How to Keep Radio-frequency Interference Out of Your Audio
Chamber Music for Beginners • The Beach Boys Eleven Years On

HIRSCH-HOUCK LABS' EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS ON: Aiwa AD-6500 Cassette Deck • Dynaco 300 Power Amplifier • Scott R336 AM/FM Stereo Receiver • Superex TRL-77 Stereo Headphone

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MUSIC OUT OF A LITTLE THING LIKE THIS?
A BEAUTIFUL BIG THING LIKE THIS.

The recording tape in a cassette is only an eighth of an inch wide. Crammed into that eighth of an inch may be as many as 64 original tracks mixed down to 2-channel stereo. Countless overdubbed things. Not to mention the entire audible frequency range.

Any cassette deck can reproduce part of what's been put down on that eighth of an inch. The Pioneer 9191 was designed to reproduce all of it. Superlatively. Without dropouts, unacceptable tape hiss, or noticeable wow and flutter.

Take our tape transport system. Since the tape in a cassette moves at only 1 7/8 inches per second, even the most minute variation in tape speed will make a major variation in sound. To guard against this, the Pioneer 9191 comes with two. The first is used only for fast forward and rewind, so the second can be designed exclusively for maintaining a constant speed for play and record.

All of our tape drive components—the capstan, belt, and flywheel—are finished to incredible tolerances. Which gives the 9191 the kind of flutter figures that no deck in its price range can match.

Of course, having a great tape transport system means nothing if you don't have great electronics to back it up. We do.

The 9191 comes with an advanced three-staged direct coupled amplifier that extends high frequency response and minimizes distortion. The built-in Dolby system reduces tape hiss by as much as 10 decibels in high frequencies. Our multiplex filter lets you record FM broadcasts without picking up a lot of unwanted noise, or the multiplex signal every FM stereo station sends out. Even our ferrite solid tape head offers the best combination of accuracy and long life you can get in a cassette head.

There's also a peak limiter that lets you cram as much onto a cassette as possible without distortion. Large VU meters and a peak indicator light that lets you know if you do begin to oversaturate the tape and distort. Plus separate bias and equalization switches that let you get the most out of different brands of tape. And an automatic CrO₂ selector.

If all this isn't enough, you'll find that the 9191 comes with a memory that lets you go back to a favorite spot on the tape automatically. And electronic solenoid controls for going from play to record, or from record to fast forward, without hitting the stop button, and without jamming the tape.

There's also the convenience of front loading. A door over the cassette compartment to help keep the tape heads clean. And a light behind the cassette that tells you where you are on the tape.

Go slip a cassette into a Pioneer 9191 at your local Pioneer dealer. You'll find it hard to believe such a little thing could come out sounding so big.

**Specifications:**
- Frequency Response: Standard, LH tape: 25-16,000 Hz (35-15,000 Hz over 5kHz); CH tape: 20-17,000 Hz (30-14,000 Hz ±.3dB)
- Signal-to-Noise Ratio: Dolby OFF: More than 55dB; Dolby ON: More than 62dB (Over 5,000 Hz Standard and LH Tapes; When Ambient Noise is used, Signal-to-Noise Ratio is further improved by 4.5dB over 5kHz)
- Harmonic Distortion: No more than 1.3% (CH tape)
- Wow and Flutter: No more than 0.07% (VRMS)
- Motor: Electronically controlled DC motor (built in generator 12Vdc, 8cm/s spaced drive) DC torque motor (Fast forward and rewind drive)
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.

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

Two, you get better separation. The small, hollow iron armature we use allows for a tighter fit in its positioning among the poles. So, even the most minute movement is accurately reproduced to give you the space and depth of the original recording.

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

The end result is great listening. Audition 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'll agree that, for the money, you can't do better than Empire.

Empire Scientific Corp. Garden City, New York 11530

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CIRCLE NO. 21 ON READER SERVICE CARD
NEW PRODUCTS
Roundup of latest audio equipment and accessories

AUDIO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Advice on readers' technical problems

AUDIO BASICS
The Trouble with Dynamics

TAPE TALK
Theoretical and practical tape problems solved

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS
Hirsch-Houck Laboratory test results on the Aiwa AD-6500 cassette deck, Scott R535 AM/FM stereo receiver, Super TRL-77 stereo headphone, and Dynaco 300 power amplifier

RADIO-FREQUENCY INTERFERENCE
For now, the solution lies (largely) in your own hands

THE BEACH BOYS: ELEVEN YEARS ON
"...nary a rock star who isn't pushing thirty"

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CHAMBER MUSIC
"I never met a music lover who didn't like chamber music"

BEST RECORDINGS OF THE MONTH
Symphonic: Elgar's Second Symphony, Sir Adrian Boult conducting
Instrumental: David Munrow's "Music of the Gothic Era" and Antal Dorati's Haydn Minuets
Vocal: Emmylou Harris' "Luxury Liner" and Teddy King's "Lovers & Losers"

THE OPERA FILE
WILLIAM LIVINGSTONE

THE POP BEAT
PAULETTE WEISS

GOING ON RECORD
JAMES GOODFRIEND

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

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EXECUTIVE MUSIC

LONG, long ago and far, far away, in the days of kings, emperors, and other awful majesties, political theorists who thought they knew more about ruling than their rulers did invented a whole “how to” literature on the subject. Some of these books had an expressly moral intent (the sixteenth-century collection of cautionary tales called A Mirror for Magistrates, for example), while others were concerned with such practical matters as the getting of power, holding onto it, and wielding it in the interim (Niccolò Machiavelli’s strange mixture of cynicism and idealism in The Prince). Things haven’t really changed much since then. Our thoroughly modern, morally enlightened political thinkers may temporarily see themselves more as guardians of civic virtue than as mere chroniclers of the deployment of political power, but both Tales from the Watergate and The Making of a President have an oddly familiar ring to them.

Magistrates, princes, and presidents are certainly under closer scrutiny today than in times past, with scarcely a place to hide from the intrusive thrust of the microphone. But as long as a smile can be worth a paragraph, a frown a column of commentary in the game of, say, President Watching, there is not likely to be any letup. Just as in more conventional espionage, a few small, apparently unrelated details can add up to a revelation—such as the discovery that we have in Jimmy Carter a musical President, a fact somehow kept from us during the recent campaign. The Washington press corps has since put together a picture of a man who loves chamber music and opera, dotes on Mozart and Wagner, and has made good, steady use of the library of 2,000 recordings presented to the White House by the Recording Industry Association of America in 1973. Is such a man, conjecture runs, likely to ignore the needs of the arts—particularly music—in his political decisions?

That remains to be seen, but we know for now that the President understands the uses of music—appropriate music—in his new residence (White House Watching is a subdivision of President Watching). The musical program for the occasion of the March visit of British Prime Minister James Callaghan and his wife was a model of its kind: short, sweet, and domestic. The President himself, in a brief introduction, pointed out that though the music was designed for the simple pleasures of family performance, the highest sort of artistry would not be wasted on it. ( Experienced Washington reporters would no doubt have put a little tick right there beside the word “family,” for it is a note the President has already struck fairly often in his short tenure, and one of these days it will surely turn out to Mean Something.)

Tenor Robert White opened the program with a group of turn-of-the-century sentimental songs drawn from his recent RCA album (ARLI-1698): When You and I Were Young Maggie; Sylvia; Little Boy Blue; May-Day Carol; and A Perfect Day. Mezzo-soprano Jan De Gaetani followed, singing Stephen Foster songs from her two Nonesuch albums (H-71268 and H-71333): Linger in Blissful Repose, an excellent example of Foster’s contemplative style; the comic If You’ve Only Got a Moustache; Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair; Little Jenny Dow, very likely addressed affectionately by the composer to his daughter (though his family life was an unhappy economic melodrama, the stuff of soap opera); Ah! May the Red Rose Live Aways, for me perhaps the deepest note Foster ever struck; and the upbeat Some Folks. Miss De Gaetani’s encore was appropriately—Hard Times Come Again No More; Mr. White’s was the traditional Welsh song All Through the Night, with the first verse ably sung in Welsh to flatter the distinguished visitors. Accompanists Samuel Sanders and Gilbert Kish struck new and marvelous chords of sound out of the piano, the same 1850 Chickering used in Miss De Gaetani’s Foster discs. If its dulcet plunk was more appropriate to the Foster than to the somewhat younger sentimental songs, it also served to unify the program, helping to make it, in the President’s own capsule review, “just about perfect.” He went on to liken the experience to walking into a peanut field right after a rain. And that is a line I won’t even try stepping on.
Our flywheel is larger than regular flywheels for a 0.08% wow and flutter.

Our flywheel is larger than regular flywheels for a 0.08% wow and flutter.

Variable pitch control to smooth out speed variations in playback.

Variable pitch control to smooth out speed variations in playback.

Heat compressed super ferrite head for frequency response of 30-16,000 Hz and S/N of 62 dB with Co5 tape.

Heat compressed super ferrite head for frequency response of 30-16,000 Hz and S/N of 62 dB with Co5 tape.

Switchable VU and Peak meters for better recordings.

Switchable VU and Peak meters for better recordings.

MIC/LINE mixing to mix live mic with tape or record source.

L - MIC - R  RECORD  ▶  L - LINE - R

L - MIC - R  RECORD  ▶  L - LINE - R

The KX-920 With cue, review and memory rewind.

The KX-920 With cue, review and memory rewind.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT.

Some of the above features and performance specs are found in other cassette decks. But those decks cost a lot more than ours.

Now, the new Kenwood KX-920 costs less than $300, but don't let that deceive you.

Because the KX-920 is our top-of-the-line. And the way we look at it, every top-of-the-line should have these features and the KX-920's performance.

The only option you should even think about is tape.

Suggested resale price. Actual prices are established by Kenwood dealers.

KENWOOD

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CIRCLE NO. 19 ON READER SERVICE CARD
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

More RFI

- Let me add yet another letter in response to Ralph Hodges' January column, "The Greater Good."

Yes, the RFI problem is severe and will become worse with more and more radio transmitters on the air and more and more receiving devices being put into service. Having been a ham operator for the past thirteen years, I am no stranger to this type of interference. Indeed, we hams—by virtue of our having had the only large antennas in the neighborhood (until the CB boom)—were often blamed for any type of interference, whether we were causing it or not. Since we are authorized to use up to 1,000 watts (2,000 SSB), we are, in fact, frequently the cause of some interference. (Notice I did not say "to blame," just the cause.) It is entirely possible for a properly operating transmitter to cause interference to a properly operating receiver. However, until and unless we want more governmental regulation, a spirit of cooperation must be developed among the operators of transmitting equipment, the users of receiving equipment, and the manufacturers of both types of gear.

First of all, the owner of the transmitter should make sure his equipment is operating properly. He should have a good ground installed and should purchase a good low-pass filter (for operation on 30 MHz and below). And the owner of the receiving equipment should not be so ready to blame "the other guy." It is quite possible that the problem is in his set.

Also, let us not ignore other sources of noise pollution—electric motors, fish-tank heaters, power lines, heating pads, electric blankets, etc., which also need simple noise-reducing devices installed by responsible manufacturers. While this type of interference rarely causes problems for FM, tape, and phonograph systems, it can be extremely irritating and troublesome to AM listeners, hams, and CB'ers.

Readers with noise/interference problems might be interested in the names and addresses of thirty-nine manufacturers on an "RFI Assistance List," published in the February 1977 QST by the American Radio Relay League. This list includes names, addresses, and telephone numbers of thirty-nine manufacturers, along with a brief description of the help one can expect from each. It may be obtained by writing to ARRL, 225 Main Street, Newington, Conn. 06111.

Finally, let me say that I believe this problem to be very serious and one that will be growing worse in the near future. If we wish to avoid tight governmental regulations, which might place restrictions on those using transmitting equipment and add to the cost of audio gear, the time for voluntary action and cooperation is now.

Mark Klocksin Phoenix, Ariz.

(For more on the RFI problem, see page 56)

Basic Repertoire

- Your comment in the January issue about Martin Bookspan's feature ('How 'basic' can a list 180-odd items long be?') is certainly true. It must have been very difficult in the latter stages for Mr. Bookspan to come up with more additions to the list. However, I want to confess that I enjoyed Mr. Bookspan's column from its inception in the November 1958 issue. As one truly ignorant of musical information, I profited much from his monthly information, I profited much from his monthly effort to elucidate the wealth of music and recordings of it.

It is good news that you intend to continue Mr. Freed's annual updates of the Basic Repertoire, and your indication of new directions you intend to take in this field, such as Mr. Kolodin's proposed look at chamber music, sounds interesting.


Richard Freed's 1977 updating of the Basic Repertoire is just off the presses. See the ad on page 90 for information on how to secure your copy.

Bicentennial Puzzle

- In the December 1976 issue Stereo Review paid one last tribute to the Bicentennial year by featuring author Sharon Warner's decoupage of popular musicians. We offered the Stereo Review Test Record Model SR 12 to the top ten contestants who came closest to naming the seventy-six faces in the découpage. Ms. Warner was herself able to identify seventy-three of them; in alphabetical order, they are:


We were pleased with the number of responses we received and especially pleased with the results: everybody followed "the rules," whether he/she identified forty-six or zero. So, thanks to those who tried, and congratulations to the winners, who were, in order of the highest number of correct answers:

- David W. LeVan, Stamford, Conn. (46), Janet Y. Jackson, Stamford, Conn. (46), Janet Y. Jackson, Stamford, Conn. (46), Janet Y. Jackson, Stamford, Conn. (46), Janet Y. Jackson, Stamford, Conn. (46)

- (For more on the RFI problem, see page 56)

Disc Quality

- It's soapbox time! In his February column the Editor gave some rather pallid suggestions for dealing with the atrocious state of disc quality. There was one glaring omission from his list (undoubtedly due to the politics involved): a consumer boycott. I propose a month-long moratorium on record purchases. The drive might be spearheaded by the creation of an organization under a name such as D.U.S.T.—Disciples United against Surface Trash. Perhaps even more effective will be to apply to retail and mail-order outlets as well as to the record companies will bring some results that have not been achieved by mere individual complaints.

In my experience all major companies are at fault. Record buyers no longer have a refuge even in foreign pressings, and the impending rises in list prices just add insult to injury. Government regulation may be the answer. But first let's see if we can get voluntary, if grudging, compliance with our request for action. We have to get the record companies literally to clean up their act. Disciples, unite!

Michael S. Flynn Leland, Miss.

The Editor replies: I haven't quite made up my mind which of today's common cries—"ripoff!" or "boycott!"—is more inimical to me. (Continued on page 10)
As far back as 1945, Ortofon was making the cutterheads used throughout the world to cut the grooves in master phonograph records. But the phono playback cartridges then available could not put our cutterheads to the test for sensitivity and capacity. So we made our first phono cartridge. For us.

Since then our cutterheads have moved ahead—with a quality we couldn’t even imagine in 1945. So have our phono cartridges.

The new MC20 moving coil phono cartridge is the best we’ve ever made. We believe it is the finest available for professional or home use.

The new MC20 moving coil phono cartridge is the best we’ve ever made. We believe it is the finest available for professional or home use.

The MC20 has the lowest stylus tip mass ever attained on a phono cartridge. A flawless, fine line diamond stylus is fixed directly (without the usual sleeve) to a stepped, low mass cantilever. Beryllium filling enables the cantilever to attain rigidity despite its minute dimensions. The moving coils are wound with wire one-fifth the thickness of a human hair.

The moving coil principle, with its low inertial mass, wider frequency response, low distortion as well as low tracking force, has clearly established its sonic superiority over any other phono cartridge system. Our new pre-preamplifier, the MCA-76, is also available to process the signal of the MC20 or any other moving coil cartridge. The MCA-76 features low-noise circuitry, a subsonic filter and a by-pass switch which accommodates all magnetic cartridges.

We’ll be pleased to forward data on the entire Ortofon line. We suggest that you write to us directly. Ortofon, Dept. A, 122 Dupont Street, Plainview, New York 11803.
The luxury a difference:

Sansui's new 9090DB top-of-the-line receiver adds Dolby to its other luxury credentials — big power, an extremely fine tuner section and great versatility. The Dolby circuitry will not only decode Dolby FM broadcasts: it can also encode and decode tape recordings for reduced noise and hiss.

And, of course, with the Sansui 9090DB you can creatively determine just how you like your music. In addition to bass and treble controls, with turnover selectors for 150 Hz/300 Hz and 1.5 kHz/3 kHz respectively.

The Sansui 9090DB.

**AUDIO SECTION**

**POWER OUTPUT**
125 watts per channel, min. RMS, both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.1% total harmonic distortion.

**FM SECTION**

**FM SENSITIVITY**
9.6 dBf (17µV)

**SELECTIVITY**
better than 85 dB

**SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO**
better than 70 dB

**SPURIOUS RESPONSE REJECTION**
better than 85 dB

* Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories Inc.
Simulated woodgrain cabinet

SANSUI ELECTRONICS CORP.
Woodside, New York 11377 • Gardena, California 90247

SANSUI ELECTRIC CO., LTD., Tokyo, Japan • SANSUI AUDIO EUROPE S.A., Antwerp, Belgium • in Canada: Electronic Distributors

CIRCLE NO. 34 ON READER SERVICE CARD
receiver with Dolby.*

there is also a midrange control. High and low filters. A tone defeat for bass and treble. A loudness switch and 20 dB audio muting switch. For added creative freedom, two tape monitors and a mic mixing circuit with separate level control. Two tuning meters, as well as twin power meters that also serve for Dolby tone calibration.

Listen to the 9090DB. Handle its superbly smooth controls. See how they respond to your slightest command. We know you will fall in love with Sansui.
rational discussion since both assume that all the evidence is in. The trouble with boycotts is that (1) they're illegal, and you'll get it in the neck (or somewhere else even more tender) if it can be proved you started one; and (2) they assume that the right is all on one side. I think that is hardly true in the present case. To claim that the whole of the American record industry is engaged in a vast plot to mutilate the public is not the kind of idea to engage the minds of reasonable men, though it may be attractive to the other kind. Once more, with feeling:

The combination of inter-company competition and public resistance to higher prices (records are not a necessity) has been responsible for keeping the price of records from rising as fast as the cost of producing them, of everything else over the past two decades. Domestically produced classical records—mono, of course—cost $4.98 twenty years ago and, up until a couple of months ago, stereo discs were still only $6.98—that's an increase of 40 per cent. Contrast that with what has happened to the 25c for a 78, rising to $1.25 these days, or up 400 per cent; the New York subway fare, up from 10c to 50c (400 per cent), or, more realistically, a top orchestra seat at the Metropolitan Opera: $8.50 in 1957 and $30 next season (up better than 250 per cent). Readers might try supplying some other figures for salaries, rents, bread, and the like from their own experience. In terms of actual dollar buying power, records are therefore cheaper than they were twenty years ago.

Record companies were hardly immune to increasing prices over the years; they had to pay salaries, buy raw materials, and ante up to Uncle Sam just like the rest of us. How did they manage on only 40 per cent? By cutting corners on costs (read quality), by making less on each recorded song but selling one helluva lot more records in the aggregate (the rising curve of record sales since the introduction of stereo in 1958 has to be seen to be believed). They found in the process that quality was, for the mass market they had discovered, something less than crucial. This meant that records could be made thinner, more of them could be pressed from a given stamper, costly inspection procedures could be "streamlined," the number of rejects cut down, pressing cycles (time is money) could be shortened, production lines stepped up, and Lord knows what else.

But nothing is forever, and it is extremely likely that things will get back to "normal" in the industry again as the "baby-boom" buyers respond to the electrifying sales totals of recent years get married and start to buy diapers instead of discs. When this happens, the record industry will have to trim its sails (as will every other "youth" industry) and discover new ways of dealing with a different kind of market. I have suggested that that way might be to permit prices to rise to a level somewhat approaching those long since attained by everything else, and to play for the increased income back into improving quality. The record buyers of the future will not only be fewer but more particular, more likely to practice informal, individual "boycotts" if quality is not to their liking. Smart record companies ought to be taking the first steps to deal with this right now.

One solution to the disc quality problem (Editorially Speaking, March 1977) would be immediately possible. The U.S. record companies could license Philips to do the disc manufacturing. U.S. companies already license each others' and independent record clubs to manufacture their products, so why not let Philips manufacture our classical discs?

Thomas E. Dimock
Ventura, Calif.

In his March column the Editor has set himself up as an apologist for the record industry and its poor-quality pressings when he implies that nothing can be done about such poor pressings because "higher quality will mean higher prices for records." It is true that higher-quality pressings cost more, then how can he explain the change in quality of records on the ECM label manufactured in the United States by Polydor? Until early in 1976, Polydor/ECM's were notorious for being some of the most off-center, crackle- and glitch-prone records anywhere. Due to the concern about the problem on the part of ECM's audience, and probably most of all on the part of Manfred Eicher, founder of ECM, Polydor brought its pressing standards up to the point where they are now among the best pressings produced in this country, and the price remains completely competitive with other American-made records.

Keith Barefoot
Santa Monica, Calif.

