robert Orban

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Mr. Hirsch replies: Philosophically, I am in essential agreement with Mr. Orban—I also emphatically do not approve of government interference with private actions that are not related to the public welfare, and this includes the bulk of legislation intended to protect the consumer from himself as well as unscrupulous businessmen.

There is another side to this coin, however: the average consumer is in no position to judge the validity of advertised performance claims. A case in point is...
the gross abuse of the old music-power rating, which resulted in almost no correlation between an amplifier's advertised power and its actual performance.

Reliability, or the lack of it, is one of the major problems facing the consumer whether we are dealing with light bulbs or automobiles. There may be room for argument as to whether this or that amplifier sounds better than some other. There is no doubt that an amplifier that tends to blow up or break down is worthless, regardless of the impressive claims made for it while it works. I don't feel that reliability, where not related to safety, should be mandated by the government, but it is a good thing to have if the cost is not excessive.

As for total harmonic distortion, I must agree that measurements of this do not tell us much about how an amplifier sounds. Although this is not the time to go into the matter, I do not believe that any amplifier that is reasonably good and operating as intended has any sound quality of its own, at least not in the sense that phono cartridges, speakers, and listening rooms have their distinctive sounds.

My original comments were inspired by the realization that, whereas it used to be commonplace for amplifiers to fail to survive even a moderate amount of full-power testing, these catastrophic failures have become very rare since the FTC regulations took effect. (I am speaking only of my personal experience, of course.)

I am convinced that the reliability of hi-fi amplifiers as a class has, at power levels up to their rated maximums, been dramatically improved since the power rating rules were promulgated. Perhaps this is mere coincidence, and perhaps it is not. Since I do not see any corresponding increase in the general price structure, I think I am entitled at least to suspect that this particular bit of government interference with our personal prerogatives has been a benefit to the high-fidelity consumer. Perhaps it was an illusion that blew some good.

I would also like to remind Mr. Orban that anyone who doesn't care to have that reliability forced down his throat can still buy a mass-produced, cabinet-encased "hi-fi," one not affected by the FTC rules because its power is not advertised, and get the same old shoddy junk that used to be available to a wider segment of the populace. It is, thank God, still a free country . . .

Technical Editor Larry Klein comments: In the fifteen years I've been working with Julian Hirsch, I've found that about every five years or so he and I will disagree about something. That time is once again upon us—at least in respect to the question of reliability. If a manufacturer's repair data indicate that, from the point at which their amplifying equipment began to conform to the FCC preconditioning requirements, there was an improvement in overall reliability for home use, then Julian would be correct. However, my impression is that the failure rate of amplifiers used in the home, taking into account the normal evolution of improved technology, is at about the same level as it was before the FCC got into the act. In any case, the FCC did not intend to set up, with its rule, a life/ruggedness/reliability test for amplifiers; the intention was simply to "precondition" (meaning "warm up") the amplifier to prepare it for testing. The fact that many amplifiers could not handle the accidentally severe stress of the preconditioning period was the end result of a series of flukes and misunderstandings that took over a year to straighten out.

I have no question about Julian's personal experience with the amplifiers he has tested; my reservations concern the validity of generalizing from an amplifier's ability to survive a peculiar high-stress, test-bench condition to its reliability in ordinary home use. I believe the two are not necessarily related, particularly in a case such as this one, where the stressing test was not designed to produce reliability data. Of course, in self-defense, the manufacturers had to redesign their units to withstand the FTC's test procedure. But whether this ability has anything to do with reliability in normal home use remains moot.

In respect to the "free enterprise" question, I must disagree with both Julian and Mr. Orban. To paraphrase Thomas Jefferson: "Educate and inform the entire mass of the people, for they are our only sure guarantee of freedom." Perhaps fortunately for him, Mr. Jefferson could not foresee a time when such education and information for "the entire mass of the people" would be simply impossible; these days even an engineering degree won't guarantee that you will be able to make an informed decision between, say, two competing toasters, no less amplifiers. Technology has overwhelmed us all, and we need protection from those who would foist shoddy goods (and, yes, shoddy ideas) on us through deliberate miseducation and misinformation. It is best that the consumer get some protection against his unavoidable ignorance rather than none at all, even though that protection may occasionally be inept.

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Equipment Test Reports
By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

Audio Pulse Model One Time-delay System

Despite the advances in the state of the high-fidelity art, the fact remains that recorded music reproduced in the home still simply does not sound like the real thing. It can sound very good—perhaps in some respects "better" than live—but, in general, it does not sound enough like an actual performance to fool anyone for a moment. One of the major reasons for this is the limitations that prevent the reproduced program from conveying the ambiance of the original concert hall or other recording acoustic. It is this sense of spaciousness, related to the reverberation and absorption characteristics of the original environment, that is so difficult to capture in a recording and to re-create subsequently at home.

At one time, quadraphony seemed to be an answer to the problem. It seemed plausible that a second pair of microphones, located at some distance from the performers, would pick up a greater proportion of the reflected (Continued overleaf)
sound in the hall. Recorded on two additional channels and reproduced through suitably placed speakers, this should be able to impose some of the acoustic qualities of the concert hall on the sound of the listening room. Some recordings made in this manner accomplish this very well, creating a more convincing illusion of an actual performance than was possible with two-channel stereo. However, the major manufacturers of four-channel records, presumably following the dictates of the marketplace, have gone heavily into "surround sound" effects. These are certainly impressive and even fun to listen to, but they are "sound effects," farther from reality than mono records were, to say nothing of ordinary stereo discs.

There are other ways besides quadraphony to restore a convincing ambiance to recorded sound. One method is to establish a separate delayed signal path, combine a number of differently delayed components into a single reverberant signal, and then play this signal through auxiliary speakers located toward the rear of the room. If the delay times, the manner in which they are blended between channels and re-circulated within each channel, the placement of the auxiliary speakers, and the balance between the direct and reverberant sound sources are all properly adjusted, the result can be astonishingly natural sound. Perhaps best of all, this process can be applied to any program source, stereo or mono, without the need for any special recording techniques.

Artificial time-delay devices have been used (and sometimes abused) by the recording industry for some years. Until recently, they have been bulky and very expensive—altogether unsuitable for home use. Originally they were mechanical devices, using springs or long air columns to achieve the necessary time delays, but it is now feasible to do much the same thing using electronics alone.

The Audio Pulse Model One Time Delay System is an example of a unit that takes such an approach. (Audio Pulse is a division of Hybrid Systems, a well established manufacturer of analog and digital circuitry for commercial and military applications.) The Model One, its manufacturer's first consumer product, contains some ninety IC's in its active circuitry. We have used an Audio Pulse Model One for several months in several different listening rooms. Our experience has given us a pretty clear idea of what it can and cannot do (needless to say, it is not a panacea for all the ills of the recording and hi-fi worlds). It also confirmed our suspicion that any type of objective testing would be fruitless because of the difficulty of interpreting the results and the lack of any frame of reference for comparison purposes. Therefore, our evaluation of the Audio Pulse Model One will be entirely subjective.

**Description.** The Audio Pulse Model One accepts stereo or mono inputs from the tape outputs of an amplifier or receiver (or the main preamplifier output if that is more convenient) and passes them on unmodified to the normal front-channel amplifier and speakers. It also converts these input signals from their analog form into a series of digital pulses at a sampling rate of 250,000 Hz. Before the analog-to-digital conversion, the bandwidth of the input signal is reduced to about 8,000 Hz. This is done partly because of the requirements of the digital conversion process, but also because in a typical concert hall the reverberant sound that reaches the audience has lost most of its high-frequency energy through absorption.

In digital form the signals (held separate for the two channels) are passed through a series of shift registers. The shift registers form a memory system capable of storing signals for extended periods. An internal clock signal transfers the contents of each register to the next one as new pulse signals enter the delay system. The output of the last register is converted back to analog form, filtered to remove the "rough edges" from the reconstructed waveform, and made available at the output terminals of the Model One. The number of shift registers through which the signal passes (and the rate at which it is transferred between them) sets the total delay time.

In the Audio Pulse Model One, there are four initial delays, varying from 8 to 94 milliseconds (ms). These delayed signals are fed back to the input of the device and recirculated to simulate the multiple reflections that take place in a real room. The recirculation takes place within each channel, and between channels through a cross-feed circuit.

Physically, the Audio Pulse Model One is a black box 14 1/2 inches wide, 10 inches deep, and 4 1/2 inches high with walnut side panels. Its principal controls are a row of pushbuttons mounted vertically on an inset portion of the front panel. There are also two slider controls on the front that adjust the levels of the delayed outputs.

At the left of the row of pushbuttons is the red on/off switch, followed by six gray buttons marked LEVEL MATCH. The delay circuitry of the Model One is in a limited dynamic range, so the incoming program levels must be set properly to avoid noise or distortion. The peak level is shown by a row of twelve LED lights located on the front panel below the LEVEL MATCH buttons. Eight of them are green, with 0 dB (maximum operating level) shown by an amber light and three red overload lights showing levels above that. The LEVEL MATCH buttons are pressed in sequence until the peak program levels do not go beyond 0 dB for any large fraction of the time. The Model One is also equipped to function as a unity gain device in that the output is at the same level as the input.

Next is a white button marked INITIAL DELAY. When it is up, the initial delay time is 8 ms, which is followed and mixed with later delays of 22, 35, and 56 ms. This combination of delays is used to create the effect of a small-to-moderate-size room. Pressing the button to the long setting changes the delays to 12, 36, 56, and 94 ms to produce the effect of larger rooms—from a concert hall to a cathedral.

The next five gray buttons are marked DECAY TIME. They control the relative levels of the longer delayed signals that are mixed with the initial delay component and thus vary the reverberation time of the total delayed signal. More than one of the DECAY TIME buttons can be engaged at the same time, giving a considerable degree of control over the reverberant characteristics of the sound. A table in the instruction manual lists the actual decay times (for a signal to drop 60 dB in amplitude following a transient) together with the control settings needed to produce them. The times range from 0.2 to 1.3 seconds.

The final two control buttons are marked PRIM and SEC, each having DIRECT and DELAY positions. Normally the primary (input) signal passes through the device unaltered, so the PRIM button is left in its DIRECT position. The secondary signal is normally delayed, so the SEC button is pressed to its DELAY setting. If it is up (DIRECT), the secondary outputs merely feed the normal signal to all four speakers, and this is useful for initial speaker phasing. If the PRIM button is set to DELAY, some of the delayed signals (reduced in amplitude by 10 dB) are mixed with the primary signals fed to the front speakers. This can be used to add reverberation to stereo or mono programs heard through the front speakers only, or to a recording being dubbed onto tape.

In the rear of the Model One are MAIN IN, PRIM OUT, SEC OUT, and TAPE IN and TAPE OUT jacks. There are also two pairs of jacks marked SHORT and LONG. These carry signals (removed from the shift registers at intermediate delay points) which can be used with additional speakers and amplifiers to form six- or eight-channel delay systems. There is a (Continued on page 38)
You can always distinguish the excellence of a turntable by its capability to rotate a platter precisely, at a given speed, without adding rumble, wow and flutter to the performance.

Because JVC's new JL-F45 turntable platter is directly driven by a specially designed DC servo motor, any rumble-producing effect is virtually nonexistent. The result is outstanding measurements that defy audibility. Rumble is better than 70dB (DIN B) and wow and flutter is less than 0.03% (WRMS). Even some of the most expensive turntables don't measure up to the excellence of these specifications.

In addition to the precision of direct-drive, the JL-F45 offers dual options for operation. Manual. And completely automatic. Auto Lead in. Auto Return. Auto Stop. You can even repeat play a record automatically up to six times—or infinitely.

The JL-F45's exclusively designed Tracking-Hold tonearm assures the highest degree of groove tracking with unusually low tracking error.

This is absolutely essential for today's ultra low tracking cartridges, including CD-4. The new unipoint gimbal suspension system reduces unwanted friction and overcomes unexpected jolts to the arm.

Every feature you're likely to want in a quality turntable contributes to this 2-speed unit's high level of performance. 2-way viscous-damped cueing. A 12-inch aluminum die cast platter with illuminated strobe. Anti-skating control. Direct-reading tracking force dial. And lots more.

While the JL-F45 is JVC's top of the line at $250,* there are two other more modestly priced models. The fully automatic belt-driven JL-F35 at $160* And the semi-automatic JL-A15 at $130.*

Whichever you choose, you can be sure you're getting the most turntable precision, reliability and value JVC has ever offered.

*Circa approximate retail value, including base and dust cover.
slide switch that boosts the response below 100 Hz at a 6-dB-per-octave rate in its con-
tour position (on the sec outputs only) to more closely approximate the reverberant fre-
quency response measured in several well-
known concert halls. There are also two un-

Installation. The Audio Pulse Model One is installed in a sound system exactly as if it were a four-channel decoder. There are two modes of connection possible. If the tape-
monitor loop is used, the level-matching but-
tons can be left at the same setting since the input signal will always be at approximately the same level. However, the main volume control will then have no effect on the delay channels. Alternatively, connecting the Model One at the preamplifier outputs gives control over all four channels to the main volume knob, but it necessitates resetting the level match buttons for any substantial change in listening level. (Of course, using the Model One with a four-channel amplifier or receiver enables you to utilize the tape-monitor loop and still maintain single-knob control over volume for all four channels.)

There is a great deal of latitude in the choice of secondary speakers, which need not be identical to the primary pair. However, the mid-range characteristics of all four speakers should be reasonably similar. In the several listening rooms in which we set up the Model One, we used both conventional and multi-
directional speaker systems, with highly satis-
factory results in every case. The Audio Pulse instruction manual recommends that the sec-
ondary speakers be placed at the sides of the room, slightly forward of the listener and preferably near the ceiling. These locations may at first appear incompatible with conven-
tional four-channel listening. Nevertheless, in our listening evaluations, which compared the effect of the Model One with that of quadra-
phonic recordings decoded or demodulated in the appropriate way, we found that the side-
located speakers were often quite effective for quadraphonic material, particularly of the ambiance type.

Listening Tests. The instruction manual for the Model One ranks among the most useful and complete we have seen for a sophisticated con-
sumer product such as this. It is, in effect, a basic textbook on listening acoustics as they affect our perception of a musical performance. In addition, it explains in great detail (for those who are interested) exactly what is happening in every part of the Model One and the effects of the controls. A study of the manual makes it plain that there is no pre-
dictable combination of operating control set-
tings that will give the best results in every circumstance and that each user must exper-
iment for himself. For our part, we found that the complex interrelationships between initial delays, decay times, and secondary speaker levels is further complicated by the nature of the music being listened to.

The most important thing, and one which requires some self-discipline, is to play the secondary speakers at a such a level that they cannot be heard as separate sound sources. If one is aware that they are operating, the convin-
cing "naturalness" of the total sound is lost. If you (or a guest) should doubt that the secondaries are contributing a worthwhile ambiance enhancement, simply switch them off while listening to a program. The effect is nothing less than astounding, with the sound collapsing toward the front of the room. It is hard to believe that you once thought that the flat, two-dimensional sound of stereo sounded more or less "real." Once you have heard a properly functioning time-delay system, you are not likely to be satisfied with ordinary two-channel stereo again.

I am well aware that I (and others) have said very similar things about quadraphonic sound. The reason is simple: a good ambient quadraphonic recording, properly repro-
duced, is very similar in effect to the sound of a time-delay system. However, with the Au-
dio Pulse Model One, you are not limited to the small number of quadraphonic recordings made with the intention of recreating the hall ambiance. Almost any stereo program will sound more "real" through the time-delay system than will the majority of four-channel records, even when reproduced properly.

You are not limited to stereo either. The cross-coupling of reverberant signals between channels of the Model One, and the fact that they are non-coherent, makes it possible to create a very believable reverberant sound field with a mono program source. We played some old mono discs and found that the ambi-
ance of the time-delay system effectively wiped out the "single-source" spatial effect. It was especially interesting to shut off the de-
layed signals and hear the sound collapse, not to a plane, but nearly to a point!

As a general rule, the less reverberation and liveness there is in a recording, the more it can benefit from time-delay enhancement. A very "live" recording can be improved only marginally, if at all, by the secondary delayed signals. However, we found very few cases where the improvement was not worthwhile. If you walk into a room where a properly ad-
justed time-delay system is operating, you probably will not even be aware of its pres-
ence. Everything simply sounds natural, the way it is supposed to. You may be aware that most music systems do not sound that good, but you will hardly guess that a pair of small speakers (perhaps concealed) are responsible for the difference.

Most people using the Model One will prob-
bly try long delays at first, with the second-
ary speakers driven at plainly audible levels, just to convince themselves that the unit real-
ly can produce cathedral-like sounds in an ordi-
nary room (it can). However, it is neces-
sary to experiment at length with control set-
tings to get the desired effect on many types of program material. Once the operation of the Model One is mastered, it becomes simple to press a couple of buttons as required to match the music being played. To us, the most disconcerting aspect of using the Model One with FM broadcasts was the gross dis-
parity between optimum decay times for mu-
sic and speech. We were repeatedly reminded of this when the announcer's voice emerged sounding as though he were speaking in a cav-
ernous, empty auditorium.

Comment. There should, at this point, be no doubt in anyone's mind that we were very favorably impressed with the performance of the Audio Pulse Model One. But it is, of course, a very expensive addition to any mu-
sic system. Even if you already have a full quadraphonic set-up, there must be an invest-
ment of more than $600 in the Model One. If you are modifying a stereo system, you must add to that figure the cost of stereo amplifiers and a pair of secondaries. It is certain that Audio Pulse's competitors (there are sev-
eral already, and more are in the wings) will do all they can to bring the price down, but these are inherently expensive devices.

Clearly, the total conversion cost will run to at least $8,000! Is there a way to reduce the price? That is as much up to your ears as it is to your pocketbook. It is only fair to point out, however, that at the moment there is nothing else you could buy for $1,000 that would make as great an improvement in the sound of a really high-quality stereo system.

Circle 105 on reader service card.

(Continued on page 42)
Empire's Blueprint for Better Listening...

No matter what system you own, a new Empire phono cartridge is certain to improve its performance.

The advantages of Empire are threefold:

1. Your record will last longer. Unlike other magnetic cartridges, Empire's moving iron design allows our diamond stylus to float free of its magnets and coil. This improves much less weight on the record surface and insures longer record life.

2. You get better separation. The small, hollow iron armature we use allows for a tighter fit to its positioning among the poles, so even the most minute movement is accurately recorded.

3. Empire uses 4 poles, 4 coils, and 2 magnets (more than any other cartridge) for better balance and hum rejection.

The end result is great listening. A beautiful one for yourself or write for our free brochure: "How To Get The Most Out Of Your Records." After you compare our performance specifications we think you will agree that, for the money, you can't do better than Empire.

Empire Scientific Corp., Garden City, New York 11530

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<td>TOTAL CAPACITANCE</td>
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CIRCLE NO. 21 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Onkyo - A step ahead

State-of-the-Art is for everyone else. Onkyo design and construction is for tomorrow. Today.

We don't just claim innovation, quality and value. We prove it when independent test laboratories publish their unbiased reports in your favorite audio magazines.

Of our TX-4500, one test report said: "...one of the finest receivers available today at any price."

Of our TX-2500, another said: "...sounds a good deal better than the data suggest—and better than one has a right to expect at $300."

If the data don't suggest the total quality, it may be we're too cautious in our claims. But, we have other equipment too new to have been reported on as yet. All are built to the same exacting standards, featuring exclusive Onkyo advances. We'll try to be a bit less modest as we tell about:

Quartz-Locked Tuning—This is the tuning system of which the most famous testing lab said, "...a new system that completely eliminates tuning errors in FM reception." This is done by using a quartz crystal oscillator which takes advantage of the unique capability of precisely ground quartz to maintain a fixed frequency.

The Quartz-Locked circuitry compares the tuner's IF frequency with the frequency generated in the Quartz-Locked oscillator, continually compensating for frequency differences that would cause distortion or poor reception, and additionally compensating the FM tuning meter at the same time.

Servo-Locked Tuning—An economy version of the Quartz-Locked system with similar characteristics in a different configuration. While essentially an automatic frequency control circuit, Servo-Lock is more sophisticated in design and performance and in actual lab tests has held stations for at least 24 hours without perceptible drift.

Quartz-Locked AM/FM Stereo Receiver
TX-8500 — Power output 110 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.1% Total Harmonic Distortion. Direct coupled differential pure complementary main amplifier with ultra wide frequency response, 2 Hz to 60 kHz ± 1 dB at main amp, Total Harmonic Distortion less than 0.1% at rated output: 0.08% at 1 watt output. Rated FM sensitivity 1.7 µV (mono), 4 µV (stereo). 50 dB quieting sensitivity 3 µV (mono), 35 µV (stereo). Image rejection ratio 83 dB, alternate channel selectivity 70 dB, IF rejection ratio 100 dB, S/N ratio 70 dB (mono), 65 dB (stereo).

TX-4500 — Power output 55 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.1% Total Harmonic Distortion. Direct coupled differential complementary main amplifier with ultra wide frequency response, 2 Hz to 60 kHz ± 1 dB at main amp, Total Harmonic Distortion less than 0.1% at rated output: 0.08% at 1 watt output. FM sensitivity 1.8 µV (stereo). Image rejection and alternate channel selectivity 70 dB. IM distortion 0.3% at rated power; 0.1% at 1 watt output.

Servo-Locked AM/FM Stereo Receivers
TX-2500 — Power output 27 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms, both channels driven from 40 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.5% Total Harmonic Distortion. Direct coupled differential main amplifier with frequency response of 2 Hz to 60 kHz ± 1 dB. Total Harmonic Distortion no more than 0.5% at rated output; 0.2% at 1 watt output. FM sensitivity in FM, 2 µV (mono), 5 µV (stereo). Image rejection 45 dB; alternate channel attenuation 60 dB. S/N ratio 65 dB (mono), 60 dB (stereo). IF rejection 80 dB.

TX-1500 — Power output 15 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.5% Total Harmonic Distortion. Direct coupled differential amplifier with overall frequency response 20 Hz to 20 kHz ± 1 dB. Total Harmonic Distortion no more than 0.5% at rated power; no more than 0.3% at 1 watt output. FM sensitivity in FM, 5 µV (mono), 10 µV (stereo). Image rejection 45 dB; alternate channel attenuation 60 dB. S/N ratio 65 dB (mono), 60 dB (stereo). IF rejection 80 dB. Alternate channel attenuation 60 dB.

All of Onkyo's receivers feature multiple speaker outputs as well as multiple tape inputs and outputs including tape to tape dubbing. All are built to specification which often exceed their price ranges with special features, including Phase Locked Loop Multiplex.
of State-of-the-Art.

Quartz-Locked AM/FM Stereo Tuner

For those who are satisfied with their present amplifier but want the distinct benefits of Quartz-Locked Tuning, Onkyo offers the T-9, the only component tuner in the world that has Quartz-Lock.

In addition to the precision tuning capabilities of the T-9, it features a dual gate MOSFET/4 gang-variable capacitor front end and usable sensitivity 1.7 mV, 50 dB quieting sensitivity of 9 µV, 80 dB Image rejection and 90 dB S/N in stereo.

The T-9 uses Phase Locked Loop Multiplexed for low distortion, high separation stereo reception. At 2 kHz, stereo separation is 40 dB, at 100 kHz, separation is 35 dB.

Assuring continuous drift-free tuning, the FM Oscillator circuitry is hermetically sealed to prevent environmental influence on the components.

Other specifications include an IF rejection ratio of 100 dB and AM suppression ratio of 50 dB. In addition to Quartz-Locked tuning and exceptional performance characteristics, the Onkyo T-9 provides a special feature for tape recording directly from the tuner.

Known as the Tape Recording Level Check Switch, activation injects a 440 Hz tone to set recording level through the tape deck. Modulation of the incoming FM signal is reduced to 50%, preventing overloading and distortion. Onkyo's T-9 provides some of the cleanest tape recording possible.

Solid State Integrated Amplifiers

Having the only Quartz-Locked Tuner in captivity, Onkyo felt the need to provide amplifiers capable of delivering the same quality. There are, at present, two amplifiers in this series...A-5 and A-7. Both have been designed for their power handling capacity featuring reserve power for optimum sound reproduction with absolutely minimum distortion.

Because of this basic, very low distortion design, these amplifiers require exceptionally musically stable power supplies with more power than needed for normal operation, and a lot available when needed for peak demands. These needs are met through mass transistors, and oversize electrolytic capacitors. Thus, an extremely stable power supply is assured for hours of continuous operation. Further, specially selected power transistors are mounted in oversized heat sinks and the entire assembly is enclosed in a more than ample cabinet which allows for the flow of air.

A-7—Power output of 65 watts per channel, minimum RMS into 8 ohms, both channels driven, from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.1% Total Harmonic Distortion.

Onkyo avoids the primary distortion found in solid state amplifiers with Class A, push-pull driver stage differential direct coupled, pure complementary circuitry. The A-7 delivers exceptional frequency response of 2 Hz to 70 kHz ± 1 dB, with system square wave response showing less than 5% rise at 50 Hz. S/N ratio is extraordinary at 110 dB (IHF A Network).

Features include two Phono inputs and two tape monitors and dubbing, as well as tone controls and defect mute and a subsonic filter plus transient killer circuitry.

A-7—Power output of 65 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms, both channels driven, from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.1% Total Harmonic Distortion.

Onkyo avoids the primary distortion found in solid state amplifiers with Class A, push-pull driver stage differential direct coupled, pure complementary circuitry. The A-7 delivers exceptional frequency response of 2 Hz to 70 kHz ± 1 dB, with system square wave response showing less than 5% rise at 50 Hz. S/N ratio is extraordinary at 110 dB (IHF A Network).

Features include two Phono inputs and two tape monitors and dubbing, as well as tone controls and defect mute and a subsonic filter plus transient killer circuitry.

In the amplifier section the phono equalizers are based on Class A, differential push-pull circuitry with exceptionally low noise characteristics, e.g., A-7 shows an impressive S/N ratio of 110 dB.

A number of special features are included such as a Subsonic filter, a high frequency filter as well as transient killer circuitry. Stepped tone controls are provided with two-turnover frequency switches and tone control defeat. Phone overload is exceptional at 300 mV RMS at 1 kHz, 0.1% Total Harmonic Distortion, and the RIAA Curve Deviation of ±2 dB from 30 Hz to 15 kHz produces superb reproduction of your records.

What does it all mean?

You've read a lot of our claims—undeniable though they may be—and some of the claims made for us. But the best test is still your own ears. And the only way to use them is at your local Onkyo dealer. If you want more information, including reprints of independent test reports, ask your nearest Onkyo dealer how it's done. After all, a thirteen cents stamp is a lot better than guesswork.
Avid 101 Speaker System

Avid's Model 101 is a floor-standing speaker system that is roughly columnar in shape. The cabinet's top and bottom are made of walnut-finish wood and three sides are covered by removable brown grille cloths. The black rear surface of the cabinet is its only unfinished side. The speaker terminals are located under the base, so that connecting wires enter at floor level.

The Avid 101 is a somewhat unconventional three-way system. The 8-inch woofer operates in a ported enclosure, crossing over at 2,500 Hz to a 1.3-inch tweeter located just above the woofer. On each side panel, at the same height as the front tweeter, is a 2-inch-diameter cone tweeter operating above 3,500 Hz. There are no “balance” controls, the levels from the four drivers being factory set.

The Avid 101 has a nominal system impedance of 8 ohms. According to the manufacturer, its moderately low efficiency makes it advisable to use amplifiersrated at between 15 and 70 watts output. The rated frequency response is 30 to 18,000 Hz ± 3 dB. The Avid 101 is about 13 inches square and stands 29 inches high. It weighs approximately 40 pounds. Price: $149.

Laboratory Measurements. It is a practical necessity when measuring the “frequency response” of a speaker such as the Avid 101, which radiates (at least over part of its frequency range) into a full 180-degree horizontal angle, to measure its total energy output rather than make an anechoic measurement along any arbitrary axis.

Since this is our usual speaker test procedure, the Avid 101’s were set up against one wall of the listening room and the microphone was placed about 15 feet in front of them. The frequency response at middle and high frequencies was recorded separately for the left and right speakers, using a swept “warble tone” signal and averaging the two response curves. The resulting curve was corrected for the known room- and microphone-response characteristics. The low-frequency response was measured with the microphone close to the woofer and then separately at the port; the two measurements were then combined with the appropriate corrections for the relative diameters. Splicing this curve to our room measurement gave a total frequency response which, in our view, is truly representative of what the Avid 101 can deliver in a normal home environment.

It was a very good response curve by any standards, varying within only ±2.5 dB from 38 Hz to beyond 15,000 Hz. The only visible response variations were a slight rise above 5,000 Hz (where the side-mounted tweeters become effective) amounting to about 3 dB and a similar rise at the woofer’s maximum output frequency of 65 Hz. The contribution of the port to the total bass output was limited to frequencies below 40 Hz.

The sensitivity of the speaker was a bit lower than that of most ported systems, a drive level of 1 watt of random noise in the octave centered at 1,000 Hz producing a sound-pressure level (SPL) of 89.5 dB measured at a distance of 1 meter from the speaker. The bass distortion at a 1-watt drive level was very low—under 1 per cent down to 42 Hz and still an excellent 5 per cent at 30 Hz.

Our measurements and listening tests agreed in their indications that the Avid 101 is a very fine speaker system. Our next goal was to attempt to identify its inherent colorations and to compare it to other good speakers using a wider variety of program material than was available on our special “live-music” tape. As it happened, it was very difficult to identify any particular speaker coloration in this way. Whenever we thought we had heard something not to our liking, a switch to another speaker system usually showed that it was

Most of the speakers with which we compared the Avid system over a period of several months sold for two or three times its price. In the few cases where one of them had a definite superiority over the Avid, it was by a small margin. And there were a surprising number of cases where a direct A-B comparison showed the 101 to be clearly superior. When test comparisons lead to this kind of result, it is safe to say that all the products being compared are of roughly similar quality.

We found that the placement of the 101 was relatively noncritical, good results being obtained whether the speaker was against a wall or as much as three feet from it. Obviously, it should not be placed in a corner. If there is one adjective that applies to the sound of the Avid system, it is openness. In contrast to speakers that might have tested better but nevertheless managed to sound as if everything was coming out of a box at a specific point in the room, the Avid’s widely dispersed sound repeatedly gave it the edge in creating a feeling of natural presence. Without question, the Avid 101 is a remarkably good speaker judged by any standard.