The Editor replies: Mr. Barefoot nicely proves my point. Polydor (ECM) does not own the American plant (Columbia's) that does its pressing, but is its customer just like the rest of us. Its pressings improved because it was able to bring pressure upon its supplier, presumably by threatening to go elsewhere (there are lots of independent pressing plants in the U.S.). In other words, it complained and was listened to.

The combination of inter-company competition and public resistance to higher prices (records are not a necessity) has been responsible for keeping the price of records from rising as fast as the cost of producing them, of everything else over the past two decades. Domestically produced classical records—mono, of course—cost $4.98 twenty years ago and, up until a couple of months ago, stereo discs were still only $6.98—that's an increase of 40 per cent. Contrast that with what has happened to the 25c for a 78, rising to $1.25 these days, or up 400 per cent; the New York subway fare, up from 10c to 50c (400 per cent), or, more realistically, a top orchestra seat at the Metropolitan Opera: $8.50 in 1957 and $30 next season (up better than 250 per cent). Readers might try supplying some other figures for salaries, rents, bread, and the like from their own experience. In terms of actual dollar buying power, records are therefore cheaper than they were twenty years ago.

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Laverne and Shirley

I was amused at Peter Reilly's review of Penny Marshall and Cindy Williams' album, "Laverne & Shirley Sing," in March, but I was also rather disappointed at the overly serious manner in which Mr. Reilly criticized the album. Misses Marshall and Williams, admittedly, may not be the best singers in the world, but I do not think that either the performers or the records' producers ever intended the album to be anything other than a novelty act. The next time an album like this comes along, I would recommend that STEREO REVIEW's critics avoid seeing it as an attempt to pass off the artists involved as serious singers.

Allen Jones
Port Arthur, Tex.

Well, maybe, but our reviewers do tend to feel that making a record is a Very Serious Matter.

Mickey Duck

Craig Stark, on page 83 of March STEREO REVIEW, has made a serious error that will set acoustical terminology and standardization back a generation. He describes the quantitative shift in frequency when playing back a speech tape at a speed higher than recorded as "Mickey Mouse effect." He is actually describing the well-documented "Donald Duck effect," the parameters of which have only been delineated in the psychophysics literature. "Mickey Mouse," in contrast, is a qualitative, dimensionless phenomenon of more concern to the serious music critic than to the serious acoustician.

Daniel Queen
Chicago, Ill.

Sorry—somehow it just squeaked by us.

Simels

I see that Steve Simels has gone on to the "fresh pastures" of TV writing. Sing praises! The boy has found himself!

Jack Stacy Booze
Kinston, N.C.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**FREQUENCY RESPONSE**

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

**TONE BURSTS**

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

**TOTAL HARMONIC DISTORTION**

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

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

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

For further information and name of your nearest authorized Spectrum Dealer, write to: Jensen Sound Laboratories, Dept. SR-57 4136 United Parkway, Schiller Park, Illinois 60176.
Clean Sound’s Handsome New Record Cleaner

The Clean Sound record-cleaning system from Recoton consists of a proprietary fluid and a handsomely styled applicator pad. The applicator is constructed of two half cylinders of clear styrene held together by chromed aluminum clips. One of the halves is wrapped in a padded plush-pile fabric, and it is this (treated, if desired, with a small amount of the Clean Sound fluid) that contacts the record surface. An untreated portion of the pad is then used to dry and buff the record.

The Clean Sound system is priced at $15. Refill bottles of fluid are available, as well as replacement pads for the applicator.

Circle 115 on reader service card

Time-synchronized Speaker System From Ultralinear

The Ultralinear ST550 has two driver mounting surfaces, one of which holds the mid-range and tweeter and is set back relative to the woofer panel to equalize the sound-propagation times for different frequencies. In addition, the crossover network has been designed to correct phase anomalies in the drivers’ outputs. The ST550’s driver complement consists of a 12-inch woofer, 2-inch dome mid-range, and 1-inch dome tweeter. Output-level controls for all three drivers are provided beneath the system’s removable grille. The woofer enclosure, nominally sealed, is fitted with aluminum plates that block a pair of circular ducted ports. When either or both of these are removed, the system becomes a ported design with somewhat boosted output at the lower frequencies.

Frequency response of the ST550 is rated as 27 to 22,000 Hz. For its 8-ohm impedance, minimum recommended amplifier power is 20 watts per channel continuous, and maximum is 100 watts continuous. Crossover frequencies are 700 and 4,300 Hz. The system measures 34½ x 17¾ x 17 inches. Three finishes are offered: walnut-grain plastic and oak or walnut veneers. The grille, fashioned of acoustically transparent cloth, is available in black or brown. Approximate price: $390.

Circle 116 on reader service card

Thorens “Isotrack” Turntables Feature New Tone Arm

The TD-126C, the new leader of the Thorens turntable line, has a low-mass tone arm that is also available on the Models TD-145C, TD-160C, and (in a slightly modified form) the TD-166C. The arm achieves low effective mass with a straight tubular shaft, a lightweight headshell, and what Thorens calls a “plug-in arm” design. Instead of a detachable headshell, Thorens provides a detachable arm shaft, thus locating the mass of the bayonet connector and locking collar much closer to the pivot assembly than would otherwise be possible. The TD-126C’s arm has stylus force applied by a calibrated spring, a magnetic anti-skating system calibrated for elliptical and spherical stylus and for wet or dry record playing, plus electronic cueing and motion sensing that automatically raises the arm when any physical shock disturbs its playing.

The turntable itself is a three-speed (33⅓, 45, and 78 rpm) belt-drive mechanism with electronic speed control. Speeds can be fine-tuned over a 12 per cent range; an illuminated stroboscope indicates on-speed operation. Wow and flutter are less than 0.04 per cent, and unweighted rumble is -50 dB. Effective tone-arm mass is 7.5 grams. The turntable can be operated manually, with automatic arm lift at the end of a record or with automatic arm lift and motor shut-off. With the base and dust cover supplied, the TD-126C measures about 20 x 15½ x 6¼ inches. Price: $625. The same turntable without tone arm is offered as the Model TD-126BC.

Circle 117 on reader service card

Sherwood’s FM-only “Computer” Tuner

The heart of the Sherwood Micro/CPU FM-only tuner is a microprocessor—a “mini-computer” with memory—that performs all tuning functions and also operates three tuning displays. The first display is a digital readout of station frequency; the second is a digital readout of station call letters (programmed by the user from the alphabet stored within the tuner’s memory); the third is a dial scale with—instead of a pointer—a string of LED’s spaced at one-megahertz intervals to provide an idea of a station’s location within the FM band.

The Sherwood Micro/CPU 100 uses a frequency-synthesizing device with tuning that is totally non-mechanical. Its principal tuning modes are manual (via a conventional tuning knob that operates a photoelectric system) and auto-scan, which advances station by station up or down the FM band, locking onto each station until the touch of a contact switch commands it to move on. There is also a four-station memory that will tune to any pre-programmed broadcast channel on demand.

The tuner has a usable sensitivity of 1.7 microvolts and a 50-dB quieting sensitivity of 2.1 microvolts. The user is offered a switch-selectable choice of i.f. bandwidths: normal (for maximum selectivity) and wide (for minimum distortion and best stereo separation). For these two conditions, alternate-channel selectivities are 80 and 18 dB, respectively, and harmonic distortion is 0.1 and 0.07 per cent. Separation is 45 dB in the normal mode at mid frequencies, improving to 50 dB in wide. Capture ratios are 1 dB (normal) and 0.5 dB (wide). Image and spurious-response rejection are both 130 dB, and i.f. rejection exceeds 120 dB. Frequency response is 20 to 15,600 Hz ±0.5 dB. The Micro/CPU’s tuning accuracy is within 0.0024 per cent.

(Continued on page 17)
Turn on to Spring.

At your Ford Dealers now.

Colorful, exciting, lively new wheels and great Spring Deals.
Granada Sports Coupe

Mustang II Cobra

F-100 Ranger with Free-Wheeling Option

Customized Courier (Aftermarket options shown)

LTD II Brougham

Mustang II 2+2 with Rallye Appearance Package

F-250 4x4 Ranger XLT

LTD II with Sports Touring Package

Thunderbird Town Landau

Pinto with Rallye Appearance Package

F-100 Custom Flareside
Spring Wheels

Look them over!

New action-stripe Pintos, sassy sweet-handling Mustang II’s, tricked up trucks and fancy vans. Thunderbirds and LTD II’s in new spring colors. Even a new sportier Granada.

See your Ford Dealer. Turn on to his Spring Wheels and great Spring Deals.

Turn the page for more.
Spring Price News.
See the lowest base sticker prices of the year on Pinto, Mustang II, Maverick and Granada. Inexpensive options like Pinto's all-glass 3rd door, sticker priced at $12.00 and a Flip-Up Open Air Roof for Mustang or Pinto at $145.00. And right now, during your Ford Dealers Limited Edition Sale, get special features, special prices* on '77 Ford Cars and Trucks.

*Based on a comparison of traditional sticker pricing of options purchased separately and as a package.
Subsidiary controls of the Micro/CPU 100 are concealed behind a swing-away panel below the dial area. They include variable interstation-noise muting, high-frequency blend for stereo noise reduction, switchable deemphasis (75, 50, and 25 microseconds), and an output-level control. The tuner has signal-strength and multipath meters. The Micro/CPU 100 measures about 20 x 6½ x 15 inches. Price: approximately $2,000.

Circle 118 on reader service card

Containers for Cassette Storage

Bundy Crafts is the manufacturer of two cassette storage racks, the Model 15 and Model 25, whose names designate their capacity. Cassettes are held upright, spines exposed, in clear plastic spacing slots. The racks can be stacked like shelves or wall mounted by means of pre-drilled screw holes. Prices: Model 15, $9.98; Model 25, $14.98.

Circle 119 on reader service card

Visible Audio

Atari's "Video Music" is a component-styled module that produces a variety of abstract colors, shapes, and patterns on the screen of a television set, altering the display according to the rhythmic content of music played through an audio system. It connects to the VHF antenna terminals of a TV receiver via a switch box supplied, and to the left and right tape- or preamplifier-output jacks of an amplifier or receiver through a shielded cable with phono-plug connectors.

The unit generates variations on three basic shapes, called solid, hole, and ring. The user can select by pushbuttons a single shape or employ an automatic mode that causes the device to alternate among all three. Randomly controls change the size of the pattern, the number of shapes it contains, the outline "envelope," and the values and distribution of colors (when a color TV receiver is used). Pushbuttons select the rate at which the pattern changes. The Video Music module has an input impedance of 47,000 ohms and will accept inputs up to 10 volts peak. Dimensions are 14½ x 4 x 8½ inches. Price: about $180.

Circle 120 on reader service card

Nakamichi's New Tuner-preamplifier

The latest product introductions from Nakamichi include a combined stereo preamplifier/FM tuner, the Model 630. The unit's circular tuning dial is calibrated linearly with ten divisions per megahertz, and it is rotated (by means of reduction gearing) by a central knob. The tuning aids consist of five front-panel lights, three of which serve as channel-center indicators; the other two are labeled SIGNAL and STEREO. User-selectable i.f. bandwidth (WIDE and NARROW) is provided, as well as switchable interstation-noise muting and built-in Dolby noise-reduction circuits (with the appropriate 25-microsecond deemphasis for Dolbyized broadcasts).

The Nakamichi 630 also has inputs for phono, auxiliary, and full tape monitoring and dubbing facilities for two tape decks. Major preamplifier controls are volume, balance, bass, treble, and variable loudness compensation. Signal-to-noise ratios (A-weighted) are better than 80 dB for phono (referred to a 1-millivolt input) and 102 dB for high-level inputs. Distortion is generally under 0.003 per cent. The preamplifier has a maximum output of 5 volts into 50,000 ohms or 300 milliwatts into 8 ohms (+via the front-panel headphone jack). The tuner section has a usable sensitivity of 1.5 microvolts, a capture ratio of 1 dB, AM suppression exceeding 60 dB, and image, i.f., and spurious-response rejection all greater than 100 dB. Alternate-channel selectivity exceeds 90 dB in the narrow-bandwidth mode and 45 dB in the wide mode. Corresponding figures for mid-range stereo separation are 30 and 55 dB. Ultimate signal-to-noise ratio is more than 65 dB without the Dolby circuits. The Model 630 is constructed on Nakamichi's wedge-shaped chassis, suitable for shelf or rack mounting. It measures approximately 16 x 6¼ x 9½ inches. Suggested price: $600.

Circle 121 on reader service card

European Styling and Automatic Features On B&O Receiver

The Beomaster 1900 FM-only receiver from Bang & Olufsen in Denmark has a European look. Its gently slanted top serves as a control panel, with many of the controls normally concealed beneath a hinged aluminum plate. Lighted indicators show the positions of the concealed bass, treble, and balance controls. The volume control (not concealed) is fully electronic, with two switches that increase or decrease the listening level gradually when they are merely touched. In addition, the 1900 has three volume presets that determine what the volume level will be when the receiver is first turned on. There are also five presets for FM stations, the fifth consisting of the receiver's main tuning mechanism (normally concealed). These presets, along with the phono and tape inputs, are all selected by electronic touch switches.

Power output for the Model 1900 is 20 watts per channel continuous (8 ohms, 20 to 20,000 Hz), with less than 0.2 per cent harmonic distortion and 0.15 per cent intermodulation distortion. Usable FM sensitivity is 19.2 dB in mono and 24.4 dB in stereo; corresponding figures for 50-dB quieting sensitivity are 20.5 and 28.9 dB. The capture ratio is 4.5 dB, AM suppression is 50 dB, and spurious-response rejection is 87 dB. The FM frequency response is 20 to 15,000 Hz ±1.5 dB. Signal-to-noise ratios exceed 50 dB (phono inputs) and 65 dB (tape inputs). The Model 1900 measures 24⅛ x 2¼ x 9⅜ inches. Price: $495.

Circle 122 on reader service card

(Continued on page 18)
"If I just wanted to listen to music, I’d go to a concert."

"I want to lead the band. I want to build my own albums."
"I want to get my hands on the music."

You're talking TEAC open reel. From the time you decide to edit, resequence and build your own albums until you finish your home studio, you're talking TEAC open reel.

Why TEAC?

Better specs. Not more bells and whistles and gingerbread. Performance you can hear. Specs we can prove:

We can print a signal at plus six and still meet spec. (A cheapy will lose definition and distort.)
We hold and define a piano and violin with a sustained Middle C. (On Brand X, Y and Z, the tone will wander away.)
When the tape transport moves or shifts or reverses, TEAC has a nice, clean, solid "thunk" that tells you the tape transport is there to stay. (Some TEAC look-alikes give off a hollow, plastic complaint when they're asked to do anything.)

And we'll perform to specs a year or two from now. Not just pull tape. Perform to specs.

Do you know who buys one out of every three new TEAC systems? People who own old TEAC systems. We've been making tape systems for twenty five years, and we really know how.

It's just a matter of time. The more you know about tape, the more you'll know about TEAC.

*Actual resale prices are determined individually and at the sole discretion of authorized TEAC dealers.
Tape Talk

By Craig Stark

Dolby Adjustments

Q. Some cassette decks provide Dolby calibration controls that allow the user to adjust his Dolby system when he changes tape brands, while others don't. Is this a real advantage or just a case of knobs for the sake of knobs?

R. White
Ames, Iowa

A. The appearance, disappearance, and reappearance of Dolby controls on consumer cassette decks obviously reflects mixed feelings on the part of manufacturers. On the one hand, optimizing the adjustments for any electronic device will make it operate better, but sad experience has convinced many manufacturers that consumer controls on home Dolby recorders will cause more of them to become misadjusted than optimized.

To put the matter in a practical perspective, when I recently tested some thirty-one brands of tapes, I found a variation in their basic low- to mid-frequency output (400 Hz) of 4 dB, though the vast majority were within ±1 dB of each other. At the high-frequency end there were differences of up to 10 dB at 10,000 Hz (growing larger at still higher frequencies). Among conventional ferric-oxide and CrO₂ cassettes, however, I could not find a consistent relationship between the high-frequency and the low-frequency differences. This is important because, when a Dolby system is adjusted, the reference is a low- to mid-frequency (333 Hz) tone on a level-calibrating tape, whereas any frequency-response errors that arise in decoding are most serious in the high frequencies, where the Dolby action is concentrated. For conventional oxides, then, optimizing the Dolby settings makes sense only if you're not in a position to make a full frequency-response check.

X-Ray Damage?

Q. Does radiation from a color television set affect prerecorded tapes, and if so, how far away should they be stored?

M. M. Mintz
Paramus, N.J.

A. Some years ago, the question of X-ray damage to recorded tapes was rather thoroughly investigated—by Memorex, if memory serves—in connection with problems that might arise in very high-flying aircraft. Radiation levels far in excess of any encountered either in the upper atmosphere or in the vicinity of misbehaving color TV sets were tested, and no damage either to the recorded material or to the tape itself was found.

On the other hand, many color sets contain degaussing coils that are activated each time the set is turned on. While I haven't measured the field strength of these demagnetizers, I'd recommend keeping recorded tapes about as far away from a TV as you would from a loudspeaker (three feet or so), just to be on the safe side.

Cobalt and Treble Losses

Q. Recently I came across a statement that the high-frequency response of cobalt-doped iron-oxide cassettes fell off progressively with each play. Is this true of today's premium cobalt-doped cassettes? And how do I know which cassettes are cobalt-doped?

R. Zulmberger
Williamsburg, Va.

A. I raised this question with technical representatives of Maxell (UD-XLII) and 3M (Master II), whose cobalt-treated ferric oxides follow the same direction as TDK's Super Avilyn. Today's tapes have advanced considerably since the appearance of the first "cobalt-doped" formulations, and to make this distinction clear, modern tapes are generally said to be cobalt "treated" rather than "doped." The nature of the treatment varies from product to product, but in general any ferric-oxide cassette intended for chromium-dioxide bias and equalization has undergone some kind of cobalt treatment.

Early experiments with cobalt treatment, quite a number of years ago, did reveal a problem with treble stability in connection with both typical capstan/pinch-roller pressure and elevated temperature. However, today's cobalt-treated tapes have been specifically designed to avoid this problem, and I am assured that they exhibit no more treble fall-off in use than regular iron-oxide cassettes do. Proper cobalt treatment has been and is being used in the manufacture of many high-quality video tapes whose short-wavelength (high-frequency) response requirements far exceed those of cassettes, so there seems to be no reason to doubt my sources' reports that good engineering has eliminated this potential danger.

Tape Chatter

Q. When I put my open-reel machine into fast forward or reverse, the recorded music is still audible as the reels rotate. This condition has developed only recently. Could it be my heads are out of alignment? How can I correct this problem?

G. Ailing
Amherst, N.Y.

A. Your problem is not one of head alignment, so don't touch that! Rather, it would seem that your machine's tape lifters, whose job it is to hold the tape away from the heads when it is in its fast-winding modes, aren't doing their job properly. These are usually spring-loaded, so if a spring has been lost or lost tension, that's the explanation. I'd suggest a service shop visit, since you'll probably need an exact replacement.

Dolby and 0 VU

Q. I thought that Dolby levels were standardized. But when I look at the meters of various cassette decks, some have the Dolby mark at 0 VU, some at +2 or +3 VU, and others as low as −5 VU. How can the Dolby system work on all these very different record/playback levels?

Mark Finch
Miami, Fla.

A. The Dolby-B system does have a single reference: a recorded test tone with a flux level of 200 nanowebers/meter. The relation between this specified flux level and the tape deck manufacturer's decision as to where, on his meters, he wants to put the "0 VU" indication depends on a number of variables. One is the question of how much "headroom" to allow between the nominal 0 VU and the onset of serious distortion. Another is the question of whether the tape deck uses a peak-reading or an average-reading indicator.

Setting your recorder so that its built-in Dolby tone generator (if your machine has adjustment facilities) records at a level that plays back at the Dolby reference mark calibrates the recorder for proper Dolby encode/decode action no matter where "0 VU" falls on the meter scale. In other words, if the Dolby mark on the meter always corresponds to a specific level, it is the 0 VU point and other calibrations that can and do vary from one machine to another.
ARE YOU BLAMING YOUR TAPE RECORDER FOR PROBLEMS CAUSED BY YOUR TAPES?

Every day people all over the country go into hi fi dealers with complaints about their tape recorders. When in reality what they should be complaining about is their tapes.

Because the fact is, a lot of the problems that plague tape recorders can be attributed to bad tape.

HEAD WEAR IS CAUSED BY YOUR RECORDER. OR IS IT?
If you have to clean your tape heads more than usual, for example, it could be your tape doesn't have a special nonabrasive head cleaner.

Maxell is the only tape that has one.
If your recorder jams, it can be any number of things. Maxell does something to prevent all of them.
We make our cassette shells of high impact polystyrene. And then so they won't crack

JAMMING IS CAUSED BY YOUR RECORDER. OR IS IT?
even after years of use, we finish them to tolerances as much as 60% higher than industry standards.
Inside, we use free rolling Delrin rollers so the tape doesn't stick.
And finally we screw instead of weld everything together because screws make
for stronger cassettes.
If your recorder frequently suffers lapses in sound, it could be the tape is of inferior quality. And nobody's bothered testing the tape for dropouts before it leaves the factory.

DROPOUTS ARE CAUSED BY YOUR RECORDER. OR ARE THEY?
Maxell tape is made of only the finest polyesters. And every inch of

POOR TRACKING IS CAUSED BY YOUR RECORDER. OR IS IT?
it is checked for even the slightest inconsistencies.
So if you're having problems with your recorder, try a Maxell cassette, 8-track or reel-to-reel tape. You might find there's really nothing wrong with your tape recorder, just with your tape.

MAXELL THE TAPE THAT'S TOO GOOD FOR MOST EQUIPMENT.
Maxell Corporation of America, 150 West Commercial Ave., Moonachie, N.J. 07074

MAY 1977
© PHONO-CARTRIDGE CROSSTALK:
One of the most gratifying aspects of my work is the continuing education it provides—for me, that is. I am now well into my twenty-third year of testing audio components, yet I am constantly getting involved with new testing techniques made necessary by the technical sophistication of today's consumer products.

In addition, I find that one must constantly question the validity of time-honored procedures. Just because something has been done in a certain way for many years, or because everyone "knows" that certain factors can be ignored when making a measurement, does not mean that these assumptions are correct. I can illustrate this point with an actual recent example.

For years, I have been measuring the frequency response and crosstalk of stereo phono cartridges by installing them in a suitable tone arm in the usual manner and connecting them, one channel at a time, to a wide-band amplifier and a graphic-level recorder whose chart speed is synchronized to the frequency sweep on a test record. And, of course, the appropriate resistance and capacitance are placed across the measured channel output to suit the needs of the cartridge. With the left channel connected, the left and right swept-frequency bands of the test record are played and the cartridge output is recorded on the same section of chart paper. The process is repeated for the right channel. The result—or so we have always believed—is a plot of the frequency response and crosstalk response of the cartridge as measured with that test record.

So far as I know, just about everyone else makes this measurement in essentially the same way. It seems to be a logical and obvious way to do the job, and until recently there was no reason to question its validity. Last year, I tested a new cartridge from Empire Scientific. Its performance was first-rate, and I assumed that the considerable reduction (as against the specification) in measured channel separation near 20,000 Hz was a combination of product variability and test-record characteristics. In any event, I saw no reason to be concerned about a totally inaudible loss of separation at a frequency of primary interest only to dogs, cats, and bats.

Understandably, from his viewpoint, the manufacturer took issue with my measurements. He pointed out that the record-player tone arm (a very good one, by the way) in which I had mounted the cartridge had a fairly high capacitance between the signal leads of the two channels (as distinguished from the capacitance from either lead to ground, which is well recognized as affecting the frequency response of most magnetic cartridges). He pointed out the simple and obvious fact (which I admit I had not thought of until that time) that at high frequencies the capacitive coupling from the driven channel to the opposite one could produce a large crosstalk signal which was in fact external to the cartridge itself. I made enough additional measurements and calculations to convince myself of the truth of this argument, and resolved to be more careful in the future.

At that time, I was also concerned that only a few tone arms had low enough interchannel capacitance to render this effect negligible. The vast majority of cartridges were, are, and will continue to be used in arms with an interchannel capacitance of at least 50 to 60 picofarads instead of the 20 or so needed to remove this factor from the picture. Unless the cartridge has low-impedance windings, the measured—if not the audible—high-frequency channel separation is almost certain to be seriously affected in some way by this cross-coupling.

The problem is even more complex than it seems at first glance. On a number of occasions I have measured high-frequency separation far greater than would be expected in the presence of interchannel capacitive coupling. Based on the limited tests I have made since becoming aware of the problem, it seems that internal cartridge crossfeed can have widely different and unpredictable (by me, at least) phase characteristics. The external capacitive crosstalk has a phase shift which can approach 90 degrees. Internal cartridge crosstalk with a 90-degree phase angle, depending on whether it is in the same or opposite phase to the external crosstalk, can either add to or subtract from it, giving a measurement that can be either worse or better than the "true" cartridge performance. I have found that the external-crosstalk effect can reduce high-frequency channel separation to zero, make it 10 dB or more greater than it should be, or result in any intermediate condition.

More recently, I encountered a similar problem when testing the Shure M241 stereo/CD-4 cartridge. Initially, the channel separation I was getting in the carrier band (above 30 kHz) was far from meeting Shure's specifications although the tone arm I was using was compatible with CD-4 cartridges and was fitted with low-capacitance signal cables. It finally occurred to me that the bugaboo of interchannel capacitance might be involved, so I disconnected the unused channel of the cartridge instead of at the other end of the signal cable. At last, my measurements essentially duplicated...
Shure's, which had been made in an SME tone arm. I do not present this merely to illustrate the pitfalls of testing hi-fi components, although it is a classic example of Murphy's Law, which states that "If anything can go wrong, it will." The dilemma it poses for me is that most medium- or high-impedance magnetic cartridges can deliver their rated channel separation at high frequencies only when installed in tone arms having very low interchannel capacitance (I assume that Shure's SME arm meets this requirement). Since a negligible percentage of cartridges are used in arms with that quality, this suggests that almost all of them cannot deliver, in home service, the full separation of which they are capable. My problem is this: should I test and rate cartridge separation under realistic average use conditions or under special or atypical test conditions?

I can understand a manufacturer's concern with having the inherent performance of his product presented fairly in a test report, but I am also concerned with the consumer out there in the "real world" who thinks he is getting, say, 20 dB of separation in his de luxe cartridge at 20,000 Hz when he may in fact be getting only 5 dB. This is another case of the manufacturers of different components being somewhat insensitive to the compatibility question. Does all this really matter to the user? Fortunately, no—at least not in the case of stereo cartridges, whose separation at any audible frequency is generally much better than is required for the full stereo effect. But I am not so sure in the case of CD-4 cartridges, since a radical reduction in separation in the carrier band might well have serious effects on the sound quality.

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**Equipment Test Reports**

**By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories**

**Aiwa AD-6500 Cassette Deck**

The Aiwa AD-6500 is a front-loading cassette deck with a single d.c. servo-controlled motor driving the capstan and both tape hubs. It features a novel automatic tape-loading mechanism. The hinged door, with its large window, swings upward into the cassette opening when the OPEN key on the panel is pressed (or when it is lifted manually). This exposes a flat carrier tray on which the cassette is pressed (or when it is lifted manually). This exposes a flat carrier tray on which the cassette is placed. A slight push on the cassette (or closing the door) causes the cassette to disappear with a soft whirring sound into the depths of the machine, where it is automatically placed into playing position about two inches behind the panel. The cassette is angled upward at about 30 degrees, and it is well illuminated so that the status of its tape pack can be seen easily from outside the machine.

Seven flat keys extending from the front panel below the cassette opening control all transport functions. Following the OPEN key are RECORD, REW/REVIEW, FWD, F.WD/CUE, STOP/EJECT, and PAUSE keys. They can be distinguished by standardized markings above them as well as by color stripes on the RECORD, STOP/EJECT, and PAUSE keys (the FWD key is considerably wider than the others).

Pressing the STOP/EJECT key stops the tape and disengages the mechanism; releasing it and pressing again moves the cassette forward and opens the door so that it can be withdrawn easily.

To the right of the transport controls are two levers that select the input source (LINE or MIC/DIN) and activate the Dolby system (multaneously inserting the low-pass multiplex filter into the recording signal path for recording stereo FM broadcasts). There is a DIN socket in the rear near the phono jacks that carry the line inputs and outputs. A second DIN socket on the front panel replaces the rear DIN circuit when a plug is inserted into it. Plugging a microphone into one of the front-panel mic jacks disconnects both DIN inputs.

Separate three-position lever switches adjust the bias and equalization for ferric (LH), ferrichrome (FeCr), and chromium-dioxide (Cr02) tapes. Separate control over bias and equalization gives the machine added flexibility in accommodating almost any type of tape formulation.

To the right of the switches, a small knob adjusts the playback level on both channels and a larger pair of concentric knobs controls the recording levels. Above them are two large illuminated VU meters, between which are two peak lights set to flash at levels of +3 and +7 dB. To the left of the meters is a three-digit index counter; a MEMORY button that causes the tape to stop in theREWIND mode when the counter returns to a 000 reading, and a moving-light strip that shows when the tape is in motion.

At the far left of the panel is a square POWER switch button, the headphone jack, and the two microphone jacks. The red RECORD indicator light is behind the tinted plastic cover of the cassette compartment. The Aiwa AD-6500 has a rated frequency response (no tolerance given) of 30 to 14,000 Hz with LH tape and 30 to 17,000 Hz with Cr02 and FeCr tapes. The S/N, using Dolby with FeCr tape, is rated at 62 dB, and the weighted rms flutter is 0.07 per cent. The record/playback head is of ferrite construction. The recorder is about 18 inches wide, 12 inches deep, and 6½ inches high; it weighs 18.7 pounds. Price: $370.

**Laboratory Measurements.** The playback equalization of the Aiwa AD-6500 was checked with Nortronics AT200 and Teac 116SP test tapes for the 120- and 70-microsecond equalization characteristics, respectively. After correcting for the differences in low-frequency equalization between the recorder and the Nortronics tape, we came up with a response curve (over the limits of the two tapes) that was flat within ±0.5 dB from 80 to 10,000 Hz and up about 2 dB at 31.5 Hz. The 70-microsecond (Cr02) response, using the Teac tape, was within ±1 dB from 40 to 10,000 Hz.

The recorder had been adjusted at the factory for three types of Aiwa tape: a high-grade ferric tape (LH), a chromium-dioxide tape (Cr02), and a ferrichrome tape (FeCr). Samples of these tapes were supplied to us by Aiwa and were used for our performance checks. With LH tape, at a -20-dB recording... (Continued overleaf)
level, the playback response was flat within ±0.5 dB from 55 to 14,000 Hz and down 3 dB at 28 and 15,000 Hz. The CrO₂ tape produced the expected extension of high-frequency response, though it was not quite as flat above 10,000 Hz as the LH tape. Overall, it was down 3 dB at 27 and 16,500 Hz. Ferichrome tape was slightly better, flat within ±1 dB from 28 to 15,500 Hz and down 3 dB at 27 and 17,000 Hz.

To judge the compatibility of the AD-6500 with more widely available tapes, we checked its frequency response with Maxell UD-XL I and II (LH and CrO₂ equivalents) and with Sony Ferichrome. The results were close to those obtained with the Aiwa tapes. The Dolby circuits tracked well, with no more than 2 dB of difference between the response curves made with Dolby in and out at levels of -10 AND -30 dB. The Dolby-level mark on the recorder's meters is at +3 dB, so these test levels were actually 23 and 33 dB below 200 nW/m. The crosstalk between channels, playing the TDK AC-352 test tape, was -35 dB at 1,000 Hz.

A line input of 45 millivolts (mV) was needed for a 0-dB recording level. The microphone inputs required 0.24 mV and overloaded at 27.5 mV. The maximum playback output from a 0-dB recording was 0.67 volt with LH tape (it varies somewhat with the tape used). The meters had VU ballistics, reading 100 per cent of steady state on 0.3-second tone bursts. The +3-dB light flashed at +4 dB and the +7-dB light came on at the indicated level.

The distortion in the playback of a 1,000-Hz signal recorded at a 0-dB level was a very low 0.45 per cent with LH tape. With FeCr tape it was 0.89 per cent, and with CrO₂ it was 1.4 per cent. The recording levels corresponding to 3 per cent distortion were respectively +8.5, +6, and +3 dB with the three tapes, in that order.

The S/N, referred to the 3 per cent distortion playback level, was 51, 53, and 59 dB with LH, FeCr, and CrO₂ tapes, respectively. With IEC "A" weighting, these improved to 54.2, 55, and 51 dB. With CCIR/ARM weighting (the characteristic preferred by Dolby Laboratories), the S/N readings were within 1 dB of the "A" weighted measurements, and with the Dolby system in use they improved to 63, 66, and 61.5 dB. Through the microphone inputs the noise increased by 12 dB at maximum gain, but at normal gain settings the increase was negligible.

The wow of the AD-6500 was lower than the residual of our test tapes and instruments (about 0.015 per cent); the unweighted rms flutter was about 0.12 per cent playing the Aiwa TTA-111A test tape and also in a combined record-playback measurement. The tape transport moved a C-60 cassette from end to end in 87 (rewind) to 95 (fast forward) seconds.

Comment. The Aiwa AD-6500 impressed us with its smooth mechanical operation and with the quality of its sound. The automatic loading, though hardly necessary as a labor-saving device, worked perfectly (it reminded us of the picture ejection from a Polaroid SX-70 camera in reverse). The transport controls operated lightly and positively (they are mechanical, but they need only a light touch). The mechanism shut off automatically at the end of a tape in any mode of operation. The peak-reading LED's were an ideal adjunct to the meters. The instructions suggest appropriate peak indications for different tape types (although the LH tape had far more headroom than these suggestions implied). In any case, it is hard to imagine making a recording at an incorrect level if the +3-dB light flashes occasionally and the +7-dB light hardly at all.

The review and cue features of the rewind and fast-forward modes are a great convenience for locating a specific portion of a tape. When the rewind (play) key is engaged, the tape can be shuttled in either direction at high speed with the rewind and fast-forward keys, with sufficient coupling to the playback head so that recorded segments can easily be identified. In this mode, the fast keys are non-latching, so that releasing them returns the machine to normal playing speed instantly. The headphone volume from the AD-6500 was more than sufficient for comfortable listening with medium-impedance phones.

As for the sound quality, it could hardly have been better. Recording interstation FM tuner hits and comparing the playback to the tuner output, we were pleasantly surprised to discover that at a -20-dB level (on the recorder's meters) there was no difference whatever between the two signals, and at -10 dB there was only a trace of dulling of the extreme high frequencies. This is a very severe test for a cassette machine (not too long ago, few open-reel machines designed for home use could pass it), and it served to underline the audible benefits of the ruler-flat frequency response we measured on this machine.

When the features and performance of the Aiwa AD-6500 are considered, its price is surprisingly low (we would have guessed it to be considerably higher). It is a first-rate product, unique in some respects and better than good in every respect.

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Scott R336 AM/FM Stereo Receiver

The Model R336 stereo receiver is one of the newest components in the H. H. Scott line of audio equipment. It is rated to deliver 42 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.3 per cent total harmonic distortion. Its front panel, of satin-finish aluminum, has a large rectangular cut-out behind which is another aluminum sub-panel that carries the tuning-dial scales and two meters. The FM-band calibrations are linearly distributed and marked at 1-MHz intervals. There is a "logging" scale.
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marked from 0 to 10, between the AM and FM calibrations, but the spacing of its calibrations makes it useless for logging stations. One of the meters reads FM channel-center tuning, while the other is a relative-signal-strength indicator that functions for both AM and FM.

Above the dial and meter scales, softly illuminated labels identify the selected program source and indicate whether a stereo FM broadcast is being received. Small green lights to the left of the dial scales identify the FM and AM modes of operation.

The other controls form a single row across the bottom of the panel. The input selector has positions for microphone, phono, FM, and AM modes of operation. A three-position slide switch changes two tape decks for dubbing from either one to the other. Another button selects either of two tape machines as the playback machine for copying or for normal tape operation. A third button connects the amplifiers to either the playback (monitor) output of the selected tape deck or to the selected signal source.

The balance control is detented at its center, and there is a large volume-control knob with some forty very positive detents throughout its range. The level change per "click" varies somewhat over the full range of the control, but it is about 1 dB in the most used portion. The bass and treble tone controls each have eleven detented settings. They permit independent adjustment of the two channels.

Four black-handled lever switches operate the loudness compensation, FM muting, highcut audio filter, and stereo/mono mode switching. Next to them is a combined power speakers switch that enables either, both, or neither of two pairs of speakers to be driven from the amplifier. A headphone jack completes the front-panel array.

In the rear of the R336 there are insulated spring clips for the speaker outputs, screw terminals for the antenna terminals, and a hinged, ferrite-rod AM antenna. One set of tape-recorder jacks is duplicated by a DIN socket. A three-position slide switch changes the FM de-emphasis from the normal 75-microsecond time constant to either 50 microseconds (the European standard) or 25 microseconds (for use with an external Dolby accessory). A removable power cord plugs into a socket in the rear of the receiver, and there is a single unswatched a.c. outlet.

The Scott R336 is furnished in a walnut-vinyl-clad wooden cabinet. It is about 181/2 inches wide, 151/4 inches deep, and 5 5/8 inches high; it weighs 261/2 pounds. The receiver carries a three-year limited warranty covering parts and labor. Price: $399.95.

**Laboratory Measurements.** During the standard FTC preconditioning period, the top ventilation grille (above the output-transistor heat sinks) became very warm. However, there was no evidence of damage or improper operation during the subsequent power and distortion measurements. The audio amplifier outputs clipped at 53 watts per channel with both channels operating at 1,000 Hz into 8-ohm loads. Power at clipping into 16 ohms was 33.6 watts; into 4 ohms it was 75.7 watts.

At 1,000 Hz, the total harmonic distortion (THD) was very low at low power levels. It was 0.013 per cent at 0.1 watt, 0.025 per cent at 10 watts, 0.04 per cent at 40 watts, and 0.05 per cent at 50 watts. The intermodulation distortion (IM) was 0.12 per cent at 0.1 watt, decreasing to about 0.025 per cent from 10 to 40 watts and reaching 0.1 per cent at 55 watts.

At the rated 42 watts output, the THD was just under 0.04 per cent in the 20- to 30-Hz range; it dropped to 0.02 per cent between 50 and 150 Hz and increased steadily to 0.09 per cent at 10,000 Hz and 0.16 per cent at 20,000 Hz. At half power and under, the distortion was less than these figures at all frequencies.

For a reference output of 10 watts, the input required was 84 millivolts (mV) at the auxiliary jacks and 1.3 mV at the phono inputs. The respective signal-to-noise ratios (S/N) (Continued on page 40)
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On each of our new receivers, Yamaha's Noise-Distortion Clearance Range assures no more than a mere 0.1% combined noise and distortion from 20Hz to 20kHz at any power output from 1/10th watt to full-rated power.

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The CR-2020's tuner makes FM reception up to 18kHz possible for the first time with unique negative feedback and pilot signal cancellation circuits (patents pending).

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other receivers require an expensive preamplifier or step-up transformer, which can compromise sound quality, the CR-2020 already provides for it—the same solid-state device first developed for our superlative C-2 preamplifier.

Input/Rec Output/Pre Out Selectors. Here's extra convenience for tape recording enthusiasts. Record any source while listening to another. For example, copy a tape or disc at the same time you're enjoying an FM program. When you're in the mood to play recording engineer, you can use all the tone controls and filters to compensate for poor quality sound sources.

Fast Rise, Slow Decay Power Meters. The CR-2020's large, accurately calibrated power meters, with fast rise, slow decay characteristics, make accurate readings possible from 1/10th watt to 200 watt peaks without switching ranges.

Multi-Function Signal Quality Meter. When tuning, the right channel power meter automatically converts to a signal quality/strength meter. Needle oscillation indicates the degree of multipath present, while the meter calibrations indicate the strength of the signal. After tuning, the needle automatically reverts to power reading.

Optimum Tuning System. Yamaha takes the problem of inaccurate tuning out of human hands. After you manually locate the desired station, OTS automatically fine tunes it to the single point that gives maximum stereo separation and minimum distortion. A defeat switch is provided for special applications.

Built-In Equalizer. Think of the CR-2020's tone control circuitry as a small multi-band equalizer. Feedback bass and treble controls have selectable turnover frequencies. A midrange presence control adds more flexibility. Two-position low and high filters have 12dB/octave slopes. For the purist, a defeat switch removes the effect of the tone control circuitry entirely.

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were 77.6 and 71.4 dB. The phono preamplifier overloaded at an acceptable 100-mV input. The bass tone-control turnover frequency shifted from under 100 Hz to about 500 Hz as the control was moved from its center, while the treble-response curves were hinged at about 2,000 Hz. The maximum range of the bass control, in particular, was quite large; it could boost the output by some 23 dB in the 20- to 30-Hz region. Even at the moderate power output of the R336, this could be hazardous to some small speaker systems, and it is an invitation to distortion if the tone controls are not used with discretion.

The loudness-compensation circuit boosted both low and high frequencies at reduced volume-control settings (although this effect did not begin until the control was set at least 10 to 15 dB below its maximum). The filter had a 6-dB-per-octave slope; its 3-dB point is at 5,000 Hz. The RIAA phono equalization (extended) was accurate within ±1 dB from 30 to 20,000 Hz. The circuit was totally immune to phono-cartridge-inductance interaction, which affected the response by less than 0.5 dB at any frequency.

The FM tuner section had an IHF sensitivity of 12 dBf or 2.2 microvolts (µV) in mono and 23 dBf (8 µV) in stereo. The latter was the automatic stereo-switching threshold as well as the muting threshold. The 50-dB quieting sensitivity was 15.5 dBf (3.3 µV) with 0.8 per cent THD in mono; in stereo it was 38.5 dBf (46 µV) with 0.37 per cent THD. The distortion at a 65-dBF (1,000 µV) input was 0.23 per cent in mono and 0.14 per cent in stereo. The respective S/N readings were 73 and 70.5 dB. Stereo distortion at 65 dBf with out-of-phase (L - R) modulation was 0.32 per cent at 100 Hz, 0.16 per cent at 1,000 Hz, and 0.1 per cent at 6,000 Hz.