Circle 106 on reader service card

(Continued on page 44)
Critics were most generous in their praise when the Shure V-15 Type III phono cartridge was first introduced. The ultimate test, however, has been time. The engineering innovations, the uniform quality and superb performance of the V-15 Type III have made it the audiophile's choice as the source of sound for the finest music systems both here and abroad.

Consider making the relatively modest investment of a new cartridge to upgrade the performance of your entire hi-fi system. It will make a difference you can hear!

The original manuscript by J. S. Bach shown is reproduced by kind permission of the British Library.

The Test of Time.

TECHNICAL CORNER
MODEL V-15 TYPE III
Tracking Force Range: ¾ to ¼ grams
Frequency Response: 10 to 25,000 Hz
Typical Tracking (in cm/sec peak recorded velocity at 1 gram):
400 Hz: 36 cm/sec
1,000 Hz: 38 cm/sec
5,000 Hz: 35 cm/sec
10,000 Hz: 36 cm/sec
Channel Separation (Minimum): 25 dB at 1 KHz, 15 dB at 10 KHz
Stylus: Model VN3SE Bi-radial Elliptical, 5 x 18 microns (.0002 x .0007 inches)
Also available: Model V-15 III G with the VN3-G Spherical stylus, 15 microns (.0006 inches)
Model VN78E Bi-radial Elliptical stylus, 13 x 63 microns (.0005 x .0025 inches) for mono 78 rpm.

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

MANUFACTURERS OF HIGH FIDELITY COMPONENTS, MICROPHONES, SOUND SYSTEMS AND RELATED CIRCUITRY.
CIRCLE NO. 45 ON READER SERVICE CARD
THE Realistic SA-2000 (distributed through Radio Shack stores) is the company's finest integrated stereo amplifier. The Realistic brand name has long been associated with components appealing to a broad segment of the population and providing good performance at a moderate price. The SA-2000 follows that tradition, but its specifications and control features place it in competition with medium-price amplifiers from many of the better-known hi-fi manufacturers.

The SA-2000 is rated to deliver 55 watts per channel to 8-ohm loads, from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with less than 0.3 per cent total harmonic distortion (THD). It is a compact unit, approximately 16 inches wide, 12 inches deep, and 4½ inches high in its walnut-veneer wooden cabinet; it weighs about 21 pounds. The volume- and channel-control functions are combined into two vertical slider controls at the right side of the panel. They adjust the channel levels individually and are normally moved as a pair for changing volume. Channel-balance changes can be made by a slight shift of one control relative to the other.

To the left of the volume sliders is a small knob marked PERFECT LEVEL, below which is a pushbutton marked DEFEAT. These controls provide the SA-2000's loudness-compensation system, which will be described later.

Across the top center of the panel are knobs for the input selector (with positions for PHONO 1, PHONO 2, TUNER, and AUX) and three-position rectangular switches below the input selector control. The switches select the tape functions. The monitor switch connects the playback output from either of two tape decks—or the normal program source—to the amplifier circuits. The adjacent pushing switch interconnects the decks for copying a tape from either machine to the other.

At the upper left of the panel are two blue-lit power-output meters whose logarithmic scales are calibrated from 0.01 to 70 watts (based on 8-ohm loads). Below them are individual pushbuttons to switch in the two pairs of speaker outputs. When the speakers connected to the "B" outputs are placed at the rear of the room, pressing the QUATRAVOX button drives them with an out-of-phase derived ambiance signal for a simulated quadraphonic effect. Another button converts the amplifier to the mono mode. There is a pushbutton POWER switch and a headphone jack.

In the rear of the SA-2000 are binding posts for the speaker outputs and phono jacks for the signal inputs and outputs. The "A" speaker outputs are duplicated by phono jacks. One of the two a.c. outlets is switched. Price: $259.95.

**Laboratory Measurements.** Although the output transistors and their heat sinks are located entirely within the cabinet of the Realistic SA-2000, they are well ventilated and the amplifier did not become unusually warm during a one-hour preconditioning period at one-third rated power and five minutes at full power that preceded our tests. At 1,000 Hz, the outputs clipped at 69 watts per channel into 8 ohms, 91 watts into 4 ohms, and 41 watts into 16 ohms.

The total harmonic distortion (THD) at 1,000 Hz was 0.07 per cent at 0.1 watt, decreasing to less than 0.01 per cent between 10 and 40 watts output. It was 0.4 per cent at the clipping point of approximately 70 watts. The intermodulation distortion (IM) was relatively constant—between 0.12 and 0.16 per cent for all power outputs from 0.1 to 65 watts.

Our distortion measurements across the full frequency range showed that the "distortion," especially at full power and low frequencies, contained appreciable amounts of hum (at non-audible levels) together with the harmonics of the input frequency. To separate the two effects, we used the Hewlett-Packard spectrum analyzer and measured every harmonic component strong enough to contribute to the total reading while excluding harmonics of the power-line frequency. The SA-2000 just met its specification at 20 Hz, with the rated 55 watts output, with an actual distortion of 0.3 per cent. The THD decreased with increasing frequency to 0.15 per cent over most of the mid-range and 0.02 to 0.07 per cent between 3,000 and 20,000 Hz. At half power the mid-range THD was about 0.006 per cent, increasing to 0.05 per cent at 20 and 20,000 Hz. At one-tenth power it was 0.02 per cent or less at middle frequencies and less than 0.1 per cent at the extremes.

The amplifier delivered a reference output of 10 watts with 60 millivolts at the AUX inputs, or just under 1 millivolt at the phono inputs (both of which are identical). The signal-to-noise ratios, respectively 79 and 75 dB referred to 10 watts, were excellent. The phono inputs overloaded at 145 millivolts—more than sufficient headroom to handle the output of any modern cartridge.

The tone controls of the SA-2000 are among the better ones we have seen in their ability to modify the response at the frequency extremes without affecting the mid-range. The combination of a turnover frequency varying with control setting and the choice of either a 125-Hz or a 400-Hz maximum turnover frequency makes it possible to boost or cut the response by several decibels at frequencies below 100 Hz with no effect on the overall tonal balance of the program.

The filters had 6-dB-per-octave slopes, with -3-dB frequencies approximately 40 and 9,000 Hz. Being so close to the edges of the audible spectrum, they did not seriously affect program content, but neither did they provide much noise reduction (although the low filter is effective against subsonic rumbles). The loudness compensation boosted

(Continued on page 46)
Remember the plug-in-shell?

Thorens Isotrack Series
Turntables proudly introduce the Plug-In Arm.

Thorens introduces an exciting new tonearm design to complement its highly sophisticated, new manual turntable series. Thorens has eliminated the headshell and its collar connection by incorporating the headshell and tonearm rod in a straight tubular design only 7.5 grams in effective tonearm mass. This reduction in mass (up to 50% that of other tonearms) reduces the inertial forces that affect stylus pressure. Tracking is improved, distortion lowered and stylus and record life are extended. Thorens Isotrack tonearm assures optimum performance with the newest, light weight, high-compliance pick-up cartridges.

The accent is on quality
—The high-speed stability and silent opera-
tion of the belt-driven 16-pole synchronous motor is a tribute to Thorens traditionally advanced engineering. The natural elasticity of the belt filters motor vibrations from reaching the platter, and therefore, the pick-up stylus. In more than twenty years of continuous development, and the manufacture of nearly one-million Thorens turntables, Thorens has brought its belt-drive design to a level of technical perfection not approached by any other drive system known today.

Thorens Isotrack turntables featuring the "mini-mass" tonearm—now at your Authorized Thorens Dealer, or for further details write:

ELPA MARKETING INDUSTRIES, INC.
East: Thorens Bldg.,
New Hyde Park, N.Y. 11040
West: 7301 East Evans Road,
Scottsdale, Ariz. 85250

Pictured Above: Top Right—TD-126C  Lower Right—TD-145C  
Lower Left—TD-166C  Top Left—TD-160C

CIRCLE NO. 18 ON READER SERVICE CARD
The "perfect loudness" feature of the SA-2000 makes use of a secondary volume control (PERFECT LEVEL) to which we referred earlier. In use, the sliders are set to a "PL SET" mark about three-quarters of the way up. Then the PERFECT LEVEL knob is used to set the listening volume to the loudest one expects to use. After that, when the volume sliders are moved downward, the loudness compensation is introduced properly, so that unnatural heaviness is not created at normal listening levels.

Over the years we have seen only a handful of amplifiers which combined a loudness-compensation circuit with a means of matching the volume-control setting to an actual listening volume. This is the only way in which a loudness control can function as it was meant to, and the result is that the Realistic SA-2000 provides really useful, listenable loudness compensation.

The RIAA phono equalization was accurate within ±0.5 dB from under 100 Hz to 20,000 Hz and rose about 1 dB in the 30–to 60-Hz range. Interaction with cartridge inductance was minimal, taking the form of a slight boost (instead of the usual loss) of output at high frequencies to a maximum of +1.2 dB between 10,000 and 15,000 Hz.

The power meters read within about 20 per cent of the actual 8-ohm output from 1 to 70 watts. They were considerably more accurate between 10 and 70 watts. Only at very low levels (where it is of minor importance) did the error become appreciable. The meters had a fast rise time, a slower decay, and little overshoot, so that they gave a useful indication of the program power level. Both meters read identically.

**Comment.** If one were to judge the Realistic SA-2000 by measurements alone, its only "weakness" would probably be its distortion figures (0.3 per cent) at full power and low frequencies. However, when one considers how unlikely it would be to encounter program content in the lowest audible octaves that had a small fraction of 1 per cent distortion and yet required the amplifier to deliver its full output, the whole matter comes into its proper perspective. And this is assuming you could find loudspeakers with distortion low enough to compare with the SA-2000's, which you cannot.

The SA-2000 can deliver as much power, with as little distortion, as will ever be required by the vast majority of its users. Against any of its low-frequency limitations, real or imagined, one must balance its tone-control system (definitely one of the better ones available), one of the very few loudness compensation systems that really works, a signal-to-noise ratio that compares with that of some of the most highly regarded (and expensive) amplifiers, power meters that are sufficiently fast-acting, accurate, and legible to give the user a good idea of how many watts he is actually delivering to his speakers, and last—but not least—an affordable price. In addition, the SA-2000 has just about all the control and operating flexibility most people could desire (separate preamplifier outputs/ power-amplifier inputs are probably the chief omission in this respect).

To us, it seems that Radio Shack has done itself proud in its new "top-of-the-line" amplifier. Anyone who has a stereotypical image of Realistic as a "low-end" brand name owes it to himself to take a good look at (and listen to) the SA-2000.

Circle 107 on reader service card

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### Shure M24H Stereo/Quadraphonic Phono Cartridge

The long-awaited CD-4 phono cartridge from Shure Brothers has finally made its appearance. To emphasize its compatibility with all types of discs, Shure calls the Model M24H a "2 + 4" stereo and four-channel cartridge. Unlike many CD-4 cartridges whose stereo performance (and, particularly, high-level tracking ability in the audio band) leaves something to be desired, Shure's M24H is offered as a cartridge whose audio tracking abilities rival those of their Model M95ED, which is just behind the top-of-the-line V-15 Type III in performance.

The M24H has a high-efficiency magnetic structure like that of the M93ED, although its winding inductance is considerably lower because of the necessity for a 50,000-Hz frequency response. Also, its hyperbolically shaped diamond stylus has, according to Shure, the lowest tip mass (0.39 milligram) of any CD-4 cartridge. The hyperbolic tip shape is Shure's equivalent of the Shibata and similar special stylus that are designed to trace ultrasonic frequencies without causing excessive record wear.

The M24H is designed to track at forces between 1 and 1.5 grams, with 1.25 grams being the recommended value. Its frequency response is essentially flat up to about 10,000 Hz, rising at higher frequencies to a maximum at about 30,000 Hz (the CD-4 carrier frequency). Because of its low coil inductance of 160 millihenries, the cartridge-loading requirements are somewhat different than for other Shure cartridges (which usually give their flattest response when loaded with 400 to 500 picofarads of capacitance). In stereo operation, the M24H can be loaded by a 20,000- to 100,000-ohm resistance in parallel with a capacitance of 100 to 250 picofarads. For CD-4 service, the recommended load is the standard 100,000-ohm input of a CD-4 demodulator paralleled with not more than 100 picofarads.

Externally, the M24H resembles the M93ED, with a swing-away stylus guard on its replaceable stylus assembly. Its output of 3 millivolts at 5 centimeters per second peak velocity is compatible in stereo and four-channel. Price: $74.95. (Continued on page 48)
The Sensuous Speaker.

Yamaha's new two-way beryllium dome NS-500.

A very responsive speaker with a rich, luscious sound. Highly defined, finely detailed. A deeply involving sound. In a word, sensuous.

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 instantaneously 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 greater—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 sweet-heart rose. 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 taste more emotion at the low end than the absolutely 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 tweeter, 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 50dB SPL, from 40Hz to 20kHz, 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.

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 pre-print of the Audio Engineering Society paper on Yamaha beryllium technology mentioned above.
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.

● Laboratory Measurements. The Shure M24H was tested in the tone arm of a high-quality record player using the recommended loads for each type of operation. Although it tracked our low-frequency test records nicely at less than 1 gram as Shure suggests, we found that 1.25 grams was the best force for overall operation. The lower-mid-range tracking ability was adequate but not outstanding; the cartridge was able to play only the 60-micron level of the German Hi-Fi Institute test record.

The output of the cartridge was 2.7 millivolts at 3.54 centimeters per second. The measured vertical angle of the stylus was 24 degrees. At usual recorded velocities (up to about 18 centimeters per second) the intermodulation distortion was unusually low, measuring 0.6 to 1 per cent with the Shure TTR-102 test record. However, at 22 centimeters per second and higher velocities the cartridge mistracked unmistakably. Playing the 10.8-kHz shaped tone bursts of the Shure TTR-103 test record, the M24H matched the performance of the M95ED and surpassed every other cartridge we have tested in this manner. Its repetition-rate distortion was 0.6 per cent at most levels and only 0.8 per cent at 30 centimeters per second. The low-frequency response in the tone arm we used was at 9 Hz, a near-ideal frequency.

The frequency response of the Shure M24H was measured with the CBS STR 100 record in the audio band and with the JVC TRS-1003 test records in the CD-4 carrier band from 20,000 to 50,000 Hz. Although the load resistance (47,000 or 100,000 ohms) had little effect on the audio response, the capacitance did affect the output above 15,000 Hz or so. A low capacitance (75 picofarads) gave the flattest overall response, with a 2.5- to 3-dB rise at 20,000 Hz and an overall variation of ±2 dB from 40 to 20,000 Hz. A typical "stereo" load of 320 picofarads resulted in a more pronounced rise, to a maximum of +6 dB at 20,000 Hz.

The channel separation was typically 25 to 30 dB at frequencies up to 10,000 Hz and higher, and it was 7 to 12 dB at 20,000 Hz with the CBS record. Measurements in the CD-4 carrier band are even more subject to test-record differences than audio measurements. Best results were obtained with the JVC TRS-1003 record, which gave an overall re-

● Comment. So far as we are concerned, Shure's claim that the M24H is a "no compromise" stereo/quadraphonic cartridge is fully justified. How else could one describe a cartridge whose stereo performance virtually matches that of the Shure M95ED (and which in most cases could not be distinguished from that of the V-15 Type III) and yet sounds, in conjunction with a modern CD-4 demodulator, at least as good as any other CD-4 cartridge on the market?

While some people might consider a 1.25 gram tracking force to be at least a slight compromise, it is a fact that very few cartridges—including the aforementioned Shure models—cannot benefit from being operated at that force, even if they can cope with most situations at 1 gram or even slightly less. As for the rising high-frequency response, which might also seem to be less than ideal for stereo applications (CD-4 demodulators cut off the signal above 15,000 Hz anyway), we simply could not hear it as a "brightness" or other undesirable quality. To balance this, the strong output of the cartridge in the 30,000-Hz carrier range undoubtedly contributes to its excellent, distortion-free CD-4 performance.

Priced between the M95ED and the V-15 Type III, the M24H is substantially less expensive than any other CD-4 cartridge of comparable quality. On the basis of performance alone, the M24H ranks very high; when value for the dollar is considered, it probably has no equal.

Circle 108 on reader service card
One of a kind.

He challenges the last uncharted world.
A frontier where discovery is the greatest reward of all.
He smokes for pleasure.
He gets it from the blend of Turkish and Domestic tobaccos in Camel Filters.
Do you?

Turkish and Domestic Blend

19 mg. "tar", 1.2 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report DEC. '76.

An abundance of skill, energy, and time more than compensated for the budget and space limitations faced by Roger B. Miller in the design and construction of this simple but sturdy audio installation for his home in Downey, California. Measuring fifty inches in both height and length, the beautifully crafted walnut complex is quite transportable and can be operated with ease from either a sitting or a standing position.

An assortment of medium-price equipment purchased over a number of years is secured within six neatly inset component panels. Perched on the left-hand side of the cabinet and sharing the bulk of the recording activity are Craig 2408 and Sony TC-353-D tape decks. A Concord Dolby-B unit occupies the upper right corner of the structure, and cradled directly underneath is a BSR FEW-3 octave graphic equalizer. Within the remaining compartments below are a Harman-Kardon 630 AM/FM receiver and a Wollensak 8050 eight-track deck.

The base of this handsome installation features two convenient slide-out drawers, the lower functioning as a storage area for headphones, microphones, and other useful accessories and the upper (see inset) housing a switch panel as well as a Sony sound-on-sound adapter used in conjunction with the Sony tape deck. When not in use, both drawers are hidden behind the tambour door to further enhance the console’s clean, uncluttered appearance.

The turntable shown is a BSR 610, which is temporarily resting on one of a pair of Sound Research Lab Model 20’s, a set of local house-brand speakers. Two JBL L-100’s placed in the other two corners of the 10 x 12 foot room complete the lineup of components. The well-stocked library of reel-to-reel and eight-track tapes consists mainly of popular music from FM programming; the cartridges are used for playback both at home and on the road.

Mr. Miller is currently working toward a B.A. degree in industrial arts at California State University at Long Beach. He has done a variety of custom-woodwork projects in his own workshop not only for other hi-fi enthusiasts but also for buyers of quality furniture. With such experience under his belt it comes as no surprise that he spent under $150 in the building of this fine cabinet.
Performance.
Scott Stacks Up.

Every serious listener knows that separate tuners and amplifiers offer greater system versatility and flexibility than the all-in-one receiver. But Scott separates stack up where it really counts—performance.

Every one of Scott's complete line of tuners and amplifiers is engineered and designed to give you all the performance features you expect, at a price no higher than many receivers currently on the market.

Scott’s T 526 AM/FM Stereo Tuner and A 436 Integrated Power Amplifier provide such important performance features as front panel Dolby de-emphasis switching, a phase locked loop multiplex section and linear motion calibrated controls.

And that's only part of the story. Compare these important performance features with any other medium-priced tuner and amplifier on the market today.

**The Scott T 526 Tuner**
- IHF sensitivity rated at 1.9 µV, S/N ratio 68 dB and a capture ratio of 1.5 dB.
- Signal strength and center channel tuning meters.
- Four gang tuning capacitor for better image rejection.
- AM section designed around a tuned RF amplifier using J-FET for improved signal-to-noise ratio.
- AM noise suppression circuitry.

**The Scott A 436 Amplifier**
- 42 watts RMS per channel, driven into 8 ohms from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.3% THD.
- True logarithmic meter amplifier obviates the need for range switching.
- Individual channel power level meters calibrated in % of full power output capability eliminates confusing dB and VU readings.
- Two completely independent tape monitors allow two tape recorders to be used simultaneously for direct tape-to-tape copying.
- Instantaneous electronic protection circuit in the output stage.
- IM distortion lower than 0.15% for a cleaner sound without listening fatigue.
- High and Low filters, two auxiliary outlets and mic inputs.

And the Scott T 526 and A 436 come complete with professional rack-mount handles, and are backed by a three-year, parts and labor limited warranty.


© SCOTT
The Name to listen to.

Receivers / Tuners / Amplifiers / Turntables / Speakers
CIRCLE NO. 100 ON READER SERVICE CARD
GOING THE OTHER WAY

Much has been written to introduce those with popular tastes to classical music, but very little to aid those who might want to travel the road in the opposite direction. It is as if popular music were thought to be something one fell into quite naturally and without preparation, understanding instinctively exactly what to expect from a given artist, group, or style. And so it is, you say, and so it has always been. Not any more, I say. Popu-

lar music today comprises a group of tonal languages for the most part as foreign to those with classical tastes as the spoken languages of Polynesia are to a conventionally educated European. The root difference may not be so specifically geographic, but it is social, economic, perhaps intellectual, and most definitely generational. It is also willful.

The old conception of popular music as primitive entertainment for the masses is dead in all but a numerical sense, even as we realize that primitive art is sometimes exceedingly sophisticated—by criteria with which we have little familiarity. The concept of popular music as “light” is equally moribund, for some of it is heavy indeed with meaning for its devotees, and the very term “light” implies (as in Scotch whiskey) a dilution of flavor, whereas what we are dealing with here is a difference in the very substance. Little wonder that those who spend their time with Mozart and Beethoven, or feel at home with Schoenberg and Boulez, are so nonplussed when confronted with Jefferson Starship or Toots and the Maytals. Little wonder also at the overreaction that had classical critics at one time rearranging the pantheon to make room for the Beatles and Procol Harum somewhere between Bach and Schubert.

The problems faced, then, by those who would make a first acquaintance with popular music are (1) that it is not necessarily clear, simple, and easy to understand; (2) that its standards of excellence do not necessarily bear any relation to standards of classical music; and (3) that it is not one music but a multiplicity of musics that often have little to do with one another. Such complexities are rarely taken into account by those whose ears are elsewhere.

Anyone with some experience in classical music will have a fair idea of where to look for a new piece of classical music that will please him. If he has an antipathy to polyphonic choral music he will not readily buy a recording of Lassus or Palestrina, and if he likes Bach cantatas he can turn to Buxtehude with reasonable expectations. The average classical listener has the field fairly well compartmentalized, both as to style and as to his personal likes and dislikes.

But suppose that same listener decides to sample the popular music of today. He reads a bunch of reviews and, armed with the assurance that informed and knowledgeable criticism has declared all the items in question to be first-rate, he purchases the following group of records: “Doc and the Boys” by Doc Watson, “First Night” by Jane Olivor, “Shake Some Action” by the Flamin’ Groovies, “Spirit” by John Denver, “Viva” by Roxy Music, “Creative Orchestra Music 1976” by Anthonny Braxton, “Bogalusa Boogie” by Clifton Chenier, “Here and There” by Elton John, and “Dr. Buzzard’s Original Savannah Band.” All right, you pop sophisticates, stop laughing. Someday someone may attempt to turn you on to classical music by suggesting that you rationalize the similarities of Walter von der Vogtweide, Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2, a Palestrina motet, the Bartók piano sonata, and John Cage’s Four Minutes and Thirty Seconds. That’s about what it comes down to if you approach “popular” music unwarily.

The innocent explorer needs warning. He should know, for example, that while most pop music involves songs, and songs have lyrics, in some pop music those lyrics are everything while in other music those lyrics are literally (not to mention literally) nothing. It may be difficult for him to determine which is which, but the difference is crucial. He should be aware that even in the same area of pop music, even dealing with the same song, some singers are valued for their ability to sing the words while glossing over the notes, yet others are equally valued for being able to sing the notes while paying no attention to the words. He should be aware that among the recording collectively under the title “jazz” he will find coexistent musical styles that sound, by classical standards, as though they were several centuries removed from each other in origin. Jazz has many parallels with classical music, and among them is its position of offering virtually its entire historical development simultaneously. True, jazz is a performer-oriented music, but the original progenitors of every succeeding style are very much alive on records, often in stereo, and sometimes in person.

The explorer must be aware that there are people performing today for whom the Forties have never existed—and not even as history. He should know that loudness is measured by some pop people in odd ways (“Turn the volume up, I hear it but I don’t feel it yet”). He should also know that music is a performer-oriented music, but the original progenitors of every succeeding style are very much alive on records, often in stereo, and sometimes in person.

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Raise the roof tonight in a Dodge Charger.

If you can't wait to see that evening sun go down, the '77 Charger is your special car. Made for people who come out to play after dark. And now you can make a night of it in a Charger that welcomes the night inside.

Just remove the transparent panels of the optional T-bar roof, and you're cruising in a Charger that's almost a convertible. Come alive in the invigorating breeze as you settle into the high-back bucket seats. For certain, you and your Charger were born for the night.

A standard 318 V8 teams up with TorqueFlite automatic transmission to give Charger a response that's anything but everyday.

When the day starts to fade and you're ready to shift into high gear, you need the car that can light up the night—Charger. Why let another sun go down without driving one? You can buy or lease an exciting new '77 Charger from your nearby Dodge Dealer today.

THE NIGHT BELONGS TO CHARGER.
COME TO THE CABARET

As a member of perhaps the newest generation of cabaret devotees, I count myself lucky to be able to witness the art's recent resurgence. New clubs and rooms have been sprouting mushroom-like in the dark, fertile atmosphere of New York nights, while some of the old ones have been rejuvenated. Born too late, war baby that I am, to catch many of the legendary artists in their prime, I am greatly comforted by the continuing trickle of record reissues on such labels as Stanyan and Monmouth-Evengreen as well as by the stami¬na of those venerable artists who still carry on the tradition live.

One of these is the "incomparable" Hildegarde, who last year celebrated fifty years as a performer with a concert at New York's Town Hall. She still retains the visual trappings of sophisticated romanticism she has cultivated for so long—the red roses, the long black gloves, the clinging gown, and the white lace handkerchief. More important, she has lost none of her vocal artistry. Indeed, the studio recording inspired by the anniversary concert (now out for review) displays a voice richer and mellower than ever before; the phrasing is more precise, and there is greater emphasis on the dramatic presentation. There is also, to be sure, a tendency to talk a line from time to time to compensate for a somewhat diminished breath support, but, far from being a drawback, this sails her right into Mabel Mercer waters, where the sometimes brittle wisdom of maturity more than compensates for the lost sweetness of youth.

It is hard to find a vocabulary to communicate an enthusiasm for a performer who is at once so special (in her art) and so universal (in her humanity) as Mabel Mercer. Exerting all my willpower so as not to "doyenne" and "disease" you to death, I refer you instead to other critical explorations of the talents and history of this earth-mother of popular song: read Whitney Balliett's penetrating chapter on her in his book Alec Wilder and His Friends (Houghton Mifflin, 1974), Henry Pleasants' discussion in his The Great American Popular Singers (Simon & Schuster, 1974), and William Livingstone's article in February 1975 STEREO REVIEW on the occasion of her seventy-fifth birthday.

The parties, awards, and other festivities in honor of Miss Mercer's attainment of the three-quarter-century mark gave me my chance to experience her art firsthand—and under rather unusual circumstances. "AM New York," an early-morning TV program, was featuring her in a special two-hour broadcast with a cabaret format. And so, in a make-shift studio re-creation of a night club, a host of early-rising friends and fans of Mabel Mercer were deployed among tables and champagne glasses to play "audience." Miss Mercer sang regally seated in her own special chair, transported from the St. Regis Hotel's Mabel Mercer Room for the occasion. I found myself seated beside The Chair, mercilessly exposed to the TV cameras on the outer edge of the singer's spotlight and, of course, per¬spiring madly. As Miss Mercer's voice, a bit shaky yet firmly in control of each lyrical nu¬ance, caressed It Isn't Easy Being Green and turned Wait 'Til You're Sixty-four into a wit¬ty, knowing promise of the future, the lights, the cameras, and my discomfort were forgot¬ten in the aura emanating from this wise, quiet woman who practically compels belief and mandates comfort in her listeners. When she sings, there is simply nothing more important, for she knows what is important and you feel privileged to share that knowledge.

There is a wonderful sense of discovery for neophytes like me who begin exploring this music, for there is a golden network of influences that leads us inexorably from performer to performer and back again. It is impossible, for instance, to mention Mabel Mercer without having Bobby Short, that suavest of cab¬aret babies, spring to mind. Bobby Short leads one to think of Blossom Dearie, and Blossom Dearie brings all the others along in a rush—Chris Connor, Porilia Nelson, Mel Tormé, Sylvia Syms, Elly Stone. The flow is free¬associative, for the similarities are often tenu¬ous and the styles diverse. The common de¬ nominator in all these performers is their ded¬ication to style, to a particularly subtle, pol¬iced form of musical expression that has nothing to do with the maddening pow-bam of the typical Las Vegas singer. Often they share material or arrangers, so when I search through the record bargain bins where these artists usually (and unfairly) end up I'll occasion¬ally take a chance on an unknown for that reason alone. In this way I've come up with some marvelous music by Carol Sloane and Claire Hogan, both of whose thus-far limited careers deserve expansion, and Teddi King and Sylvia Syms, whose popularity is on a welcome upswing.

This fine web of musical influence is far from finished, for a new generation of per¬formers is being woven into it right now. Jane Olivor and Peter Allen are but two newcom¬ers with the requisite devotion to style, though I confess it is not always easy to cram the exuberant Allen into the cabaret bag. His performances are often delightfully extravag¬ant—he may leap up from his piano to sing sitting on top of it or dance about brandishing the cameras, and my discomfort were forgot¬ten in the aura emanating from this wise, quiet woman who practically compels belief and mandates comfort in her listeners. When she sings, there is simply nothing more important, for she knows what is important and you feel privileged to share that knowledge.

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PART I

Don't "play" over micro-dust

THE PROBLEM:
The greatest cause of record degeneration is micro-dust. All records possess a static charge which attracts a very fine, virtually invisible micro-dust from room air. A record may "look clean" but contain a fine coating of micro-dust. When you play over this coating, even at one grain of stylus pressure, you grind the micro-dust into the record walls, often forever. Your record then gets "noisy."

COMMON ERRORS:
Most record cleaners are "pushers", and simply line up dirt without removing it from the disc. Skating a pusher off the record only spreads micro-dust into a tangent line of danger. Extra arm devices and all cloths are too coarse to do anything but pass over micro-dust—or gently spread it out.

AN ANSWER FROM RESEARCH:
The exclusive Discwasher System removes micro-dust better than any other method.
1. The slanted pile lifts up rather than lines up debris. The pile fibers are fixed in the fabric better than any other record cleaner, and "crack" record grooves rather than scrape them (see figure 1).
2. Alternating "open rows" of highly absorbent backing hold micro-dust taken off the record, and demonstrate Discwasher's effectiveness over long term use (see figure 2).
3. The inherently safe D3 fluid delivery system and capillary fluid removal allows the most researched record cleaner to be the world's best.
BUYING GUIDELINES FOR CAR STEREO

IT'S GETTING CLOSER TO HOME

by Ivan Berger

Sound equipment for automobiles has changed over the past few years, and very much for the better. Once it consisted of no more than an AM radio installed at the factory, the only options being pushbutton tuning and an extra speaker in the back. Today, when only about 15 per cent of car audio systems are factory-installed, you can have your choice of AM, FM, stereo FM, stereo cassette or eight-track tape, and even quadraphonic eight-track. You can also get up to 125 watts of power per channel and two-way, three-way, and even bi-amplified speaker systems (that is, separate amplifiers for each driver in the speaker system).

Options that lead to higher-price systems aren't the only reason Americans are expected to spend over a billion dollars this year on sound systems for their cars. Long drives often provide a better opportunity for uninterrupted listening than the same time spent amid the chores, distractions, and responsibilities of home. Traffic congestion and lower speed limits make those drives longer too, and they add to the desirability of having a pleasant sonic stimulus available.

- A Car Is Not a Home -

Listening in the car is not the same as listening in your living room: it's both better and worse. The list of problems car stereo must overcome is long: high ambient noise (as much as 40 dB or so above home noise levels); equipment failure due to heat, cold, dampness, or vibration; and sound distribution compromised both by the difficulties of mounting speakers where they sound best and the impossibility of rearranging the seats to suit the speakers.

What's good about car listening is that, if you get it right, the sound can combine most of the virtues of both speaker and headphone listening and that the bass you hear is better than even the most optimistic speaker specs would lead you to believe.

Experts differ on just why this should be so. Speaker authority Abraham Cohen of Polydax summed up the most popular view in a recent Audio Engineering Society paper: listeners in the small space of a car's interior are not so much in a listening room as within the speaker cabinet. But Tim Holl, Acoustic Research's director of engineering, disagrees: "It's not that the car forms an acoustic-suspension enclosure; you can open doors and windows and still get more bass from a speaker than one would think from anechoic measurements. We suspect it's that you're held in the near field of the speaker."

Acoustic Research is just one company noted for home speakers that's also looking into speakers for the car; JBL and Advent are reputedly interested also, and car speakers are already available from Altec (distributed by car-sound specialist Clarion), ADS, AFS, Braun, Cerwin-Vega, Craig, Jensen, Panasonic, Pioneer, Polk, RSL, Tru-Sonic, and Utah. Car speakers are beginning to adopt a lot of home-speaker techniques, too.

- Trends in Speakers -

The biggest trend is to two-way systems, with separate woofers and tweeters. These are available in coaxial form (with the tweeter mounted within the woofer cone's concavity for easier installation) from Audiovox, Boman/Astrosonix, Cerwin-Vega, Clarion,
some installations today's car speakers have a lot of power to handle. Car stereo units boasting up to 15 watts per channel are already on the market, and boosters amplifiers of anywhere from 8 to 125 continuous watts per channel have been announced. Some manufacturers sell their speakers and amplifiers as matched sets. I've not been overly impressed by the 6 x 9-inch speakers that carry booster amplifiers piggyback, but the de luxe systems by ADS and AudioMobile offer car sound for the "carriage trade," and they are priced accordingly.

The first of the auto-audio super systems was the ADS 2001, a $475 ensemble incorporating two two-way speaker systems in metal enclosures each about the size of two bricks and a bi-amplified electronics package delivering up to 60 watts to each woofer and up to 20 to each tweeter—a potential of 160 watts total. The amplifier has some unusual properties: to overcome road noise it provides a mild level boost at low to medium volumes; then, to protect ears and speakers, it cuts back slightly at the highest sound levels—in other words, level compression. The amplifier's bass is pre-equalized to compensate for bass rolloff in the 4-inch woofers, and since this bass boost plus the amplifier's high power could blow unprotected woofers, a circuit limits high bass amplitudes.

ADS's newer 2002 system is similar, but with smaller amplifiers (25 watts per woofer, 5 watts per tweeter) built into the speaker cabinets, and a correspondingly lower price ($395). Unlike the 2001, which is designed for use with any tape deck or sound system, the 2002 is designed primarily to work with the new Nakamichi 250 cassette player or 350 player/recorder.

AudioMobile's approach is considerably different. Its amplifier delivers a straight 20 to 35 watts per channel, depending on the speaker impedance it sees, and the crossovers are passive ones following the amp. And AudioMobile's speakers don't come with enclosures: instead, each channel has a 4-inch dome tweeter and your choice of a 6½- or 10-inch woofer designed to be flush-mounted in the car's interior panels. The company recommends that you install the tweeters near the front of the car and the woofers in the parcel shelf above the trunk.

**Speaker Installation**

The type of speaker you use is a function of the sound you want and what you are willing to pay for it. The size of speaker is a function of the spot where you'll install it. Several places are in common use: the rear deck above the trunk, the doors, the "kick panels" under the dash, and the dashboard itself. Rear parcel shelves in U.S. cars usually have cutouts and pre-drilled bolt holes for 6 x 9-inch oval speakers; most other spots require smaller, round models.

The ideal speaker spot is one where the speaker won't be in the way, where it will have a good-sized cavity behind it to serve as an enclosure, and where it can direct its sounds at the car's occupants from sufficient distance to ensure good distribution. In most cars, though, there is no such spot.

Surface-mount speakers, with their own enclosures, eliminate the problem of finding a suitable cavity that's in a good location, but the cavities built into them are small, which (except on the ADS models, with their equalized amplifiers) limits bass response. Many such enclosures are labeled "acoustic suspension," but it is not unusual to find vents or other openings in them. In any case, sealed enclosure or not, since many of these speakers give perfectly good sound, you should just ignore the claimed operating principle and pay attention only to what you hear. Be alert to one inevitable disadvantage of surface-mount speakers, however: they stick out. That means a door- or dash-mounted surface mount is likely to intercept your knees or elbows, while a badly located rear-deck speaker may obscure your view of cars behind you.

Many surface-mount speakers have open backs, so you can enlarge their volume by cutting a hole in the panel they attach to and using one of the car's cavities as an enclosure. But as long as you're going to do that, perhaps you might as well flush-mount the speakers. And many surface-mounts let you do just that.

**Flush-mounting** on the rear deck is easy in most U.S. cars. You just lie in the trunk and use the cutouts in the metal surface as templates with which to cut the fiber trim panel—if it's not already perforated to act as a grille. The trunk provides a big, beautiful cavity for the speaker.

The upward-facing rear-deck speaker's treble is nicely dispersed by the bounce it takes off the car's slanted rear window. But often a rear speaker's sound can't be heard clearly in the front seat even when it's turned up loud enough to blast rear-seat passengers halfway to deafness. Furthermore, sunlight beats down on the cone, drying and bleaching it. There are rumors (groundless, I suspect) that speaker cones can be damaged by the sudden rise in air pressure when the
CAR STEREO

 Speakers, of course, are only half the story. The other half is what you feed them. Amplifier power, in my experience, can be quite low by home-component standards and still be adequate for a car. Even though car speakers have more noise to outshout, the normal 3 or 4 watts per channel can do a fine job, letting you hear clearly in all but the noisiest situations. More power is always nice, of course, if you’re willing to pay for it. Unless you’re buying a unit such as the Nakamichi machines, the Uher 210, or the new AM/FM/cassette deck coming from AudioMobile, your tape player will have at least a few watts of amplifier power available. See if that’s enough before you invest in a booster amplifier; you can always add the booster later if you need it. But try to get a demonstration of a more powerful system too, for comparison.

The trend in tape players is increasingly toward AM/FM/cassette combinations that fit into your dashboard’s existing radio cutout. Installed there, they’re less visible to a potential thief (especially the models whose tape slots are covered by swing-away tuning dials) and somewhat harder to remove. They’re also easier to feed tapes to—if your car’s designer gave some thought to where he put the radio-installation slot, that is.

Concerning the trend toward cassette units, the arguments in favor of it are nearly overwhelming—but not quite. The main advantage of cassette over eight-track cartridge is its versatility. If you have (or plan to get) a cassette deck at home, you can swap tapes between your home and car at will. And though you could record your own programs on an eight-track cartridge deck, it’s far easier with cassettes where you don’t have to worry about taping into segments that will fit between track-change breaks. With cassettes, you can also tape classes and business notes on a pocket-size recorder, then review them as you drive with your car’s tape deck. There are some units that let you pick up a microphone and tape your thoughts as you drive, including models from Sanyo, Blaupunkt, and Becker that let you tape stereo FM programs from their built-in tuners. Also, you can buy a bracket that holds Uher’s Car 124, 134, and 210 portable stereo recorders. It connects them to your car’s battery and—via a control unit on the bracket—to a matching power amplifier that is included in the package.

For a cassette unit that matches eight-track’s convenience of music that goes on until all tracks are played without requiring any action from you, you have to pay $40 or $50 extra for automatic reverse. On the other hand, cas-
Cassettes give you real fast-forward (eight-track "fast forward" is only about double normal speed) and rewind. Thus you have instant access to any desired spot on the tape: pop listeners can go straight to the song they want (though it would help if all car-cassette units had digital counters), and classical listeners can easily re-start a symphony from the beginning instead of from the point where the tape last stopped.

Classical tape material seems to be in better supply on cassette than on eight-track (although in pop it's still the other way around). And since the cassette market seems to be strongly hi-fi oriented, sonic improvements are likely to show up in cassette tapes and equipment first. Cassettes are smaller, too, for easier storage, and they are less likely than cartridges to jam. But, on the other hand, at least some cassette-deck mechanisms seem to be less reliable than eight-track units.

One final thought: discrete four-channel tapes continue to remain available in the eight-track format, and machines to play them on are sold under a number of brand names. Nonetheless, eight-track—once dominant—is expected to cede half the market to cassette this year.

Radio

Tape lets you listen to the music of your choice when you want it; it comes without commercials, and it doesn't fade as you get further from the station. But it can't do everything.

Radio can bring you current news, traffic reports, ads for local shopping when you're in an unfamiliar area, and music that you didn't bring along and therefore haven't tired of yet. And there's little question that you should get both AM and FM. With its longer wavelengths and its many clear-channel stations, AM can carry much greater distances than FM. And there's more news, sports, and talk on AM. But for high-fidelity music, FM is unsurpassed, with far less static and distortion and with a wider frequency range than AM. Also, FM has stereo and fades less when you go under bridges or through underpasses. Besides, there's a lot of music and even a bit of talk you'll hear only on that band.

For either band, easy tuning is doubly necessary in a car radio. Since you're moving out of range of some stations, you'll need to tune more often, and since you're usually driving at the same time, you have less attention to spare. So the first requirement of a good car radio is a dial that is reasonably readable at a glance. (Heath's FM-only tuner kit has one of the better...
CAR STERE0

ones.) The second is some sort of tuning aid to make that dial unnecessary most of the time. The commonest such aid is a row of pushbuttons that can be preset to bring in your favorite stations. In the more expensive radios, you'll usually find five buttons that can be tuned so that each will summon up one AM and one FM station, or ten stations total. Next most useful are buttons that can be set to any combination of five AM or FM stations. Then come the sets which dedicate some buttons just to AM stations, others just to FM.

Pushbuttons are most useful when your trips all lie within the same area, even if it is a large one (I knew a salesman once whose FM buttons followed the Concert Network throughout his New England route). For travel into unfamiliar areas, though, signal-seeking automatic tuning is an even greater help. All you do is push a button and a signal-seeking radio will look for the next strong station on the dial, then lock it in until you either tell it to hold that station or to move along and try the next. Signal-seekers are available from Delco (factory-installed on GM cars only), and from Becker, Blaupunkt, and J.I.L. But with the exception of the $1,200 Blaupunkt "Berlin," which has six station presets on its goose-neck-mounted remote-control module, car radios have either signal-seeking or pushbuttons—not both.

If your car has stereo, get stereo FM. But look for a set with a manual stereo/mono switch. Any radio will automatically switch to stereo when the signal is strong and clear, orB mono when it isn't (for reduced noise and distortion). But when you're skirting the fringes of a station's stereo signal area, hearing the radio switch back and forth between clean mono and degraded stereo can be very annoying; a mono switch will prevent that.

Tone controls in most car-stereo units usually consist only of a treble-cut control: turning the control to the left may seem to give you more bass, but what it really does is give you less treble. Turning it all the way to the right restores nominally flat response. Separate bass and treble controls are better, even if they only turn down their respective ranges; controls with both cut and boost are better still. More elaborate controls, including separate bass, treble, and mid-range controls, are available in some car amplifiers, and Clarion has a 15 watt-per-channel amp with a built-in five-band equalizer.

What with equalizers, multi-way speaker systems, bi-amplification, high-power amplifiers, electronic tape-speed controls, and vastly improved FM tuners, the list of home-stereo techniques used in the car gets longer every day. But perhaps the most significant incursion of component ideas has been in the realm of specifications. Slowly, first with car amplifiers, and now with Pioneer's Supernutner FM series (which lives up to its name), units are appearing whose specifications can be compared with those of home units. And as that happens, more and more such units will bear up well under the comparison. All in all, it sounds good for the road.

Ivan Berger, who has written widely on audio subject matter, was recently named senior editor of STEREO REVIEW's more technical sister publication, Popular Electronics.

THEFT: HOW SAFE IS YOUR STEREO?

While I was writing this piece, my CB and an Audiovox converter that added TV sound to my car radio were stolen from my car. My tape deck and my radio weren't. I accept the blame for the loss, but I also take full credit for what was saved.

In the first place, my car was on the street, not locked in the garage, and I'd forgotten to lock the door on the passenger side, so getting at the stuff was easy. I'd left my CB antenna up, a fairly sure tip-off that there was a CB radio inside to be stolen, and though I had removed the CB from its slide-in mount, I hadn't locked it in the trunk, just hidden it from view beneath the seat. The TV sound converter, normally bolted beneath the radio where it looked like a permanent fixture, had broken free of the plastic under-dash panel it was fastened to and was lying loose on the floor, so it looked like easy pickings.

How did I manage to keep my radio and tape deck? The first was firmly mounted in the dashboard—too much trouble to steal. And the second was in the trunk, where no one would even know I had it.

There are some obvious conclusions to be drawn: whatever isn't mounted in the dash should be removed from the passenger compartment entirely and stowed where a thief isn't likely to find it (in the trunk or inside the house). Signs that you possess electronic goodies should be concealed as much as possible: CB antennas, microphones, and tapes should be stored in the trunk. You should also keep your car locked, and in the safest place you can find.

Don't trust in lock mounts to keep your stereo safe if it is in plain sight. Some mounts are easy to break into; most are easy to break loose, and a thief who does that is likely to damage your car as well.

What about insurance? Most companies who used to cover sets under the "comprehensive" sections of their automobile policies have recently excluded them and now offer separate coverage for about 10 per cent of the unit's worth each year. These policies apply only to units "permanently installed" in cars, which, according to agents I've talked to, means either in-dash units or those bolted under the dash. Units on slide-in mounts are not covered, even if you've hidden them in the trunk or taken them into the house (where they're not covered by homeowners' or tenants' policies either).

So insurability is another plus for in-dash units—if you want to pay the extra cost of the insurance. But I think I'd prefer a removable stereo, which I can probably prevent from getting stolen, to an under-dash one whose theft is more likely, though it is more insurable. Whether you will make this choice depends on how likely you are to remember to hide the set each time you park the car and whether you prefer the sure but minor nuisance of removing the set to the possible major nuisance of having it stolen and waiting for your insurance company's check.
NOW ONE TAPE GIVES YOU THE PEACE AND QUIET OF THE CHROME POSITION. WITHOUT THE HEADACHES.

Use TDK SA in the chrome position and you'll hear a lot less noise and a lot more sound.

Ordinarily, using the chrome position results in a decrease of anywhere from 4 to 5 dBs of background and tape noise. Of course, that's not a problem. It's a blessing.

The problems, or rather the headaches, begin with your choice of tape.

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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SYSTEM ONE

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These lines from the title song of the album “Marcus Garvey” by Winston Rodney, also known as the Burning Spear, have nothing to do with you. They have nothing to do with me either. They have to do with a bunch of pot smokers down in Jamaica who have invented the quasi-political religion called Rastafarianism, which posits the dogma that the late Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, is (was) God, that Marcus Garvey was his prophet, and that pretty soon God is gonna do a Second Coming and take all black Jamaicans back to Africa on Black Star liners.

But you already know about all that, for by now you have already read, skimmed, or passed up most of those ten thousand articles celebrating Bob Marley as some kind of Mick Jagger with spiritual overtones and outlining in unscrupulous detail the religion that put him in the Top Forty. It is therefore only fair to warn you that this article is not going to be about Bob Marley, Haile Selassie, or Marcus Garvey, but if it succeeds in its purpose it will take you to armchair Ethiopia. This article is being written first of all on the assumption that, whether you are white or black, you have lots of money to spend (which is only one of the reasons the Burning Spear lyrics quoted above have nothing to do with you), and on the further assumption that you bought “Rastaman Vibration” or at least have a certain amount of curiosity about all this reggae jive and are wondering where to go to satisfy it. Since, as with practically any other musical idiom, a great many reggae albums are terrible, I will tell you which ones are not and help you to navigate through the floodgates of vinyl product that the commercial success of “Rastaman Vibration” has opened up.

I have already declared that Rastafarianism, Marcus Garvey, and all the rest are irrelevant, since if you are white you are automatically excluded, and if you are black I doubt that you are dying to hotfoot it to Africa, where
you might, for your innocence, end up as a crocodile’s lunch. But reggae, the musical form that came out of all this, is fascinating, hypnotic, multifaceted (contrary to the claims of its critics), and startlingly beautiful once you get it. It is not the laid-back, coconut-clonk, ricky-tick redundancy it might at first seem; it brims over with passion, love, rage, pain, anguish, and joy, just like the best of all music. And though most American listeners don’t “get” it, it is fascinating, hypnotic, multifaceted (contrary to the claims of its critics), and startlingly beautiful once you get it.

REGGAE

I finally began to dig reggae myself when I discovered that it had taken me so long only because I didn’t particularly dig Bob Marley, whose music was all I had been exposed to. That is one reason I’m not going to talk about any of Marley’s work here. Another is that there is simply too much fine reggae coming out of other artists who have received considerably less hype, and space is limited. Assuming that the average listener finds reggae moderately to totally inaccessible, I will try to take you through seven stages of acculturation, beginning with music very close to American soul and ending up in the primeval African mud and a haze of cannabis fumes. Wherever you choose to stop down the line depends simply on your level of tolerance for the (to normal American ears, anyway) musically outré.

One problem with presenting reggae to an LP-oriented American audience is that this music is almost totally singles-oriented in its homeland. On albums, reggae artists, like so many Bo Diddleys, tend to repeat a hit formula until it keels over and dies, resulting in whole disc sides that are deadly dull. But my job is to steer you clear of such quagmires; this is a directory of the good stuff. The jadedness of music critics is legendary, so if it turns me on it ought to have you hopping for joy.

1. Anthologies

One answer to the problem of reconciling an LP market with a singles culture is, of course, the anthology, which ideally not only separates out the dross but also exposes you to artists who may have had only one or two great songs in them. Jamaica has the largest per capita weekly release of singles of any country in the world, so theoretically there should be an unlimited supply of satisfying reggae oldies and greatest-hits collections. There are probably more than anybody but a fanatic has time to listen to, but unfortunately a great many of them are unavailable in the United States, and the albums that are obtainable here are not always of equal quality. More than many other forms of music, reggae frustrates objective qualification—a record that most listeners would find impressively murky or so deep into monotony-as-mesmerism as to be terminally boring will strike other, perhaps more hard-core, fans as the “real” Roots Music—maybe just because it is so murky and monotonous. This results in anthologies, both English and American, that are often as erratic as albums by individual artists.

The reason for this, I suspect, is that many record companies just buy up the rights to whatever they can lay their hands on and put it out on the off-chance it will sell—they have no real idea of how good (or how bad) any of it actually is. Even Island, which prides itself on being the white record company most sensitive to the nuances of black Jamaican consciousness and generally delivers the goods to prove it, still manages to give the feeling that they are not quite sure of the sales potential of much of what they are releasing. If they were, they’d probably promote it better. They don’t seem to be able to decide whether to push the more commercial aspects of reggae or just settle for its being one of the strongest musical cults around. Their two samplers, Volumes One and Two of “This Is Reggae Music” (ILPS 9251 and 9327), mostly take the commercial approach, and while one could hardly call Third World’s American-soul-infused Freedom Song or Arthur Louis’ cover of Bob Dylan’s Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door (with Eric Clapton accompaniment) the last word in Trenchtown roots music, both these albums are totally accessible, providing enjoyable listening for all but the most diehard aural reactionaries.

A better set, if you don’t already own it, is the soundtrack from The Harder They Come (Mango 9202), the underground-classic reggae movie starring Jimmy Cliff, who leads off a collection of some of the very greatest examples of earlier reggae by several acknowledged masters. Some of the songs in this album—the Slickers’ Johnny Too Bad, Cliff’s own You Can Get It If You Really Want and Many Rivers to Cross, and the title tune—have already become standards. Certainly Cliff has never been as strong since this tour de force display of deceptively liltting Otis Redding vocal turns and street-tough lyrics, and every one of the other artists is equally compelling. “The Harder They Come” achieves total commercial accessibility without compromising its hard-won political principles or their religious base, nor does it teeter on the edge of the abyss of self-parody as so much subsequent topical reggae does. Convincing evidence in
support of the argument that reggae is the
soul music of the Seventies (American soul
having been all but decimated by disco), this
album will stand as a masterpiece for years
and should be the cornerstone of any reggae
collection, serious or otherwise. Incidentally,
it received an Honorable Mention in
STEREO REVIEW's Record of the Year
awards for 1973, and Cliff himself received
another for his "Unlimited" album (Warner
Bros. MS 2147) in 1974.

One of the best reggae anthologies I have
ever heard is a three-record set called
"Feelin' High" assembled by Don Williams
of Shelter Records and originally released
on the Columbia Special Products label only
to the press, disc jockeys, and record-club
members. Part of it, also selected by Will-
iams, will shortly be available as a single LP
disc under the title "Roots" on the Shelter
label, but neither its exact contents nor its
number-to-be are known at this time. What
makes the three-disc set truly important (as
well as a sheer delight) is that, although
Marley and Toots are both present, the larg-
er part of the material is by performers even
more obscure than most of those on any of
the albums already mentioned. There is sim-
ply no way to convey the somehow beatific
sadness of Freddie McKay's "Swee You,
Sour You" in mere prose, or the way this one
song impresses itself indelibly on the listen-
er's sensibilities by transforming the condi-
tion of heartbreak into something very like a
state of grace.

"Feelin' High" is also noteworthy for its
inclusion of obscure early recordings by ar-
ist s familiar to confirmed reggae fans. There
is Marley's "Duppy Conqueror" in its original
(superior) version, the first-day-of-summer
motorcycle peelout of Prince Jazzbo's
School, the ribald hilarity of I-Roy's Flash-
ing My Whip, the Motown-influenced dyna-
mism of I Come from Jamaica by the Black
Eagles, and Desmond Dekker's 1969 U.S.
hit Israelites, just to put it all in a little per-
spective. These three records make up the
most diversified reggae anthology I've ever
heard; they are long on musicality and short
on the ecclesiastical didacticism that is per-
haps attractive to some listeners but prob-
ably puts many more off as boringly preachy.
"Feelin' High" is the record that
turned me into a reggae fan, so I probably
have a soft spot for it; once you've heard it I
think you will too.

An excellent anthology of more current
reggae is "The Front Line," a Virgin Rec-
ords sampler (VC-508) available on import
at a price so reasonable you may suspect the
quality of the product. Besides two beauti-
f ul cuts by the Mighty Diamonds, it has the
very best songs from recent albums by U-
Roy, I-Roy (no relation), Johnny Clarke, the
Gladiators, Delroy Washington, and Keith
Hudson. Most of those albums weren't very
well sustained, but listening to "The Front
Line" again just now I was struck by how
vital and complementary to each other these
individual songs sounded removed from the
oppressive redundance of their original con-
texts. These discs are especially recom-
mended for listeners whose musical curios-
ity has a tendency to outstrip their cash
supply.

2. Toots and the Maytals

"... strikes the perfect balance
between barnyard squawk and
uptown strut ..."

With his deep, groaning, bluesy voice
and the relentlessly charming arrangements that
support it, Toots Hibbert and the Maytals
should be instantly relevant to anybody who
grew up on American soul music of the Six-
ties. Like Jimmy Cliff, Toots has absorbed
Little Richard's and Otis Redding well, but his understanding of
the message is grittier, more down-home,
and, with an occasional James Brown edge
to the rhythms, his music rocks more solidly
than just about anyone else's in reggae.
Some critics have labeled Toots negatively
as an "old-fashioned" performer, but I can
see that only as a compliment. Toots' music,
far from the velvet insinuations of Cliff or
the supercool apocalypses of Marley, cooks
in the flat-out, no-apologies-to-MOR man-
ner of the great Stax-Volt sides of a decade
ago. Add to this the fact that Toots has a
real feel for pop music (he even recorded an
audaciously brilliant cover version of John
Denver's hit Take Me Home, Country
Roads) and you can see there is ample rea-
son why this man, perhaps the most dynam-
ic reggae artist alive (on records, anyway)
should be able to break through to the mass
American audience.

Toots has lots of albums out in Jamaica.
Of course, though only two have been re-
leased so far here, both on Island. I find the
second, "Reggae Got Soul" (ILPS 9374), a
bit strained, although the title track is a clas-
ic. But "Funky Kingston" (ILPS 9330), his
first American set (and a STEREO REVIEW
1976 Record of the Year award winner) is
absolutely essential to any collection of con-
temporary music, let alone reggae. It con-
tains the juiciest cuts from two albums re-
leased in Jamaica and Britain on the Dragon
label—"Funky Kingston" and "In the
Dark," which you can get from your friend-
ly local import service if you don't like
abridged editions; both are well worth the
money. But the American "Funky King-
ston" is perfection, the most exciting and
diversified set of reggae tunes by a single
artist yet released. Besides the revelatory
reworkings of Country Roads and Louie
Louie, it contains Toots' most unforgettable
evocations of Jamaica—Time Tough,
Pressure Drop, and the title song—all rolling
along in the great, blustery, scalding-funk
style that has become Toots' trademark.
Toots' songs have a universality that many
of his peers' odes to Jah Rastafari fall far
short of, and the vocal backings of the May-
tals as well as the instrumental work by the
rest of the band are never less than vital. If
you want more after that, there is some very
early Maytals work available on import.
Most listeners will probably find "Never
Grow Old" a little too primitively raucous,
but "From the Roots" (both discs on Tro-
jan) strikes the perfect balance between
barnyard squawk and uptown strut, and
Jamaican society

"Thou shalt not shout my name in the streets if I am walking with another woman, but wait intelligently until I come home, then we both can have it out decently"—and Commandment Ten—"Thou shalt not call my attention to anything that may be for sale in any stores, for I will not give thee anything but what you actually need for your purpose."

At his best, as in Earthquake and Judge Dread, Buster combines his talent for aural cartoons with a wry, sly perception of the violence and oppression besetting Jamaican society, themes that would come to fruition with the flowering of reggae. All the songs mentioned here can be found on a wonderful Melodisc import called "Prince Buster: Fabulous Greatest Hits" (FAB MS 1).

I am probably going to get in trouble with white true believers in the primacy of the Rastafarian doctrine for this inclusion, but I figure if we’re going to be in any way comprehensive in this thing, we should have at least one example of the music that immediately preceded the advent of reggae in Jamaica—the outgrowth of calypso known variously as Ska, Rock Steady, and Blue Beat. There is a lot of out-and-out calypso still available, but I imagine you got enough of that with Harry Belafonte. Anyway, from the Mighty Sparrow to Byron Lee (an old commercializer masquerading as a reggae artist) it’s not very listenable stuff. The real Blue Beat, though, was as woolly a permutation of black American music as reggae, blessed not only with the r&b charge but with a plenitude of wit. Enter Prince Buster.

You have probably heard Prince Buster before. Ten Commandments, a hit in the United States and much of the rest of the world in 1967, was a prototype for most of his other work. It is characterized by a drivingly repetitive Latin riff over which Buster firmly (and with no little irony) declaims "The Ten Commandments of man, given to wo-man." A diatribe of sexism so fanatical it becomes a form of burlesque, it abounds in such gems as Commandment Seven—"Thou shalt not shout my name in the streets if I am walking with another woman, but wait intelligently until I come home, then we both can have it out decently"—and Commandment Ten—"Thou shalt not call my attention to anything that may be for sale in any stores, for I will not give thee anything but what you actually need for your purpose."

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3. Prince Buster

"... a wry, sly perception of the violence and oppression besetting Jamaican society..."

4. The Mighty Diamonds

"... they look like they just got out of prison only to be conscripted by the SLA."

In the work of the Mighty Diamonds we encounter not only solid, mainstream reggae but the fulfillment in blood and tears of Buster’s caricatures of bullet-riddled turmoil. The songs titles alone testify: Why Me, Black Brother, Why?, Gnashing of Teeth, I Need a Roof, Go Seek Your Rights. Like the blues, this is music issuing directly from the conditions of squalor and oppression so extreme as Rain and the SLA. If the central subject of all the best Rasta reggae is the paradox of the velvet knife, as many of Bob Marley’s followers assert, then the Diamonds may be deemed master assassins. Anybody who has ever swooned to Smokey Robinson will welcome the blade. Album: "Right Time" (Virgin PZ 34235).

5. Burning Spear

"... a group that even many professed reggae fans find boring, or too laid back, or too something."