The frequency response of the FM tuner was perfectly flat from 30 Hz to beyond 10,000 Hz, dropping to ~3.4 dB at 15,000 Hz. Stereo channel separation was about 45 dB in the 100- to 250-Hz range and decreased gradually to 30 dB at 7,000 Hz and 24 dB at 15,000 Hz. It was 36.5 dB at 30 Hz.

The FM capture ratio was 1.2 dB at a 45-dBF (100 µV) input, and an outstanding 1 dB at 65 dBf. The AM rejection at these respective signal levels was 67 and 59 dB. Image rejection was an excellent 97 dB. Alternate-channel selectivity was very good at 71 dB (it was symmetrical about the center frequency of the channel), while the adjacent-channel selectivity was 4.7 dB. The 19-kHz pilot-carrier leakage in the audio outputs was 76 dB below full modulation, and the tuner's hum level was ~73 dB. The AM frequency response was very restricted, being down 6 dB at 60 and 1,700 Hz.

- **Comment.** In its basic performance as an FM tuner and stereo amplifier, the Scott R336 gave a very good account of itself. All the key tuner parameters were in the "good" to "excellent" category, with special mention going to the FM S/N and capture ratios, which were among the best we have measured. The audio amplifiers also have a very low noise level, and the distortion measurements speak for themselves. Although the AM tuner produced a rather constricted, nasal sound, we would not hold that against the R336. If AM quality was a significant factor, few stereo receivers could be considered even marginally acceptable for quality reproduction.

- **Laboratory Measurements.** On a modified ANSI headphone test coupler, the Superex TRL-77 response was strong from about 45 to 300 Hz (it rose to a maximum around 100 Hz) and from 1,200 Hz to the upper limit of our measurements at about 16,000 Hz. The output dropped off smoothly above 100 Hz to a minimum at 900 Hz before returning to its normal level at about 1,200 Hz. This sort of irregularity is not uncommon in headphone-response measurements due to interaction between the headphone driver and the enclosed volume of the coupler. It does not necessarily correlate with the subjective sound.

With a 1.5-volt signal delivered through a 100-ohm series resistance (the proposed IHF standard test conditions), the output of the TRL-77 had an average sound-pressure level between 110 and 115 dB from 50 to 16,000 Hz, except for the mid-range dip mentioned previously. The harmonic distortion was measured at 100 and 1,000 Hz as a function of drive level. It was about 1 per cent at normal listening levels.

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With a 1.5-volt signal delivered through a 100-ohm series resistance (the proposed IHF standard test conditions), the output of the TRL-77 had an average sound-pressure level between 110 and 115 dB from 50 to 16,000 Hz, except for the mid-range dip mentioned previously. The harmonic distortion was measured at 100 and 1,000 Hz as a function of drive level. It was about 1 per cent at normal listening levels.

**Comment.** In its basic performance as an FM tuner and stereo amplifier, the Scott R336 gave a very good account of itself. All the key tuner parameters were in the "good" to "excellent" category, with special mention going to the FM S/N and capture ratios, which were among the best we have measured. The audio amplifiers also have a very low noise level, and the distortion measurements speak for themselves. Although the AM tuner produced a rather constricted, nasal sound, we would not hold that against the R336. If AM quality was a significant factor, few stereo receivers could be considered even marginally acceptable for quality reproduction.

Like almost any product, the Scott R336 had a few minor idiosyncrasies. The bass tone control, as we have noted, had far too much range, especially in the boost condition. And the FM interstation muting—at least in our sample—operated with a definite "whump" sound, not loud enough to be annoying, perhaps, but still audible enough to distinguish it from some more refined systems. The styling of the Scott R336, although it somewhat resembles that of many Japanese-made receivers, has a European flavor as well. It is undeniably attractive and a good performer to boot; we think this bodes well for the success of the new Scott product line.

**Circle 106 on reader service card**
I can’t taste numbers. I can taste Winston Lights.

I was looking for a cigarette with low tar. But the low tar cigarettes I tried had no taste. Now I smoke Winston Lights. I get the low tar I want. But more important, Winston Lights are all taste. Winston Lights are for real.

els up to about 90 dB and rose to 5 per cent at
the maximum allowable input of 5 volts
(which corresponds to a very loud listening
level of about 125 dB). The impedance of the
TRL-77 phones was about 80 ohms over most
of the audio range, approaching 150 ohms at
100 Hz and 20,000 Hz. The phones are suit-
able for use with any amplifier’s or receiver’s
headphone jack.

Comment. The Superex TRL-77 phones
were very comfortable to wear. The stainless -
steel band provided just the right pressure
against the ears, with a minimum sensation of
weight. The foam ear cushions, which of

course did not materially attenuate sounds
from elsewhere in the room, were equally
comfortable. Like other open-air phones, the
TRL-77 radiated considerable external sound
and could be heard clearly by others when
played at any reasonable volume level.

Like many other phones, the TRL-77 had a
better subjective sound quality than one
might expect from its measured frequency re-
sponse. The upper middle and high frequen-
cies were smooth and strong. Listening to
FM-tuner interstation hiss, one could hear the
low-frequency coloration associated with the
broad 100-Hz response peak in the form of a
slight “roaring” quality. On program material
the effect was of a slight heaviness particular-
ly noticeable in male voices (it was analogous
to a loudspeaker’s bass-resonance effect).

Overall, however, we would describe the
sound of the TRL-77 phones as well-balanced
and musical, and certainly as good as one
could hope to get from a phone of this price.

Although it obviously cannot match the qual-
ity of the better phones costing several times
as much, it should not be confused with the
low-price “bargain” phones sometimes
offered for $10 or $15. The latter are certain to
offend the sensibilities of any audiophile,
while the Superex phones are both good to lis-
ten to and comfortable to wear. In short, the
new Superex TRL-77s represent an extremely
good dollar value.

Circle 107 on reader service card

Dynaco 300 Power Amplifier

The Dynaco Stereo 300 basic power
amplifier, also known as the QSA-300,
can be easily converted into a four-channel
amplifier. In its stereo mode the amplifier is
rated to deliver 150 watts per channel to 8-
ohm loads between 20 and 20,000 Hz with less
than 0.25 per cent total harmonic distortion.
Also, by means of another internal wiring
change, the Stereo 300 can be converted from
the normal “high-impedance” output to a
“low-impedance” mode suitable for driving
loads of less than 8 ohms. With the low-

impedance wiring, the power rating is 150
watts into 4 ohms and 200 watts into 2 ohms
(the latter condition can be sustained for up to
five minutes without the need for external fan
cooling).

The Stereo 300 has completely separate
power supplies for the two stereo channels.
The electronic circuits are on two identical
printed-circuit boards, and the power transis-
tors are cooled by large heat-sink fins extend-
ing from the rear of the amplifier. The internal
wiring change that converts the unit to four-
channel operation provides 75 watts per chan-
el to four 8-ohm loads or 100 watts per chan-
el to four 4-ohm loads. This facility can be of
value to some stereo listeners as well,
since each channel can be used as part of a
multi-amplifier system with an electronic
crossover device ahead of the amplifiers.

Most of the front panel of the Stereo 300 is
covered by black plastic. On a metal strip
across the bottom of the panel are a rocker
power switch and a blue pilot light. In the
rear, below the heat sinks, are the phono-jack
inputs and binding-post speaker outputs for
each channel (there are four sets, but only
two are used for stereo operation); each
speaker line is fused, and so is the power line.

(Continued on page 44)
Two sources of perfection in stereo sound.

Match one to your equipment

"The right Pickering Cartridge for your equipment is the best Cartridge money can buy."

We've been saying that for years; and tens of thousands of consumers have profited by applying this principle in assembling their playback systems.

If you have a fine manual turntable, the XSV/3000 is a perfect choice.

If you have a high quality automatic turntable, then installing an XV-15/625E in its tone arm is a perfect choice.

The summary advice of Stereo's Lab Test, in an unusual dual product review, we think brilliantly states our position: "The XV-15/625E offers performance per dollar; the XSV/3000, the higher absolute performance level." That makes both of these cartridges best buys!

Pickering's new XSV/3000 is a remarkable development. It possesses our trademarked Stereohedron Stylus Tip, designed to assure the least record wear and the longest stylus life achievable in these times with a stereo cartridge. Its frequency response is extraordinarily smooth and flat; its channel separation is exceptional; its transient response affords superb definition. It represents a whole new concept of excellence in stereo cartridges.

Read the whole evaluation report. Send for your free copy of the Stereo "Lab Test" reprint; write to Pickering & Co., Inc., 101 Sunnyside Blvd., Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

"For those who can hear the difference"

Department SR

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MAY 1977

CIRCLE NO. 41 ON READER SERVICE CARD

FREE!
Dynaco 300 . . .

(Continued from page 42)

In addition, each stereo output stage is protected by a thermal circuit breaker that removes power from the transistors if their temperature rises excessively.

The sides of the Stereo 300 are covered with walnut panels, giving the amplifier an attractive and finished appearance. Its 35,000-ohm input impedance is slightly lower than that of some amplifiers, but it can be driven by almost any good preamplifier (including the Dynaco PAT-4 and PAT-5). Because the Stereo 300 draws some 10 amperes from the 120-volt line at full power, it should not be plugged into the typical preamplifier switched n.c. outlet (the Dynaco PAT-5 is an exception to this rule).

The Dynaco Stereo 300 is 18¾ inches wide, 14¾ inches deep, and 7¾ inches high. Its net weight is 52 pounds. It is priced at $489 in kit form and $699 as the factory-wired Stereo 300/A. The QSA-300 is essentially identical except that assembly instructions are provided covering its wiring as a two- or four-channel amplifier. An optional accessory meter kit (MC-3, $125) provides four panel-installed power meters for the QSA-300. The factory-wired version of the QSA-300, including the meters, is $799.

Laboratory Measurements. After the one-hour preconditioning period, the output transistors and heat sinks of the Stereo 300 were too hot to touch comfortably, but the thermal circuit breakers did not trip. The outputs clipped at 195 watts per channel into 8 ohms and 121 watts into 16 ohms, with both channels driven at 1,000 Hz. The amplifier was not tested into 4 ohms because it was wired in the high-impedance configuration.

The total harmonic distortion (THD) with a 1,000-Hz test signal was less than 0.02 per cent from 0.1 to 50 watts output, reaching 0.069 per cent at the rated 150 watts and 0.5 per cent at 180 watts. The intermodulation distortion (IM) was less than 0.05 per cent from a few milliwatts output to 50 watts, reaching 0.056 per cent at 150 watts and 0.135 per cent at 190 watts.

At the rated 150 watts output, the THD was between 0.03 and 0.05 per cent from 20 to several thousand hertz, rising smoothly to 0.16 per cent at 20,000 Hz (there was an apparent increase to 0.1 per cent at 30 Hz because power-supply ripple combined with the distortion products). At lower power levels the distortion followed a similar pattern, but it was somewhat lower (typically 0.02 to 0.03 per cent at most frequencies and power outputs).

An input of 0.37 volt drove the Stereo 300 to a reference output of 10 watts, and its unweighted noise level was 80 dB below 10 watts. The amplifier rise time was 3.5 microseconds and the slew rate was 11 volts per microsecond, surpassing the manufacturer's specification of 7 volts per microsecond. The frequency response was down 1 dB at 5 Hz and 50 kHz, and it was down 3 dB at 100 kHz.

Comment. The Dynaco Stereo 300 must inevitably be compared to their Stereo 400. It would appear that the new model is $10 cheaper in kit form and is rated at 75 per cent of the power of the earlier model (which is still very much in the Dynaco product line). The Stereo 300 lacks the input level controls and filters of the Stereo 400 and its "Dynaguard" power-limiter circuit. However, the two are about the same size and generally comparable in performance—except for their power ratings, which differ by an insignificant 1.25 dB.

Balanced against this is the greater versatility offered by the Stereo 300. It can be wired to drive very low-impedance loads safely or to drive quadraphonic speaker arrays. And for those who stack (and parallel) two identical speakers to reproduce each stereo channel (which can present an undesirably low impedance to the amplifier), the Stereo 300 in its four-channel configuration permits each speaker to be driven with its own 75-watt amplifier, thus retaining the full 300-watt total capability of the amplifier.

This is clearly a case where the buyer can make his choice on the basis of his actual requirements, since the two amplifiers are effectively identical in performance quality as well as price. Although the change of output configuration and impedance rating can be made to either a Stereo 300 or a QSA-300, it is probably easier to work with the QSA-300 if one plans to experiment with the various output options.

Circle 108 on reader service card.
Waveform fidelity.
If you don’t understand it, you could be making a $350 mistake.

Today a good amp and tuner can easily cost you $350, $500, $700 or even more. But no matter how much a component costs, if it doesn’t have waveform fidelity, the music that’s put into it won’t be the music that comes out. And that’s an expensive mistake to make.

It’s also a mistake Technics won’t let you make. Because Technics’ two new integrated amps, the SU-7600 and the SU-8600, as well as our two new tuners, the ST-7600 and the ST-8600, have superb waveform fidelity.

With both tuners, the waveform being broadcast will be the waveform you’ll receive, with virtually no distortion or cross modulation. Because both have flat group delay filters in the IF sections. So the time delay is constant for all frequencies.

There’s also a Phase Locked Loop IC in the MPX sections. That’s why, for example, with the top of our line, the ST-8600, you’ll get stereo separation of 45dB at 1kHz and 35dB at 10kHz. And a frequency response that’s as flat as it is wide, 20Hz to 18kHz (−0.2dB − 0.8dB).

And with an 8-ganged tuning capacitor (5 for FM and 3 for AM) and a Technics developed 4-pole MOS FET, broadcasts with the ST-8600 will sound more like master tapes than FM.

You’ll also find waveform fidelity in both amps. Including our most powerful one, the SU-8600. With 73 watts per channel, minimum RMS, both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz, with no more than 0.08% total harmonic distortion.

And the SU-8600 will stay 73 watts regardless of the power-hungry transient bursts found in many musical waveforms. The reasons: Sixfold independent power supplies for the control voltage and power amplifiers. The results: Virtually no transient cross-talk distortion. And optimum waveform fidelity.

So before you make a $350 mistake, or an even more expensive one, listen to our new amps and tuners. Your Technics dealer has them. Along with Technics waveform fidelity.

Cabinet is simulated wood.

Technics by Panasonic
This Dual tonearm does more to optimize stylus-to-groove interaction than any other tonearm ever made.

Dual engineers have never forgotten their basic geometry, especially the principle that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. Nor have they overlooked their advanced physics as applied to materials, balance, mass, bearing friction and resonance. The desired end result: fidelity of reproduction and extended record life.

All Dual tonearms are straight-line tubular from pivot to tonearm head—for lowest effective mass and greatest rigidity. The horizontal and vertical pivots are centered within a true, four-point gyroscopic gimbal in which the masses are balanced at the intersection of both axes.

Every initial setup adjustment has a special touch of precision. Stylus overhang is accurately adjustable for optimum horizontal tracking angle. Zero balance is vernier-adjustable. Stylus tracking force is applied at the vertical pivot and remains perpendicular to the record even if the turntable is tilted. Anti-skating is calibrated separately for all three stylus types and is self-compensating for disc diameter.

The 721 and 704 tonearms have additional refinements, not provided on any other tonearm. A vernier 8mm height adjustment parallels the tonearm to the record without spacers. Thus, accurate vertical tracking angle is assured, and the mass at the head minimized. Also, mechanical filters, in the counterabalances of the 721 and 704 tonearms, absorb energy in the resonance-frequency ranges of the tonearm/cartridge system and the chassis. This preserves tracking stability in the presence of external shock and vibration whether produced by acoustic feedback, record warps or dancing feet.

Dual's cored-drive system is also the most advanced today. It features an all-electronic, low speed, brushless DC motor with Hall-effect feedback control and a regulated power supply. Two overlapping coil layers, each with eight coreless bifilar-wound coils, achieve a gapless rotating magnetic field. This eliminates the vibration-inducing successive pulses of magnetic flux common to all other motor designs.

With either mode—the fully automatic 721 or the semi-automatic 704—we think you'll agree that geometry and physics, as interpreted by Dual, have never sounded so good.

United Audio Products
120 So. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10552
Exclusive U.S. Distribution Agency for Dual
True, four-point gyroscopic gimbal centers and pivots the tonearm mass at intersection of horizontal and vertical axes. Tonearm is dynamically balanced in all planes. Each pivot is first hardened and then honed, a process which produces microscopically smooth surfaces. They are matched to ball-bearing races only 0.157 inch in diameter.

Stylus pressure is applied via a long coiled spring centered around the vertical pivot. Pressure is always maintained perpendicular to the record even if the turntable is not level.

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

Vertical Tonearm Control parallels tonearm to record at any point over an 8mm range. Result: accurate vertical tracking without the added mass of cartridge spacers.

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

The Dual 721:
- Fully automatic, single-play
- All-electronic, direct-drive motor
- Features include: Vertical Tonearm Control; variable cue-control lift height and descent speed; 10% electronic pitch-control; illuminated strake; dynamically-balanced 12" platter; cue-control viscous-damped in both directions; continuous-repeat. Price: less than $400, with base and cover. Dual 704: similar, except semi-automatic. Ingenious mechanical sensor locates lead-in groove of 12" and 7" records; tonearm lifts and motor shuts off automatically at end of plcy. Less than $310, with base and cover.

Rumble (DIN B):
- Dual 721, > 72dB
- Dual 704, > 73dB

Wow and flutter:
- < ±0.03%

Fully-automatic, single-play/multi-play Duals: 1225, less than $140; 1226, less than $170; 1228, less than $200; 1249, less than $280. Semi-automatic, single-play Duals: 502, less than $160; 510, less than $200.
**MACBETH**

The first official La Scala recording of a complete opera in a number of years is Deutsche Grammophon’s recently issued album of Verdi’s Macbeth. It was based on Giorgio Strehler’s production, which was seen in this country last year when La Scala paid a Bicentennial visit to the Kennedy Center. Pino Cappuccilli and Shirley Verrett are the principal soloists, and the set is conducted by Claudio Abbado. Before the DG set was released in this country, Angel Records announced plans for their new Macbeth, conducted by the other young hot-shot Italian maestro, Riccardo Muti, with Sherrill Milnes as the title role and Fiorenza Cossotto as Lady Macbeth. Both sets have now been released (DG 2709 062 and Angel SCLX 3833, three discs each), and both are excellent.

Macbeth is a wonderful opera, the first of Verdi’s great works. Premiered in 1847, when the composer was only thirty-four, it came between Attila and I Masnadieri, preceding Rigoletto (the first of the middle-period masterpieces) by four years. Verdi revised Macbeth for its first performance in Paris in 1865, but aside from adding the ballet music required in Paris, he made very few changes in this work of his youth. Interesting as his other early works are, Macbeth stands apart from them. Perhaps because of his fondness for Shakespeare, perhaps because he had more time than usual when he composed it, Verdi produced in Macbeth a very original opera of unusual psychological power and dramatic effectiveness.

In the new recordings both Abbado and Muti conduct Macbeth as though it were one of Verdi’s mature Shakespearean masterpieces, and when it is performed with such conviction it comes closer to the level of Otello and Falstaff than you might think possible. For me, Abbado is the hero of the DG recording. The Scala chorus and orchestra are excellent, and he conducts them and the soloists with authority and drive, paying great attention to detail within an overall concept and producing a well integrated performance that is both beautiful and exciting. The recording has an unusual sense of spaciousness and movement and a wide dynamic range.

Cappuccilli, an elegant, tasteful baritone, is DG’s Macbeth, and I have never heard him sing with greater dramatic involvement. In the smaller male roles, Nicolai Ghiaurov is a sonorous Banquo and Placido Domingo is an effective Macduff. My one reservation concerns Shirley Verrett’s Lady Macbeth. She gives a somewhat affected, “actressy” performance, laying on generalized emotion rather than shaping phrases and coloring her voice to fit the requirements of the music and words. She is now a soprano, and there is a real soprano quality in her high notes, but I think they have been bought at the expense of resonance in the middle and lower registers. She is not a bad Lady Macbeth, but I had expected something more from this very interesting singer.

Abbado conducts the customary 1865 version of the opera, including the very atmospheric ballet music, but (like Erich Leinsdorf in the old RCA set) he reinstates Macbeth’s brief death-scene aria from 1847. I prefer this ending.

I enjoyed the DG recording so much that I didn’t think Angel could match it. I was wrong. Muti has an excellent cast, chorus, and orchestra at his disposal, and he makes the most of it, delivering a total performance that is musical, dramatic, and exciting. Like Abbado, Muti has had a great deal of symphonic experience, and this shows in the way he highlights orchestral detail, emphasizes dynamic contrasts, and yet controls the overall shape of the opera.

Verdi might have thought Fiorenza Cossotto’s voice too pretty for Lady Macbeth, and she creates a character that is more human and attractive than is customary in this role. But she adds some interesting dramatic touches, too, such as whispering her reading of the letter. Ruggero Raimondi is a subtler Banquo than most, and José Carreras is a youthful, impassioned Macduff.