Now, true to this piece’s already stated spirit of gradually increasing obscurity, we enter the realm marked “Not for Everybody.” You’re on your own from here on out—there’ll be no more handholding and one-toe dipping in those currents of reggae more amenable to infidels, so if you don’t like any of the records discussed henceforth, don’t come crying to me.

Burning Spear is a group that even many professed reggae fans find boring, or too laid back, or too something. I find them utterly hypnotic, a slow vortex of spiraling rhythms, tidal horns, and sedimetary piano over which Rupert Willington and Delroy Hines wave sad, brooding harmonies that sway like looming kelp behind Winston Rodney’s sinuous, plaintive, hauntingly

THE MIGHTY DIAMONDS: HEARTBREAKING LYRICISM

BIG YOUTH: DUB’S BEST
primitive chants which alternately telegraph or painfully cry out tribal philippics, painting stark images of slave ships and shackles around the legs.

See?

Burning Spear's music is so personal to me it's almost embarrassing, partly because I suppose they really aren't the most quietly powerful sound in years or more people would be into them, partly because I'm white, after all. I've never been one for indulging in liberal guilt, so it seems just a wee bit anomalous that I should become so lost in and entranced by these little slices of black history originally addressed to such a specific and ultimately foreign audience. It is partly Jack Ruby's production and partly the magnificent band employed that make "Marcus Garvey" (Island 9377), Spear's first Island album, so intensely evocative that you can drift away from yourself and general external awareness in the magnetic currents of the music. But there's more than technical genius and picturesque filigree at work here. Winston Rodney is a kind of folk-historian/sociologist/poet, and it is his vision and his overriding sense of mission that finally make this music so powerful, so troubled and troubling for listeners of any cultural or ethnic persuasion. When he sings about Marcus Garvey, he's not just branding a name that by now has become a reggae cliché, but telling the story of a man.

Like all great artists, Rodney is continually interested in moving on, transcending the statements he's already made. The result is that, although the basically tribal melodies are almost identical, the subject matter in the "Marcus Garvey" follow-up, "Man in Hills" (Island 9412), has changed. Where the earlier album dealt with black history and figures like Garvey and Jamaican Prime Ministers Bustamente and Norman Washington Manley, "Man" concentrates on present-day Jamaican family life in rural villages and Trenchtown shacks. I find the earlier disc more moving by far, though whether that's because of subject matter or the limited nature of Rodney's melodic materials is open to question. Don't miss "Marcus Garvey" if these descriptions spark you at all, and if you find in the record the same wealth of feeling and musical artistry that I did, then pick up "Man" as well as "Garvey's Ghost" (Mango 9382), a mostly instrumental dub version of the first album that makes tremendous background music.

6. Dub

"... the bass notes in some dub records are enough to blow out your speakers ..."

Dub is one of the most fascinating and, to many non-Jamaican Caucasian ears, most comprehensible frustrating forms of reggae. An audacious innovation comparable to putting the beat on two instead of one (the basis of all reggae), dub may also be this music's one truly revolutionary contribution to the technology of recorded sound.

Certainly one cannot remember a previous instance in the history of the phonograph when artists routinely took records by other people, overdubbed their own interpretations of the basic track, and then released the product under their own names. Dub originated when Jamaican record companies began filling the flip sides of singles with "versions" of the A sides that usually consisted of the vocals almost entirely mixed out and the rhythm tracks mixed up through a lava-haze of reverb. The result, as might be imagined, is fairly strange—a snatch of a barely comprehensible vocal hissing in and out like a quick draft from a door opened for five seconds and then slammed shut, then a seemingly endless stretch of guitars and piano vamping successively to a metronomically unvarying beat which itself becomes something very like the star of the proceeding. Nobody loses—the track just clacks along in this molten rigidity until it runs out, and, as with the A sides, the endings are often abrupt.

The innovation came when producers, technicians, and artists in Jamaican studios devised a sort of jive-spieler’s vocal counterpart to the remixed versions, overdubbed the result, and released it. It was perhaps natural that such recordings should become hits in Jamaica—after all, they sounded like recent hits because, at least instrumentally, they were—but they have remained something between an unlistenable curiosity and a druggies' cult in America.

One of the earliest and still-surviving dub artists was I-Roy, whose Flashing My Whip is a highlight of the "Feelin' High" anthology. The record he was dubbing opened with a Mills Brothers-type vocal group crooning with almost ludicrous sweetness "Yoo000, and your smiling face," over which I-Roy suddenly barged, booming his inscriptions: "Flashin' my whip, flashin' my whip! We gotta move, we gotta move!" It was a great comic moment. Since then, I-Roy has released five stunningly dull albums in Jamaica and Britain on which almost every cut sounds the same. I have them all, never ever play any of them, and have no idea why I keep them, except that an artist who holds on being this boring for this long must be respected for an eccentric persistence that borders on the avant-garde.

But I wouldn't be going on at this length if I didn't feel dub was worth your while. For one thing, rest assured that there is absolutely nothing like it anywhere else; also, dub records are just beginning to be released in America, so you might as well know what you're up against—one of these days a new purchase may make you think there is something wrong with your record player. Certainly it is the most violent-sounding form of reggae—the bass notes in some dub records are enough to blow out speakers, the mix can be hot enough to melt your stylus, and the whole sound is a kind of cacophonous clattering smog. This invests dub with more psychedelic properties than any other reggae, and in Jamaica there are large numbers of people so flippant out that they made best sellers of certain dub records that didn't even have the grace to bother with the vocal overlays.

(Continued overleaf)
Assuming that you haven’t reached that point yet, I can steer you in the direction of some “artists” so accomplished at their curious and arcane art that their spaceports may make better listening than the original records they’ve mutilated. Big Youth (a.k.a. Manley Buchanan) is a wildly dreadlocked hipster grinning manfully through jeweled front teeth. He usually wears a pair of red-tinted shades to go with these—and he is the best dub artist on the island. His records are truly entertaining because he brings not only broad wit and enormous verbal invention to everything he does, but a strong sense of pop music too. His best material can be found on “Dread Locks Dread” (Kilk KLP 9001), where, as usual, he half sings, half talks the words in a voice midway between a choked cry and a hooting laugh, delivering as much a running commentary on the Kingston street scene as Rastafarian rant.

I recommend this album in the face of the fact that five of the eleven songs are the purest filler, dull instrumentals with a harmonic riffing over an indifferent rhythm section. The rest is magnificent, especially his apocalyptic dub of Burning Spear’s title track from “Marcus Garvey” and Train to Rhodesia, a brilliant performance that opens with Big Youth singing, “Is there always gonna be/One more bridge to cross?” and then cuts abruptly back with an overdubbed holler of “Black people, do we really really have to fight?” The whole leaps and swoops to the middle section, where the vocal from the original record sifts in and out, dancing in counterpart to Big Youth’s own loping verbal improvisations. The effect is nothing short of breathtaking, a dizzying play of rhythms not quite like anything else you’ve ever heard.

“Natty Cultural Dread” (Trojan TRLS 123) is a more consistent album, and although nothing on it is as instantaneously gripping as Train to Rhodesia, it’s probably a better buy, especially for such smolderingly up-tempo back-up vocalists. I hear what sounds like a steal from Marley’s No Woman No Cry) as well, though nothing here is quite so flat and leaden as Nico seem fleet and airy by comparison. I hear what sounds like an African bog.

There is an element of drag in the music that is in direct contrast to the almost grim dogma of “Freedom Sounds.” The third Ras Michael album, “Ras-Tafari” (Vulcan VULP 005), is more commercial than the other two. Though still chalant and relatively sluggish, the songs are upbeat by comparison. Some songs, like None a Jah Jha Children No Cry (a direct steal from Marley’s No Woman No Cry) even have enough melody to be catchy, and effective use is made of female back-up vocalists. I hear what sounds like a xylophone soloing in Birds in the Treetop, and In Zion is a fairly straight copy of the Drifters’ On Broadway.

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There is an element of drag (as in real slow plod) indigenous to all reggae. It’s predictable when the rhythm is staggered this way. The best reggae uses drag propensities to suck the listener into the total drone and keep him hypnotized, but in less fortuitous circumstances it makes for astoundingly dull listening. One way or another, it’s got to be dealt with, and one way of dealing with any challenge is to fling yourself headlong into it and wallow, which is probably why I love Ras Michael and the Sons of Negus so.

Ras Michael is one of the most interesting reggae artists in Jamaica by dint of the fact that in his music the element of drag has permeated so far as to be absolutely central. Though hand-drums aplenty go bip-bap all around a Ras Michael song, the music itself seems to have almost no momentum whatsoever but to be at a near standstill in a primeval African bog. Meanwhile, Ras Michael himself groans about Jab and Zion in a voice so flat and leaden that it makes a mere Nico seem fleet and airy by comparison. I mean, if you think reggae is just a big thud-plod in the first place, you’re not going to believe this stuff.

The most peculiar aspect of Ras Michael’s music is its tramping, chantlike structure. Yet, glaringly modern sounds keep cropping up on his albums. Each of his three discs embodies this contradiction, and each is a different quality to such instrumentals as Jazzboe Abubaka (whoever the latter is) and the traditional “Freedom Sounds.” (Dynamic DYL 3004) is the most primitive—the songs are long, groaning chants and seem to have no motion at all. But out of this somnous morass, which you might call garage reggae, rise two electric guitars rifting in a manner unmistakably reminiscent of white American rock solo styles of the Sixties. The effect is like a prehistoric Grateful Dead, and though the lead guitarist, Earl “Chinna” Smith, is one of the most ubiquitous session guitarists in Jamaica, he plays this like only with Ras Michael—which must indicate something exceedingly odd about the musical personality of Michael himself.

Ras Michael’s records, all imports, are some of the most unusual, even bewildering items I have heard in some time. I am not at all the most people I have heard are particularly listenable, although in their reconcil-}

### DEALERS

If your local record dealer is not into reggae yet, you might try the following import houses:

- **Peters International**: 619 West 54th St., New York, N.Y. 10019 ($7.98 per disc including post)
- **Dynamic Discophile**: 56 West 8th St., New York, N.Y. 10011 ($6.98 per disc plus $1.25 handling for orders under four items)
- **Jem Records**: Import Record Service, Box 343, South Plainfield, N.J. 07080 ($6.49 plus $3 postage per item)

70 STEREO REVIEW
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CIRCLE NO. 43 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Stereo Review Throws a Party...

...to celebrate its Record of the Year Awards for 1976. There were twelve awards, twenty-six honorable mentions, and hundreds of guests. The First Lady of the American Musical Theater, Ethel Merman, presented the magazine's Certificate of Merit (for outstanding contributions to the quality of American musical life) to Arthur Fiedler, conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra. Maestro Fiedler is shown being congratulated by (1) Stereo Review's Publisher, Edgar Hopper, and (2) his daughter Johanna Fiedler, associate press representative of the Metropolitan Opera. (3) Miss Merman makes an emphatic point to the maestro. A builder of bridges between the worlds of popular and classical music, Fiedler chats with (4) harpsichordist Igor Kipnis and (5) nonagenarian ragtime pianist Eubie Blake. (6) Award winner Southside
Johnny (right) and a hirsute member of his band, the Asbury Jukes, are ogled by adoring fans. (7) Publicist Michael MacLeod tests François Clemmons, Sportin' Life in London Records' award-winning Porgy and Bess. (8) Robert White displays his award for "When You Are Young and Maggie" at Stereo Review's Managing Editor William Livingston. (9) Award winner June ("First Night") O'Connor, flanked by RCA's pop press manager Shi Sandy and Cue Magazine columnist Chip Orton. (10) Stereo Review's Editor William Anderson chats with Katherine Nance Lewis, daughter of blues composer W. C. Handy.

On the second page rock goddess Patti Smith unites the party by laughing it up with (11) Miss Merman and (12) Editor Anderson. (13) Patti collects an autograph from the venerable Eubie Blake and (14) grantees one to disc critic Clifford Toney's shirt. (15) Monster Times publisher Larry 3all (left) with Ben Bagley of Planet Smiles Records and Stereophile's Technical Editor Larry Klein. (16) JazzFract David Sancious (center) chats with Stereo Review's Technical Assistant Richard Sarba (left) and Chris Kalisch, Smiles' manager. (17) Smiles are flashed by Miss Merman, Stereo Review's Pop Culture Editor Paul Weiss, and Miss O'Connor. (18) Emanuel Ax, whose RCA album of Chopin piano music was singled out for honorable mention, with Publisher Higgins. (19) Ivan Davis (left), also honorably mentioned (for his London album of piano works by L. M. Gottschalk), with pianist Ilana Vered and Joan Harper, national sales manager for London Classical Records. (20) Old hand Celeste Blake gives a few pointers to the award-winning young members of Dr. Buzzard's Original Savannah Band. (All photos by Erik Davidson, except numbers 11, 14, 17, and 20, by Chuck Pullum.)
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Should someone tell you otherwise, they speak with forked frequency response.

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Thus our goal was to create speakers with a minimum of coloration. With a low distortion. And with repeatability. Which is critical. Which means that each speaker we turn out will sound like the one before and the one after.

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Our basic dilemma was that speaker specs don't specify much.

You can build two speakers with identical specs, and find they'll sound non-identical.

That's because your sophisticated ear can pick up differences our clumsy measurements can't.

Some examples:

You can hear how pure water is. The purity of the water in which the pulp for the speaker cone is pressed will influence the sound. (Spring water is the best.)

But water purity would hardly change the frequency response—or any other measureable characteristic.

Nor would the dye used to color the cone—or the glue used in gluing the cabinet.

But you'd hear the dye and the glue. And there are dozens and dozens of elements that interact this way.

So our job was mammoth. To correlate these factors in order to reach the goal we outlined earlier. Changing one changes the other and almost changed our minds about going into the speaker business.

But we stuck it out. And found the answer to the juggling of these variables thanks to a major technological innovation,

Trial and error.

That's why we labored for three years to bring you our speakers. While other manufacturers rushed frantically to market with theirs.

We keep the whole world in our hands.

Once we understood how to control the sound of our speakers, we realized we had to control what went into our speakers.

So we did the only logical thing.

We built a plant.

And pursuing that logic, we built it at a place called Kofu. Which is at the base of Mt. Fuji. Where we can get all the spring water we want.

This factory does nothing but produce—under outrageously close control—the components for our speakers.

Whatever we do buy, we specify so carefully that our vendors have nightmares about us. (It's unfortunate that we can't make everything ourselves, but only God can make a tree, and only wood can make a fine cabinet.)

Few companies make this effort. So it's safe to say that when it comes to exercising this kind of control, our speakers are a voice in the dark.

Don't judge a bookshelf speaker by its cover.

As you can see, there's a lot that goes into producing a speaker that's not easily seen. (One beautiful exception—the handsome finish on our cabinets.)

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Carbon fiber is light and strong. (Why they don't use it in girdles we'll never know.)

Light, so our speaker is more efficient. Meaning you need less power to operate it. Meaning you are closer to the ideal of converting electrical energy to mechanical energy without a loss of power.

Light, so our speaker cone reacts quickly to stops and starts in the signal. The result: improved transient response.

Strong, to prevent the cone from bending out of shape in the high frequency range.

Moreover, carbon fiber doesn't resonate much. It has what's called a low Q, and it took someone with a high IQ to realize it would absorb the unwanted vibration rather than transmit it down the cone.

We also cut down on unwanted vibration (as opposed to the wanted vibration, which is music), by using a cast aluminum basket rather than a stamped, shoddy, cheap metal one.

We could go on, but at this point the best thing would be for you to move on to your nearest Sony dealer. And listen.

Because the results of our three years of labor will be clear after three minutes of listening.

At which point, far from heckling our speakers, you'll be tempted to give them a standing ovation.

SONY

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1. Land of Hope & Glory

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE.

1. Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the Free.
Making the Case for
ELGAR

Hailed though he was by Richard Strauss in 1902 as "the first English progressivist" and by the conductor Hans Richter at a London rehearsal six years later as "the greatest modern composer—and not only in this country," Edward Elgar could never claim that his reputation was quick to ripen outside his native land. The astonishing instant vogue represented by a hundred performances, around the world, of his First Symphony within just over a year of its premiere couldn't, and didn't, last.

Certainly there was an audience for Elgar in the United States when I worked as a critic in New York and Chicago between 1964 and 1973: in those days, my reviews of Elgar records seemed to provoke a larger and more enthusiastic response from readers than anything else I wrote. But it was probably the very paucity of available material that led a devoted and knowledgeable little band of Elgar listeners to seize so eagerly on every new release. The big exception—the Enigma Variations—may not, in a wider sense, have helped. Recognized from the time of its first hearing in 1899 as an orchestral composition worthy to stand with Brahms' St. Anthony Variations, and featured with fair frequency in the programs of even the less adventurous American orchestras, the piece brought with it the risk of turning Elgar into that most misunderstood of figures, a "one-work composer." And misunderstanding was compounded by the only other Elgar pieces that were at all well known, the Pomp and Circumstance marches, for these served only to reinforce—misleadingly, as I shall argue—the popular image of the composer as a typical Edwardian Colonel Blimp. But in the second half of the 1970's, happily, making "the case for Elgar" as an artist of the highest and most unimpeachable mastery is a much easier task than it would have been as little as five years ago. The territory, in this as in other cases, has been opened up, and with a will, by the phonograph.

One substantial "new" area of the discography is not really new at all. Elgar was the first composer to take the phonograph seriously, and between 1914 and 1933, anticipating Stravinsky's documentary use of the medium by several decades, he committed large segments of his output to disc in a landmark series of recording sessions. (The results of this activity have, in the past few years, been transferred in their entirety to LP's, and these are discussed later in this article.) The other main development, equally welcome, has been the interest lately taken in Elgar's music by conductors from outside the English tradition. The Enigma, not surprisingly, has been the spearhead, the justly celebrated readings by Monteux and Toscanini being joined in the catalogs since 1972 by versions under the leadership of Ormandy, Mehta, Haitink, Jochum, Solti, and, still to come, Barenboim. But Barenboim and Solti—both now resident in London and most accurately described from the British standpoint as semi-foreigners—have also ranged more widely through Elgariana. Solti has concentrated on the two symphonies, and Barenboim, with characteristic thoroughness, has already recorded half a dozen major works and a selection of minor ones.

*Pomp and Circumstance*

With this expanded and diversified corpus ready to hand—or to ear—it might be thought that Elgar was at last in a position to make his own case. One or two misconceptions, however, still stand in the way of his just appreciation. The most glaring of them concerns, indeed, that deceptive question of "foreign-ness" and "Englishness." Writers of liner notes (though not Elgar's two most indefatigable annotators, Michael Kennedy and Jerrold Northrop Moore) are still prone to label Elgar as a nationalist. It is in this regard that the pompous and circumstantial image, and especially the subsequent fitting of "Land of hope and glory" words to the trio tune of the first P. and C. march, have been most misleading. Even if we ignore "the note of recession, the heroic melancholy, which, rather than self-confident assertiveness," Kennedy identifies as the tune's "true character," we ought still to recognize the crucial distinction between a nationalist composer and a composer of nationalist music. Yes, Elgar loved his country, and yes, he encouraged

By Bernard Jacobson
ELGAR

younger English composers to look for sources of inspiration in England's own culture. Yet in musical style he was himself a conscious, systematic follower of continental European methods and an aspirer to European standards, unlike his fifteen-years-younger contemporary Vaughan Williams. It may well be argued that it was Elgar's legitimization of the very idea of an "English composer," through his emulation of those standards, that cleared the path for his successor to write self-proclaimed "national music."

Even to say that Elgar "loved his country" is, if it suggests an image of outdated chauvinism, to wrong him by oversimplification. Both in artistic matters and in the wider politico-social sphere, his views were rarely black-and-white; they never fell into the "my country, right or wrong" category. He was, it's true, repelled by the idea of socialism, and Kennedy and others are probably right in tracing his creative decline after 1918 to his oppressive sense that the First World War had destroyed all he valued in the Europe of his day. (As Elgar himself put it in a letter written during the war: "Everything good & nice & clean & fresh & sweet is far away—never to return.") But we must surely write with a rather small "c" the conservatism of a man who, in the 1870's, was conducting, and writing much of his early music for, the band of an insane asylum in his native Worcestershire, and a man who, in 1910, observed during a speech in Aberdeen: "Dusseldorf is not a very beautiful town, but many people go to reside there on account of the music; the town looks upon that orchestra as a valuable asset, and the municipality takes the responsibility of any loss that may arise. . . . The time is coming when all towns must be able to give the people the good music they want."

Elgar made it clear on many occasions, too, that when he said "the people" he meant exactly that, and not some social elite with a conventionally inculcated taste for "the arts."

• Gerontius

This supposed pillar of the English establishment was, indeed, thoroughly sickened by its artistic aspects. Returning home in 1902 after the triumphant German première of The Dream of Gerontius, he told his friend Jaeger, "The horrible musical atmosphere I plunged into at once in this benighted country nearly suffocated me."

In particular, the blinkered concentration of critics on what went on in London exasperated him. "Some day," he declared in a letter published in the Musical Times in May 1903, "the Press will awake to the fact, already known abroad and to some few of us in England, that the living centre of music in Great Britain is not London, but somewhere further North."

With views so disaffected it's hardly surprising—and indeed it was partly the cause of them—that the unofficial composer laureate of the nation had some of his greatest successes on the European continent and received some of his best performances from foreign musicians. Richter, already quoted, was a devoted champion of Elgar's work. And that German Gerontius performance came less than fifteen months after a disastrous world première at the 1900 Birmingham Festival, an occasion when inadequate preparation under a makeshift chorusmaster defeated even Richter's attempt at last-minute inspiration. The Dusseldorf performance under Julius Buths disproved, Elgar wrote, "the idea fostered at Birmingham that my work is too difficult. The personnel of the chorus here is largely amateur, and in no way, except in intelligence and the fact that they have a capable conductor, can they (or it) be considered superior to any good English choral society."

The role of Gerontius was sung in Dusseldorf by Ludwig Wittmer—"We never heard a singer, and that with so much brain," said Elgar. Yet insularity dies hard, and when Sir Adrian Boult's long-awaited recording of Gerontius came out in England early in 1976 with Nicolai Gedda in the name part, there were mutterings about the choice of a foreign tenor "who couldn't be expected etc. etc." Well, Gerontius—both as work and as role—has been lucky in its recordings. But though Richard Lewis and John Barbirolli in their Angel version, Heddle Nash in the 1945 mono set under Malcolm Sargent, and especially Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten on London achieved many memorable touches, and though there are new releases imminent conducted by Alexander Gibson and Barenboim (with Robert Tear and Placido Domingo as their Gerontii), my own preference is unhesitatingly for both Gedda and Boult. Their two-record album will probably either be issued in the United States by Angel or possibly imported directly by Capitol. Virtually everything about the set, including the recorded sound, the orchestral playing, the choral singing, and the superb young bass soloist Robert Lloyd, conspires to make it a near-ideal representation of a great Elgar work.

How great exactly? "This is the best of me," Elgar himself judged, and certainly Gerontius is an epoch-making, and often profoundly moving, revivification of the English oratorio tradition by the infusion of German symphonic methods and European chromaticism. For me, much as I love the work, its very success in capturing the somewhat overheated religious fervor of Cardinal Newman's text militates against complete acceptance. Whatever you may think about that purely personal reaction, Gerontius undoubtedly points to another deep contradiction between the image of Elgar and his reality.

• The Apostles

Intense in his identification with the Gerontius story, he is often thought of as an explicitly Christian and Roman Catholic composer. Yet doubt lurked just below the surface of his faith, and in the end his belief turned to ashes. As a man, he refused the rites of the church on his deathbed. As a composer, he left unfinished the imposing trilogy of oratorios designed, in the years after Gerontius, to chronicle the progress of Christianity. The two parts that were completed, The Apostles (1903) and The Kingdom (1906), seem to betray this diminishing certainty of aim, for they never quite decide whether to concentrate on human drama or on
of these five central works concludes in unshadowed triumph. The Second Symphony and the violin concerto have their moments of delight and grandiloquence, but they end on a Homeric note of poignant regret for past beauty. *Falstaff*, musical logic reinforced this time by fidelity to the Shakespearian program, fades bleakly away. The cello concerto, written in the aftermath of the war, is sorrowful, or at least nostalgic, almost through.

Quirk’s impassioned St. Peter in The Kingdom.

**Falstaff**

If there is a discrepancy more fundamental even than the contradictions we have explored in Elgar’s attitudes toward nation and toward religion, it is the gulf between the popular picture of him as a sumptuous embodiment of Edwardian confidence and the reality, which was constant, gnawing self-doubt. Recent writings about Elgar have laid increasing stress on the conflicts and questionings that underlie his music’s glittering facade. That we to-doubt. Recent writings about Elgar which was constant, gnawing self-assured age, if not as comprehensive of the music’s facets as are the Monteux, Haitink, and Davis readings. Barenboim’s *Enigma* is coupled in England with a live recording, taken from concerts given with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1970, of the cello concerto. The soloist is Jacqueline du Pré, here in even more electrifying form than in her earlier studio recording with Barbirolli.

**Symphonies**

Barenboim is also conductor in a new recording of the violin concerto (Columbia M34517) by Pinchas Zukerman, who matches the young Menuhin (with Elgar conducting, in a five-disc “Images of Elgar” set, EMI RLS 708, sadly now deleted as an import) in beauty of tone and the older Menuhin (with Boult on Angel S-36330) in completeness of understanding. The “Images” set included, among other things, *Enigma*, the two symphonies, *Falstaff*, and the cello concerto with Beatrice Harrison, and Elgar conducted fine performances even though harried occasionally by the time limits of the original 78-rpm sides. Modern recording technique, however, is particularly important in music like this, and the *Falstaff* to have if you must have only one is Barenboim’s (Columbia M 32599), one of his greatest performances. For the symphonies, Barenboim is magnificent in No. 1 (Columbia M 32807) and a shade less so in No. 2 (M 31997). Boult’s earlier recordings, available in the U.S. from the Musical Heritage Society, are orchestrally less polished, but occasionally by the piece ended quietly, and Elgar tackled on the more “effective” conclusion at the urging of friends.

I would dearly love to hear *Enigma* in its first form. But since there is apparently no chance of that, we must be content with what we have, and there are several superb performances on record to help us. The best of all, in my own order of preference, are those of Monteux (London STS 15188), Haitink (Philips 6500481), and Colin Davis (Philips 835317). But Barenboim’s new recording (to appear on Columbia) comes to mind when I share my doubts about the ending, for his conducting minimizes the grandiosi-ty—indeed, it brings to the entire work a fresh directness that is most attractive, if not as comprehensive of the music’s facets as are the Monteux, Haitink, and Davis readings. Barenboim’s *Enigma* is coupled in England with a live recording, taken from concerts given with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1970, of the cello concerto. The soloist is Jacqueline du Pré, here in even more electrifying form than in her earlier studio recording with Barbirolli.

**Enigma Variations**

Thus it would seem to be not just the passionate aspiration to glorious cer-tainty, but the tension between that longing and its ultimate denial that marks the quintessential Elgar. That is why *Enigma*, as we now know it, is not on *my* list of the best of Elgar. A great and lovable work it is, but there is a slightly facile quality about the grandiose coda that separates it from the peak of Elgarian perfection. And that is where my phrase “as we know it” comes in, for originally the piece ended quietly, and Elgar tackled on the more “effective” conclusion at the urging of friends.

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sought and attained complete technical mastery. As Bernard Shore, principal violist of the BBC Symphony Orchestra for many years, put it in his book *Sixteen Symphonies*: “In one respect no composer has ever matched Elgar. None other has fully exploited all the orchestral instruments and at the same time written nothing impossible. In this latter respect Strauss frequently sins, and so did Wagner... [but] Elgar was unerring.”

• Other Forms •

This gift, and the sense that the music was conceived fully dressed, rather than being composed in the abstract first and orchestrated later, is no less apparent in Elgar’s minor orchestral works. Here, yet again, Barenboim has made a valuable contribution, with the best available versions of the *Pomp and Circumstance* marches (Columbia M 32936) and of a variety of smaller pieces (M 33584). His Serenade for Strings on the latter disc, however, is outshone by Boult’s performance, coupled with an equally successful Introduction and Allegro on Angel S 37029. As for the three attractive concert overtures, I would pick Colin Davis’ studio recording of *Cockaigne* (coupled with his *Enigma*), and, antique sound notwithstanding, Elgar himself for *Froissart* and *In the South*—these two being among more than two dozen smallish works contained in another absorbing EMI set, “Elgar on Record” (RLS 713, six discs, still available as an import). There is more treasure in “The Elgar Edition” (EWE 1), a seven-disc set enterprisingly assembled by the small English label Pearl (which is distributed in the United States by Qualiton) and containing all of the composer’s acoustic recordings.

In the chamber, instrumental, and vocal spheres, Elgar’s music is, by and large, neither better nor worse than other early twentieth-century efforts. The best recorded representations of it are John McCabe’s disc of all the piano works on the new English Prelude label (PRS 2503, which might possibly become available in the U.S.), a song recital by John Carol Case and Mary Thomas with Daphne Ibbott (Saga 5304, distributed by CMS Records, Inc., 14 Warren Street, New York, N.Y.), a collection of short violin and piano pieces played by John Georgiadis and John Parry on Pearl (SHE 523), and a glorious new performance of the violin sonata by the Weiss Duo on Unicorn (RHS 341, distributed in the U.S. by HNH).

Even in these areas, though, Elgar sometimes plumbed greater depths. The excellent John Ogdon/Allegri Quartet performance of the piano quintet on Angel S 36686 is unfortunately no longer available. But Louis Halsey conducts some rivetingly imaginative part-songs on Argo (ZRG 607), the short choral pieces conducted by Christopher Robinson on EMI (CSD 3660) are every bit as impressive as Bruckner’s works in the genre, and—to give the busiest young Elgar conductor of the day an appropriate last word, Daniel Barenboim has recorded the touching, truly picturesque *Sea Pictures* with Yvonne Minton on Columbia. It will shortly be joining the lovely performance by Janet Baker (Barbirolli conducting) on Angel S 36796 in a catalog of available Elgar recordings that has not heretofore been matched for richness, excellence, and variety.

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Visit the dbxpert at your dealer or write: dbx, Inc.; 296 Newton St., Waltham, MA 02154; (617) 899-8090.
So what else is new? Well, how about Loretta Lynn’s umpteenth album “Somebody Somewhere,” as finely honed down (or up) to the taste of her market as ever before and not different in any appreciable way from the slew that preceded it, except perhaps that here she doesn’t do any of her own songs.

But for those of you who haven’t been paying much attention, there is a difference, and it has to do with the fact that Loretta Lynn long ago moved beyond the narrow confines of being just a hugely popular c-&-w singer and has become an exceptional personality in almost every performing medium. You see, along with her undoubted good-ole-gal earnestness, sincerity, and honesty, to say nothing of her skill in communicating these qualities (nobody goes nowhere in the c-&-w field without them), there is also a wry sexiness, a sly wit, and a gutsy realism about her performances that makes her a kind of hill-country Dietrich.

And can she ever put you on in such cameo confessions as Somebody Somewhere (Don’t Know What He’s Missin’ Tonight): “Lord I need someone, but ev’ry one I know is away being/Needed at home.” Another example is While He’s Making Love (I’m Making Believe): “When he tells me he needs me, I try hard to please...” Both are sung with the head-on, blank-stare coolness that is twice as effective as any amount of stuck-valve rant, and both are therefore funny and touching and real.

On the more serious side is Me and Ole Crazy Bill, about a man who marries a woman already pregnant with someone else’s baby. They try the rodeo circuit for a while, and she begins to realize how much she loves him when she sees him “passing out cigars to the cowboys/Like my baby was his own...” I realize that that reads more like True Confessions than True Life, but suspend judgment until you hear Loretta sing it; she performs it with a sober, earthy dignity that will give you pause for the little while it takes to glance into a world perhaps a little less wide than your own.

Such songs (I’ll Leave the Leavin’ Up to You is another), made up one part each of woman-of-the-world stoicism and understanding compassion, suggest that Loretta Lynn is a lot more than the c-&-w money machine, the empress of the truck-stop juke box, that much of her publicity has suggested. Whatever else she is—stars of this...
Pianist Daniel Barenboim, baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau

LORETTA LYNN: Somebody Somewhere. Loretta Lynn (vocals); orchestra. Somebody Somewhere; Sundown Tavern; The Game That Daddies Play; While He's Mak- ing Love; Crawling Man; Me and Ole Crazy Bill; I'll Leave the Leavin' Up to You; Your Woman, Your Friend; Playing with Fire; Blue Eyed Kentucky Girl. MCA MCA -2228 $6.98, T-2228 $7.98, © C-2228 $7.98.

WOLF: Lieder on Poems by Goethe, Heine, and Lenau. Goethe: Anakreons Grab; Beherzigung, I and II; Blumengruss; Coph- tisches Lied, I and II; Dank des Parias; Der Harfenspieler, I, II, and III; Der Neue Amadis; Der Rattenfanger; Der Sänger; Der Schäfer; Dies zu Deuten Bin erböbig; Epiph- anias; Erscharfen und Beleben; Frech und Froh, I and II; Frühling übers Jahr; Ga- nymed; Genialisch Treiben; Gleich und Gleich; Grenzen der Menschheit; Gutmann und Gutweib; Hätt' ich irgend Wohl Benen- ken; Komm, Liebenchen, Komm; Königlich Ge- bet; Locken, Haltet Mich Gefangen; Nicht Gelegenheit Macht Diebe; Ob der Koran von Ewigkeit Sei; Phanomen; Prometheus; Ritter Karts Brautfahrt; Solang Man Nachttern Ist; Spottdieth; St. Nepomucks Vorabend; Trunk- en Müssen Wir Alle Ein; Wanderers Nacht- lied; Was in der Schenke Waren Heute; Wenn Ich Dein Gedenke; Wie Sollt Ich Heit- ter Bleiben. Heine: Du bist wie eine Blume; Maiden mit dem Rote Miindchen; Mit Schwarzen Segeln; Spätherbstnebel; Wenn Ich in Deine Augen Seh'; Wie des Mondes Abbild Zittert; Wo Wird Einst. Lenau: Abendbilder; Frage Nicht; Hertbstein- schluss; Herbst. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone); Daniel Barenboim (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2740 156 three discs $23.94.

RCA’s New Forza del Destino Holds Its Own Amid Some Formidable Catalog Competition

VERDI’s La Forza del Destino, a complex and demanding opera, has fared remarkably well on records. Indeed, in the long list that runs all the way back to the marvelous first complete version accomplished in wartime Italy (by Caniglia, Masini, Pasero, and others), there isn’t one that fails to do

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the music justice or that does not contain at least one cherishable contribution. A new set by RCA (the third by that company in some sixteen years) now takes on the formidable competition—and holds its own admirably.

Presiding over a cast of outstanding singers, conductor James Levine gives renewed evidence of his natural gifts as a Verdi interpreter. In the early scenes there is more efficiency than true inspiration in his work, but as the performance takes shape the listener is won over by the clarity, vitality, and discipline of his leadership. There are crisp attacks and a steady momentum. He no longer drives the singers as he once did; occasional excesses in this area (the rushed finale of the Inn Scene, for one) are far outnumbered by brisk but eminently right-sounding tempos. The little Preghiera in the second act is handled with a fastidious care befitting Verdi's Requiem, and the singers are equally fastidious as a consequence. In short, this kind of Verdi conducting need not defer to the much admired work of such Italian veterans as Tullio Serafin and Lamberto Gardelli in other Forza sets.

As the vengeful Don Carlo, Sherrill Milnes has rarely sounded better. His gallery-pleasing inclinations are held in check, and he uses his sizable baritone intelligently within an impressive range of dynamic and timbral variety. The recitative preceding his aria "Urna fatale" is meaningfully projected; the aria itself is somberly introspective, and that makes the explosive caballera all the more exciting. The crucial scenes between Don Carlo and Don Alvaro display a remarkable rapport between two artists at their peak. In the latter role, Placido Domingo excels with his appropriately melancholy sound and his exemplary legato; his intonation, however, has been more careful on previous occasions.

This is Leontyne Price's second Leonora on discs, and though it is not quite as impressive as her first (RCA LSC-6413), her musicianship is as strong as ever, her attacks are clean, and the tone above the staff has the radiance of old. Unfortunately, much of the part lies in the lower mid-range (never the happiest area for her voice), and there she sounds unappealingly raw, lacking in Italianate warmth. And too, there is a rather passionless quality to her singing in the first act. But she sounds like her early self in the Convent Scene, where she is eloquently partnered by Bonaldo Giacotti, a majestic-sounding Guardiano.

Fiorenza Cossotto's light-toned, accurately sung, and cleanly ornamented Preziosilla is a delight (despite two B-naturals that are a shade under pitch), and Gabriel Bacquier's colorful Melitone makes almost visible his unforgettable interpretation of the role at the Met a few seasons ago. Kurt Moll is outstanding as the short-lived Marquis de Calatrava, and Michel Sénéchal is an amusing Trabucco. The choral singing is first-rate and so is the orchestra, paced by splendid violin and clarinet solos.

I will not place this new set above the others currently available (London 1405, in particular—with Tebaldi, Del Monaco, Bastianini, and Stepi, all in peak form—has not lost its magic for me throughout the twenty years of its existence), but I doubt that I will ever part with it. I recommend it very highly despite the fact that RCA's well-annotated album is encased in an unattractive and ill-fitting box that is sure to offend some buyers—especially given the price.

—George Jellinek

VERDI: La Forza del Destino. Leontyne Price (soprano), Leonora; Placido Domingo (tenor), Don Alvaro; Sherrill Milnes (baritone), Don Carlo; Fiorenza Cossotto (mezzo-soprano), Preziosilla; Bonaldo Giacotti (bass), Padre Guardiano; Gabriel Bacquier (baritone), Fra Melitone; Michel Sénéchal (tenor), Trabucco; Kurt Moll (bass), Marquis de Calatrava; Gillian Knight (mezzo-soprano), Curra; Malcolm King (baritone), Mayor of Hornachuelos; others. John Aldis Chor.; London Symphony Orchestra, James Levine cond. RCA ARL4-1864 four discs $31.92.

Jeremiah Ingalls and Hezekiah Moors: Vital, Beautiful Music From Old New England

If William Billings (1746-1800) was the giant among the New England psalmists whose heyday (1770-1810) marked the first creative outpouring of a wholly original American music, at least a dozen of his singing-schoolmasters conferèes and part-time composers (they were tavern keepers, farmers, and comb makers also) produced pieces of comparable rhythmic vitality, stark loveliness, and raw power.

Justin Morgan (of horse-breeding renown), Daniel Read, Supply Belcher, and Jeremiah Ingalls are but a few of those who come to mind, and their hymns and anthems, as well as Billings', are still to be heard these two hundred years later at the Sacred Harp singing conventions beloved of the rural South. For when the more "cultivated" musical styles imported from Europe drove the community singing schools and their highly individual music from the New England scene, the home-grown products quietly decamped and were reborn in the American South. Only over the past twenty
James Chapman conducts the Vermont Choral Union: masterly performances of early American music

years has there been any active interest in the North toward reviving the work of the so-called New England tunesmiths in authentic performance.

An excellent example of such performance is contained in a compendium of Federal-period New England psalmody done for the Vermont-based Philo label (see STEREO REVIEW, January 1977, page 78) by the University of Vermont Choral Union. It is equalled in vitality and beauty only by the remarkable 1960 University of Maryland Chapel Choir disc issued by Washington Records and now long out of print. Besides offering a fine collection of the work of the relatively well-known Jeremiah Ingalls (1764-1838), the Vermonters have unearthed the music of Hezekiah Moors (1775-1814), whose name is to be found in no standard reference work but whose music is certainly richly deserving of a renown it never attained during the brief lifetime of its author. Moors died at thirty-nine, five years after publication of his single tunebook, The Province Harmony. Space does not permit going into biographical detail here concerning Ingalls and Moors, but fortunately the Philo package offers copious annotation, full texts, and information on how scores may be obtained from the Vermont University Choral Union (this is music that deserves the widest circulation and performance).

Among the compositions I would singled out from the Ingalls group are such items as the folk-like Christian Song with its effective word painting, the elaborate Falmouth with its vigorous "fuguing" episodes and unprepared key shifts, the starkly beautiful Farewell Hymn, and the poignant Lamentation. The rendition of Ingalls’ most famous tune, Northfield, is highlighted here by being given in both its church version and its highly amusing secular one.

In the works of Hezekiah Moors we encounter a far more sophisticated harmonist, one who bridges the gap between the stark primitivism of the "tunesmiths" and the cultivated style that was to gain dominance within the decades to come. In Dorset and Pittsford we find the "fuguing" devices of the older composers, while in Orwell and Mount-Holly we have stunning examples of Moors’ singular gift for gorgeous, densely packed harmonic textures. Remarkably effective, too, is the anthem By the Offence of One, which is through-composed in a kind of arisson-recitativo.

Unlike the Vermont Choral Union’s first album (Philo 1000), which, though it offered a marvelous collection of music by composers native to or associated with Vermont (including all the extant work of Justin Morgan), was inadequately recorded and rather ineffectively sung, this "Vermont Harmony 2" disc is an altogether masterly production from every standpoint. One can only wish that the contents of the earlier disc might now be rerecorded under comparable conditions. Meanwhile, I rate this as one of the half-dozen finest discs of American music to come out of the Bicentennial year.

—David Hall

VERMONT HARMONY 2. Ingalls: Love Divine; Christian Song; Falmouth; Farewell Hymn; New Jerusalem; Crostic; Lamentation; Delay; Tranquility; Northfield; Election Hymn. Moors: Cavendish; Charlotte; Dorset; Plainfield; I Will Praise Thee—Anthem; Pittsford; Fairfax; By the Offence of One—Anthem; Moretown; Shirley; Orwell; Mount-Holly. University of Vermont Choral Union.

Eagles Don Henley, Joe Walsh, Randy Meisner, Glenn Frey, and Don Felder
The Eagles' New "Hotel California": High Standards and a Tight and Tidy Vision

Try not to get too hung up on how middle-class their backgrounds may be, or whether there's any real sagebrush sticking to their spurs; the Eagles are pros and they try to represent themselves honestly. In their new "Hotel California" their professional standards are pretty high, and the result is satisfying, well-turned album.

The most commercial song, New Kid in Town, has more depth than we have any right to expect of the most commercial track in the latest album by a group with a large and faithful following already primed to salivate at the sound of the opening chords. I mean the Eagles could get by with a lot more coating than they do in this instance. They could take more chances, too, of course, but this one seems to suggest that that may be a matter of constitution: their vision is tight and tidy; they don't have individual genius or a hot-dog soloist in their midst, but versatile part players and cooperators thinking Arrangement and Detail.

There is good contrast here between the acoustic and the electric aspects of their style, a smattering of dandy if derivative melodies (check Wasted Time and The Last Resort), some lyrics that reflect actual thought, and first-rate, unfancy vocals. I never thought I'd be praising a "group mentality" all over the place, but I guess it depends on what the group mentality does. Or maybe it's just rare to find a group that has a mentality. Whatever, the Eagles have harnessed something here and made it do some fine work.

—Noel Coppage

Opus 77: the Last And the Greatest of The Great Haydn String Quartets

In 1799 Joseph Haydn wrote to his publisher Breitkopf: "Oh God, how much remains to be done in this splendid art, even by such a man as I have become!" Haydn was never immodest, but he had a very good idea of what he had accomplished: he had brought both the symphony and the string quartet to their highest level of development and capped his own production in both forms with valedictory works that surpassed all their predecessors. His last and greatest symphonies were then four years behind him; the last and greatest of his completed string quartets—the pair published as Op. 77—were written that very year.

Both of these quartets are miraculous works—so rich, so varied, so well-balanced, so altogether perfect that one hardly thinks of their having been thought up, laid out, and written down, any more than one thinks of a sunset or any other natural phenomenon as being "composed." Haydn himself was acquainted with this sort of reaction to his works, and, while it is of course complimentary, he complained that "no one will believe the strain and effort it costs to produce them." Such works, in other words, do not write themselves, and they don't play themselves either, but "strain and effort" are the last things likely to come to mind in listening to the Tatrai Quartet's superb performances of these two masterworks on a new Hungaroton disc.

The Tatrai set of the six Op. 76 quartets issued a dozen years ago (Qualiton SLPX-1205/1207) is one of the glories of the Haydn discography. Whether it is because these musicians reside in a center of Haydn scholarship or because they were simply born to play Haydn quartets, their identification with this music makes itself felt as exceptional and complete. Twelve years was a long time to wait for a second installment in what I hope may yet be a survey of the complete cycle, but I'm glad it was Op. 77 that was chosen this time, for there has not been a fully successful realization of this towering pair on records since the Haydn Society issued the great Schneider Quartet versions a quarter-century ago.

In both outline and detail, the Tatrai approach is similar to the Schneider. Yet the playing here has still more sweetness, rhythms are somewhat firmer (without any suggestion of rigidity), and the first-rate modern recording brings out the bloom on the individual and collective string tone as the players themselves bring out the amiable, witty, poignant, audacious, brilliantly inventive character of the respective movements. The Tatrai performances happily parallel Haydn's own achievement in Op. 77 in being the finest thing this group has given us, yielding new and deeper pleasures with repeated hearings. Although 1977 has hardly begun (this review was written on New Year's Day), I expect this to be my chamber-music record of the year when the tally is made next winter.

—Richard Freed

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND: Wipe the Windows; Check the Oil, Dollar Gas. Allman Brothers Band (vocals and instrumentals); Wasted Words; Southbound; Ramblin' Man; In Memory of Elizabeth Reed; Ain't Wastin' Time No More; Come and Go Blues; and four others. CAPRICORN 2CX0177 two discs $9.97, © M8 0177 $10.97. © M5 0177 $10.97.

Performance: So-so
Recording: Mostly good

This was recorded at various concerts between 1972 and 1975. It has touches of live-album indulgences in it and hints of road-weariness, dogged professionalism here and there, but it is not "previously unreleased" as in "dregs." Relative to some other Allman Brothers albums it is no great shakes, but relative to some other band's live albums it has its moments, as they say. It sounds more cohesive than it should, considering that part of it was recorded when bassist Lamar Williams and pianist Chuck Leavell had been with the band less than a month. The thing I like is sound, flavor rather than line. Leavell is a favorite of mine, though, and this is an interesting cross-section of the group's material, especially if you have little and could use a sampler, and it's not too padded as live albums go. To a degree, I guess it all boils down to a demonstration that this has been a different band ever since the death of Duane Allman . . . but then what band wouldn't be? N.C.

THE ALPHA BAND. Steven Soles (vocals, guitar); David Mansfield (violin, mandolin, guitar); T-Bone Burnett (vocals, guitar, piano); David Jackson (bass); Matt Betton (drums). Interviews; Cheap Perfume; Ten Figures; Wouldn't You Know; Madman; and five others. ARISTA AL 4102 $6.98, © 8301-4102H $7.95, © S301-4102H $7.95.

Performance: Fragmented
Recording: Good

There's some talent here but you might miss it while wincing about some of the other stuff. Steven Soles, chief singer and songwriter, is more interested in words than in tunes, and, while he uses words intelligently, he does seem a little preoccupied with the hard-boiled metaphor. The vocals, though, are the main distraction; they give more weight to inflection than to melody and are more like chant than singing. The instrumentals don't sound like the same band from one cut to another, although they're never weak. The makings of something are here, all right, but they're rather scrambled. N.C.

RAY BARRETTO: Tomorrow, Barretto Live. Ray Barretto (congs); instrumental and vocal accompaniment. Vaya; Ahora Si que Vamo a Guey; Bon Bon Quere; Night Flowers/Slo Flo; and three others. ATLANTIC SD 2-509 two discs $7.98, © TP2-509 $7.97, © CS2-509 $7.97.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Ray Barretto, the conga king, is one of the great stars of modern Latin music, and he usually assembles first-rate talent for his bands. That is the case here with what is grandly referred to as the Concert Orchestra Band, but this double-disc live set never quite comes off, mostly because the concert was handled as a Cultural Event rather than a fancy gig. It would have been better if Barretto and his group had been recording playing a dance; the interaction between the band and the dancers would have been steamier than the ritual cheers of the concert audience.

The liner notes stress that Barretto has been looking for a new sound that would reflect Latin culture, etc. etc., because he's really paid his due, blah blah. I think the boosters of Latin music are getting rather carried away with this "preserving the culture" business: the only dilutions Latin music has suffered culturally have come when these same boosters mixed salsa with gringo disco, jazz, and soul. I am very much in favor of keeping Latin music pure, but I wish the gentlemen boosters would either practice what they preach or kindly close their bocas grandes. J.V.

THE BEACH BOYS: Live in London '69. The Beach Boys (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Darlin'; Wouldn't It Be Nice; Sloop John B; California Girls; Do It Again; Good Vibrations; God Only Knows; Barbara Ann; and four others. CAPITOL ST-11584 $6.98, © 8XT-11584 $7.98, © 4XT-11584 $7.98.

Performance: Feeble
Recording: Fair

Capitol Records, for whom the Beach Boys used to record back in the good old days, has had a lot of success in repackaging catalog material by the group and pushing it with high-gear merchandising campaigns. But the label seems to have hit, if not the bottom of the barrel, the damp floor of their tape vaults with the issue, eight years after the event, of a live 1969 recording of a London concert. Why the long delay? After hearing the album, I would guess that Brian Wilson, leader of the group, initially found it lacking and didn't want it released. It was under Wilson's guidance that the Beach Boys became a prime ex-
ample of what could be done with a quintet of marginally talented singers performing interesting material (Wilson's) while relying heavily on the cosmetics of studio sound techniques at the hands of a producer (Wilson again) whose use of the machinery was gifted. Good Vibrations is a little masterpiece in the studio version, but it is less a song than a testament to Wilson's brilliant understanding and use of studio techniques. The same can be said of nearly all the material here, which includes most of the best tunes from Wilson's inventory. The Beach Boys were never much of a stage band; outside the comfort and protection of the studio, they sounded frail, wobbly, and mediocre. This album is for dedicated fans only.

J.V.

JEAN CARN. Jean Carn (vocals); orchestra. You Are All I Need; You Got a Problem; Time Waits for No One; No Laughing Matter; and five others. PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL PZ 43494 $6.98. ® P.Z.A 43494 $7.98.

Performance: Better than the material
Recording: Routine

Here's some expertly mellow, very sweet singing by Jean Carn in one of those Gamble-Huff cookie-cutter productions, this one labeled Classy Lady Singer. That she is, but, trapped as she is in a repertoire that includes three Gamble-Huff songs and a bunch by Dexter Wansel, she's a little like an Olympic swimmer in a pool filled with Redi-Whip. She tries mightily but can't overcome such goo as No Laughing Matter or If You Wanna Go Back, and the result is, sadly, a waste of her time and yours.

P.R.

TOM CHAPIN: Life Is Like That. Tom Chapin (vocals, guitar, banjo); orchestra. You and Me; Number One; Jenny Jenny; Magic Man; Sorrow Takes a Bow; and four others. FANTASY F-9520 $6.98.

Performance: Fair
Recording: Good

Tom (Harry's brother) Chapin plays and performs bubblegum ideas in early-Sixties coffeehouse style. His foggy themes are ripely adolescent. Here is Jenny Jenny, for instance, the saga of someone who "Woke up this morning in the middle of the afternoon" and, while waiting for the heroine to arrive, ponders the fact that "Your parents don't like me much but I know you do/ And your brother doesn't think I'm good enough for you." Chapin takes the edge off all of this drama by performing it in a turtle-neck, denim voice with a pseudo-folk banjo accompaniment. Then there is You and Me, performed in pretty much the same profound style: "Wait and see how happy we're gonna be, you and me/ Bop baba doo dah, bop baba doo dah, bop baba doo dah." Mr. Chapin, from his picture, appears to be somewhere in his thirties. P.R.

BLOSSOM DEARIE: My New Celebrity Is You. Blossom Dearie (vocals and piano); orchestra. Smiling Feet; Killing Me Softly with His Song; Unless It's You; Feel Me A Grape; Pretty People; The Christmas Card; and ten others. DAFFODIL BMD 103 two discs $12.98 (from Daffodil Records, P.O. Box 312, Winchester, Va. 22601).

Performance: Unique
Recording: Good

Blossom Dearie holds court again in this new two-disc release on her own label. For the faithful, and there are many, it's a resplendent occasion. For the uninitiated, it's another chance to discover one of the truly unique performers now recording. And for the still dubious... well, they can take care of themselves. My personal opinion of Blossom Dearie (and she's the kind of special artist that one can't avoid having a personal opinion about) is that she can be absolutely wonderful in the right material. Unfortunately, in the wrong material she can be a harrowing, affected bore. Here, it breaks down about evenly. Her eerily childlike voice, so at odds with the sophistication and style of her lyric approach and her fastidious musicianship, turns such chestnuts as Killing Me Softly with His Song and There Ought to Be a Moonlight Saving Time into gorgeous little pastel portraits of mood and feeling. But when she applies these same talents to something such as the title song, a clumsy attempt at chic by Johnny Mercer, or her own Long Daddy Green (the Almighty Dollar), a sourish finger-flick masquerading as witty comment, she seems arch, smug, and infuriatingly mannered. Even unique artists are, apparently, only as good as their material. But revel in the good stuff if you can—there is a lot more of it here, including a lovely À Paris, a gallant and wise Unless It's You, and a shimmering Leon Russell tune, A Song for You. The production is respectful and courtly, with particularly fine work by Ron Carter on bass. P.R.

THE EAGLES: Hotel California (see Best of the Month, page 87)

THF-ENID: In the Region of the Summer Stars. The Enid (instruments). The Sun; The Last Judgement; The Lovers; The Devil; and three others. BUZ 52001 $6.98, ® 8-52001 $7.98.

Performance: Pretentious
Recording: A boomer

The strongest traceable influence on the compositions and music of the Enid, a.k.a. Robert John Godfrey, Francis Lickerish, Stephen Stewart, Glenn Tollett, and Robbie Dobson, would seem to be the Phantom of the Opera—that is, after the Phantom had been to a concert consisting exclusively of the most juicily transcendent sections of Strauss, Mahler, and Bruckner. In such boomers as The Sun, The Last Judgement, and The Devil, the Enid whack, thrum, and blare (technically very well) through what sounds like a series of stumpy chords. All the while, cast over everything, is an electronic, organ-like hum that lets one know that Something Is Amiss. Indeed there is. Even the dear old Phantom wasn't that deafeningly pretentious. Meanwhile, back on the farm, between Vangelis and the Enid poor Chicken Little is probably having one anxiety attack after another. P.R.

(Continued overleaf)
JOHN HAMMOND: an impeccable performance from a man who loves the blues

FOGHAT: Night Shift. Foghat (vocals and instrumentalists). Night Shift; Drivin' Wheel; I'll Be Standing By; Burning the Midnight Oil; instrumental) (trumpets, bells, tambura, voice); other musicians. VANGUARD VSD 79380 $6.98. © M8 6962 $7.97, © M5 6962 $7.97. Recording: Good

John Hammond loves the blues, has worked hard at making himself a good musician, and had a good voice to start with. I don't know what more one could ask. I do know what people always say, that he wasn't born black—but then if he were, he probably wouldn't be doing the blues at his age. Here he accompanies himself on guitar and, with one of those racks popularized by Dylan, on the harmonica before a small, live studio audience. He does a fairly varied program of Muddy Waters, Elmore James, Jimmy Reed, et al. I've heard better guitar playing and better harmonica (by Hammond himself when his hands were free), but I've seldom heard anyone play both at once this well. His singing style was, of course, mannered at first, but it is beyond that now; the rest of him has come around to jibe with it. The attitude behind this performance is almost impeccable. I wish I'd been there, and this is recorded so well I almost feel I was. N.C.

STEVE HILLAGE: L. Steve Hillage (vocals, shenai, guitar, synthesizers); Don Cherry (trumpets, bells, tambura, voice); other musicians. Hurdy Gurdy Man; It's All Too Much; Electrikk Gypsys; and three others. ATLANTIC 18205 $6.98. Recording: Very good

Now, I ask you, who would name an album "L"? Somebody who would assure you that a track entitled Lunar Musick Suite has been "recorded exclusively at full moon, May and June," that's who. Who cares? Not too many people, I hope. I bet you already think I hate this album, but it is only the cuteness on the cover that I object to. What's inside—produced and engineered by Todd Rundgren—is souped-up to the hilt, but it's well done and mostly quite listenable. Despite the presence of Don Cherry—Ornette Coleman's former sidekick, who is heard only on Lunar Musick Suite—this is decisively a rock album, synthesized to kingdom come and respectfully performed. If you like the sort of thing Rundgren dishes out under his own name, you'll probably like this serving as well. C.A.

LEO KOTTKE. Leo Kottke (guitar); instrumental accompaniment. Buckaroo; The White Ape; Hayseed Suede; Rio Lobo Range; Airproofing; Maroon; Waltz; and three others. CYRUSALIS CHR 1106 $6.98. Recording: Very good

This is another instrumental album from Leo Kottke, and this time the emphasis seems to be on his compositions. He may be refining his open-tuning and slide techniques on the twelve-string guitar, but what's more apparent is how his fashioned melodies around those. It's a developmental process taking off from Kottke's almost abstract—at times it seems almost "pure," whatever that is—(Continued on page 94)
Introducing the Avid 101.
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Designing a reasonably priced 2-way speaker system has always had its problems. One of the most perplexing of which has been engineering a speaker system with both well-dispersed midrange and really extended bass.

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A real dilemma. The best solution to which we feel lies in a unique new 2-way speaker system—the Avid Model 101.

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I first heard Gladys Knight and the Pips in April of last year. More precisely and pertinently, I went to hear them. They were there all right, and for a while I much enjoyed and admired Gladys' cheerful, exuberant presence and the Pips' marvelously coordinated and rhythmically impeccable choreography. But something was wrong. Indeed, a lot was wrong. I was ideally placed in a forward row of the balcony. I could see everything, including a twenty-five-piece orchestra with strings banked on one side of the stage, a jazz band on the other, and a lot of percussion in the middle. And that was what was wrong. I couldn't hear Gladys below the decibel level of a holler, and I could hardly hear the Pips at all. And so, after maybe half an hour, I walked out, wondering, as I have often wondered before with other singers on other occasions, why big artists, or their record companies, or whoever foots the bill, spend all that money on luscious arrangements, highly skilled personnel, and ultrasonicated sound systems only and simply to render themselves inaudible.

They were back at the New Victoria a few weeks ago to give five concerts in three nights. I decided to have another go and bought a ticket for the last concert, figuring that by then, at least, the sound system would be in order. While sweating out a pretty ghastly intermission passed. The audience was restless, the curtain still down, when suddenly there was an ear-shattering blast. I thought a speaker had blown. But no. The curtain rose, and there sat musical director Albert Thompson frenetically producing some more of those blasts from his drum kit, surrounded by that same twenty-five-piece orchestra playing those same overblown arrangements. Nobody had learned anything, and nothing was changed. But this time I stuck it out, and was rewarded at the end when Gladys settled down to some ballads, with only piano and discreet rhythm accompaniment, singing "The Way We Were" and "Georgia on My Mind" as beautifully as I have ever heard or hope to hear them sung.

Things must, I thought, be better on record. What, after all, are the producer, the arranger, the engineer, the mixer, the conductor, the editor, etc. paid for? And on the albums released since Gladys Knight and the Pips abandoned Motown for Buddah in 1973 you can even read: "All selections co-produced by Gladys Knight, Bubba Knight, William Guest and Edward Patten."

Well, things are better, but not much, although I hasten to add that the most recent of these releases—"2nd Anniversary" and "Bless This House"—suggest that someone is beginning to see the light. Or has it finally occurred to someone, possibly Gladys Knight herself, that for nearly twenty-five years a great singer has been hidden away in a group sound and sacrificed to the brash clangor of Motown r- &- b and soul?