Never having seen Milnes as Macbeth in the theater, I was unprepared for his beautifully developed characterization of this role. Milnes is in that line of great American baritones that includes Lawrence Tibbett and Leonard Warren, and in the last couple of years he has taken giant steps in interpretation. Without distorting the music, he expresses great feeling in Macbeth, letting his big robust voice out for the climaxes, yet reigning it in expertly for more inward moments, when he colors it precisely to convey the meaning of the text. Few Americans sing Italian as well as Milnes, and fewer still are so responsive to the words. His Macbeth is among his finest recorded performances.

Muti also directs the 1865 version of the opera, including the ballet music, but an added attraction on the Angel set is the inclusion on the Angel set of Fiorenza Cossotto’s first performance of Macbeth, letting her big robust voice out for the climaxes, yet reigning it in expertly for more inward moments, when she colors it precisely to convey the meaning of the text. Few Americans sing Italian as well as Milnes, and fewer still are so responsive to the words. His Macbeth is among his finest recorded performances.

If you are in the market for a Macbeth, you can buy either of these with confidence. I like both so much that I cannot choose between them. Of the three available older sets, I do not recommend London OSA 1380 because I find Birgit Nilsson miscast as Lady Macbeth. I have a lingering fondness for London OSA 1385, which has flawed but interesting performances by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Elena Suliotis and the best Macduff on record in Luciano Pavarotti. Leinsdorf’s official Metropolitan recording (RCA VICS 6121) is treasurable for the larger-than-life portrayals created by Leonard Warren and Leonie Rysanek, who sang the leading roles at the Met première of Macbeth in 1959.

That première had been promised to Maria Callas and was to be her first new production at the Met. I was an impassioned Callas fan in my youth and could hardly wait to see her as Lady Macbeth, a role that seemed ideal for her. But there was some disagreement between La Divina and Rudolf Bing, then the company’s general manager, and Bing, like some kind of dunce, fired her. Leonie Rysanek substituted for Callas and was an unforgettable, hair-raising Lady Macbeth, but I and other Callas fans have not found it in our hearts to forgive Bing for depriving us of her interpretation. She never made a complete recording of Macbeth, but her album “Callas Sings Verdi Heroines” (Angel S-35763) contains the three principal Macbeth arias, includ-
The Sherwood Model HP 2000:
It adds a new high to performance.

If power and versatility are the essential elements of high performance, the HP 2000 is unquestionably the high performance amplifier you’ve been waiting for. This new top-of-the-line Sherwood amplifier puts you in full command of your sound system.

Consider the credentials:

**Power:** 120 watts per channel (minimum RMS at 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz) with no more than 0.08% Total Harmonic Distortion. This rating is ensured by massive 16,000 μf filter capacitors, backed by a zener regulated dual secondary power supply. The full complementary direct-coupled OCL output circuitry employs output transistors with the largest S.O.A. [safe operating area] of any consumer device currently available.

**Precision:** The film resistor step Loudness [Volume] control features 22 accurately calibrated positions (both channels matched within 0.5dB in all steps). Eleven position Variable Loudness Contour, Bass, Treble and Midrange controls have 11 detented positions each. Resisting to your exact acoustic preferences is never a matter of guesswork.

**Made to Order Defeat, High and Low filters, and -20dB Audio Muting are controlled by power on front panel switch.**

**Operational Flexibility:** The HP 2000 can accommodate two turnables (Phono inputs are selected with IC analog switching, and feature a front panel level control; two tape decks [tape to tape duplication is accomplished with the Tape 1, Tape 2 Monitor circuits]; and a pair of professional caliber microphones [mixing level determined by a separate front panel control]. Additional source capabilities include a Tuner, two Auxiliary components, and a 4-Channel Adaptor [which also serves as a third Tape Monitor if needed].

**Maser to Treble, Bass, Tree and Midrange controls have 11 distinct positions each. Resetting to your exact acoustic preferences is never a matter of guesswork.**

**Everything you hear is true.**

Sherwood Electronic Laboratories, Inc.
4300 N. California Ave
Chicago, IL 60618
The Pop Beat

By Paulette Weiss

EACH month I get more prophecies on the future of pop music in my reader mail than Jeanne Dixon could churn out in a fruitful year. One in particular caught my attention the other day with its tone of quiet authority. It stated simply that "Country is the pop music of the future" and was signed Corn Dog, the Prophet. The city slicker in me would once have shrugged this off as easily as a rumor that Minnie Pearl has taken up fan dancing, except that the Country Music Association and Jerry Bradley of RCA Records had recently provided me with some impressive statistics that suggest Corn Dog may just have something.

Mr. Bradley, vice president and director of Nashville operations for RCA, had trekked up east to attend the CMA's quarterly board meeting held in New York City, and simultaneously to promote the c- & w branch of RCA by meeting with the local press. Culled from our talk, a CMA press kit, and some extracurricular research of my own are the following revelations:

• Of the approximately two billion dollars grossed on records of all kinds in the U.S. last year, half came from the sale of country music records.
• Average successful c- & w album sales have leaped from 25,000 copies to a significant 200,000, and 1976 witnessed the first c- & w album ever to earn the RIAA platinum certification of sales of one million copies or more ("The Outlaws," RCA APL-1321, Waylon Jennings and friends).
• There is at least one country night club in every major U.S. city.
• Every major market area boasts at least one full-time country radio station.

Even with the grain of salt required to down this information (such artists as Tom Jones and Ringo Starr, not your average good ol' boys, are included to puff up some of the above figures), it's still bound to be startling news, I think, to a generation that has made boys, are included to puff up some of the one full-time country radio station. Radio's appetite for new performers competed with that of the infant recording industry, and the determined search for artists who could sell wax as well as airwaves turned up the Carter Family (no kin), Jimmie Rodgers, and others you've probably never heard of.

Since then, country music has absorbed various influences and produced numerous offshoots. The perhaps less accessible traditional forms—"hillbilly," bluegrass, Western swing, and Cajun—now exist side by side with newer styles that have gained a wide audience—the polished, orchestrated "Nashville Sound," "progressive" or "outlaw" country, and crossover country-rock. Country stars like Johnny Cash, Glen Campbell, Kris Kristofferson, and Roy Clark are also true pop stars, making movies and/or TV appearances regularly. Maybelle Carter and Crystal Gayle sing commercial jingles on radio. Movie soundtracks abound with down-home music, from Eric Weissberg's dueling banjos in Deliverance to the Foggy Mountain Breakdown theme that ran through Bonnie and Clyde, not to mention the imitative if not downright parodistic whole score of Robert Altman's Nashville.

On the flip side, pop/rock stars have been producing country-flavor hits that pin them firmly to the Nashville charts. The designation of Olivia Newton-John as the Country Music Association's best female vocalist of 1974 shook the c- & w old guard to its bluegrass roots; after all, the lady isn't even a native American, for Pete's sake. (Even Jerry Bradley thought her sound too MOR at the time. He was prepared with his own country artist and arrangements for a cover version of Let Me Be There just in case Olivia flopped with it in Nashville. She didn't.) And don't forget that John Denver (CMA's Entertainer of the Year in 1975) exploded onto the c- & w charts with Take Me Home, Country Roads before it ever hit the pop market, or that Linda Ronstadt (1976 Grammy award winner as best female pop singer) can have the keys to Nashville back any time she wants them.

Pop music's creative exhaustion in the late Sixties sent it tottering to Dr. Feelgood for pep injections. The result was the temporary energy of fusion—jazz-rock, Latin-rock, country-rock. In the early Seventies, when young people started to act out fantasies of the simple life, leaving the polluted cities for little farms where they raised rutabagas and bounced babies, they picked up on the music appropriate to the surroundings. Bob Dylan's "Nashville Skyline" (Columbia KCS-9825) and the Byrds' 1968 "Sweetheart of the Rodeo" (Columbia CS 9670) were classic precursors of the trend that produced such country-rock groups as Poco, Pure Prairie League, the Flying Burrito Brothers, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, New Riders of the Purple Sage, and the Eagles. Hard-core rock fans who sneer at c- & w can't see the irony of their stand. Rock-and-roll is country's kissin' kin, the electrically christened offspring of the union between c- & w and rhythm-and-blues.

Rock and country parted company in the early Sixties, but folks like Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, and the Everly Brothers got a lot of mileage out of the relationship before the split.

The reality of c- & w's upsurge in the U.S. was impressed upon me by tremors in my home town—cosmopolitan Manhattan, the bastion of punk rock. O'Lunney's, formerly an Irish bar and for four years now a c- & w club, has been packed and rollicking nightly since the pickers and singers moved in. Worldly New Yorkers dance with abandon— in the aisles, on table-tops if they must—to good-time music played by little-known groups. The Lone Star Cafe, a newer club that rolllicks on a more sedate level, features such name performers as James Taylor and Bob Swain, plus plans for live broadcasts of shows on WHN AM. The popularity of this all-country radio station is another sign of the music's ascendancy: the audience is spread throughout New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. It is large (1.5 million per week), and it is growing, though country-music purists tend to pooh-pooh its playlist.

The third and last signal I have caught is the emergence on city newsstands of Country Style, a tabloid magazine with the physical appearance of Rolling Stone (four-color on newsprint) and articles dealing solely with country music and its performers. It has been rumored that you can sell anything in New York if you know how (not true), but if this one goes, then Corn Dog, you rascal, you are a prophet!
JVC builds in what other receivers leave out.
A graphic equalizer.

The only way you can equal the realistic sound capability of JVC’s modestly priced S300 stereo receiver, is by adding an expensive, but highly versatile graphic equalizer, to another receiver.

For the price of a conventional receiver in its price range, the S300 has built-in JVC’s exclusive graphic equalizer system. With five zone controls to cover the entire musical range. While most high priced receivers offer bass and treble controls, and some include a third for midrange, none approach the precision and flexibility of the SEA graphic equalizer system developed and patented by JVC.

371,293 ways to hear better sound.
By adjusting the five detent tone controls covering the frequency range at 40Hz, 250Hz, 1000Hz, 5000Hz and 15,000Hz, you can create 371,293 different sounds. A feat never before achieved (with a stereo receiver) outside a professional recording studio. But, then, the S300 is a JVC professional.

Get better performance from your components and listening room.
Why do you need such tremendous variations in tone? Quite simply, they help you to overcome the shortcomings of the acoustics in your listening room; they also can help you to compensate for the deficiencies in old or poor recordings.

Finally, they can do wonders for the frequency response of your speakers, and where you place them.

SEA is really quite easy to use. For example, the 40Hz switch reduces record hum or rumble, and it can add greater clarity to the ultra low bass of an organ.

The problem of booming speakers is simply handled with the 250Hz switch. And in the important midranges, the 1000Hz control adds new dimension to the vocals of your favorite rock performers, while the 5000Hz switch brings out the best in Jascha Heifetz. You can even reduce tape hiss and diminish the harsh sound of a phono cartridge at high frequencies, with the 15,000Hz control.

SEA adjusts the sound of your system to the size of your room.
You see, small rooms tend to emphasize high frequencies, while large ones accentuate the lows. But the ingenious SEA allows you to compensate for room size and furnishings — so your system can perform the way it was meant to, wherever you are.

While most manufacturers reserve unique features for their top of the line model, JVC has included SEA in three of its receivers. The S300, the S400, and, of course, the top professional — the S600.

When you hear these receivers at your JVC dealer (call toll-free 800-221-7502 for his name), think of them as two components in one. In fact, it’s like having all the benefits of a graphic equalizer... without buying one.

JVC America, Inc., 58-75 Queens Midtown Expressway, Maspeth, N.Y. 11373 (212) 476-8300

CIRCLE NO. 16 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Some Very Clear Statements From Reviews of the Advent Model 300 Stereo Receiver.

From Julian Hirsch's report in Stereo Review:

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

"The Advent's actual sensitivity (ability to receive weak stations without excessive noise and distortion) is as high as will ever be needed by the majority of users. The phono preamplifier is designed to be immune to interaction with phono-cartridge inductance, which affects the high-frequency response of many preamplifiers, and to have an effectively negligible noise level (inaudible under conditions of practical use)."
“All of which brings us to the question of how a 15-watt receiver sounds in this day of 100- to 200-watt amplifiers and receivers. In a word, great! Critical A-B tests in FM reception between the Advent Model 300 and a receiver with more than ten times its power and three times its price revealed absolutely no audible difference between the two at any listening level within the sound-output capability of the Model 300 (of course, the other receiver could play much louder). Even that limit is surprisingly loud despite our use of fairly inefficient acoustic-suspension speakers.”

“The phono preamplifier sounded first-rate and as a demonstration of its low noise level, at maximum gain only a faint hiss could be heard within a foot or so of the speakers.”

“We find it refreshing that this caliber of sound, combined with reasonable control flexibility, has been designed into a really small, light package, one whose installation doesn’t call for the services of an Olympic weight lifter or special reinforced furniture.”

From an Equipment Report in High Fidelity:

“If it were possible to devise a performance-to-appearance ratio for audio products, those of Advent Corporation would, in all likelihood, be strong contenders for top honors. It’s not that they don’t look good, but that there has been no attempt to make them into sculptures. Their value (and thus the cost) has been put inside the box and is directed at the consumer’s ears, not his eyes…. This is the tradition that the 300 springs from and is meant to advance—and as far as we are concerned the advance has been made.”

“Separation could almost be mistaken for that of a supertuner. In fact, when reasonably strong signals are available, it is amazing how closely the FM sound of the Advent resembles that of tuners—without a preamp and power amp—whose prices are close to twice as much.”

“Perhaps the most striking feature of the 300 is its new phono preamp circuit…conventional measurements don’t tell the whole story. The key question is: what will it sound like with a cartridge rather than a test generator connected, when it has to operate with a complex source impedance. Advent’s engineers have studied this matter in depth and have designed the circuit for minimal impedance interaction. We found that an otherwise fine pickup that had seemed somewhat shrill was much smoother than we had thought possible—when it was connected to the Advent preamp. This tends to support the company’s boast that the 300 will audibly surpass many far more expensive units.”

“With moderately efficient speakers, we were able to generate substantial sound pressure levels before clipping set in. And the recovery from clipping, an important consideration in a small amp, is instantaneous and graceful.”

“Advent’s announced intention with the 300 is to make a receiver that, within its power capability, sounds as good as anything available at any price. While we cannot substantiate that claim—it is, after all, a partially subjective one—we cannot dismiss it as untenable either. And that, considering the price of the product, constitutes a remarkable accomplishment.”

[As a postscript to this report, HIGH FIDELITY indicated that it was uprating the performance of a previously tested phono cartridge because its high-frequency performance when used with the Advent 300 was free of an edgy quality it had exhibited when connected to several more expensive preamps. This kind of difference is exactly the point of the 300’s unique preamp design.]

If you would like more information on the Advent Model 300, including reprints of the full reviews excerpted for this ad, please send us the coupon.

Thank you.

To: Advent Corporation, 195 Albany St.,
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☐ Please send full information, including review reprints and a list of your dealers.

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Going on Record

By James Goodfriend

ABC CLASSICS

THE most visible result in the United States of the current internationalizing of classical record marketing is the appearance here of many new, or seemingly new, record labels. ABC’s new ABC Classics series is a case in point, a particularly interesting one visually, for though the jackets are designed and printed here, they have the typical appearance of European issues, with titles, notes, and texts, where applicable, in three languages. And they are quite as handsome as almost any of the European records they are meant to emulate. The price of a record in the ABC Classics line, though, is still $6.98, which is a dollar or two cheaper than most imports.

Although a variety of sources will be utilized for the recorded material to appear on ABC, the first release consists entirely of recordings produced by the Seon label of Germany. Seon, whose records have not been issued or widely imported here before, is the company run by Wolf Ericsson, one of Europe’s finest record producers, who was earlier responsible for most of the records in Telefunken’s Das Alte Werk series as well as certain records released by BASF. Seon is his own company.

Those familiar with Ericsson’s previous work will know what to expect here: highly capable, musicianly performers; a repertoire that focuses on the span from 1500 to 1800; early instruments or reproductions thereof; scrupulous adherence to musicological correctness; excellent, well-balanced recording without gimmicks of any sort. All these characteristics are evident in the ABC series, and ABC has added to them not only the packaging previously discussed, but first-rate pressings that are similarly comparable to their European models.

The first releases include a disc of Christmas music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (ABC1-67002), a two-disc set of choral music of Thomas Stoltzer (67003/2), an early sixteenth-century composer previously unrepresented in Swann; John Blow’s Ode on the Death of Mr. Henry Purcell plus songs by Blow (67004); a three-disc set of the complete sonatas for a wind instrument and continuo of Handel (67005/3); a volume of Baroque lute music (67006); J. S. Bach’s Musical Offering (67007); a recital by Gustav Leonhardt on early organs of Switzerland and other Alpine locations (67008); harpsichord pieces by the eighteenth-century composer Antoine Forqueray (67009), another new name in the catalog; Mozart’s first two violin concertos plus the concerto-style movements from his serenades (67010/2); Haydn’s String Quartets, Op. 20, Nos. 2 and 4 (67011); and a sampler record of individual tracks selected from the above (67001).

On its own terms, the musical level of the series is incredibly high, which is not to say that all the records will appeal equally to everyone. For me, the outstanding discs are those devoted to music by Blow, Forqueray, and Haydn, with the lute recital and the organ recital close behind, for it is there that I find the best blend of interesting repertoire and outstanding performance, and it is there that I get the peculiar feeling of “rightness” that results when the musicological approach and the sound of old instruments mesh with my own conception of what the music is all about.

In the case of the Haydn quartets, the matter is perfectly straightforward. The music is magnificent, the playing of the Esterházy Quartet warm and understanding, and the gut-strung instruments produce sounds so complementary to the style that one wonders why all performances of Haydn quartets do not sound that way. With the Forqueray disc it is less the rightness of sound than the unfamiliarity and interest of the music itself. Those who know the composer at all know him as a composer for the viola da gamba. These keyboard works, in fact, are arrangements (presumably by Forqueray himself and his keyboard-playing wife) of gamba pieces, but they are no less effective for that. Listeners musically sophisticated enough to while away hours with the clavecin music of Couperin and Rameau will find a further extension of that style here in Leonhardt’s performance—with perhaps a somewhat earthier compositional personality behind it.

John Blow’s elegy for his student and friend Henry Purcell is one of the great and striking musical works in English restoration. Its scoring for two counter-tenors, two recorders, and continuo has elicited outstanding recorded performances in the past, but this one is at least as good as the best of those. Rene Jacobs and James Bowman sing with awesome skill and great intensity of feeling, and the varied vocal works on side two call up equally fine renditions from all the performers. No one interested in Baroque music should be without this work and this record.

The “Alpine” organ recital is no longer a new idea—an assortment of Renaissance and Baroque music played on an assortment of Renaissance and Baroque organs—but the playing is very fine and the instruments do make some lovely sounds. The lute recital offers works by Sylvius Leopold Weiss, David Kellner, and J. S. Bach (Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro, BWV 998) played by Eugen M. Dombois, and while I cannot say that I have heard of the gentleman before, he is obviously one of the ranking lutenists in the world today. Truly, marvelous playing.

ABOUT most of the other records, I confess I have a few personal reservations. I simply cannot get used to the sound of Jaap Schroder’s Baroque violin playing in the Mozart concertos. There may be ample musicological justification for the instrument and the vibratoless style, but it does not seem to bring out the best in the music and that to me is a sign that something is wrong. Similarly, the Leonhardt-led performance of Bach’s Musical Offering seems to offer me less musically than some other performances (Rosen’s of the two ricercari, for example). I am not usually convinced that his resolutions of the problems are the final ones. Of the Thomas Stoltzer records, I am afraid I simply find the music rather thick and provincial and not up to that of his great Netherlandish contemporaries; others may feel differently, however.

The Handel sonatas, of course, are anything but dull. My sole objection to the set (besides rather inadequate notes) concerns some occasional difficulties of intonation that flute and recorder virtuoso Frans Brüggen incredibly seems to have with his period instruments. They do not, however, constitute enough of a flaw to spoil an otherwise beautifully played and produced set, and certainly the oboist is consistently fine.

In all, then, ABC Classics has brought us a considerable musical treasure here, and I must emphasize again the real quality—in research, performance, recording, pressing, and production—that is characteristic of the series. Despite individual tastes or specific objections, this is work on the highest level.
Here's How Dolby FM Gives You: More Signal | Less Noise

These curves show the improvement in maximum high-frequency output level with Dolby FM. Contemporary wide-range program material will not "fit" under the 100% modulation limit of the 75 microsecond conventional FM curve; the signal must be high-frequency limited (or reduced in overall level) enough to do so. Such program material will, however, fit under the 25 microsecond Dolby FM curve. (Note that these curves are maximum output curves; they are not frequency response curves in the normal sense. At low modulation levels both curves would be flat to 15 kHz.)

All curves were made on a typical new stereo receiver with full Dolby FM decoding capability. The receiver was driven from the rf output of a Sound Technology 1000A FM signal generator, operating at a frequency of 97 MHz. The rf level was set at 100 μV at the 300 ohm antenna input terminals of the receiver.