I suspect and, indeed, have long suspected the latter. Not that I have been more than casually familiar with Gladys Knight's work. Groups are not my thing, and for many years I was aware of Gladys Knight and the Pips in the way I was aware of Diana Ross and the Supremes, Martha and the Vandellas, and Smokey Robinson and the Miracles. It was group's records. Group singing, especially of the kind so successfully refined by Motown, is a phenomenon having more to do with sound than with song. And thus it is manifestly unfair to take producers and arrangers working with Gladys Knight and the Pips to task for not shaping the product exclusively to the talent and accomplishment of the lead singer. I, in listening to these records, want to hear Gladys Knight. I couldn't care less about the Pips, obviously admirable as they are, nor do I much care about the instrumental backing beyond hoping that it will not get in her way. I have to remind myself that these are group recordings—as such very good—and that they were not produced for the soloist and song-oriented likes of me.

Which brings us to "2nd Anniversary," celebrating the second anniversary of the group's association with Buddah. This could have been produced for me—most of it, anyway. Here, on track after track, is the Gladys Knight I want to hear, her voice well forward, the Pips in a discreetly supportive role, the arrangements solicitously fashioned to her phrasing, dynamics, and melodic deviations. Some of the songs, notably Hoagy Carmichael's "Georgia on My Mind," Paul Williams' "You and Me Against the World," and Jim Weatherly's "Where Do I Put His Memory," reveal a Gladys Knight obviously "crossing over" from soul to MOR, or, as she put it to an interviewer recently, "getting into lyrics." Let me
quickly add that in making the transition she brings with her much of the exhortatory urgency and melismatic predilection and invention derived from her childhood apprenticeship in gospel choirs in her native Georgia. Indeed, in a song like "Georgia on My Mind" she can sound like a female Ray Charles—and be similarly compelling.

"Crossing over" has its vocal as well as—probably—its commercial advantages for Gladys Knight. The exalted character of gospel singing, often perverted in soul into instant ecstasy, tempts singers to favor the upper third of their natural range and to shift into falsetto as they extend exaltation upward into frenzy. This applies to Gladys Knight, too, although she almost never uses falsetto. When she hollers—and she can holler with the best of them—it is usually in the third between C and E. But the glory, the eloquence, and especially the tenderness of a contralto range covering just over two octaves from the low D lies in the middle and below, and that's just where her new MOR material and her arrangers put her.

You can hear that, too, on the sleeper in this lot, "Bless This House," a collection of more or less gospel-flavored Christmas songs, especially on the title track. There are two Ave Maria on this album, both of them admirably arranged by Dominic Frontiere and persuasively sung by Gladys. One of them is Schubert's. The other is Gounod's, incredibly attributed not to Gounod but to Bach. Well, Bach did lay down the changes. Producers, by the way, are Kenny Kerner and Richie Wise, also responsible for You and Me Against the World and Where Do I Put His Memory on the "2nd Anniversary" album. They know their Gladys, and they treat her right. "Bless This House" is consistently delightful. Keep it in mind for next Christmas.

GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS: 2nd Anniversary, Money; Street Brother; Part Time Love; At Every End There's a Beginning; Georgia on My Mind; You and Me Against the World; Where Do I Put His Memory; Summer Sun; Feel Like Makin' Love. BUDDAH BDS 5659 $6.98, © 8320-5659H $7.95, © 5320-5659H $7.95.

GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS: Bless This House. The Night Before Christmas; Do You Hear What I Hear; The Christmas Song: Away in a Manger; Ave Maria (Bach/Gounod); Silent Night; Bless This House; Gospel Medley; Ave Maria (Schubert). BUDDAH BDS 5651 $6.98, © 5320-5651H $7.95, © 5320-5651H $7.95.

THE BEST OF GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS. Make Yours a Happy Home; Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me; I Feel a Song in My Heart; The Going Ups and the Coming Downs; Midnight Train to Georgia; On and On; Where Peaceful Waters Flow; I've Got to Use My Imagination; I Can See Clearly Now; Try to Remember/The Way We Were. BUDDAH BDS 5653 $6.98, © 8320-5653H $7.95, © 5320-5653H $7.95.

GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS: Claudine. Mr. Welfare Man; To Be Invisible; On and On; The Makings of You; Claudine Theme (instrumental); Hold On; Make Yours a Happy Home. BUDDAH BDS 5602 $6.98, © 8320-5602H $7.95, © 5320-5602H $7.95.

GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS: Pipe Dreams. So Sad the Song; Alaskan Pipeline; Pot of Jazz; I'll Miss You; Nobody But You; Pipe Dream; Find a Way; Follow My Dreams; So Sad the Song (instrumental). BUDDAH BDS 5676 $6.98, © 8320-5676H $7.95, © 5320-5676H $7.95.

GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS: Imagination. Midnight Train to Georgia; I've Got to Use My Imagination; Storms of Troubled Times; Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me; Once in a Lifetime Thing; Where Peaceful Waters Flow; I Can See Clearly Now; Perfect Love; Window Raisin' Granny. BUDDAH BDS 5141 $6.98, © 8320-5141H $7.95, © 5320-5141H $7.95.

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cination with sound itself. His approach is complicated and gimmicky in the sense that it would seem to take four or five hands to do it, and simple in the sense that it's pegged to melody. With one instrument, he "orchestrates" it. A few other instruments help him along here in restrained ways. I would have liked a couple of vocals—Kottke's voice is a boomer that rides a diaphragm stronger than a trampoline—but I suppose the idea here was not to break up the program. Listen for theme and nuance and thou shalt be rewarded. N.C.

DAVID LAFLAMME: White Bird. David LaFlamme (vocals, violin); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. White Bird, Hot Summer Day; Swept Away; Easy Woman; and three others. AMH-1007 $6.98.

Performance: Scatter-shot
Recording: Good

David LaFlamme, as a sticker on the cover of this album informs us, was "former writer, vocalist, violinist, and leader of It's a Beautiful Day." The music on his solo album is abstracted, tending to wander—or stumble—in and out of various styles. He is only an average vocalist, and the lyrics to his songs are puerile and gushy when they aren't banal—something an over-serious boy might write after an unexpected sensual experience at a church picnic.

But LaFlamme is a pretty good jazz violinist, and the jazzier moments are the only ones in which "White Bird" comes close to sounding like something interesting. LaFlamme would probably be better off if he stopped trying to play all styles known to man in the course of a single Jello-like tune and concentrated on his violin playing, where most of his talent lies.

LORETTA LYNN: Somebody Somewhere (see Best of the Month, page 83)

Marilyn McCoo & Billy Davis, Jr.: I Hope We Get to Love in Time. Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis, Jr. (vocals); orchestra. You Love; Nothing Can Stop Me; Easy Way Out; You Can't Change My Heart; Never Gonna Let You Go; and five others. ABC ABCD-952 $6.98, © 8022-952H $7.95, © 5022-952H $7.95.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Good

Almost all the entertainment here is on one band: Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis Jr.'s chart hit, You Don't Have to Be a Star (to Be in My Show). It's one of those numbers not unlike Sonny and Cher's oldie I Got You Babe, that may not drop you with its originality or its profundity but that seems like a remembered trademark from the first moment you hear it. McCoo and Davis give it a smashing performance with a lot of genuine tenderness in the lyric reading and a robust musicianship that saves it from soap opera. As for the rest well, it's all very professional, as you'd expect from two former members of the Fifth Dimension, and it'll probably knock 'em dead in Vegas, but the lighting firmly refuses to strike twice.

M. P. R.

MICHAEL MELFORD: Mandolin Fantasy. Michael Melford (mandolin, guitar, vocal); Clyde Brooks (drums); Doug Dillard (banjo, vocals); other musicians. Devii's Dream; Black Eyed Susie; Georgia Camp Meeting, Train, Train; Omie Wise; Sweet Georgia Brown; and five others. FLYING FISH 023 $6.98.

Performance: Elegant and relaxing
Recording: Very good

I must confess I can't really tell "good" mandolin playing from mediocre mandolin playing beyond being able to detect something special about Bill Monroe's. I mean to correct that, though, as I've decided to learn how to play the thing myself. It is difficult to play well. Years ago it was sold as a civilized if not sedate instrument for making a sort of chamber music in the home. Bluegrass musicians have all but redefined the mandolin, and recordings like this make you glad they did. Not that this is heavy with lickety-split bluegrass tunes; what it does is show what a variety of approaches the mandolin can take. But then it isn't even heavy with mandolin solos or mandolin domination of the ensemble—it's a

(Continued on page 96)

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sprightly, bright, playful album with good picking coming at you from several instruments on a few old tunes you'll tolerate bearing again, under these particular circumstances, and some truly elegant and haunting ones, such as Omie Wise, that we shouldn't have been away from for so long. I guess Melford plays pretty well—give me another year and I'll say more about it—and I know he has produced a good album.

N.C.

ESTHER PHILLIPS: Capricorn Princess.
Esther Phillips (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Higher and Higher; Candy; All the Way Down; Dream; and four others. KUDU KU-31 $6.98, © KU8-31 $7.98, © KUC-31 $7.98.

Performance: Rat-a-tat-tat
Recording: Very good

Esther Phillips can shred a song faster than a hail of machine-gun fire. After she incinerates the lyric she proceeds to mow down whatever remains of the tune with a prolonged barrage of gasps, exclamations, and shouts that effectively block out anything written in the charts themselves. Most of the time she's great fun, as in Higher and Higher or Magic's in the Air, where her expansiveness reaches the point of semi-delirium. But at other times she can be a genuine pain in the neck, as she is in her carefree dismantling of Janis Ian's witty, sardonic Boy, I Really Tied One On, a song that deserves to be heard on its own terms and scarcely needs Phillips' frantic mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Otherwise everything's fine here—that is, if you enjoy hanging out with the Life of Every Party.

P.R.

QUEEN: A Day at the Races. Queen (vocals and instrumentals). Tie Your Mother Down; You Take My Breath Away; Long Away; The Millionaire Waltz; You and I; and five others. ELEKTRA GE-1091 $7.98, © ET8-1091 $7.97, © TC5-1091 $7.97.

Performance: Cold
Recording: Excellent

The English critic Roy Carr observed recently that the vast majority of bands to have emerged in the Seventies are taking the mid-Sixties as their jumping off point, and in particular (italics mine) one of four albums: 'Blonde on Blonde,' 'Beggars Banquet,' 'Abbey Road,' and 'Led Zeppelin I.' One could probably compile a long list of the groups that have chased the first two and failed, but Queen, an English troupe initially dismissed as just another tiresome entry in the glitter sweepstakes, has of late enjoyed enormous commercial success through a clever synthesis of the latter two.

In person Queen remains merely an distinguished metal band in the Zeppelin mold (though, as one wag observed, they have the best smoke bombs in the business), but on records they have achieved a technically dazzling balance between Jimmy Page-ish hard rock and Paul McCartney/George Martin studio trickery and melodic winsomeness. Considering the low level of the recent competition, I suppose you have to award them some sort of high marks, and, to give them their due, they have come up with one truly original innovation in Brian May's remarkable overdubbing of multiple guitars to produce orchestral textures. Still, for all their mastery of craft, they are one of the coldest bands extant. Zeppelin and the Beatles are/were studio virtuosos too, but their best work had fire, passion, and an illusion of spontaneity.

Nothing of the sort can be said for Queen. The supposed masterpiece from their previous album, Bohemian Rhapsody, for example, was all decked out with structural tricks and clever vocalisms, but it meant absolutely nothing lyrically, musically, or emotionally. Of course, on a purely academic level, neither did Little Richard's 'Awopbopaloomopawopbamboom,' but that misses the point—which is, in case you haven't gotten it by now, that Queen, on this record as well as in all its previous outings, has not displayed one iota of human feeling beyond the prevailing Seventies attitude of Get the Product Out. That the group has been so successful in disguising this hollow center to so many people is, simply, incomprehensible.
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The Hollies, despite a ridiculously lengthy history of chart successes in this country, have never really gotten the kind of respect that those successes ought to have assured them. There are a couple of reasons for this. For starters, the Hollies hardly ever tour, and, with very few exceptions, bands that don't tour seem destined to remain cult entities. For another thing, they have never bothered to generate any, shall we say, extramusical associations—that is, they ain't got much of an "image." It's generally known that they are about as regular a bunch of guys as any folk mother could dream up (a publicist who worked with them once told me incredulously that their bassist, Bernie Calvert, actually went to church every Sunday), and when Graham Nash left the band to hang out with the Los Angeles pop-star crowd and join CSN&Y, he badmouthed them pretty strongly along those lines, which probably didn't help.

But, of course, none of that should matter. Strictly on the recorded evidence of the last fourteen (!) years, the Hollies are one of the finest pop/rock outfits ever—I'd venture that it is one of the handful of live rock albums deserving the appellation "classic." I'll simply say that it makes the recent Wings live set sound like amateur night. If I hadn't seen the band do essentially the same program presented here at two shows during their 1975 American mini-tour, I would find it too difficult to believe it had not been totally doctor'd in the studio—it's that slick.

But the slickness does not, I hasten to add, translate into lack of feeling. Many of the songs here—and they span literally the whole of the band's career—are far more moving than they were on their first go-rounds. The lovely version of Bruce Springsteen's "Sandy" is a case in point. Without the orchestral trap-pings that dressed it up originally, it comes across as much more atmospheric and authenti-
tic. Even that most celebrated of schlock weepers, the unfortunately ubiquitous "He Ain't Heavy," is a genuinely affecting ballad here. As for the Hollies' overall singing—well, it's just incredible; not even the Beach Boys can pull off this kind of breathtaking harmony work in person. Whether they're applying it to such up-tempo rockers as "Just One Look" (their first American hit, 1964) or newer melodramas such as "I'm Down," it is simply spine-tingling. And the Hollies' instrumental sound is much better than they are generally given credit for—the rhythm section, propelled by the explosively kinetic drumming of Bobby Elliott, is superb, and (with the help of guest keyboard star Pete Wingfield) the level of the group's playing is comparable in gutsiness to that of just about any other rock band you could mention.

In case you haven't guessed by now, I'm just nuts about this record, and I suspect that anyone else with even a passing interest in rock- and-roll will feel the same way about it. Since the import sales have already been substantial, Columbia will probably have to release it stateside eventually, but if I were you I wouldn't wait—you'll have too much fun playing it for your friends, watching their jaws drop and their gooseflesh rise. It's the kind of album that makes you remember just why you fell in love with rock in the first place.

---Steve Stone

THE HOLLIES: Russian Roulette. The Hollies (vocals and instruments); other musicians. Wiggle That Wotsit; 48 Hour Parole; Thanks for the Memories; My Love; Lady of the Night; Russian Roulette; Draggin' My Heels; Louise; Be with You; Daddy Don't Mind. POLYDOR 2383 421 $6.49 (available from Jem Records, Import Record Service, Box 343, 3001 Hadley Road, South Plainfield, N.J. 07080; include 35¢ per disc handling charge).

THE HOLLIES: Hollies Live. The Hollies (vocals and instruments); Pete Wingfield (keyboards). I Can't Let Go; Just One Look; I Can't Tell the Bottom from the Top; Bus Stop; Another Night; Sandy; Star; My Island; I'm Down; Stop, Stop, Stop; Long Cool Woman (in a Black Dress); Carrie Anne; The Air That I Breathe; Too Young to Be Married; He Ain't Heavy. COLUMBIA PES 90401 $6.49 (available from Jem Records, Import Record Service, Box 343, 3001 Hadley Road, South Plainfield, N.J. 07080; include 35¢ per disc handling charge).
MARTHA REEVES: The Rest of My Life. Martha Reeves (vocals); orchestra. This Time I'll Be Sweeter; Love Blind; Second Chance; Love Strong Enough to Move Mountains; Higher and Higher; and four others. ARISTA AL 4105 $6.98, © 8301-4105H $7.95, © 5301-4105H $7.95.

Performance: Perverted
Recording: Good

From all accounts, the Motown Record empire of the Sixties was run in a manner akin to that of the big movie studios of Hollywood's Golden Age—the star grooming, the political infighting, and the blacklisting were apparently very close to the kind of thing that went on at MGM or Paramount. Sadly, at Motown as in Hollywood, the losers were female more often than not. Kim Weston is now a Detroit disc jockey; Tammi Terrell died on stage; Florence Ballard of the Supremes died broke and on welfare; Brenda Holloway, the Marvelettes, and Mary Wells have all but faded into obscurity. Only Diana Ross and Gladys Knight still prosper, though they are singing the direst kind of Vegas MOR and Knight had to leave the label to get her due anyway.

Which leads us to Martha Reeves' new album and label. The operative word here is wasteful. At Motown, as leader of the Vandellas, she cut a succession of classic singles in which she soared easily over gargantuan wall-of-sound production jobs (most rock aficionados consider Dancing in the Streets one of the greatest 45's of all time), but then, for reasons known only to God and Berry Gordy, we heard no more from her for a few years until she came back on that dreadful MCA album.

Reeves' new effort, on Arista this time, sports three different producers, which should give you some idea of the care with which the project was approached. She is presented as—surprise!—a disco singer. So, in between the goofy hey-baby-let's-get-it-on ballads, we get disco remakes of Sixties soul classics that are obviously meant to appeal to the same folks who are buying Gloria Gaynor's updatings of Motown classics from the same period. To say that it doesn't work, to say that a great singer is being criminally misused, to say that this is a thoroughly disheartening album, would be the height of understatement. Unfortunately, I can't see what else Martha can do... unless, of course, there's somebody out there like Miami Steve Van Zandt who can give her the artistic shot in the arm he and Southside Johnny provided Ronnie Spector. Are you listening, guys? S.S.

SEALS & CROFTS: Sudan Village. Jim Seals (vocals, guitar, fiddle); Dash Crofts (vocals, mandolin); Bill Cuppo (keyboards); Ralph Humphrey (drums); Bobby Lichtig (bass); other musicians. Sudan Village; Advance Guards; 'Cause You Love; Baby I'll Give It to You; Thunderfoot; and four others. WARNER BROS. BS 2976 $6.98, © M8 2976 $7.97, © MS 2976 $7.97.

Performance: Variable
Recording: Good remote

This makes a good start, with Seals and Crofts peering out of a Rousseau-style jungle on the cover and gently but firmly caring for the first couple of songs, but then it resolutely fizzes out. If I felt a great need to hear Arkansas Traveller and Eighth of January fiddled and picked, I certainly wouldn't turn to Seals and Crofts (or anyone else who grew up...)

Much ado about something.

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SLY & THE FAMILY STONE: Heard Ya Missed Me, Well I'm Back. Sly Stone (vocals, keyboards); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Heard Ya Missed Me, Well I'm Back; What Was I Thinkin' in My Head; Nothing Less Than Happiness; Sexy Situation; Blessing in Disguise; and five others. Epic: 8 PE 33448 $6.98, © PEA 33448 $7.98, © PET 33448 $7.98. Performance: Excellent Recording: Excellent

Sylvestere Stewart, a.k.a. Sly Stone, seems to have regained all the inventive joy that made his music so exciting during the first burst of his career in 1968-1970. There was a protracted and unhappy period after that when he became musically furtive, morose, and ponderous, but a few years ago whatever it was that had been freezing his talent started to thaw.

The title of this album and an emotional testimonial by Philadelphia producer Kenneth Gamble ("May almighty God give you the strength to control your emotions..."

you profit from your mistakes..."

) indicate that Sly feels free and happy again and that he is no longer wrestling with himself. But the credits read "Produced by Sly Stone and Sylvestre Stewart," and the title tune could as easily be a dialogue between two aspects of his personality as it could be a greeting card to the audience.

At any rate, the music here is refreshing, positive, and enticing. Sly's greatest talent is as an arranger—he is one of the best in the business—and his way of expressing an emotional concept with instrumental and vocal colorations is like no one else's. He has indeed been missed, and it's very good to have him back again.

J. V.

THIN LIZZY: Johnny the Fox. Thin Lizzy (vocals and instrumentals). Johnny; Rocky; Borderline; Don't Believe a Word; Fool's Gold; and five others. Mercury: SRM 1-1119 $6.98, © MC81-1119 $7.95, © MCR41-1119 $7.95. Performance: Better than the material Recording: Good

Until last year, Thin Lizzy was a marginally successful journeyman English metal band that survived frequent personnel changes and knocked around its homeland largely on the strength of lead singer Phil Lynott. One of the crucial failings of most metal bands is that vocally they all sound the same, featuring either freak-high, only-dogs-can-hear-'em tenors or vibrato-laden Italiane yowlers, but Lynott's vaguely soulful stylings gave the band some semblance of an individual identity.

Then they got lucky; Lynott came up with a group of reasonably imaginative songs, including a bona fide classic, The Boys Are Back in Town, one of the few rock tunes that kept AM radio from drowning in a sea of disco last summer. It had about everything—an irresistible hook, sizzling dual guitar work, and a lyric just enigmatic enough to hold one's interest through repeated listenings. The problem was the timing. Lynott sound-
ed—superficially—like Bruce Springsteen, and, although their approaches are worlds apart, the media seized on the resemblance. Lynott freaked, made defensive statements to the British pop press, and threatened a new album that would end the comparison.

The result, "Johnny the Fox," is an overreaction. The lyricism, the sensitivity, that had begun to come through in The Boys has been abandoned for—you guessed it—the same kind of heavy blandness, though a wee bit more sophisticated, that everybody from Aerosmith to Kiss has been dishing out of late. There is, however, one stunning exception: Old Flame, a really lovely little ballad that leaves one with the hope that Lynott will recover and Thin Lizzy will someday make an album that picks up from the promising point we left them at in the summer of '76. S.S.

SYLVIA TYSON: Cool Wind from the North. Sylvia Tyson (vocals); orchestra. Good Old Song; Tumble-Down Woman; River Road; Honey Hair; Poor Fool; and five others. Capitol: ST 6441 $6.98. Performance: Monotonous Recording: Good

Sylvia Fricke, which is the way she's billed in her songwriting credits, is the Sylvia Tyson of Jan and Sylvia, and she's now on her own, singing mostly her own material. Ian produced this album and has devised a smooth, waxen showcase for Sylvia's throaty contralto to monotone. It's sophisticated c- & -w, if that isn't a contradiction in terms, and Sylvia moans about in such things as I Can't Learn to Love You and Poor Old Rose appropriately and assuredly and almost endlessly. It's intensely boring.

DIANA WILLIAMS. Diana Williams (vocals); Bobby Dyson (bass); other musicians. Teddy Bear's Last Ride; The Loving of Your Life; Be Careful of Stones That You Throw; Old Fashioned Love Song; Little One; and five others. Capitol: ST 11587 $6.98, © 8XT-11587 $7.98, © 4XT-11587 $7.98. Performance: Right lame Recording: Good

I'd like to thank Diana Williams and her writers for killing off Teddy Bear. He was the little crippled boy Red Sovine sang—rather, talked—about in working yet another angle to exploit the CB craze. Only pleasure the little fellow got out of life, you see, was talking to the truckers on the CB. Here Diana Williams, "Mama Teddy Bear's best friend," comes on and tells truckers and nontruckers that the kid has expired. I hope that means we'll hear no more about him, although I wouldn't be surprised if St. Peter comes on the CB with still more news about him. I hoped that country music was finally beyond stooping to "recitations" and crippled-to-dead-kid themes, and you see what I got for that. Anyway, the rest of this album suggests that Diana Williams would rather recite than sing, and it sounds like she's reciting when she does sing anyway—or like she's busy chewing gum or doing something that takes her mind off the words. Not that you can blame her, considering the lyrics; when Loretta Haggars does this sort of thing, she's kidding, which is something the people handling Diana ought to learn right quick. Unless they want you to buy her albums to make fun of them. N.C.

(Continued on page 102)
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The title is "New England" but it could just as easily be "Mozambique" or "Montana" for whatever influence geographical location shows on this album. Wishbone Ash remains an island of rock only briefly touched by waves from any other outside-world shores. And very good, solid rock it is: slightly on the sedate side, a bit too well-mannered, but so effectively played and sung by its composer-performers that one can listen to it repeatedly without feeling foolish. The best things here are Mother of Pearl and a rather gauzy but potent Lorelei. It's an album you'll continue to enjoy for a long time with nary a pang about its "relevance.

FRANK ZAPPA: Zoot Allures. Frank Zappa (vocals and guitar); instrumental accompaniment. Black Napkins; The Torture Never Stops; Disco Boy; Wonderful Wino; and four others. Warner Bros. BS 2970 $6.98, © MB 2970 $7.97, © MS 2970 $7.97.

Performance: Hectically boring
Recording: Old fashioned

Frank Zappa's ability to astonish the middle-class listening public has dwindled so much that these days he comes across as the musical male equivalent of one of those eccentric shopping-bag ladies muttering darkly to herself in a doorway. Stale breezes from the Sixties waft all through this album as Zappa tries his old-time shock tactics in such things as The Torture Never Stops and Black Napkins. The result is so hectically boring that it makes you want to buy a pencil from him just to shut him up. Needless to say, the crust of pretension that is thick and the production work is an elaborate hodgepodge of everything that was "happening" ten years ago.

If you want to know about that album title: years ago there was a French cartoon that showed a v e-r-r-y long dachshund wrapped all the way around a tree so that he was sniffing his own little behind. The caption read: "Zut alors—c'est moi!" Just so.

COLLECTIONS

VERMONT HARMONY 2 (see Best of the Month, page 85)


Performance: Good fun
Recording: Fair to excellent remote

Bear with this one. John Hartford is a bit off form—at least in deciding what songs to include—at the start, but things pick up. Don Humphreys' singing and Tut Taylor's flat-picking on the dobro are more like it, and the New Grass Revival, a group it really is fair to call a progressive bluegrass band, has a fine time with a haunting Jim Webb song called Fly Through the Country. Then there's Merle Travis, quite a lot of him. His singing voice has seen better days, but he has a lot of soul (he is from Kentucky) and his two-finger guitar-picking style is as distinctive and, as White Heat tends to indicate, as fast as ever. Cathy Barton's fiddle/hammered-dulcimer bash at Soldier's Joy is nice, too, and the Hutchison Brothers' imitation of both Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash on Girl from the North Country, including three (count 'em, three) of Dylan's singing styles (and all one of Cash's) is a real knee-slapper. All this was recorded at the Walnut Valley festival in Kansas on what sounds like pretty good equipment. The mixes caught a little too much of the rowdies in the audience, but still it's a live album worth having, something almost as rare as a dope dealer who pays taxes.
Serenade-Departed and Easy; Les Rendezvous Waltzes; Galop d'Orrore, from Rossini's Semiramide; Free Polkas and Serenades of the Manchester Cor-HOMESPUN AMERICA. Marches, Waltzes, Away; The Vulture of the Alps; The Old Gra-

Family Singers. Crossing the Grand Sierras; popular, Sentimental Tunes of the Hutchinson rity Patriotism, Temperance & Abolition, & Po-

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tons; The Guards Waltzes; The Quaker Medley Set Quadrellas; The Hand Organ Polka; The Old Folks Quadrille. Eastman Wind Ensemble and Eastman Chorale, Donald Hunsberger and Robert de Cormier cond. Vox SVBX 5309 three discs $10.98.

Performance: Fascinating Recording: Excellent

Out of the musical cornucopia created by the Bicentennial still pours a plentiful supply of treasure from the American past. The latest box from Vox in the Americana department is this three-record concert, a major part of which is taken up by songs of the Hutchinson Family Singers. The Hutchinsons flourished in the region of the manufacturing town of Manchester, New Hampshire, in the 1850's and 1860's. They were a family of teetotalers and reformers always eager to take up the latest social cause and set it to music, to the delight of, among others, Abraham Lincoln. The family was so large that they split up into "tribes" who went around the country performing their songs of protest for increasingly large and enthusiastic audiences. At the same time, the region abounded in brass bands and "social orchestras" that regaled the public with quadrilles, quick steps, and waltzes as well as instrumental medleys of his own tunes set by Stephen Foster.

To re-create all this musical history the Eastman Wind Ensemble and Eastman Chorale have divided themselves into replicas of the original groups of singers and players to supply a cross-section of the repertoire. The proceedings open with the "Manchester Cornet Band". Music for the Social Orchestra of the Manchester Quadrille Orchestra. The Famous Quad-

rilles; The Peri Waltzes; Felina Redowa de Sa-

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April 1977

CIRCLE NO. 17 ON READER SERVICE CARD

103
It was over. Phil Ochs knew it was over—"The movement dwindled out about 1971," he said—but he couldn't get it finished in his head, couldn't get off it. He was dedicated to social change and that was the way it was. He kept going off to places to study new kinds of politics on into the Seventies. Not only could he not get off it, he had a plan for reviving it—that was the Elvis phase he went through in gold lame suits—but the people yes over, lots of us could have told him he couldn't sell the Elvis-as-Ché idea to the people, however sensible it was. As quoted by Sanders, Ochs' explanation was that to cause real change in America one had to reach the working class, "and to me Elvis Presley, in retrospect, is like a giant commercialization of the working class singer..." He was right, of course, but selling the idea where it will do some good is a complicated task these days. To do it, you'd have to use the fat cats' ways and means, the most formidable among them being television. Ochs sensed this, too, and wanted to get on television, but with his political profile he couldn't.

He bucked up against a closed system. I don't know that he underestimated it by much more than I did, but it does appear that he didn't veer off into other subjects as, say, Paxton did, nor did he develop the kind of patience we've seen in Seeger or in such veterans as Norman Thomas. It appears that Ochs chose to go on being a public man after it was demonstrated that the best way for certain kinds of thinkers to defend themselves against the Seventies was by becoming private men. People seemed to be considerably more self-centered than Ochs wanted them to be.

Yet he was incisive. He had an instinct for seeing all the way through a piece of folly and could—at least during his productive period—make you see it too, with only a few short words. The songs in "Chords" represent only a sampling of the subjects he tackled, but they do include his last one, Here's to the State of Richard Nixon. His voice was clear and pleasant, but he seemed to give little consideration to how to use it. He sang as he wrote, in an impromptu manner, and the approach worked better for the songs than for the singing. Several unkind things have been said about his guitar playing, and they were all true. So when you combined his headless amateur vocals and his inept picking in the time-honored solo recording and performing style of the radical (radical: one who wants to discuss unpleasant things) folk singer, you got less than the song deserved. What Ochs' recordings needed to be good recordings to listen to—as opposed to either agree with or be horrified by—was a little production. Nothing serious, just a little body in the instrumental sound and a producer who knew enough to say hold that note a little longer, Phil. The second disc in "Chords" has something approaching that, including a couple of tracks produced by Van Dyke Parks, and it gives you some idea of how much more music there was in Ochs' songs than he, left to his own devices, was ever going to get out of them.

The question, though, is will it last? Will Ochs be remembered? I think so. We have an unofficial historical category for characters like Ochs. Woody Guthrie and Jimmy Rodgers are in it. Remembered as artists? Or politicians? Nobody can quite say for sure, and maybe it doesn't matter. The protest song is a great and cherished cultural thing of ours, and Ochs did quite a lot with the protest song. He did a little, mostly by accident, with the form and a lot with content. In such songs as I Ain't Marchin' Anymore and Outside of a Small Circle of Friends he transcended current events by concentrating on them. He told us about the Sixties. He did it by sticking his head into the fray and keeping it there, being what they called at the time hip to it, at God knows what cost to himself.

The substance of some of his reports may be lost in time—much of it is already dated—but his natural affinity for melodies and his ability to tell the larger truth now and then should bring some of these songs back again and again. Ochs himself would be any biographer's dream subject, a romantic and tragic figure who seems to have left a string of anecdotes behind him everywhere he went. A man who wanted to do something about the world, he was—a topical man. Some of course do get remembered. If Lenny Bruce, why not Phil Ochs?

—Noel Coppage

PHIL OCHS: Chords of Fame. Phil Ochs (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. I Ain't Marchin' Anymore; One More Parade; Draft Dodger Rag; Here's to the State of Richard Nixon; The Bells; Bound for Glory; Too Many Martyrs; There But for Fortune; I'm Going to Say It Now; Santo Domingo; Changes; Is There Anybody Here?; Love Me, I'm a Liberal; Tape from California; When I'm Gone; Outside of a Small Circle of Friends; Pleasures of the Harbor; Chords of Fame; Crucifixion; The War Is Over; Jim Dean of Indiana; Power and the Glory; Flower Lady; No More Songs. A&M SP-4599 two discs $6.98, © ST-4599 $7.98, © CS-4599 $7.98.
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CIRCLE NO. 59 ON READER SERVICE CARD

A new company called Out Take Records seems to be devoting its resources to rescuing the unused parts of the soundtracks of old film musicals from the cutting-room floor and supplying the lost numbers in generous quantities on discs, the first two of which are now available by mail. Unfortunately, the out-takes themselves sound as if most of them had been trampled on by some hostile editor while still on the floor; never before have I heard so many clicks and crackles accompanying the musical numbers they are! Here's Judy Garland singing Easy to Love to an over-themselves sound as if most of them had been from Out Take Records, Inc., P. O. Box 1066, Ansonia Station, New York, N. Y. 10023). Performance: Buried booty Recording: Sandpaper sound


A new company called Out Take Records seems to be devoting its resources to rescuing the unused parts of the soundtracks of old film musicals from the cutting-room floor and supplying the lost numbers in generous quantities on discs, the first two of which are now available by mail. Unfortunately, the out-takes themselves sound as if most of them had been trampled on by some hostile editor while still on the floor; never before have I heard so many clicks and crackles accompanying the musical numbers they are! Here's Judy Garland singing Easy to Love to an over-themselves sound as if most of them had been from Out Take Records, Inc., P. O. Box 1066, Ansonia Station, New York, N. Y. 10023).
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CIRCLE NO. 44 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Another Little Eva Altogether

Composer Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyricist Tim Rice of, first, the pop-rock musical Jesus Christ Superstar and, now, Evita are a couple of pop-art geniuses; what they lack is talent.

Eva Peron, superstar, was the first wife of the late Argentine dictator Juan Peron. Like the Byzantine Empress Theodora, she started out as a dancing girl and worked her way up from the beds of the mighty to the seats of power. She never made it to empress, or even empress, and she's still the woman of the people herself.

There's no more than the minimum social background: a mincing chorus of aristocrats sings "Tarts have become the set to know," and Eva keeps telling us that the working people like her because she used to be a hard-working person herself.

The attitude toward the characters is ambiguous. Peron is a stooge and has virtually nothing to sing. The real male lead is someone ominously named "Ché" who seems to be more interested in pushing the new insecticide he's developed than in helping tell Eva's story. Whatever the intent, this character bears no resemblance to Ché Guevara (for the record, Argentinians are often nicknamed "Ché"—an argot word equivalent to "hey" that appears in virtually every spoken Argentinian sentence—but only outside Argentina), and he has no relevance to the plot. He is not even an effective commentator but really just a device to get on with the story. Eva herself is hardly dramatized at all; she is a puppet and, strangely, not at all likable. Even her big emotional addresses to the people of Argentina, set over and over again to the same music, are like a prostitute's bag of faked emotional tricks. Dramatization requires characters, conflict, discoveries, mysteries, comedies, tragedies, surprises, knowns, unknowns, ironies, loves, hates, sympathies, dejects—all of which our authors forgot or didn't know how to supply. And an opera (or music theater or lyric theater or whatever) must develop these motifs musically, not only expressing ideas and emotions but also carrying events on its musical back.

Perhaps one should forget about all this—after all, Evita is just a recording at this point, not a dramatic presentation—and concentrate on words and music. Both are great lumpy concoctions of clichés, awkwardnesses, and ripped-off ideas (would you believe Swan Lake and Both Sides Now?) leavened with flashes of brilliance. Now and again parts congeal into bouncy, cynical, outrageous, campy Latin-rock or folk-rock numbers. The focus of the whole is Eva's speech to the crowd at Peron's inauguration. This song or aria, beautifully sung by Julie Covington and actually moving in a counterfeit sort of way, is based entirely on a couple of dumb emotional tunes that are repeated over and over again (before, during, and after) so that they burn their way into your brain.

Up to the end of Part I we are carried along on the impetus of Eva's rise to power, set as a series of strokes of high banality and low camp. But once she has arrived, there is nowhere to go, musically or dramatically. Everything grinds to a halt. Part II is full of draggy, bad modern-opera-isms and fake Caribbean tunes along with endless repetitions of music from Part I, some of it pasted up in mawkish, awkward collage. In the end, we cannot untangle the dramatic, verbal, and musical skeins, and, indeed, the authors' ambitions do not permit us to do so. When the dramatic form crumbles, the musical ebullience and the flashes of brilliance flicker out too.

As with Superstar, this work has been elaborately recorded before ever having been performed. The quality of the performance is exceptional. Julie Covington, C. T. Wilkinson, and Paul Jones are all fine singing actors (or, more correctly, acting singers), a combination hard to match in the operatic world. All the singers here are pop and very good too. The rock and symphony playing (good arrangements by Webber himself) is excellent, and the production, again by our authors, is brilliant. Only the substance fails.

Maybe what we need is a law that says nothing may be recorded—certainly not a theater work—until it has actually been rehearsed and performed in front of a living, breathing audience. Doing operas (not recording them) is the right way to learn how to do operas.

—Eric Salzman

EVITA (Andrew Lloyd Webber-Tim Rice), Julie Covington, Eva Peron; Paul Jones, Juan Peron; C. T. Wilkinson, Ché; other vocalists; Superstar Chor.; London Boy Singers; various rock and solo instrumentalists; London Philharmonic Orchestra and Anthony Newley cond. MCA MCA2-11003 two discs $12.98. © MCA2-11003 $13.98. © MCAC2-11003 $13.98.
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CIRCLE NO. 7 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Eric Dolphy's Miss Ann and a joint composition entitled Nickie, they have some interesting moments on three rather abstract compositions that are identified by silly schematic diagrams but bear no titles I can type, and they are simply embarrassing as together they stumble through Scott Joplin's Maple Leaf Rag. Because I consider Braxton an important artist, and because he gives at least two excellent performances here, I don't think this album can be ignored, but it is a step down from his previous Arista output. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CLIFFORD BROWN: The Quintet Vol. 1. Clifford Brown (trumpet); Harold Land (tenor saxophone); Richie Powell (piano); George Morrow (bass); Max Roach (drums). Delilah; Jordu; Daahoud; Joy Spring; Mildama; and nine others. Emarcy © EMS-2-403 two discs $7.98, © EMT-8-2-403 $9.95. © EMT-4-2-403 $9.95.

Performance: Quintessential Recording Excellent mono

Some four years ago, when the Mainstream label released some complete and partial albums from the Clifford Brown/Max Roach Quintet, it was a step down from theirijuin original sessions, but there were exceptional performances here, I don't think it is a step down from this album which adds more music from the same sessions. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

GEORGE BENSON: Bibop Burner. George Benson (guitar); Lonnie Smith (organ); Ronnie Cuber (baritone saxophone); Jimmy Lovelace (drums); King Curtis, Harold Ousley (tenor saxophones); Blue Mitchell (trumpet). Buyou; Hammond's Bossa Nova; Willow Weep for Me; Clabber Biscuits; Mama Walker; Goodnight; The Man from Toledo; My Babe; The Cooker; Return of the Prodigal Son; Benson's Rider; Ain't That Peculiar; and sixteen others. Columbia CG 33569 two discs $9.98.

Performance: Good Recording: Good

George Benson is now a hot name in pop-jazz circles, more as a vocalist than a guitarist, so it follows that the recordings he made in his pre-star life will be reissued to take advantage of his current notoriety. This double-disc set, compiled from 1966-1967 recordings produced by John Hammond, features Benson as an eager and facile jazz guitarist in a loose, small-band, rough-and-ready format.

What is most apparent in this set is Benson's joie de vivre. He cheerfully buries himself into his solos, and sometimes his energy gets in the way of his thinking, resulting in scatter-shot bursts of notes that are more fustian than funky, but most often his sense of good-time jazz comes through. It is interesting to note that most of the selections presented here are brief, running well under the four-minute line and sometimes even further curtailed—unusual in jazz recordings, where ordinarily too much room is given to musicians who either don't have any ideas or can't resolve the ones they do have. But it's obvious that Benson, scrappy and peppy at this point in his life, was having great fun playing. It's likely that you will have good fun listening. J.V.

ANTHONY BRAXTON: Duets 1976. Anthony Braxton (saxophones, clarinets); Muhal Richard Abrams (piano). Maple Leaf Rag; Miss Ann; Nickie; and three others. Arista AL 4101 $6.98.

Performance: From the sublimes to . . . Recording: Good

As Anthony Braxton points out in his notes to this album, duet recordings are not uncommon these days. This, however, is an uncommon duet album, a perplexing mixture of magnificence and mediocrity made all the more perplexing by the fact that the mediocrity appears to be intentional. Braxton's partner here is pianist (sometimes cellist and reed player) Muhal Richard Abrams, whom Braxton first met over ten years ago when both were members of the Chicago-based AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians); they are good together on ternate takes of the Clifford Brown/Max Roach Quintet's earliest EmArcy sessions and tried to pass them off as demo tapes made the year before they actually were, I pointed out the hoax and expressed the hope that Mercury—the rightful owner of these phenomenal recordings—would bring out its riches. Mercury later made a deal with the Trip label which did release virtually all the Clifford Brown material (and many other good things) in worthy form and without any kind of ludicrous stereo "enhancement." Now the EmArcy label—Mercury's jazz subsidiary under which these sides originally appeared—has been reactivated, and the first series of well-packaged, low-price double albums includes yet another release of this material with more Clifford Brown to come.

Obviously, Mercury is thus directly competing with its own material as leased to Trip; that is perplexing, but it is not your problem unless you find yourself having bought identical recordings in different dress. The EmArcy releases are, however, different from the Trip releases in that Trip presents each album exactly (except for covers and notes) as it originally appeared while EmArcy has reprogrammed chronologically, leaving out such tracks as Darn That Dream (from the very first session) because Brown himself does not play on it; another difference is, of course, the price: one disc for $5.98 (Trip) as against $7.98 for two (EmArcy).

The music? Well, by any other label, in any other cover, the Clifford Brown/Max Roach Quintet would be just as swinging and just as vital to a serious collection of modern jazz. All but seven of the selections made by the original full quintet appear in this first EmArcy volume; the seven remaining—and another seven, with Sonny Rollins replacing Harold Land—will presumably be forthcoming in future volumes. And let us hope that the alternate takes, smuggled in clandestine fashion onto the Mainstream and Time labels by the man who originally produced these sessions, also finally find their way to their rightful label in an additional volume.

I am not one of those dyed-in-the-wool col-

(Continued on page 112)
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CIRCLE NO. 4 ON READER SERVICE CARD
tunes that obviously inspire him. The rhythmic support by bassist Buster Williams and drummer Billy Hart is, of course, excellent. The East Coast seems recently to have discovered Jimmie Rowles, and, if you haven't already, I suggest that you do too. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
THE SONS OF BIX'S: A Legend Revisited.
Tom Pletcher (cornet); John Harker (clarinet); Russ Whitman (baritone saxophone); Don Ingle (valve trombone, vocals); Charlie A. Marshall, Jr. (guitar); Don Gibson (piano); Wayne Jones (drums). Rhythm King; 01' Man
Marshall, Jr. (guitar); Don Gibson (piano); Thu Ol' Man River; Royal Garden Blues; Singin' the Blues; Riverboat Shuffle; Thou Swell; and four others. FAIRMONT F-110 $6.98 (from Fairmont Records, P.O. Box 3392, Santa Monica, Calif. 90403)

Performance: Outstanding
Recording: Good

Some time ago Don Gibson, the pianist in this fine group, sent me tapes of some of the selections from "A Legend Revisited," and I was quite impressed with the way the band had captured the sound of the Bix & His Gang 1927-1928 dates—not, I hasten to add, the acoustic sound but the musical one. The bass sax and the cymbals played in off-accents were a treat to hear, and Tom Pletcher's Beiderbeckian cornet playing was very close to the glorious original.

Now that the full album has been released, however, I find that what delights me about the performances is not the instrumentation or the re-creation of atmosphere, but that the whole band and Pletcher especially, are not trying to sound like Bix and his contemporaries but are playing their ideas. The bass sax, for instance, had a short but brilliant career as a jazz instrument, chiefly in the hands of Adrian Rollini, who abandoned it in the early 1930's for the xylophone. Russ Whitman brings to the instrument all the fine things Rollini did: personality, agility, and a solo voice that grows naturally out of ensemble rhythm use (it often substituted for string bass in 1920's recordings). Wayne Jones' use of cymbals, after the manner of Chauncey Morehouse, is a refreshing change from the average "Dixieland" drumming, in which the ride cymbal and the (shiver) cowbell play prominent roles.

While the whole band is fine, it is Tom Pletcher who is in central position, and he brings his part off beautifully. He is as close to Bix as any horn I ever heard, and in the right way. He went to the trouble of discovering what Bix's musical basics were: a rapturous fascination with harmony and a strong sense of loyalty to the melody. A Bix improvisation is thrilling not for the way it departs from a tune but for how close it stays to it, inserting harmonic concepts within the structure of the tune that the composer was sometimes unaware of or had overlooked. Pletcher understands Bix's basics; he approaches a tune as Bix would, so his solos and fills are about as close as any mortal is going to come to Bix's immortal ones.

The album is not only a fine tribute to Bix, but also an impressive display of the talents of all the musicians in the band. The original recordings from which the band takes their inspiration were made fifty years ago; the Sons of Bix's have not returned to that time—they have brought it forward to the present and offer their music as living jazz of a type that has been largely forgotten but still has much to offer in both comfort and adventure. J.V.

JOE TURNER: In the Evening. Joe Turner (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Summertime; Corrina, Corrina; Too Late, Too Late; Pennies from Heaven; and six others. PABLO 2310-776 $7.98, @ $10776 $8.98, © K10776 $8.98.

Performance: Simplistic
Recording: Very good

Joe Turner has made some nice records over the years, but there have also been disasters such as his last Pablo offering ("Nobody in Mind") This album isn't quite as bad as that one; on such numbers as Sweet Lorraine and Chains of Love Turner actually seems to be paying attention to the lyrics, but his style is still terribly monotonous and predictable. Again, Benny Green's notes are almost apologetic, though he does refer to Turner as "literally the voice of Jazz," which is going further than any annotator should have to.

CORRECTION
The review of Sheffield Labs' direct-to-disc recording of Harry James and His Band, "The King James Version," on page 121 of the March issue contained an error in the price information. The correct price is $12 (from Sheffield Lab, P.O. Box 5332, Santa Barbara, Calif. 93108).

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ALFVÉN: Swedish Rhapsody No. 1, Op. 19

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Good 1950's vintage

Hugo Alfvén recorded his deservedly popular Midsommarvaka (Midsummer Vigil) in 1954, at the age of eighty-two, and it is that performance that is the high point of this disc in both musical-poetic content and documentary value. It was, by the way, the first Swedish recording of a Swedish Romantic composition, with folk tunes displayed sequentially and lovely expressive touches that the composer brings to his minor masterpiece of the felicitous underlining of contrapuntal value. It was, by the way, the first Swedish recording of a Swedish Romantic composition, with folk tunes displayed sequentially and lovely expressive touches that the composer brings to his minor masterpiece of the felicitous underlining of contrapuntal value.

However, this new Swedish Society Discofil release offers a decidedly superior remastering job and shows to best possible advantage the felicitous underlining of contrapuntal detail and lovely expressive touches that the composer brings to his minor masterpiece of Swedish Romantic nationalism. The Dalarapsoni (Dalecarlian Rhapsody), composed in 1937, more than thirty years after Midsommarvaka, is a more dark-hued and sprawling affair, with folk tunes displayed sequentially rather than cleverly combined as in the earlier score. The most arresting touch is the opening soprano saxophone solo, evocative of the Swedish birch horn. The Festspel (Festival Piece) with which the disc opens is a handsome ceremonial piece in polonaise style composed for the 1908 inauguration of Sweden's Royal Dramatic Theater in its then new quarters. These 1957 recorded performances by Stig Westerberg were also released here by Westminster some two years later, but again, Westerberg's spirited readings benefit from the expert remastering of this new import disc.

D.H.

J. S. BACH: Six Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord (BWV 1014-1019). Alice Har normoncourt (violin); Herbert Tachezi (harpsichord); Nikolaus Harnoncourt (viola da gamba). TELEFUNKEN 6 35310 two discs $13.96.

Performance: Authentic
Recording: Excellent

This album is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

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

Explanation of symbols:

- **= reel-to-reel stereo tape
- ** = eight-track stereo cartridge
- ** = stereo cassette
- ** = quadraphonic disc
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Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol **

One of the problems posed by the Bach Violin and Harpsichord Sonatas is balance: the rich, modulated tone of the modern violin simply steals the show from the rigidity static sound of the harpsichord. A violinist's chief means of expression is dynamic; the harpsichordist's is temporal. It is well-nigh impossible to use both without upsetting ensemble and balance, and yet the use of one or the other proves frustrating to both performer and listener. These three albums offer three varying solutions, all of which work to a degree but still leave unanswered questions.

Granat and Kilbuck on Orion Records present us with the modern violin played in the current high-pressure style. Mr. Granat's execution is violinistically admirable, but it is filled with spurious crescendos and slurs, and there is an overall legato that is detrimental to Bach's highly articulated writing. Ms. Kilbuck, on the other hand, plays a historic instrument by William Dowd in an austere, authentically manner. Not only are the performers' styles incompatible, but the harpsichord sound is so soft that it offers a mere tinkle in the background, which is particularly frustrating in that Ms. Kilbuck is an excellent harpsichordist who understands temporal expression well and is not afraid to use it. This is attested in her fine performance of the solo movement of the G Major Sonata. Perhaps different microphone placement would have helped us to hear her.

The use of modern violin and piano by the Laredo-Gould team solves the balance problem. Here the equal lines are heard in proper balance, and Mr. Gould's talent for polyphonic clarity comes to the fore as he underlines important thematic entries. But otherwise his treatment of the music is utterly perverse. His articulation is so choppy and arbitrary that the long Bach lines become a farce of trivia. He also chooses to fill in the writing with staccato chords and spacings that properly belong in a night club. Perhaps the most galling feature is the way he breaks chords; his added figurations in the adagio of the E Major Sonata, for instance, completely destroy this magnificent music.

Laredo's reading, however, is superb. His tone is perfect for the style, and he brings that rare combination of articulation and line to the music that reveals Bach in his fullest glory. One wonders how he manages such musical integrity and beauty over such a grotesque accompaniment. It is typical of any performance associated with the name Harnoncourt that authentic instruments are played in the most uncompro mising, authentic style that can be mustered. This approach, of course, requires arduous research and technical skill. For the modern listener, however, it has both its pros and cons, as demonstrated in the Telefunken recording of the Bach sonatas. Most admirable
Sunday afternoon petits concerts, François Couperin's fourteen Royal Concerts are perhaps the most elegant salon music ever conceived. As the title of the second set implies, Couperin, a passionate lover of Italian music, creates a blend of suave French melody propelled by Italianate sequences, of smooth French harmonies spiced with Italianate modulations and dissonance. Never do the two styles clash, but rather become a subtly balanced mixture that only such a genius as Couperin could achieve.

Scored for utility, the Concerts call for continuous and a single melody instrument with an occasional added counter-melody "if one wishes." Taking full advantage of this freedom of instrumentation, this recording superbly portrays the harpsichord with gamba or bassoon and distributes the various melodic parts among violin, oboe, and flute depending on the character of the music. Thus, what looks dull on paper takes on great variety as the instruments in solo and combination offer a constantly changing timbre.

The style of playing is extremely legato here, and I would prefer a slightly more marked articulation. But this is more than offset by overall beauty of phrasing. The lines are long and sinuous, and this group of musicians deserves high praise for molding them in completely natural contours.

Typical of the French galant style, the melodies are overlaid with a plethora of ornaments, but Couperin intended them all—plus what the performer could add—to be played. They are all here, too, clear as a bell, and never once does an ornament mar the shape of a phrase. The only questionable practice is the consistent use of the appoggiatura before the beat as an unaccented passing note. I long for the more characteristic staccato indication of long, on-beat appoggiaturas. Although all the performers are at home in the style, oboist Heinz Holliger's ornamentation and tasteful divisions are really outstanding.

One of the bêtes noirs of French music is the question of notes inégales. Here the charters that characteristically French mannerism of Couperin's ornamentation and tasteful divisions are really outstanding.

The longest selection, "Je voudrais," comes from the long out-of-print recording (Columbia ML 6075) of Debussy's La Damoiselle Elue, made in 1947. Miss Sayao made her American debut under Toscanini in this same work in 1936. French was a language she acquired in childhood. Later studies with Jean de Reszke and extensive appearances in France established her as a mistress of the French singing style. But she exhibits a mastery of the vocal art as well in this sequence of simple songs that are by no means simple to do this well. Her tones are sweet and true, effortlessly produced, with exquisite pianissimos that are to be cherished.

I would have preferred piano accompaniment for the Hahn song and an orchestra behind the Auber and Ravel arias, of course. But these were recorded in a less exacting era, and we are fortunate that they were recorded at all in quite acceptable sound for the period (1938-1950). There are useful and informative notes by producer William Seward, who was enterprising enough to obtain releases from RCA on three selections. Compliments to all concerned.

—George Jellinek

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characteristic rhythmic alteration is turned off and on in a somewhat vexing and inconsistent manner. A passage will be played as written and the repetition will be rhythmically modified. Frequently when Couperin clarifies the situation by specifically calling for inegales, they are ignored. From what I can gather about this contradictory documented practice, they should be applied, when appropriate, to an entire movement, not haphazardly to small sections or repeats. When they are used in this album, however, they are subtly handled and the flow of the music is not impeded by the gallow lumpsiness so frequently heard in many so-called “authentic” performances where they are applied with a vengeance.

Despite my quibbles, this is a fine album of a very special repertoire. The overall effect is exquisite, and if these Concerts found favor with Louis, which they did, they are a tribute to that monarch’s remarkably high degree of refinement.

EMMANUEL: Symphony No. 2, in A Major ("Bretonne"), Orchestre Philharmonique de l’ORTF, Maurice Suzan cond. (Continued on page 121)

FRANCK: Symphony in D Minor; Redemption—Morceau Symphonique, Orchestre de Paris, Daniel Barenboim cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 707 $7.98, 3300 707 $7.98.

Performance: Craftsmanlike
Recording: Spacious

For the most part Barenboim has his orchestra at the top of its form here: even the horns betray none of the saucy quality one is almost resigned to accepting from French orchestras. The English horn player does not make enough of his moments in the slow movement to justify the solo billing he receives, the trumpet tone shows an occasional harshness, and the spacious recording itself is sometimes a little fiery, but none of these little shortcomings would matter much if there were more momentum in Barenboim’s reading. The very opening is most promising—eloquent, brooding, suitably mysterious—but in the first movement proper the music fails to take wing, and the finale too seems earthbound in its lack of tension. It is as if Barenboim were for a while, like than inspired.

But you may listen with a more sympathetic ear if you happen to be fond of the Morceau Symphonique from Franck’s 1872 oratorio Reformation (on which not a word of information is offered in DG’s trilingual annotation). The shorter work, which has not been around for a while, is given a gorgeous, all-out performance, just the sort one wishes Barenboim had given the symphony.

Performance: Splendid
Recording: Splendid

In Baroque opera and oratorio, there never was such a thing as a definitive version of a (Continued on page 121)
"Head to Head on Beethoven's Nine"

Bernard Haitink

The age of recording has its own set of qualifications to be met by those aspiring to international musical fame, and interpreting Beethoven convincingly is at the top of the conductors' list. Soon or late, every maestro with an eye on the history books must submit himself to posterity's judgment, in competition with the others, by putting performances of the nine symphonies onto discs.

The two most recent entrants in this continuing contest approach the music from different backgrounds, different circumstances, and at different points in their careers. Unhappily, Seraphim's American release of Rudolf Kempe's version of the complete symphonies has had to serve as a memorial to the conductor, who died last May at the age of sixty-five. Bernard Haitink's set for Philips, on the other hand, comes in the middle of the forty-seven-year-old conductor's career, and the most surprising thing about it is that he didn't get around to it sooner.

Deciding between these two issues is rather like deciding between a pair of well-made, good-looking shoes and a pair of slightly eccentric but captivating ones that aren't going to last through the winter. First-time purchasers of the Beethoven symphonies have no choice here but to go with Haitink; they may not always be excited, but neither will they be incensed, and in the long run they'll be served very, very well. But adventurous collectors will covet the Kempe set, for the performances are always interesting—at worst annoying, at best fascinating.

The most pervasive problem in the Seraphim set is the orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic, which is simply not up to the competition in today's symphonic arena. Their sound can be harsh and badly blended, their technique unreliable. For every time on these sixteen sides that the listener is enchanted by the sound of active playing—that is, by the feel that the instrumentalists are actually bowing, blowing, hitting—there is another when the musical "mechanics" seem to be just that.

Haitink's London Philharmonic is not without its drawbacks, but it is an able ensemble, ready to meet the conductor's cues with a modern blending of strings and winds and—most of the time—with technical élan. Furthermore, the sound on the seven Haitink discs is brighter and clearer. The Kempe set proudly claims the distinction of being the first budget issue of the complete symphonies in compatible SQ/stereo quadraphonic sound, but the four-channel sound is occasionally confusing to the ear (what are the cellos doing in the back of the hall?), and the benefit even in the effectively engineered passages are minimal.

The only other practical consideration is the sequencing of the music: Kempe uses the Prometheus, Leonore No. 3, and Egmont Overtures as fillers for the Eroica, the Fourth, and the Fifth, respectively, to keep to a policy of one symphony, one record (the First and the Second take one side each). Haitink's set includes only the symphonies; the Second shares a side with the First, and the disc of the Third also accommodates the first movement of the Fourth.

But these considerations should be negligible compared to the issue of interpretation. Throughout, Haitink is almost defiantly true to Beethoven's written wishes, while Kempe perhaps does what he thinks the composer would have wanted him to. Haitink's sense of lyricism is the more natural, but Kempe discovers the drama more easily and with more flair. Kempe feels free to add his own ritards and accelerandos, and occasionally he has trouble holding a tempo (most notably in the finale of the Seventh). Haitink holds religiously to the pace, avoiding any change that isn't indicated in the score, and sometimes taking those only reluctantly. Both treat repeats arbitrarily, presumably so that the music will fit neatly onto the discs, though in the long run Haitink is both more consistent and more sensible in his decisions.

Haitink's approach is generally less personal, and the one symphony in which this makes the most striking difference is the Third. Kempe's opening statement is irresistible, with a feeling of anticipation that doesn't settle into sureness and boldness until the thirty-seventh bar. Haitink, on the other hand, sets in his ways, is solid from the outset. The two conductors negotiate the second movement in exactly the same amount of time, but Kempe's work is more somber and thoughtful, with an attractive growl in the lower strings and a tendency to make the most of the unusual. Haitink's scherzo is lighter than Kempe's; the older conductor likes to plow forward strongly. Kempe's tendency to foot around with tempos gets just a bit tiresome in the finale, but both versions are basically traditional.

Ernest Newman's intelligent notes, originally companions to the Cluytens version, accompany the Seraphim set. The Haitink brochure includes shorter descriptions of the music with a shallow essay having the rather unfortunate title "Beethoven—Man, artist, personality."

—Karen Monsen*


BEETHOVEN: The Nine Symphonies. Hänodele Bode (soprano); Helen Watts (contralto); Horst Laubenthal (tenor); Benjamin Luxton (bass); London Philharmonic Choir (in Ninth Symphony). London Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernard Haitink cond. PHILIPS 6747308 seven discs $58.86.

*Music critic, Chicago Daily News

Soon or late, every maestro must submit to judgment . . .
work. Each performance was unique. As singers were changed, so were their requirements. Each audience had its own tastes, and composers in this capricious era simply altered their works to fit the exigencies of the occasion. Thus every time Handel presented his Messiah he made whatever changes were needed to fit the requirements of the situation and also (and this is most important) made changes that fit his own musical fancies at that time. Therefore, some changes are purely practical and others show signs of creative growth. The problem, then, is to sort out those changes that were the result of necessity and those that were prompted by a musical rethinking of the work at hand. Christopher Hogwood, who has edited the version presented in this recording, has chosen to present what he considers the closest to Handel's original concept of the work; through a careful study of various documents, manuscripts, and librettos, he has painstakingly reconstructed the version first presented in London on March 23, 1743.