For the maximum high-frequency output curves, the output of a B&K 1024 audio sweep oscillator was fed into the FM generator at a level giving 100% FM modulation at all frequencies (±75 kHz deviation, including 19 kHz multiplex pilot). One stereo channel of the receiver (tape output) was fed directly into a B&K 2305 chart recorder. The Dolby FM/conventional FM switch on the receiver was then operated to give the two recordings shown.

For the noise level curves, the audio input to the FM generator was switched off. The receiver output was fed to a Radiometer FRA 3 wave analyzer which was coupled to the chart recorder and calibrated to give a flat chart recording with pink noise input. The Dolby FM/conventional FM switch on the receiver was then operated to produce the two noise spectrum recordings shown.

In all of the chart recordings note that there is a sharp drop in response above 15 kHz. This is normal for all FM receivers and is caused by the filters necessary for rejection of the 19 kHz and 36 kHz multiplex components.

These chart recordings show the noise reduction effect of Dolby FM. The top curve is the noise spectrum of conventional 75 microsecond FM. The bottom curve shows the reduced noise level of Dolby FM.

These chart recordings show how the Dolby FM technique increases the available high frequency dynamic range of FM broadcasting. The Dolby FM process works on both extremes of the dynamic range. The maximum permissible level of high frequency signals is increased, while low level noise is reduced. The 10 dB action of the Dolby B system is split in an optimum way between these two equally important areas of operation. The net result is an FM system which can pass signals from transmitter input to receiver output with high integrity.

To find out more about this new development, please write to us for further details. The following information is available:
1. Explanations and technical details on Dolby FM.
2. A list of stations with Dolby FM encoder units (160 stations).
3. A list of receivers with built-in Dolby FM circuits (45 models).

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MAY 1977
For now, the solution to radio-frequency interference in your audio system lies (largely) in your own hands

By John McVeigh

Over one hundred thousand people complained to the Federal Communications Commission last year about radio-frequency interference coming through their stereo systems, church public-address systems, intercoms, TV's, electric organs, juke boxes, tape recorders, hearing aids, and only the FCC knows what else. This is a dramatic increase over the figures for such interference recorded the last time STEREO REVIEW surveyed the problem for its readers (November 1972), and the reason for it is clear: the tremendous growth in the use of citizens band (CB) radio equipment over the past few years.

For those afflicted with this far-from-laughable electronic disorder, the big questions are two: What (who) causes it, and how can I stop it? Radio-frequency interference occurs when, for one reason or another, two electronic devices cannot function compatibly in the same environment. One or both will be adversely affected by electromagnetic radiation from the other. Power tools, fluorescent lights, thermostats, light dimmers, automotive ignition systems, radar, television, and radio transmitters (among many other things) all radiate electromagnetic energy. Television receivers, FM tuners, musical-instrument amplifiers, P.A. systems, tape decks, and audio preamps and amplifiers can all be influenced by this radiated energy, but our concern will be the RFI problems associated with audio systems.

A typical RFI incident starts in one of two ways. First, someone in your neighborhood is bitten by the "radio bug," gets a CB or ham license and some equipment, puts up an impressive-looking antenna, and starts transmitting. As luck has it, you immediately experience interference in your audio system, with the radio operator's voice being heard on top of whatever program source (tape, disc, or tuner) you are listening to—or perhaps only through your phono or tape inputs. Another RFI incident might start like this: you've lived down the block from a ham or CB'er for several years, and never had any interference problems. But now, after updating your component system with a new preamp, you're experiencing severe RFI. In either case, your natural reaction is annoyance or anger toward the ham or CB'er who is responsible for the interference. But is he responsible? Granted that it is his broadcast—it is also your equipment that is receiving it. Who should take steps to eliminate the interference?

The source of the interference might just as well be not a radio ham or a CB'er but a commercial AM, FM, or TV broadcaster. It might even be some doctor's diathermy machine. But the majority of cases reported to the FCC involve local radio amateurs or citizens-band operators, and, because of the sheer numbers involved, odds are that you are more likely to experience RFI from one of them. The remedies that will be described here, however, are applicable to any RFI problem—TV "sync buzz" interference from commercial broadcasters and all the irritatingly noisy rest.

Amateurs and CB'ers usually broadcast signals that are amplitude modulated. As with conventional AM radios, this means that the operator's voice varies the strength of the radio-frequency carrier signal. To recover the original information (the voice) a detection process is necessary. This means converting the modulated radio-frequency signal back into an audio signal. But the signal transmitted by the radio station—any radio station—is composed solely of radio-frequency energy well beyond the highest frequencies to which any audio component is designed to respond. Even a "wide-band" power amplifier's frequency response extends only to 100 or 200 kHz at most. In contrast, the lowest frequencies allocated for amateur radio use (1,800 to 2,000 kHz) are far above the upper limits of the amplifier's fre-
further between. Simply because of
stronger r.f. fields, they are fewer and
involve CB`ers rather than hams. Al-
picking characteristics of the audio equipment
and strength of the r.f. source, the
more or less unique in terms of the se-
many engineers involved with the prob-
and filtering they do not need? Further,
products at the lowest possible prices. This
means that they will include (at least at
the lower-cost end of a product line) as
little "extraneous" material as possible.
But what is extraneous, and what is
essential? Many manufacturers
define extraneous to mean anything
that is not necessary to the meeting of
published specifications or to operation
in a "normal" environment. Those
special circuits, shieldings, and extra
parts that might allow an audio compo-
nent to function in the presence of
strong r.f. fields are deemed extrane-
ous in most designs, and in most instal-
lations they probably are. If only, say,
5 per cent of all the audio components
sold end up in locations where RFI is a
problem, then why should 95 per cent
of the buyers pay extra for shielding
and filtering they do not need? Further,
many engineers involved with the prob-
lem consider each RFI situation to be
more or less unique in terms of the se-
verity of the interference, the frequen-
cy and strength of the r.f. source, the
characteristics of the audio equipment
picking it up, and which specific
"cures" may be required.

The majority of RFI cases now in-
volve CB`ers rather than hams. Al-
though hams generally use more pow-
erful transmitters and thus generate
stronger r.f. fields, they are fewer and
further between. Simply because of
their larger numbers, CB`ers are more
likely to be causing RFI in audio com-
ponents than radio amateurs are. Also,
not every CB`er observes the 4-watt
power limitation, and the use of illegal,
high-power equipment can certainly
enhance the probability of RFI.

Both radio amateurs and CB`ers are
supposed to obey FCC regulations
dealing with the purity of the signals
they radiate, their power output, and
other matters. Although different rules
are applicable to each type of transmis-
sion, they essentially hold the operator
responsible for ensuring that spurious
signals that could cause interference to
radio receivers of other services are
suppressed. An example of these spuri-
ous signals are harmonics that appear
at multiples of the operating frequency.
These harmonics can cause TV and FM
interference, but they are usually too
weak to pose a problem to audio com-
ponents. Rather, it is the strong r.f. sig-
 nal at the operating frequency, whether
or not harmonics are radiated, that gets
into audio systems. When a ham or CB
operator is radiating a legal signal un-
der the authority of a license issued to
him by the FCC, his activities are not
only protected by federal law; they are
encouraged as well. Such operations
are deemed to be "in the public inter-
est" for a variety of reasons. However,
it can also be said that the audiophile
has a right (he has no specified "legal"
right) to use his equipment unhindered
in the privacy of his own home.

The Federal government has (so far)
adopted the position that the only avail-
able solution to this conflict of interests
is to apply the remedies—such as are
available—at the audio-equipment end.
It therefore becomes the procedural
and financial responsibility of the audi-
ofile—not the ham or CB`er—to take
the necessary steps to eliminate the in-
terference. Fair or unfair, that is the
current legal situation.

However, if the radio transmitter is
being operated illegally, you can and
should report the matter to the nearest
field office of the FCC. Although the
Commission does not have a large field
staff, it will usually investigate a situa-
tion if several complaints are received.

And if a CB`er is not licensed, does not
identify himself with call letters (nick-
names or "handles" do not count),
talks continuously with another station
for more than five minutes, uses ob-
scene language or (worse) an illegal
amount of power, the Commission can
force him off the air, impose fines, and/or
even imprison him. And you should
note that this station is being forced off
the air not because you experience RFI
from its transmissions, but because it
violates FCC operating rules!

With that station off the air, your
RFI problems may cease—at least until
the next one in your vicinity goes on
the air. But if that operator obeys FCC
regulations, RFI will plague you until
you take steps to eliminate it in your
audio installation.

Anti-RFI Procedures

The first step toward solving an RFI
problem is to contact the manufacturer
of your equipment for whatever advice
he has to offer. Sometimes he will pro-
vide a few small parts that can easily be
added to the components involved. If
you have several different brands of
components in your installation, write
each of the manufacturers. Note that
under present law a manufacturer is
not compelled to help you. The fact
that his equipment is RFI-sensitive
does not mean that there is any obliga-
tion or liability on his part. Of course,
most manufacturers will do whatever
they can to alleviate the problem short
of redesigning the unit completely (that
may ultimately be what is required).

The radio operator is under no compul-
sion to help you either, but in the inter-
est of good relations he may cooperate.
Radio amateurs, who must pass elec-
tronics theory tests to receive their li-
censes, are often very helpful. CB`ers,
however, need not be technically profi-
cient to be licensed, and most probably
wouldn't know where to start helping if
they wanted to.

It goes without saying that you
should approach a radio operator—
assuming you can physically locate
him—in a courteous and reasonable
way (remember that he probably has
the law on his side). Having been in-
volved personally (on both sides) in a
few RFI incidents, I can assure you
that a bit of courtesy and tact can go a
long way toward resolving any of these
problems. Explain to the ham or CB`er
the nature of the interference, the
times you have noted it, and what kind
of equipment you have. Unless the
TRACKING DOWN RADIO-FREQUENCY INTERFERENCE

R.F. INTERFERENCE

One input affected

RFI will most often be experienced only on low-level inputs such as phono and tape-deck microphone inputs. Disconnect shielded cables from affected program source to input jacks.

More than one input affected, but not all.

Treat each input separately as follows:

Does RFI stop?

Yes

RFI is either being picked up by shielded cables and detected in preamp or entering program source, being detected, and passed on to preamp. Disconnect cables from program source, but leave connected to preamp inputs and positioned as if connected to source.

No

RFI entering before volume control.

RFI entering after volume control.

Does volume control affect interference level?

Yes

RFI entering program source via cables. Treat input cables with shielding, program source inputs with filtering.

No

Unplug program-source a.c. line cord.

RFI stops?

Yes

Consult manufacturer for advice, outlining the steps you have taken and results noted.

No

RFI being picked up by program source. Disconnect any input cables to program source.

RFI stops?

Yes

If this does not stop RFI, further treatment is required inside program-source cabinet. Assistance of service technician may be needed.

No

Still near RFI?

Yes

Abruptly

RFI being picked up directly by internal program-source circuitry. If program source is not totally encased in metal, add a properly grounded shield.

Gradually

Unplug program-source a.c. line cord.

Figure 2.

transmissions are blatantly illegal, don’t call up or write to the FCC demanding immediate action—you simply won’t get it. What you will get is a copy of “FO Bulletin No. 25,” which states, in part, “... the Commission cannot give any protection to audio devices which respond to signals from a nearby radio transmitter. The problem is not caused by the improper operation or by technical deficiencies of the radio transmitter. ... The only ‘cure’ is by treatment of the audio device. You should therefore contact a qualified technician, the dealer, or the manufacturer of your audio device ... for assistance.”

But don’t despair! In many cases, RFI can be suppressed without expending large amounts of money or time. A qualified technician’s services will sometimes be required, but often one or more simple external remedies can be applied without even getting inside your equipment, and no special tools or electronic technical experience are required.

The basic goal of RFI suppression in audio equipment is to prevent the radio-frequency signal from reaching that point in your equipment’s circuits where it is converted (detected or demodulated) into an audio signal. There are three general ways of achieving this result: grounding, shielding, and filtering. In mild cases of RFI, only one of the three might be needed. More severe interference can require the combination of two or three methods. Grounding involves bringing the chassis of all components to an earth ground. This makes the metal chassis electrically “dead,” preventing radio fields from passing through them. However, grounding must be done in exactly the right way or intolerable hum-producing “ground loops” will be generated (more on this later).

Shielding means protecting vulnerable circuitry by surrounding it with a grounded layer of metal, be it in sheet,
The third method of suppressing RFI is filtering. It is accomplished by installing one or more devices at critical points in the audio system's signal path either to block the passage of r.f. or to shunt it to ground. The filter components most commonly used are capacitors, resistors, and inductors in the form of r.f. chokes (turns of wire wrapped on a cylindrical form), ferrite beads (small cylinders which are strung over wires like jewelry beads), and ferrite toroids or "rings." Each has specific advantages and disadvantages for use at a particular point in the audio system. Basically, the goal of filtering is to prevent r.f. from reaching critical stages in an amplifier without otherwise affecting the amplifier's performance.

Before any (or, if necessary, all) of these remedies are applied, you must first determine at what point(s) the r.f. signal is entering the system. The task can be made easier if the radio operator will cooperate by providing you with a series of test transmissions.

Let's assume that you have an audio system set up as in Figure 1 on the following page—a turntable, a tape deck, an FM tuner, a pre-amplifier, a power amplifier, and two speakers. (RFI-hunting procedures will generally be the same for systems using receivers or integrated amplifiers, but simpler because there are fewer component interconnections.) When the radio operator is transmitting, turn the preamp's selector switch to each position (phono, tape, tuner, etc.) and note when the RFI is experienced. You might get RFI in all modes or in just one or two. Typically, the phono input will yield the most intense r.f. interference because its active circuitry has the most gain (amplification). (Continued overleaf)
It would be wise to pause right here and point out that the entire RFI hunting procedure is illustrated in the large chart, Figure 2, on the previous two pages. This is not exactly the easiest procedure in the world to follow (no trouble-shooting system is), so in the interests of clarity and at the risk of redundancy I will be taking you through the chart by hand, so to speak, using slightly different language (if not procedures) at times that may dispel an occasional ambiguity. If you understand the purpose of the procedures, the step-by-step instructions will make far more sense. To return.

After determining which program sources are affected, unplug the corresponding shielded cables from the preamp. If all modes are affected, remove all input cables. If the RFI still has not stopped, turn the volume control up and down. Does the loudness of the RFI change with the position of the control, or is it unaffected by it? In the former case, the signal is entering the system before the volume control. In the latter, the r.f. is being picked up after it. Often, the volume-control setting will have no influence on the RFI. If this is the case, unplug the cables from the preamp to the power amplifier. If the interference persists, detection is taking place in the power amplifier.

Now you must find out how the signal is entering the component(s) detecting the r.f. signal. It can do so in one of three ways. First, the signal can be picked up by the a.c. power line and enter the audio component via its power cord. Second, the input and/or output leads or cables can act as antennas and introduce the r.f. at their corresponding jacks. These two are the most common. The third—direct signal pickup within the component’s enclosure—occurs only when the r.f. field is really strong. It is also the most difficult and inconvenient to correct. In most cases, the first two can be dealt with through means external to the device.

If the preamp volume control does affect the RFI, plug in all the shielded cables in the system and switch the input selector to the affected input. (When there is more than one affected program source, repeat the following procedure for each. However, if the problem is in the power amplifier, don’t bother—just read on.) Unplug the program source’s a.c. power cord from its socket and wrap its full length around your hand. If the RFI stops, the r.f. signal is entering the component through the line cord. If this doesn’t affect the interference, turn the preamp’s volume control to near minimum and remove the shielded cables of that program-source component from its output jacks. Leave the cables plugged into the preamp and positioned as if they were connected to the source.

If this silences the RFI, the signal is being detected inside the component. If it does not, try unplugging the cables from the input jacks of the preamp. In cases where the RFI stops after this has been done, the signal is being picked up by the cables and detected inside the preamp. If the RFI persists, there are only a few possibilities left: First, unplug the preamp’s power cord and wrap it around your hand to inhibit its action as an antenna. If the RFI stops, the signal is getting into the preamp via the power cord. If it continues, reconnect the power cord and remove the cables from the preamp output jacks but leave them plugged into the power amplifier and positioned normally. Cessation of interference indicates that the signal is being picked up somewhere within the preamp, where it is being rectified and passed on to the power amplifier. If RFI continues, unplug the cables from the input jacks on the power amplifier. If the RFI stops, it means that the cables are acting as antennas, passing the signal into the power amplifier where it is detected and amplified.

If you still (!) experience RFI, unplug the power amplifier’s line cord. If the interference stops instantly, you have discovered the signal’s route into the system. If the RFI dies away slowly as the amplifier’s power-supply capacitors discharge, reinsert the power cord into its socket. Disconnect the speaker leads from the output terminals and check for the presence or absence of RFI either by watching the amplifier’s power meters or by listening to a pair of headphones (make the effective length of the headphone cable as short as possible by wrapping it around your hand). In all but the rare cases where the r.f. signal is being picked up by internal amplifier wiring, this will kill any remaining RFI. You have isolated the signal’s entry path to the speaker leads, which are often quite long and can work as very effective antennas.

Keeping RFI Out

The procedure just outlined, if followed methodically, will uncover one or more r.f. signal-entry paths. Now that you know where the signal is getting in, you can determine the steps necessary to keep it out. Signals riding in on the a.c. power line are easy to deal with, no matter which component is affected. All that’s required is the installation of a “brute-force” line filter or a ferrite toroid or bar. [Line filters such as the Model C-509-L SA by the J. W. Miller Division of Bell Industries (they also manufacture filters for speaker outputs and phono-jack inputs), the Model CBBS-1 by Cornell...
Dubilier, and the Sprague Electric Company's Model F-500 (all rated to pass 5 amperes a.c., or about 550 watts) can be ordered from many radio-supply stores.] From the consumer's point of view, they are the easiest to use. All you do is plug the filter's line cord into the wall, ground the metal case (the screw holding the socket plate to the wall is often an effective grounding point), and plug the component's line cord into the socket on the filter case. The filter allows the 60-Hz a.c. power to reach the component but blocks any r.f. riding in on the line. Since such filters can pose a serious shock hazard if they malfunction, be sure to get one that bears the "UL" (Underwriters Laboratories) approval.

Ferrite bars and toroids (rings) perform the same function as brute-force filters—they let the a.c. power in but keep the r.f. out. They are also inherently safer than in-line filters. [Large electronics supply houses (especially those catering to radio amateurs) often stock them, but such distributors are not as common as they were in the past. Mail-order suppliers of Ferrite materials are listed in the accompanying box.] Using ferrite forms is relatively simple. Wrap at least ten to twenty turns of power cord on the rod or around the ring (see Figure 3). Secure the ends with PVC electrical tape, and make sure you form the coil as close to the point where the cord enters the component as possible. That's all there is to it.

When the RFI is arriving at a component via another path, other steps must be taken. The first thing to do is to examine all wire connections, plugs, and clips. For example, if the pins of your phono cartridge are corroded and the clips are not making good contact, signal rectification could be taking place right at that point. The same holds true for the phono plugs of shielded cables. Make sure that all metal-to-metal joints are clean and secure. Crimp phono-plug shells or cartridge clips slightly to ensure firm contact with jacks or pins. Polish any corroded plugs or jacks with a fine grade of sandpaper. In some cases, simply cleaning up all the connections may be enough to stop r.f. interference.

**Grounding**

The next procedures to consider are grounding and shielding. These are allied remedies: a chassis acts as a shield, for example, but it won't be very effective as such unless it is grounded. It is important that all components in the system be properly grounded, but you must do this carefully. Otherwise, ground loops will result, possibly producing high hum levels. Figure 4 illustrates the point. At A, you can see that there are two conductors running between the chassis of the preamp and the power amplifier. This produces a ground loop. At B, both chassis are tied together by a common grounding strap, but the shield of the cable is not connected to the power amplifier's input jack. (Only one channel is shown for simplicity.) Here no ground loop is present. The general rule is to connect the chassis together with one conductor only.

A grounding strap of heavy copper braid or wire is the best candidate, but it may not prevent ground loops from occurring—especially if you are using commercially prepared patch cords with molded connectors (these invariably tie the shield to the connectors at both ends). The way to get around this is to disconnect the shield at one plug. Cut carefully around the cable near the point where it meets the plug. Severing the insulation will expose the shield wires, which can then be snipped and trimmed back so they won't accidentally come in contact with anything. Note, however, that some components (particularly preamps with "floating" input grounds) will not function when the shields are interrupted in this way.

When reinstalling a component that has had its signal grounds altered, turn the volume down fully and advance it very cautiously just in case you have set up a hum situation.

**Shielding**

Although you might find that a good grounding system stops the RFI, more treatment may be required. Some very inexpensive audio components are packaged in wood or plastic enclosures and lack a metal "wrap-around" beneath the cosmetic shell. Plastic or wood cabinets offer no resistance to the passage of r.f., while metal cabinets can be effective r.f. shields. If your equipment does not have metallic cabinets or sub-enclosures and you have determined that the signal is being picked up and rectified inside, you will have to shield the affected components with metal.