Now many of us have grown up on this work in a sort of amalgamated version developed through the years from Mozart to Ebenezer Prout, and Hogwood's version will, therefore, necessarily startle us every now and then. Some of the changes here seem to be for the better; others lead one to think that Handel's second thoughts on the music were better than his first. The charming recitative sequence for soprano, for example, which follows the Pastoral Symphony substitutes a short arioso for "And lo, the angel of the Lord." I miss the rustle of the angels' wings, and, in a way, the substitution kills the impact of "Rejoice greatly, 0 daughter of Zion." But I must admit that the unfamiliar arioso is itself a beautiful piece of music. Whether or not we like the changes, though, we are forced to re-think a masterpiece, and that forced rethinking is not at the behest of a capricious editor but of the composer himself.

Mr. Hogwood has also come to terms with the problem of ornamentation. As Handel himself well knew, ornamentation can be overdone and detrimental to the work. In this performance it is both discreet and tasteful. Appoggiaturas abound and cadenzas are added, as are certain divisions. Never are they there for vocal display, but always for enhancement of the music itself. Handel would have been fortunate indeed to have had his singers show such restraint and musicianship.

The use of rhythmic alterations, however, is a different matter. Using French mannerisms in Italianate vocal music in England is, at best, questionable. Handel was perfectly capable of indicating when he wanted dotted rhythms, and they are out of place in "And the glory of the Lord." They also kill the contrasting feeling of "peace" required in the second section of "Rejoice greatly."

Performances of Messiah have often been marred by excessively slow tempos, but Neville Marriner's briskness and drive work wonderfully in such choruses as "For unto us a Child is born" and the startlingly angry "He trusted in God." On the other hand, the overture lacks dignity because of its too-ardent drive, and the almost scherzo quality of "And with his stripes" does violence to the text.

Despite certain lapses in tempo, this recording is unique in its continuity. The usual pause and banding between each number have been dispensed with, and one piece flows dramatically into the next in a way that creates a vast unity of mood change and drama. The soloists...
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are excellent, and Handel would no doubt be pleased with their expressive projection. The real hero of the performance, however, is Philip Langridge. His sensitive musicianship is supported by a rich, clear voice which is capable of stunning coloratura and subtle coloration of the text.

Quibble as one may about details of this version and performance, Christopher Hogwood deserves credit for his musicianly scholarship, and Neville Marriner for his thrilling concept of this masterpiece. They have both brought something new and fresh to a work which is itself the essence of the new and the fresh.

S.L.

HAYDN: String Quartets, Op. 77, Nos. 1 and 2 (see Best of the Month, page 87)

LISZT: Piano Concerto No. 1, in E-flat Major (see TCHAIKOVSKY)

MAHLER: Symphony No. 1, in D Major. Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta cond. LONDON CS 7004 $6.98.

Performance: Mostly splendid
Recording: Excellent

Zubin Mehta’s realization of Mahler’s First Symphony, like his often impressive reading of the Resurrection Symphony, just misses being top-drawer because of erratic firstmovement tempos. In this instance the conductor rushes the climax, dissipating its inherent impact and making the remaining pages of the movement rather pointless. Things improve with the succeeding Landler movement, though one could ask for a little less schmaltz in the trio section. It is in the final two movements, though, that Mehta and the Israelis really hit their stride, delivering wonderfully vital and colorful performances of the parodistic funeral march and turbulent finale. There are delicious bits of detailed underlining in terms of both timbre and flexibility of phrasing, yet the overall line is never lost. The sonics throughout are first-rate.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Musico-dramatic
Recording: Vivid

Cathy Berberian is so firmly associated with contemporary music of the far-out variety (and, secondarily, with the revival of turn-of-the-century parlor camp) that a collection of Monteverdi comes as a surprise. But the musical intensity and affective qualities of this music are a perfect match for Berberian’s musico-dramatic talents. Her style is not what one would traditionally regard as “real” Baroque, and her voice, never overwhelmingly beautiful, sometimes comes uncomfortably close to the edge of stridency. But frankly, if it were up to me, I would make every singer of dramatic music—of the ancient variety and of the not-so-ancient as well—study these performances to learn something about how

(Continued on page 124)
Some of the rather special adjectives the test labs have been using to describe LUX.

Unless this is the first high fidelity publication you have read, you know that equipment reviews are almost always favorable. We don't suggest that the reviews are inaccurate or that they don't reflect the editors' sincere judgments. Rather, we understand that the publications prefer to use their limited space for equipment that can recommend to their readers.

Thus, the problem for the discerning reader is to distinguish between the adequate, the good and the truly superb. As of this date, four LUX products have been the subject of test reports in high fidelity magazines. Aside from confirming excellent specifications and exceptional sonic performance, the reviewers left little doubt as to which descriptive category they meant to apply.

For an apt example, the Hirsch-Houck report (in Stereo Review) on the Luxman L-100 integrated amplifier concluded: "Obviously the performance and operating characteristics of the Luxman L-100 require the use of superlatives for an adequate description...Externally, internally and in respect to performance, (it) must be considered a simply beautiful product. The harmonic distortion (THD) at 1,000 Hz and 10 watts output was 0.0087 per cent and it remained at that figure up to the rated 110 watts..." [Our claimed THD at rated power, 20 to 20,000 Hz, is 0.08 per cent].

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High Fidelity magazine's report was on the C-1000 preamplifier. They found "the performance...virtually impeccable. Chipping occurs at 13 volts. The data from the CBS Technology Center shows that, at a more reasonable 2 volts, THD is less than 0.0064% for all conditions, and intermodulation distortion is 0.002% or less," High Fidelity's conclusion: "It is more a Rolls-Royce than a Ferrari. But if you are a sybaritic audiophile with a budget to match, the C-1000 will pamper you as few preamps can..."

FM Guide reported on the Luxman T-110 tuner, also with unequivocal conclusions: "...the FM purist’s tuner...emphasis is totally on absolutely top FM performance...in most of our listening tests we were being limited by the quality of broadcast signals...without a doubt, the best performing tuner we have ever seen at this price.

If you would like to see and hear the equipment that prompted these superlatives from the reviewers, visit one of the select LUX dealers for a demonstration. Chances are the next superlatives you hear will be your own.

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tremendous musical and dramatic intensity

Wincent Persichetti is a major name in American music—not only as a composer but, through his long association with Juilliard, as one of the half-dozen major composition teachers in this country. Yet his music is not
really all that well known. In fact, if one thinks of Persichetti at all, one tends to think of a genial sort of American-school music, conservative but with bite. This image actually applies only to a certain period of his work, exemplified here by the modal and polytonal Second Quartet of 1944. The Third Quartet of 1959 verges on atonality and twelve-tonery, and the Fourth Quartet, quite far-out in its way, is a curiously effective mixture of traditional and ultra-modern elements in a style that is highly fragmented and yet cohesive. Persichetti’s skill and fluency is already evident in the Hindemithian First Quartet and is always there through all the changes of later years. I am not willing to venture any predictions about the possible longevity of these works, but they do represent an important non-academic serious side of contemporary American music.

It is of note that this music comes to us from the Sun Belt. The New Art String Quartet, an eminently able ensemble, is in residence at Arizona State University, which has published these recordings. The idea of university nonprofit records of this type has often been discussed, but the state of university finances these days rarely permits such extravagances. I’m glad to know someone will spend money on musical culture.

E. S.

POULENC: Concerto in D Minor for Two Pianos and Orchestra (see EMMANUEL)


Performance: Stylish
Recording: Good

Both concertos here are virtuoso vehicles, and Kyung-Wha Chung is not only equal to their purely violinistic demands but makes every effort—by searching out a balance between display and lyrical elements—to make the music sound better than it actually is. Her playing is elegant and chic, but it never becomes cold or merely tinselly. She excels in the slow movements of both works. Conductor Lawrence Foster abets Miss Chung handsomely, and London’s recording staff has done a fine balancing job throughout, especially in the Vieuxtemps. The Saint-Saëns, recorded two years after the Vieuxtemps, in the spring of 1976, sounds just a shade more closely miked in the soloist department, but not uncomfortably so.

D. H.

SCARLATTI: Stabat Mater. Mirella Freni (soprano); Teresa Berganza (mezzo-soprano); Paul Kuentz Chamber Orchestra, Charles Mackerras cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 2533 324 $7.98.

Performance: Straightforward
Recording: Excellent

Commissioned for the same forces as Pergolesi’s later but more celebrated setting of the text, and by the same Neapolitan society that commissioned the Pergolesi work, Alessandro Scarlatti’s Stabat Mater inevitably became the model for the younger composer. But the similarities stop there. While Pergolesi looks forward to the simpler harmonies and textures of the Classical era, Scarlatti indulged himself in the rich chromatic harmonies.
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ties and the intricate counterpoints of the high Baroque.

The performance is a straightforward one. My first impression was that a great deal more vocal ornamentation should have been applied; the wonderful trills of Mirella Freni and Teresa Berganza leave no doubt that they could easily fill in the lines with all manner of

Both soloists are excellent. Freni's is a hard, clean sound, well focused and instrumentally conceived. Berganza, on the other hand, offers a richer sound with a warm vibrato. But the duets do not come off well as well as the solo, partly because of the balance. Freni's voice simply cuts through the texture, relegating Berganza's role to that of a shadow, albeit a lovely one.


Performance: Heavy
Recording: Fairly good

It was Arnold Schoenberg more than anyone else who put chamber music in the forefront of the development of modern music. Schoenberg's chamber-music tradition was really an extension of the great line from the Viennese classics through Schumann and Brahms. In the earliest works there is a strong Wagnerian influence, and this carries over into the expressionist period of Pierrot Lunaire. Schoenberg's early twelve-tone music is very closely allied to the neo-Classical movements—the sort of thing he satirized in his little cantata "The New Classicism" (what he meant, of course, was that his classicism was the real one). There are even turgid twelve-tone bits of Twenties jazz buried in these serenades and sonatas. Then there is a freer, final twelve-tone style represented by works written during and after World War

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128

(Continued on page 132)
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DON'T INTERRUPT LIFE'S GREAT PERFORMANCES.
WEBER/MAHLER: Die Drei Pintos. Lucia Popp (soprano), Clarissa; Jeanette Scovotti (soprano), Inez; Kari Liivaas (mezzo-soprano), Laura; Werner (tenor), Don Gaston; Heinz Kruse (tenor), Don Gomez, Majordomo; Hermann Prey (baritone), Kurt Moll's basso cantante (as the rightful Pinto).

What remains provocative after a few hearings of Die Drei Pintos is the influence upon Strauss' music for Baron Ochs, in Der Rosenkavalier, of Weber-Mahler's bumpkin Don and Mahler's own interlude between the first and second acts depicting a drunken Don Pinto's dream—this near to, in quality, although less developed than, the Biumine later excised to's dream—this near to, in quality, although less developed than, the Biumine later excised from the First Symphony.

RCA has lavished six disc sides on just one hour and forty-two minutes of music, plus fourteen minutes more of spoken dialogue. This averages out to a short twenty minutes per side, in spite of which, at decibel levels louder than a modest mezzo-forte, three different stylistic top—of— the line Supex, Shure, and B&O—persistence buzzed on two stereo playback systems. Only Grado's F-1+ (intended for CD-4 discs) took these Hamburg pressings in stride, except for the brouhaha that begins Act III. The discs are otherwise (considering their European source) antipathetic, thin, with a low—bass rumble, ticks and pops, and static properties that need several zappings with a Zerostat, per side, to tame their extreme these.

The text itself is printed only in German—not that any special knowledge of that language is needed to understand these performances. One must stretch a point to find wisps of Weberian individuality, much less of inspiration, in other than No. 10, a mellifluous recitative and aria for the heroine (one Clarissa of Madrid, whose father Don Pantalone would wed her to Don Pinto, the bumpkin son of a kindly stranger who once saved his life). With the advantage of hindsight, one can discover Mahler's fingerprints on this concoction about how, in Salamanca, fortune-hunting Don Gaston and his servant Ambrosio purloin a letter of introduction to Pantalone from the "first" Pinto about Gaston's impersonation in Madrid of the groom—to—be (making him the "second" Pinto), and his quid pro quo in response to the pleadings of Don Gomez, Clarissa's true love (who becomes the "third" Pinto), before the real rube rushes in, creates a vulgar ruckus, and is sent packing by a bewildered but wiser Pantalone.

Even during the first hearing, one doubts that a more flexible and fun—seeking conductor than Gary Bertini would be able to disguise the commonplace nature of Weber's sketches, or the hesitancy of Mahler to foliate them fully. A chorus from the Netherlands in this recording sounds perfunctory although not effortful; virtually the same may be said about members of the Munich Philharmonic. Bertini's cast of eight sings efficiently from unchancing stations in a brewing—cellar with acoustics both hollow and muffled. The participants in solo roles ascend in vocal charm from the gusty, rhythmically square mezzo—soprano of Kari Liivaas (as Clarissa's obligatory maid, seen, wooded, and won instantly by Ambrosio) to the prime—time effulgence of Kurt Moll's basso cantante (as the rightful Pinto).

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The 501 creates, in a living room, the same kind of balance of reflected and direct sound experienced in a live performance.

The Mountain, Framingham, Mass. 01701
The contents of the album are a bit curious: all the chamber works of Schoenberg minus the string quartets and the string trio—but the unbearable wind quintet is included. Also included is a lush performance of the original sextet version of Verklärte Nacht, a very musical and dramatic Pierrot by Mary Thomas, and the surprisingly grateful serene works from the 1920’s. More unusual are the unfinished chamber-orchestra pieces of 1910 in a Webernian idiom, a dreadful cabaret song from 1911, and two surprising tonal works from the period around World War I: a march and a Christmas Carol fantasia (including Silent Night). The whole huge set of five records is extremely well produced.

The surprising appeal of Schoenberg’s serenade style is even more successfully brought out in a charming performance of Op. 24 by Daniel Shulman and the Light Fantastic Players on Nonesuch. These players are skillful and lively (except for the bass voice solo, always a problem), and they convey the quality of fantasy in Schoenberg’s music—a quality often either overlooked or driven into the ground. In fact, that is exactly what is wrong with the Chamber Symphony performances on Philips; these heavy recordings lack color and imagination. A pity too, since the romantic Second Chamber Symphony deserves to be better known (it is really written for a large orchestra and is omitted from the Beecham set), and the composer’s own large orchestral version of the First Chamber Symphony is not exactly a repertoire item either. E.S.
Maiden with the Roses (in the Swanwhite sequence) are reduced to banality, and there is little hint of majesty in this Finlandia. The orchestral playing is competent but hardly little hint of majesty in this Finlandia. The orchestral playing is competent but hardly distinguished, and the sound—hard, wiry, shallow—is not an asset. (London did not send its own recording crew to Budapest.)

The best of these three discs, both musically and technically, is the one with the Four Legends, superior to Sir Charles Groves’ reading on Angel S-37106, but not to Lukas Foss’ on Nonesuch H-71203. All of these, however, are clearly outclassed by the new Deutsche Grammophon version under Okko Kamu, who has already demonstrated both his feeling for the Sibelius idiom and the quality of his Helsinki Radio Orchestra. With the first notes of Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of Saari we are given notice that this version of the cycle is to be an Event, and that promise is grandly fulfilled in the forty-five minutes of music that follows.

Kamu restores The Swan of Tuonela to its original position as No. 3 in the sequence, a decision which in itself is not very important; what does matter is that the most familiar part of the cycle emerges with a freshness and eloquence one hardly expects of it, let alone takes for granted. But there isn’t a superficial or perfunctory bar in these performances. In the Korelia Suite, too, both interpretation and execution are on the button, and DG’s engineers have captured everything with a sumptuous realism that is a pleasure in itself. This record is indispensable to Sibelians, whose number it may well increase, and who must hope now for coverage of the less familiar numbers it may well increase, and who must hope now for coverage of the less familiar works from the same source.

R.F.


Performance: A romp
Recording: Very good

Of the recording of Tchaikovsky concertos there is no end. The formula is to take the latest keyboard bronco buster and let him ride the old nag—kick some life into her, as it were.

Horacio Gutiérrez, born in Cuba and educated in this country, took the now required Tchaikovsky Competition medal in Moscow. He is impressive in a flashy, good-natured, hard-edge sort of way. He and Previn literally romp through these scarred battlegrounds with scarcely a thought for the dead and the wounded left behind from past engagements. I never thought Tchaikovkian and Lisztian heroics, musings, and breast-beatings could actually sound cool, lightheartedly brilliant, even elegant, but they do here.

E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Warm, lyrical
Recording: Good

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There are already two fine recordings of the Villa-Lobos guitar concerto; Julian Bream
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some other solo pieces for the Mystic Sextet; and John Williams (Columbia M 33208)
couples the concerto with the extraordinarily popular Concierto de Aranjuez of Rodrigo.
Santos' playing is never less than fully com-
petitive with that of his better-known rivals,
and the choice of couplings inclines me to-
ward the MHS disc, since I find the seven
intriguing works of its kind—as Gallic in spir-
it, curiously, as much of Milhaud's music of
this period is Brazilian. In the more or less
contiguous role assigned to the guitar in the
disc, Santos blends ideally with his other associ-
ates, Palliard is his dependable self in the con-
certo, and the recorded sound is very good
indeed.

R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Rampal (flute); Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harp-
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Performance: Charming
Recording: Fine

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(harp); Turibio Santos (guitar). Five Preludes.
Turibio Santos (guitar). MUSICAL HERITAGE
SOCIETY MHS 3397 $3.50 (plus $.95 handling
charge, from Musical Heritage Society, Inc.,
Oakhurst, N.J. 07755).
Performance: Deft
Recording: Very good

There are already two fine recordings of the Villa-Lobos guitar concerto: Julian Bream
(RCA LSC-2606) offers the concerto and the preludes but substitutes the Choros No. 1 and
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(Continued on page 138)
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Lacroix, he brings out the light elegance of these works through clear articulation, brisk tempo, and facile ornamentation. The results are delightful.

S.L.

**RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**WAGNER:** Gotterdammerung (Orchestral Excerpts). Dawn and Siegfried’s Rhine Journey; Siegfried’s Funeral March; Brunnhilde’s Immolation and Finale. London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati cond. London CS-6970 $6.98, © CS-6790 $7.95.

Performance: Brilliant

Recording: Sumptuous

In his latest (fourth? sixth?)—one tends to lose count after so many of them)—recording of Gotterdammerung excerpts, as arranged by himself, Stokowski has eliminated the segment “Siegfried’s Death,” which he included in his London/Decca version with the same orchestra a dozen years ago (SPC-21016). I miss that noble passage, which enhances the Funeral March just as the “Dawn” fragment does the “Rhine Journey”; Toscanini seems to have been the only conductor who consistently included it in his concert performances of the Wotan’s Farewell. The new recording, though, is even more refined, more genuinely exalted than the London Phase-4 version, and RCA’s production team can take a good share of the credit: the sound is as gorgeous as the performance—rich, vibrant, beautifully balanced. The long Immolation Scene is somewhat less convincing as an orchestral piece than its two companion pieces, but it would take a harder heart than mine to find it unattractive as presented here. Stokowski, who will be ninety-five this month (April 18), is still the sorcerer supreme.

Do, as it happens, also has a birthday this month (seventy-one on April 9), and his Wagner collection is a stunning testimonial to his own powers of sorcery. Perhaps more than any other recording the National Symphony has made since Dorati became its music director in 1970, these performances (taped in 1975) demonstrate the magic he has wrought. He steps down at the end of this season with his mission in Washington largely accomplished: he has given the nation’s capital a more than respectable orchestra, capable of taking on anything. Here there is not only brilliance to burn but compassion to move us in Wotan’s Farewell, real breadth in the Rheingold excerpt, solemn grandeur in the Funeral March, downright enchantment in “Forest Murmurs.” The “Rhine Journey” alone might have been a little more animated, but it is as beautifully played as the rest. London’s sumptuous sonics give us strings richer than rich, brass burnished to a lambent glow.


Performance: Brilliant

Recording: Sumptuous

In his latest (fourth? sixth?)—one tends to lose count after so many of them)—recording of Gotterdammerung excerpts, as arranged by himself, Stokowski has eliminated the segment “Siegfried’s Death,” which he included in his London/Decca version with the same orchestra a dozen years ago (SPC-21016).
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(although it is neither) is grand opera built on the French models of Spontini and Meyerbeer. Epic in scale (five acts) and rich in pageantry, it offers an elaborate ballet, battle sequences, and a final conflagration. Of "music drama" there is not a trace: scenas à la Weber, arias with cabalettas, and vocal ensembles follow one another in a manner not far removed from the procedures of Bellini, to whom the finale of Rienzi's first scene is startlingly indebted.

The opera's plot, though based on Bulwer-Lytton's famous novel, also borrowed many devices from Auber's enormously successful opera Massaniello (1828). Just the same, the typical Wagnerian elements are already there: a hero confronted with and eventually destroyed by hostile forces despite the heroic devotion of a woman. The latter in this instance is Irene, Rienzi's sister. Their paratissipitous relationship is further complicated by the fact that Adriano, Irene's mixed-up suitor, is interpreted by a female singer.

Musically, on the other hand, there is much to enjoy in Rienzi. It does suffer from excess; the lengthy recitative delay the action and some brilliantly conceived passages are diluted by repetition. Still, there is no denying the effectiveness of the ceremonial music, the choral pieces, though harmonically uneventful, are stirring, and the familiar vocal highlights (Rienzi's Prayer, Adriano's big dramatic scene) sound even more impressive in context. With their anticipations of Tannhäuser and Lohengrin, the last three acts are clearly superior to the first two.

The singing here, while not ideal, is good enough to give us a respectable account of this historically important opera. The title role is cut from a vocal fabric Wagner later remodeled for a Melchior or, at the very least, a Vickers. Kollo's light voice is severely taxed by the requirements; he sounds uncomfortable and at times unpleasant in the high tessitura, but he delivers the Prayer movingly and in a good vocal estate.

Casting Adriano for a woman in trousers was a severe miscalculation on Wagner's part—it may be the single most powerful reason for keeping Rienzi off the stage in modern times. In any case, the role calls for a voice of the Ortrud-Venus type, whereas Janis Martin is more of an Elsa-Elisabeth. This consideration aside, she serves the music well, at times rising to impressive heights. The young Swedish soprano Siv Wennberg also scores impressively in the part of Irene. Her powerful mettalic timbre and easy command of the high register show promise of a great future Brunnhilde. In the present context, however, it is Miss Wennberg who supplies the steely and resolute tones and Miss Martin (as Adriano) who delivers the softer, more feminine lines—and the absurdiies are thereby compounded.

There are two fine bassos in the cast: Nikolaus Hillebrand as Colonna, Rienzi's archenemy, and Siegfried Vogel as the papal emissary who announces Rienzi's excommunication. Peter Schreier makes a notable contribution in the small role of Baroncelli, but Günther Leib is weak as Cecco, the fellow-turncoat. Nor does Theo Adam lift the role of Orsini to a significant level. Heinrich Hollreiser may not be the most exciting interpreter of this music (it would be fascinating to let Sir Georg Solti loose on it), but he gets solid results from both orchestra and chorus and keeps the action moving without making the opera seem longer than it is. G.J.

WAGNER: The Valkyrie. Alberto Remedios (tenor), Siegmund; Margaret Curphey (soprano), Sieglinde; Clifford Grant (bass), Wotan; Norman Brian (bass), Hunding; Norman Bailey (baritone), Siegmund; Margaret Curphey (soprano), Fricka; Rita Hunter (soprano), Brunnhilde; others. English National Opera Orchestra, Reginald Goodall cond. ANGEL DL SELX-3826 five discs $35.95.

Performance: Dignified and stately

Recording: Good live

I am a strong proponent of opera in English, but I do think you ought at least to be able to demonstrate redeeming social value in a translation. Just as the Germans long ago naturalized Shakespeare, the English have long tried to adopt the Ring as a national epic—w ith decidedly mixed results.

This recording is taken from a complete English Ring translated by Andrew Porter and produced with an all-British cast at the English National Opera (formerly Sadlers Wells) under the direction of Reginald Goodall. The performances roused great rapture among our overseas confreres, which demonstrates only that the English can work up a great deal of enthusiasm over luke-warm beer.

The performance, like the translation, is High Church—dignified and stately. What is lacking is passion and anything like elevated poetry. Gone forever are the old translator's efforts to adopt the Ring as a national epic.

(Continued on page 142)
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The first name in high fidelity.
The singing is competent but, with one exception, rarely thrilling. The outstanding vocalist is easily Norman Bailey, whose solid and vibrant Wotan has real nobility and tragedy; he is the one performer who takes advantage of the fact that he is singing in his native language with "real" words full of emotional as well as literal meaning to intensify his interpretation. His appearance at the beginning of Act II creates an electricity entirely missing from the first act and even seems to galvanize the way of vital signs.

On the whole, the men fare better than the women. I liked Alberto Remedios, who, in spite of his name (and apparent Latin ancestry) was born in Liverpool. A lyric Siegmund's wounds are not worth Sieglinde's trouble) and "Who are you, say, who so stern and beauteous appear?" and "Fearful is the fate I'll pronounce." Like an over-restored picture, the patina of antique poesy and rhetoric has been removed, exposing the careful touch-up job underneath. This is the faithfulness that betrays the sad part is that, in this case, it really doesn't matter; you don't understand any of it anyway. A well-turned, singable phrase is just as incomprehensible as an awkward, misaccented one, for these performers, like those Anglican High Churchmen who mumble their ritual English to make it sound like Latin, sing everything to sound as much as possible like Old Norse—or possibly early Anglo-Saxon. Perhaps the slow tempos are intended to help comprehension, but the effect is exactly opposite: the singers have every opportunity to linger deliciously over endless, Brobdingnagian diphthongs that never existed in any language at all. Another effect of slow tempos is that the singers, believe it or not, are often impatiently pushing ahead of the beat. These problems are most severe in the excruciatingly slow first act; the last two acts show more in the way of vital signs.

In searching out a repertoire for the trumpet, Don Smithers has boldly availed himself of works originally written for harpsichord, organ, voice, and oboe. Considering that this was customary during the Renaissance and Baroque eras, purists should not indulge themselves in any twentieth-century qualms they might have about transcriptions. The proof of the pudding lies in the musical results, and here there is nothing to quibble about; Don Smithers is just fine both as a technician and as a musician. And the arrangements, relying heavily on organ accompaniment, are tasteful and effective. More important, Mr. Smithers brings them off so skillfully that they sound as though they were conceived for the remarkable variety of trumpets he tackles for this fine disc.
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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

Eric Salzman

It was on a damp, muggy evening in September 1955 that I first met Eric Salzman. While the more conventional graduate students at Princeton were putting on their black robes, stained with old food, preparing to hear grace said by the dean in the graduate commons, some of the rest of us of who couldn’t take all this neo-gothicety ate the same food in a small plain room nearby. From his air of urbane-ness and cultivation and his already remarkable feeling for the trends of cultural life, I could hardly have guessed that in those veins ran the blood of a grandfather who had been a song-and-dance man in the Yiddish theater. Of course, those were the middle Fifties, a time of Anglo- and Francophile, self-improvement, and cultural yearning for all of us. It is true that Eric had an uncanny knowledge of obscure eighteenth-century operas even then, but I put this down to a scholarly interest instead of its true source: the deadly attraction of the theater.

He spent a great deal of time imagining ways to revitalize the musical scene. In spite of his creative concerns, he was always tremendously involved with the general health and vitality of the cultural eco-

sphere—as if to say an artist cannot expect to flourish in a choked environment. This concern led eventually to his tenure as music critic on the New York Times, and afterwards on the Herald Tribune, where a steady stream of events leads to his contributions to this magazine. In the same way, his initiation of the New Image of Sound series at Hunter College, and perhaps the most important of all, the founding of the Free Music Store at WBAI-FM while he was music director there, show a consistent effort to agitate the musical masses and to create energy where there was entropy.

To a sensible person, this certainly ought to be enough, leaving the actor creatively and intellectually exhausted, as indeed it has in many cases. But actually Salzman’s main achievement is creative. A welter of works come from this time, of which these are only a sample: Foxes and Hedgehogs, The Nude Paper Sermon, Ecolog Feedback, Can Man Survive?, The Peloponnesian War, Lazarus, Larynx Music, In Praise of the Owl and the Cuckoo, Queens College, Wiretap, Buggopia. And then there are the music-theater works on which he and I have collaborated—The Conjurer, Stauf, and others yet unfinished—performed under such auspices as La Mama, New York Shakespeare Festival, the BBC, the New York Philharmonic’s and Pierre Boulez’s Perspective Ensembles, the Brooklyn Philharmonia under Lukas Foss, Nonesuch Records, Atlantic/Finnadar Records, and lots more.

This collaboration has extended itself into other areas, most notably a translation into English of Mozart’s Abduction from the Seraglio and a book on popular harmony called Making Changes: A Guide to Vernacular Harmony, which, even as you read these words, is being published by McGraw-Hill.

Opportunities for performances of chamber music are plentiful, if not lucrative, but music theater is another story. In 1970, in order to produce his own works as well as the works of others, Salzman founded Quoq Music Theater, an empati-

cally nonprofit company intermittently funded by the New York State Council on the Arts. From this time on, the creation of new lyric theater—a synthesis of opera and theater—has been his major preoccupation. Running Quoq Music Theater meant actually mounting theatrical works, and this has had an increasing effect on his music and writings, as can be seen from his recent articles and reviews.

Tolstoy says, in Anna Karenina, “Le-
nin fell ill, and was treated by the doctors, but recovered.” In a similar way, Salzman had a good education, but he survived it. Many snares lay in his way. For example, he wrote a history of contemporary music that became a widely used text, a terrible temptation to teach and to do even more responsible things we shudder to mention. Nevertheless, he held these temptations at bay and can be found today in Brooklyn Heights, a creator, director, and writer who is always learning and incorporating new things (and even old ones) and allowing himself to be transformed by them. —Michael Sahn

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3. The tape is lifted out from the cassette and guided across the heads by a stabilizing pin in the deck itself — just as in reel-to-reel.

Result: lowest wow and flutter, superior tape/head alignment, even better frequency response. (See diagram).

4. All-new tape formulation with thicker oxide coating and thicker polyester for highest quality sound.
5. Automatic tape formulation adjustment. Small holes encoded on the cassette case “tell” the Elcaset deck what type of tape is being used (SLH, FeCr). The Elcaset then automatically adjusts both bias and EQ for optimum performance.

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* Actual Size

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