Copper flashing or brass screening is ideal for this purpose. Staple the screening to the inside of the cabinet and solder all portions of the screening together, leaving as few gaps as possible—none, if you can manage it. It may be that when you reinstall the now-

**Figure 3.** The proper way of wrapping cables and cords around ferrite rings and rods. The ferrite form should be kept near the component's rear panel.

**Figure 4.** In (A), the existence of two separate ground paths between components creates the possibility of a ground loop. In (B), the shield of the signal cable is detached at one end, leaving only a single ground path.
shaded cover the copper screening will be automatically grounded to the metal chassis. If not, solder a lead to the screening and connect it to the chassis at the main grounding tie point. Be very careful when installing the screening to prevent accidental short circuits between it and electrically "live" portions of the component circuitry. Don't allow it to droop. If necessary, staple thin cardboard over the screening to serve as an insulator between it and the chassis-mounted components. If installed properly, the screening will have no effect on the component's performance, but it will prevent r.f. from getting into the circuits. In most cases where the signal is not entering via the power line, patch cords, or speaker leads, a good grounding and shielding installation will eliminate the problem.

Now let's look at the remaining r.f. "ports of entry"—the speaker leads and interconnecting cables. These can act as antennas, picking up the r.f. and delivering it to the component, where it is rectified. The problem here is how to allow these leads (and the circuits connecting to them) to function normally with audio while blocking r.f.

There are several ways of doing this. The first is to use specially shielded leads. Most audio cables have the configuration shown in Figure 5A. It consists of an inner conductor, center insulation, and shielding wires that spiral around the inner conductor and insulation, plus an outer plastic jacket. Although the spiral shield is fairly effective at audio frequencies, it doesn't work too well at radio frequencies. To improve the shielding, you can either replace the patch cord with one made of coaxial cable (Figure 5B), such as RG-59-U, the type used in some TV or FM antenna installations, or you can slip tubular copper braid over the existing patch cord. Be sure to connect the braid to the system ground.

Where two conductors (speaker leads, for example) must be shielded, you can use the cable shown in Figure 5C. This type of cable is available in 18- and 16-gauge sizes and can be used for most speaker-wire runs. Again, be sure the braided shield is tied to the system ground. (This and all the cable shown in Figure 5 are available from large electronics supply houses under brand names such as Alpha and Belden. Copper braid can also be obtained from these sources.)

Filtering

The final method of RFI treatment is to install filters in the leads picking up RFI. Most useful in accomplishing this are discrete filters that employ ferrite bars, toroids, ferrite beads, and small capacitors. Let's consider the speaker leads first. They can pick up and deliver a strong r.f. signal to the output terminals of the amplifier. The r.f. is passed back to an earlier stage by the feedback loop where it is converted into audio. The audio is then treated by the later stages as a normal signal: it is amplified and ultimately heard through the speakers. The best cure is to block the r.f. before it gets into the circuits by using an appropriate filter, by forming r.f. chokes from the speaker leads and ferrite toroids or bars (Figure 3), by shielding the speaker leads with braid (or the use of braid-shielded, two-conductor cable as in Figure 5C), and/or by installing shunt capacitors and/or ferrite beads as necessary.

The proper way to install shunt capacitors is shown in Figure 6. Inexpensive disc ceramic capacitors rated at 250 volts (or higher) and 0.001 to 0.01 microfarad (μF) are suitable. The capacitors will appear as a short circuit to r.f. signals, preventing them from entering the power amplifier. However, they will essentially be open circuits (as if they weren't there) to the audio output signals. Thus they will have no adverse effect on frequency response. Some amplifiers might act up if a capacitor is installed directly across the speaker terminals; therefore, consult with the manufacturer of your amplifier before installing capacitors.

Ferrite forms can be used alone or together with shunt capacitors and/or cable shielding. Serious cases of RFI may require the use of all three suppression methods. Ferrite beads can also be used. One or more are slipped over the speaker lead as close to the amplifier terminals as possible. These devices act as resistances to r.f. but let audio signals flow unimpeded. Again, beads might reduce but not eliminate the interference in severe cases, and shielding, grounding, and the use of capacitors might also be required.

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Figure 5. Various shielded cables. (A) is a standard type for patch cords. (B) has a braided copper sleeve for better shielding. (C) and (D) have two inner conductors plus shield and are useful for speaker cables (C) and antenna lead-ins (D).

Figure 6. Disc capacitors of recommended value (see text) will shunt RFI picked up by the speaker wires to ground when connected as illustrated. The chassis screws shown can actually be any handy nearby grounding point.
Ferrite beads can also be used at the preamplifier and program sources. In some cases, beads will have to be mounted inside the component's cabinet on the "hot" leads at the input and output jacks. A small amount of unsoldering and resoldering will be required. Beads can also be mounted on the leads to a tape deck's record, playback, and erase heads (but this sort of delicate work is perhaps best left to an experienced technician). Shielded cables can also be treated with ferrite bars or rings, as in Figure 3.

FM tuners might be overloaded by strong short-wave radio signals. The use of shielded twin lead or coaxial antenna feedline can help, as can the installation of copper screening. (Chassis grounding is a must for this approach.) Sometimes a high-pass filter is needed to stop tuner overload. This type of filter blocks all signals below about 40 MHz, preventing CB and short-wave amateur signals from reaching the antenna input but passing FM signals to stop tuner overload. This type of filter is useful for this application. They are installed at the antenna terminals of the tuner. (Incidentally, these filters are also useful for stopping interference in television reception.) The Drake filters are available from many electronics supply houses.

Phono preamps are best treated with ferrite beads and bars or toroids. The use of braid shield or coaxial input leads is also important. Shunt capacitors are not usually desirable at the phono input because they can have a detrimental effect on frequency response. However, coaxial cable such as RG-59 can be used to replace spiral-shield input leads. The capacitance of this type of coax is even less than that of "low-capacitance" spiral shielded cable, making it totally compatible with stereo and CD-4 systems.

The great majority of RFI cases can be dealt with successfully using one or more of the techniques that have been outlined here. However, it is always easier to eliminate interference when you have the cooperation of the radio operator. Remember, though, that any costs involved must be borne by you. Although that might seem unfair, it is the law as promulgated by the administrative agency of the government in charge of such matters (the FCC). Some irate people have attempted civil lawsuits against radio-operator neighbors, but these suits have invariably failed—and on occasion even prompted harassment counter suits brought by the radio operators. The courts have consistently refused to penalize a radio operator when he abides by FCC regulations. Hams and CB'ers, however, are two different breeds of cat. The ham usually has a reasonable degree of electronic knowhow; the CB'er does not. It will be helpful to solicit a ham's cooperation in discovering how r.f. is getting into your system and in applying appropriate remedies; you won't get that cooperation by harassing him.

In response to the growing RFI problem, bills have been introduced in the last two sessions of Congress that would require the FCC to set resistance-to-RFI standards for all home-entertainment devices. However, both times Congress has adjourned before acting on them and the bills have expired. But it seems only a matter of time before an RFI bill becomes law. Any standards adopted under such a law will be reasonable, we hope, and they should not be developed without the technical advice of the audio manufacturers who would be affected.

For the present, however unfair it might seem, you as a consumer must tackle the RFI problem on your own. As mentioned earlier, manufacturers anxious to keep their customers' good will often provide parts and advice. By all means, write to the manufacturer describing the nature of the interference and the model and serial numbers of the affected components. Armed with your persistence, his advice, and whatever the radio operator's cooperation, you can lick Radio Frequency Interference.

John McVeigh is an electrical engineer, an audiophile, and a radio amateur holding call letters WB2BLS. He is an associate editor with Popular Electronics magazine.
Take a spin on our new fully automatic turntable. And leave the direct driving to us.
With Sony’s new PS-4300, you just sit back and enjoy the ride. Wherever the record takes you.

That’s the blissful simplicity of a fully automatic turntable.

But the PS-4300 is more than purely practical. We like to think of it as a model union: combining the convenient and the complex.

It is a profoundly engineered machine, with intelligent design slashing through down to the smallest detail.

We gave brushes the brush.

The motor that powers the PS-4300 is brushless and slotless. Direct drive, if you will.

This deceptively simple construction makes for a smooth-running motor with less friction and noise than traditional DC motors. And it eliminates cogging.

What’s more, this smooth-running motor is monitored by a smoothly-engineered 8-pole magnetic pick-up head. And our magnetic speed sensor works through an intricate electronic feedback system; driving the platter directly—without a jumble of belts and pulleys getting in the way.

So our torque is not a turkey, and we’ve got low wow and flutter and high speed stability to boot.

An electric eye.
For your ear.
Hands off the PS-4300!

Our optical sensing system automatically returns the arm when your record is over.

Optical sensing is light years ahead of the conventional mechanical linkage. Eliminating the pressure and distortion you’d ordinarily get at the end of a record.

A tone-arm that’s a strong arm.

Now we’re not calling anyone clumsy. But there is the chance you might make a mistake and grab hold of the tone-arm while it’s in motion.

That’s why the PS-4300 has a tone-arm that’s more than just statically balanced. It comes with a protective clutch device. (The only clutch you’ll find on our fully automatic turntable.)

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Moving from arms to feet, ours are designed to cut feedback. They’re rubber-soled: suspended by cup-shaped rubber shock absorbers.

And they’re adjustable, letting you level the turntable. So you might say our feet come with elevator shoes.

Our vibration-reducers are great shakes.
Sometimes the cabinet itself can vibrate—distorting what comes out of it.

Not so with the PS-4300.

Our cabinet is built out of a material with a low Q. Low Q material hardly vibrate, and nobody watches their P’s and Q’s like Sony.

Even our platter has been undercoated with a damping material.

And what looks like a bad case of acne on our record mat is a series of bumps that provide an air cushion and absorb vibration.

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You can see that we’ve covered just about everything when we created the PS-4300.

Even the cover.

Our dust cover is ingeniously simple. When closed, it leaves the controls accessible.

And what controls they are! One-touch, LED-indicated switches for start/stop and repeat.

One light tap starts everything going, while your record, under the dust cover, is in splendid isolation.

So if what you’re looking for is an unmatched fully automatic direct drive turntable, drive on over to Sony.

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CIRCLE NO. 37 ON READER SERVICE CARD
THE BEACH BOYS: Eleven Years On

By Steve Simels

Top to bottom, Brian and Dennis Wilson, Al Jardine, Mike Love, and Carl Wilson (Capitol Records photo).
P

or culture makes for strange bedfellows. For example, English writer Kingsley Amis, in his New Maps of Hell, the first (during the Fifties) serious scholarly appraisal of science fiction, noted a previously uncharted affinity sci-fi fans had for jazz. We all know that kids today have been raised largely on movies and TV and consequently don’t (or can’t) read much sci-fi or anything else—but they can listen, so critics have noted another affinity, that between movies, TV, and rock-and-roll. Some have gone so far as to suggest that most rock critics, once generally assumed to be frustrated rock stars, are in reality frustrated film critics, as if John Mendelssohn wanted to be Andrew Sarris rather than Mick Jagger.

All this is, I think, at least slightly off-base. If rock-and-roll was at its inception (and, to a certain extent, is now) a bastard child, an outlaw music, then the real visual equivalent of rock is not TV but that equally scorned and congressionally investigated American phenomenon, the lowly comic book. In the Fifties, remember, both were thought to be direct causes of juvenile delinquency, and ten years later, as political unrest was sweeping our campuses, it was probably true that young radicals were just as likely to own the latest issue of Spiderman as the latest Airplane album.

I was reminded of all this as I reread something Jules Feiffer wrote in his The Great Comic Book Heroes. He had been one of those youngsters involved in creating the so-called “Golden Age” of comics, and he observes that kids then thought of themselves as “a generation, the way the men who began the movies must have felt... out to be splendid somehow.” Just as Pete Townshend, John, Paul, Mick, Keith, Brian, Eric, and all the others must be splendid somehow. “So you used to shake ’em down,” he sings, “but now you stop and think about your dignity.” His solution? Simple: “Come back, baby, rock-and-roll never forgets.”

But there is one group—and one group only—for whom this preoccupation with the aging process seems to have no relevance whatsoever. Three incidents, rather widely spaced in time, come to mind. It is 1965, it is night, and I am outside the Asbury Park Convention Hall, where I am going to attend the very first rock show of my young life. I look up, and there on the roof, clowning around (turning their names on the marquees upside down) and waving to a horde of fifteen-year-old girls who like myself have just recognized them, are ... The Beach Boys. Carl, the lead guitarist, my hero and my junior by mere months (we are both seventeen), is acting particularly sily, and I get weeks of conversational mileage out of recounting his behavior (and mine) to my high-school buddies.

The year 1973 finds me at yet another Beach Boys concert, and I am in the third row. Behind me another gaggle of fifteen-year-old girls are working themselves into hysteria over the good looks of drummer Dennis, trying to persuade me to pass a note up to him on stage. During the band’s final encore, a paradoxically good-natured version of the Stones’ “Jumpin’ Jack Flash,” Carl falls to the floor and begins to flail at his phallic instrument. Accidentally, our eyes meet and we crack up simultaneously at the foolishness of it all.

It’s late 1976. I am emerging from Penn Station, surrounded by new hordes (where do they come from?) of fifteen-year-old girls just leaving a Beach Boys concert upstairs at Madison Square Garden. I ask one how the show was, and she is practically speechless. Her friends carry a huge banner reading “Welcome Back, Brian,” and one informs me breathlessly that Carl actually waved to her. I curse myself for not having been able to obtain tickets.

... these evocations of youthful joys and sorrows were on a level approaching the very finest folk art, and few could resist them."

Something similar has certainly happened to rock-and-roll. With the exception of the Bay City Rollers, who (sorry, kids) hardly count, there is nary a rock star who isn’t pushing thirty or already well past it, be they new sensations like Peter Frampton and Patti Smith or established artists. In other words, they are archetypes of those very grownups who made a whole generation need to have rock fantasies in the first place. It’s late 1976. I am emerging from Penn Station, surrounded by new hordes (where do they come from?) of fifteen-year-old girls just leaving a Beach Boys concert upstairs at Madison Square Garden. I ask one how the show was, and she is practically speechless. Her friends carry a huge banner reading “Welcome Back, Brian,” and one informs me breathlessly that Carl actually waved to her. I curse myself for not having been able to obtain tickets.

The point of all this reminiscence? It is now eleven years on, and, despite the attrition of years, the virtual disappearance of the surf and car culture from which they sprang, and the inevitably distancing from their audience their growth from boys to men must bring, the Beach Boys are still fueling the fantasies of adolescents and of those of us long beyond them. This is a most remarkable achievement; other musicians who, like them, began their careers at the same age as their first fans have for the most part hung on to these same fans as the greater part of their audience. Paul McCartney, Dylan, the Stones, and the Who (to say nothing of Elvis, who is in many ways outside time entirely) have, to be sure, attracted new devotees. But only the Beach Boys’ audience, among those of the classic rockers’, seems to remain forever young, forever fifteen.

The answer, I think, is something to do with Innocence, which, like most things in life, is a much more complicated proposition than it at first appears. Certainly, the Beach Boys were innocents when they began; how could they, a bunch of teenagers growing up in an unremarkable suburb like Hawthorne, California, as a tight little family unit and interested in nothing more sophisticated than cars and girls, have been otherwise? You can see it on their earliest album covers—those incredibly young faces smiling on the back of “Surfing U.S.A.” seem like extras from the cast of Leave It to Beaver or some weird, surreal foreboding of Happy Days. But there is pain in the passing of innocence, and Brian Wil-
son, who captured the group from its inception and who blossomed as an enormous talent almost overnight, felt it most strongly. In Guy Peellaert’s satirical picture book called *Rock Dreams* there is a portrait of the Brian of those halcyon days. He is seated at the piano, "alone," in Nik Cohn’s words, "in his room, with his weight problems, his ear disease, his allergies, his pathological shyness." Out of this he created a fantasy world, and "wrote dreams about outdoors where the sun was always shining, where the cosmic surfer’s waves unfurled towards infinity, and where everyone was golden young and beautiful forever."

But Brian was not merely an overly sensitive teenager; he was a remarkably gifted musician, and the fantasies that obsessed him turned into a series of records that sounded like nothing anyone had ever heard before. Grafting the falsetto harmonies of the Four Freshmen onto the rock rhythms of Chuck Berry, and then experimenting with the "wall-of-sound" techniques of Phil Spector, he unleashed a seemingly unending stream of classic singles. He was the first member of a rock band ever to assert artistic control over his own product—a commonplace now, but downright avant-garde in 1964. Some rocked like mad ("Little Deuce Coupe, Dance Dance Dance, I Get Around"); some were ballads of achingly melodic beauty ("Surfer Girl, The Warmth of the Sun, In My Room"). Either way, these evocations of youthful joys and sorrows were on a level approaching the very finest folk art, and few could resist them.

For the first few years of their career, the Beach Boys clung to their innocence as they traveled the world in triumph, enormous international stars. Oh, to be sure, they quickly grew to understand that it was all *Image*. None of them was an intellectual, but they were smart enough to realize they were role playing, even though the events were real enough. As the world rapidly changed, their innocence began to weigh heavily against them. They had represented good times, hedonism, materialism, even an Andy Hardy-ish school spirit, and by the middle of the decade the teenagers who had once adored the Boys were rejecting those values with a vengeance.

To their credit, the Beach Boys refused to lie about who they were; they did not pretend, as the rest of the youth culture did, that they had never been unhip, and there is a remarkable recorded document to prove it. In 1966, as kids all over the country began to flirt with drugs, to discover their disapproval of the Vietnam War, and as other musicians fiddled with feedback and smashed their instruments, the Beach Boys put out an album ("Beach Boys Party," now deleted) which consisted of nothing heavier than the five of them, plus assorted girl friends, noodling around on acoustic instruments with a bunch of moldy old rock songs.

After that, the full fury of the "Love Generation" was marshaled against them. Brian was on the board of directors of the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival, but his band’s appearance was canceled because of quite legitimate fears that the hippie audience would laugh them off the stage. A later billing at the Fillmore East, which attracted a mere eight hundred diehard fans, was denounced in the underground press with headlines screaming "The Fillmore Sells Out!" Next, the wolves appeared at their door, and the innocents welcomed them with open arms. Some were well-meaning academics like Leonard Bernstein. Some were journalists who still admired the band and wanted to legitimize that admiration by spreading stories of the eccentric nature of Brian’s "genius," winding up muddling him totally with drugs he was unprepared to deal with. Some were simply leeches, a horde of "business advisors" who knew the Boys were millionaires regardless of what the hippies thought of them, and others were downright evil, like Charles Manson, who actually wound up living in Dennis’ house and co-writing songs with him for a brief period before his mega-lomania turned to blood lust.

The amazing thing is that, throughout this whole chaotic period, the best Beach Boys turned out a series of albums that are perhaps their best and certainly among the least dated relics of their era. There was "Pet Sounds," Brian’s pre-"Sgt. Pepper" concept record, both a triumph of studio technology and a heart-rending chronicle of lost love. There was "Smiley Smile," a curious but entertaining piecing together of fragments of a project Brian had been working on with Van Dyke Parks. And, finally, there was "Wild Honey." Cut totally in Brian’s basement studio, it anticipated the return to pre-psychadelic simplicity of Dylan’s "John Wesley Harding" by several months, but, for all its primitive sound and back-to-the-roots naiveté, it was as perfect a piece of *music* as they had ever come up with—ten gorgeous originals and perhaps the first cover version of a Stevie Wonder tune ever attempted by any white rock band. Despite the success of the title track as a single, "Wild Honey" sold hardly at all, and it is only now beginning to get its critical due. It has been reissued, though, and if you don’t own a Beach Boys record, it is certainly the one you should buy first.

The saga of the Beach Boys since those days is well enough known that it needs only a brief recounting. The Seventies brought them the embrace of the counter-culture that had once scorned them, and they came out of it as a monster concert attraction. Capitol enjoyed staggering success with repackagings of their early hits, while Brian’s very real schizophrenia was morbidly dwelt on by the rock press. Last year they even got, at long last, a hit single—a run-through of *Rock and Roll Music*, done in the same style as their rewrite of *Sweet Little Sixteen* back in 1964. Their new album, "The Beach Boys Love You," contains all new Brian originals ("15 Big Ones," their 1976 comeback, was largely an oldies collection, a sort of studio updating of "Beach Boys' Party"). And, of course, there are all those fresh fifteen-year-old girls to contend with, the ones who know little and care less about the band’s history but simply love the way they sound and think Dennis is sexy.

And through it all, incredibly, that original innocence has somehow endured, a slightly battered assurance of survival. If their obsession with the California dream of the early Sixties—cars, surfing, the good life—has a contemporary parallel, what is it if not their involvement with conservation and ecological matters, their continued dalliance with transcendental meditation? These are fitting backgrounds for dreams of more Endless Summers and other Promised Lands, and they now include the knowledge, derived from experience, of the price of those dreams, the understanding that good times have to be earned if they are to be worth having. How wonderful that you can get all of that along with some of the most beautiful songs and performances in American music.
Brian

Dennis

AC

Mike

Carl
A Beginner's Guide to CHAMBER MUSIC

By Irving Kolodin

As terminology, the epithet "chamber music" is a prime example of giving a good dog a bad name. Further, it is an example of giving all good dogs—Dobermans and Danes, corgis and poodles—the same bad name. Just as the generalization "dogs bite" does not work when we get down to particular cases (some do, some don't), so "chamber music is boring" is demonstrably false as soon as we can get someone to accept a little guidance in his listening. There are as many kinds of attractive, rewarding, and stimulating listening experiences in the world of chamber music as there are breeds of dogs in all their uncountable variety. And just as some of the most lovable dogs we have known were unmistakably mongrels, so many of the greatest, most enjoyable chamber works are the products of mixed musical parentage.

What, after all, is a trio, a quartet, or a quintet but a sonata or a symphony under another name? Whoever has learned to live with and enjoy the interplay of ideas that makes up the first movement of Beethoven's Pathétique Sonata or his Erotica Symphonia will discover that exactly the same rules of procedure govern his monumental output of chamber works. And if Beethoven is not your passion but Tchaikovsky is, a similar relationship can be traced between his Pathétique Symphonia and his trios and quartets. Statement, development, restatement; variations; scherzo and trio; rondo finale—I could be referring either to Schubert's C Major Piano Sonata, his C Major Symphony, or his C Major Quintet. Saying that one of these is less attractive than the others because it is "chamber music" is to get foolishly bogged down in terminology when you should be fighting your way through to meaning.

And if terminology is not to the point, neither is chronology. One can quite reasonably start, in chamber music, at either end of a two-century span of musical composition, either working forward from Haydn or backward from Carter—a situation analogous perhaps to starting a study of English literature with Shakespeare on the one hand, T. S. Eliot on the other (though in the latter case you may occasionally be mystified by a reference or two). Even the enthusiast for Romantic music of the nineteenth century can be led to the spring and persuaded to drink if he discovers that what refreshes his taste in a Dvořák symphony or Slavonic dance is just as free-flowing and satisfying in a work labeled Quartet No. 6, in F Major, Op. 96, bottled as it is with the reassuring nickname "American."

The best advice I can possibly give to anyone who feels intimidated or walled off by chamber music is this: work along the part of the wall that relates to music you already know and like until you find the opening—the particular work—that will give you entry to the lovely stretch of greensward that lies on the other side. Do not, in other words, charge into the wall head on, for if you listen to classical music at all you already have keys to at least one of the many gates that lead into a veritable garden of works for small ensemble.

One would hardly think that the voluptuous sound of Borodin's Polovetsian Dances could have an echo in the seemingly "austere" realm of chamber music—four strings don't make anything like an equal amount of sound. But Borodin's D Major Quartet has quite as much of his sensuously melodic, specially personal quality in it, and I defy anyone who likes the dances not to like the quartet. Robert Wright and George Forrest discovered as much when they took the Notturno from that quartet and made it into And This Is My Beloved (and the Scherzo into Baubles, Bangles, and Beads) for the hit musical Kismet.

As a musical form, the trio/quartet/quintet for strings not only has the longest history and the broadest repertoire in chamber music, but a singular distinction as well: the instruments used have remained relatively unchanged since they were first combined in an ensemble. Haydn's klavier was a mere toy in comparison to the concert grand of today, but the first of his sev-
ently six quartets (a product of the time before 1760) was written for violins, viola, and cello that are identical in range and tuning (and similar in tone and dynamics) to those required by similar works of Shostakovich (written in 1974). The difference in sound has little to do with the inherent properties of the instruments, but everything to do with the skills, purposes, and objectives of the composers. If your musical cosmos revolves around Debussy's Prélude à L'Après-midi d'un Faune or Ravel's Ma Mère l'Oye, you will find much of the same idiom in the single string quartet each of these masters wrote. Frequently coupled on the same disc, they provide a unique example of an introduction to a whole chamber literature (French "modern" division) back to back.

All of which is to say (in a paraphrase of Will Rogers, who once remarked he never met a man he didn't like) that I never met a music lover who didn't like chamber music—once he found out it wasn't really different from all the other kinds of music he liked.”

String Trio
(Violin, Viola, and Cello)

* MOZART: Divertimento in E-Flat Major (K. 563). Isaac Stern (violin); Pinchas Zukerman (viola); Leonard Rose (cello). COLUMBIA M 33266.

In the Salzburg duos listed above, Mozart drew a blueprint for ensemble compatibility and decorated it with a typically fulfilling design. For this Vienna work of roughly five years later he added the cello, enabling him to evolve a veritable symphonic discourse. The title "divertimento" refers to the six-movement sequence; "heavenly" would be a rather guarded word for the outcome as organized and presented by these sterling players.

Three of the greatest soloists of our time match pianos and forties and all the gradations in between in a sure-handed presentation of the young Beethoven's different, rather than better, solution to the three-part problem. Lively and reflective by turns, the work takes wing in this performance. The great Kodály duo is on the other side of the disc.

Piano Trio
(Violin, Cello, and Piano)

* HAYDN: Trios No. 25, in G Major; No. 26, in F-sharp Minor; and No. 27, in C Major. Beaux Arts Trio (Isidore Cohen, violin; Bernard Greenhouse, cello; Menahem Pressler, piano). PHILIPS 6500 023.

Though once referred to as Trios 1 and 2, those misleadingly low numbers do not identify the earliest of the many trios by Haydn but rather the "best" as arranged in a nineteenth-century collection. The qualitative context still applies to the content, however, which combines Haydn's humanity with his humor. The G Major has the famous Rondo all'Ongarase as its finale, while the F-sharp Minor contains a reworking of the slow movement of the Symphony No. 102 as its adagio. Beautiful playing by the Beaux Arts personnel, who are engaged in a project to record all the Haydn trios, makes these two works (as well as the lesser C Major Trio) sparkle.

String Duo
(Violin and Viola; Violin and Cello)

* MOZART: Duos in G Major (K. 423) and in B-flat Major (K. 424). Arthur Grumiaux (violin); Arrigo Pelliccia (viola). PHILIPS 839747.

These are unique, unsurpassable examples of doing the impossible—making two instruments sound like three or four—so well that difficulties disappear, leaving only a radiant revelation of complete musical compatibility. Lovers either of violin and viola or of Mozart will find in Grumiaux and Pelliccia the makings of a lifelong musical friendship.


A brilliant example of assimilation (of Mozart) and amplification (Kodály's own) to produce a work of fervor, warmth, and insinuating individuality.


A true musical "gusher," the B-flat Trio is equaled in melodic abundance and guileless charm only by the E-flat, its twin in thought and tonal breeding. Nothing honors Rubinstein's art more than his participation, with new associates, in Op. 99, a work whose prior classic recorded version he made three decades before with Heifetz and cellist Emanuel Feuermann. (overleaf)
CHAMBER MUSIC...

Miscellaneous Trios

* BRAHMS: Horn Trio in E-flat Major, Op. 40. Michael Tree (violin); Myron Bloom (horn); Rudolf Serkin (piano). COLUMBIA MS 7266.

Of the composer’s several trios, no other combines the appeal of this singular work for those who relish the piano Brahms, the orchestral Brahms, or the ensemble Brahms. The composer is alleged to have said that the idea for the work came to him during a walk in the Schwarzwald (Black Forest). My belief is that he had a vision of such a horn player as Bloom and honored him in absentia. (For comment on Serkin and side two, see "Quintet: Schumann.")

* BARTÓK: Contrasts. Béla Bartók (piano); Joseph Szigeti (violin); Benny Goodman (clarinet). ODYSSEY 32160220E.

A commission extended to Bartók in the late Thirties jointly by Szigeti and Goodman enabled the composer to achieve a fusion of elements in which the unique attributes of each participant are honored. Especially interesting is the treatment of the clarinet in the spirit of the Hungarian village dances well known to Bartók and not too foreign to Goodman’s jazz background. The work is best heard in this version by the original performers.

Quartet

(Two Violins, Viola, and Cello)


One could hardly err in presenting almost any pair of Haydn quartets to a neophyte in the genre while saying: “Listen to them until you know them by heart; then you’ll know what a quartet is.” The particular choice here relates, in the first instance, to the works’ outstanding quality; in the second, to descriptive titles that clarify something about the content. In the case of the D Major, it is “The Lark,” descriptive of its soaring, bird-like melodies; in the case of the D Minor, it is “Quinten,” a title derived from the recurrent interval of the fifth. The performances, lilting in manner, luscious in sound, explain the rapid rise to prominence of this new American group.


In a logical progression from the preceding entry, the C Major is the last in a series of six quartets by Mozart that are dedicated to Haydn in appreciation of what the younger composer learned from the elder. That included the creation of a subtly intertwined introduction whose harmonic character prompted some (at an earlier time than ours) to refer to it as the “Dissonant” Quartet. Today, in a world filled with dissonance, it merely adds interest and anticipation to what follows. The winged B-flat was written a few years later. Both are performed here with sterling sound and golden reflections by the brilliant young Japanese-born, Juilliard-trained Tokyo Quartet, a group also responsible for some excellent Haydn quartets.


To those for whom the Beethoven of choice is the composer of the Fourth Piano Concerto, the Eroica Symphony, and the Appassionata Sonata, these quartets will present a mirror image of the Ludwig they love best. Tense, intense, compact, concentrated, they challenge the players, as does no earlier chamber music, in both mental and muscular terms. The fervor and skill of the performances by these four Italians are packed into an economical arrangement that puts three works onto two discs.


What Schubert did with four strings in the A Minor Quartet can very well stand as an introduction to the subject as a whole, especially as the slow movement arouses recollections of other uses by Schubert of the same material: in the Rosamunde ballet music (Entr’acte No. 3) and as a piano Impromptu (Op. 142, No. 3). Both the quartet and the brief added Quartett-
satz (which simply means “quartet movement”) are performed by the Guarneri according to the standard that made them famous. The headlong drive of the Quartetsatz will appeal especially to lovers of this composer’s Great C Major Symphony.


Accessibility is as close as the next groove on both sides of this well-conceived pairing. In the Smetana, familiarity is generated through the overtones of The Moldau and the other tone poems of Má Vlast (From My Homeland) as well as from The Bartered Bride in this great quartet titled Aus meinem Leben (From My Life). In the Dvořák, it is the warm spillovers from the New World Symphony and the Indian Lament that permeate the work written in Spillville, Iowa, and known in this country as the American Quartet. The Juilliard gives highly polished, freely flowing performances.


The introduction to this article has covered the matter of the Borodin Second Quartet well enough that it needs no expansion here. However, among recordings there is a choice: a coupling with one of the better Shostakovich quartets if you already have the Dvořák American, or the version by the Quartetto Italiano if you don’t. If the choice is a toss-up, my foreign-exchange chart quotes rubles over lire just now, and I’d do the same in this musical case.


The case (only pros, no cons) for these two flavorsesome works has already been made in the introduction. All that remains is to select one disc from the eight pairings currently available. My choice is the Budapest version, not only because it is one of the earliest and still among the best, but also because a basic library of chamber music recordings without at least one by this enormously influential group would be a contradiction in terms.

- CARTER: Quartets Nos. 1 and 2. Composers Quartet. NONESUCH 71249.

For those versed in current compositional practices, the two Carter quartets will be seen as concentrated summations of his art as it developed in the Forties. For others, they will provide vistas into the past (No. 1) as well as projections into the future (No. 2), in which performers will evidently function as individuals as well as members of an ensemble. The Composers Quartet is well qualified to serve as the instruments of Carter’s purposes.

Piano Quartet
(Violin, Viola, Cello, and Piano)


Schumann’s piano works could be described as chamber music in themselves; adding strings to his piano writing only makes it overtly what it already is covertly. In other words, inherent character is intensified rather than altered into something else. This well-balanced English ensemble shows a strong affinity for Brahms as well as for Schumann, an affinity appropriate to the lifetime relationship of the two composers.

- FAURE: Quartet in C Minor, Artur Rubinstein (piano); members of the Guarneri Quartet. RCA ARL1-0761.

One of the great glories of French musical art, this work will sing its way into the heart of almost anyone who exposes himself to it. The surging strength of a fine Rubinstein performance is an “open sesame” to its treasures. With the C Minor Quartet on this disc is the late string quartet (Op. 121) of Fauré, well played here by the Guarneri ensemble.

Miscellaneous Quartet

- MESSIAEN: Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps. Tashi (Peter Serkin, piano; Ida Kavafian, violin; Fred Sherry, cello; Richard Stoltzman, clarinet). RCA ARL1-1567.

The Quartet for the End of Time contains, as may be expected by those who know Messiaen, bird calls, chime-like piano constructions, what the composer describes as “soft cascades of blue orange chords,” and evocations of trumpets, all in fulfillment of the Revelation of St. John. Tashi owes its very existence and burgeoning career to a concert performance of this work, and they meet its awesome demands with power and security; need any more be said about these four extraordinary players?

Quintet
(String Quartet plus Piano)

- SCHUMANN: Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 44. Rudolf Serkin (piano); Budapest Quartet. COLUMBIA MS 7266.

From its first appearance on discs in the mid Twenties, each new version of
Of all the recordings of this work Schumann's quintet has been an invitation to total immersion in a sound bath that is regenerating to both ear and mind. This is perhaps an elaborate, indirect way of saying that if there is a basic basic chamber music work with piano, this is it. One good reason for owning this Serkin-powered disc is the Brahms Horn Trio (already discussed) on the second side; this quintet makes two good reasons.

Miscellaneous Quintet

- **SCHUBERT**: Quintet in A Major, Op. 114 ("Trout"), Jorg Demus (piano); members of the Collegium Aureum (FranzJosef Maier, violin; Heinz-Otto Graf, viola; Rudolf Mandalka, cello; Paul Breuer, double bass). BASF KHB 20314.

Of all the recordings of this work known to me—including versions in which the pianist is Clifford Curzon, Mieczyslaw Horszowski, Louis Kentner, Hephzibah Menuhin, and both Serkins—this is the one which would have sounded, I think, most sympathetic to Schubert himself. This is not alone because of the excellence of Demus, but also because he plays a period Conrad Graf piano with the kind of mellow, unfocused tone known to the composer. And too, Demus' highly qualified associates use gut (rather than wire or wound) strings on their splendid Italian instruments. The blend is thus both luminous and illuminating, exposing details rarely heard on other recordings. As for the work itself, praise of it is as superfluous as speaking up in favor of tomorrow morning's sunrise.

- **BRAHMS**: Clarinet Quintet in B Minor, Op. 115. Gervase de Peyer (clarinet); Melos Ensemble. ANGEL S-36280.

What Beethoven could not have realized when he was writing his Septet in 1799-1800 was that there was then in Vienna a two-year-old child who would grow up to add a second violin to his septet combination and produce one of the unique masterpieces in the whole chamber literature. Franz Schubert played the Beethoven Septet as a student, reacted to it as a man, and glorified many of its concepts in an octet of 1824 which, for sheer euphony, has never been surpassed. Written for Viennese musicians, it is best heard from those conditioned (there) to understand not merely its sense but also its sound. To me that means Willi Boskovsky, violin, and seven other peerless principals of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.


Violinists who dote on the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto, pianists who adore the *Rondo Capriccioso*, and just plain music lovers who appreciate the *Midsummer Night's Dream* should lose not a day in acquainting themselves with the source of all of them. In this work written in 1825, the sixteen-year-old Mendelssohn both found and flowered his gift for fairy music, for fantasy, and for string writing. As his sister Fanny wrote to a friend in description of its content, one is "half inclined to say, 'There was never anything like it before, and there has never been anything like it since.'" That is as appropriate a way as any I can think of to end the octet category—and, indeed, the much larger one of Chamber Music as well.

**Chamber Music...**

- **MOZART**: Quintets No. 3, in G Minor (K. 516); and No. 4, in C Minor (K. 406). Arthur Grumiaux (violin); Arpad Gerecz (violin); Georges Janzer (viola); Max Lesueur (viola); Eva Czako (cello). PHILIPS 6500 620.

The G Minor Quintet is a conceptual counterpart to the G Minor Symphony, but, lacking some of the galant externals as it does, it reveals more of the inner turmoil and emotional distress induced by the recent death of the composer's father. No one who relishes Mozart at his most joyous should deny himself the privilege of sharing also his sufferings and sorrows. The Grumiaux-led performance strikes me as more faster than appropriate, hence less expressive of the work's inner essence. But it is both better-sounding and more accurately reproduced than any other currently available version. Curiously, the C Minor Quintet has everything in its sound. To me that means Wiili Boskovsky, violin, and seven other peerless principals of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.


In its multiple movements (six) and scoring for strings plus clarinet, horn, and bassoon, Beethoven's Septet is, in everything but name, a divertimento. The reason for this is wholly terminological, for the work was written on the cusp between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, when the older designation was becoming old-fashioned. Under either name it is a thoroughly enjoyable experience, both for what it summarizes of the eighteenth century and for what it promises for the nineteenth. The performance shows British ensemble artistry at its best.

**Octet**

(More of the Same)


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- **BRAHMS**: Clarinet Quintet in B Minor, Op. 115. Gervase de Peyer (clarinet); Melos Ensemble. ANGEL S-36280.

To call this work Brahms' supreme chamber-music accomplishment might be to invoke only a warm personal preference rather than a cool cerebral judgment. But it should at least suggest that this quintet occupies a unique place above other Brahms works for which I have great affection—the F Minor Piano Quintet, the A Minor String Quartet, and the B-flat Major Sextet, to name a few. But in none of them did Brahms invent material of the distinctive and memorability the Clarinet Quintet conveys both reflectively and rhapsodically. De Peyer swings from one mood to the other with a tone quality amenable to either, and his associates are no less resourceful.
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Elgar's Second by Boult: a Realization as Close to Perfect as It Is Ever Likely to Be

In his latest (the fifth!) recording of Elgar's complex and enormously rich-textured Second Symphony for Angel Records, Sir Adrian Boult, together with the players of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and producer Christopher Bishop, has finally achieved a realization that takes the full measure of all the dimensions of this mighty score.

In reviewing previous recordings of Elgar's Second in these pages, I have noted that the work is a tough nut for listeners to crack on first hearing, and that it is perhaps best approached by way of the middle movements, so that familiarity with them may provide the key to unraveling and putting in their proper perspective the many-layered and close-packed events of the end movements. Sir Georg Solti, in his remarkable 1975 reading of the music (also with the London Philharmonic), accomplished prodigies of textural and rhythmic clarification of these same end movements, but I noted somewhat cramped recorded sound in climactic moments of the score. I also recalled that Sir Adrian Boult's first recording of the symphony, done in 1945 on 78-rpm discs, embodied a breadth and power I had never before experienced.

In any event, Sir Adrian, at the age of eighty-eight, has achieved the seemingly impossible: a magnificent re-creation of his 1945 reading that is enhanced by some of the best recorded orchestral sound it has been my privilege to encounter. This job of production is in the same class with Bishop's achievement in his recording of the Benjamin Britten Sea Interludes and Passacaglia from Peter Grimes. Boult's tempos here, marginally more deliberate than Solti's, enable the special fervor of his conception to take hold fully from the beginning to the end of the fifty-three-minute score. All of the textural clarity of Solti's recording is achieved here, plus the sort of power in the major climaxes that only the right kind of room ambiance and precisely gauged microphone placement can achieve. The somberly elegiac music of the slow movement comes forth with heart-wrenching eloquence, and the central section of the scherzo that follows becomes metamorphosed into something that approaches blind terror. In four-channel playback the whole experience is even further enhanced. All of which leaves me quite prepared to assert that Sir Adrian and his cohorts, musical as well as technological, have achieved a realization of this music that is as close to perfect as it is ever likely to be.

—David Hall


(Continued overleaf)
Munrow’s Last Album:  
The Aristocratic Courts Rather Than The Barnyards

While the final editorial work on Deutsche Grammophon’s Archiv album “Music of the Gothic Era” was being done, conductor David Munrow died at the age of thirty-three. This, then, is his last recorded collection of early music; it is also one that outstrips any others in the field in concept, scholarship, and execution.

These three discs contain no mere collection of Gothic music, but an anthology tracing the whole history of polyphonic music based on plain-song in France for a period of just over two hundred years. Beginning with the organa of Leonin and Perotin, it leads us through the motets of the Ars Antiqua (Montpellier and Bamberg Codices), the Ars Nova, the mannered motets of the late fourteenth century (Ivrea Codex), the motets of Machaut, and finally the large-scale motets from the Chantilly Codex.

To the casual listener the repertoire may seem a limited one, but the musician and scholar interested in Gothic music can sense the excitement of tremendous stylistic growth as harmonic and rhythmic languages undergo a subtle but sure evolution. It is, in fact, a development similar in scope to that which took place between Sammartini and Mozart, and, with a little getting used to the style, even the casual listener will begin to hear it in those terms.

Besides three records of performances of the actual music, the album offers a superb booklet of over fifty pages which includes comprehensive essays concerning the music and literature of the period, the original texts with translations into English and German (there is even a glossary of obsolete words), complete documentation of the musical sources, a catalog of the instruments used, and a variety of illustrations and reproductions of pages from some of the manuscripts. In short, this album is a complete package containing everything one needs to survey this era in detail.

But these are only the trimmings; the outstanding feature of the album is the superb performances offered by the Early Music Consort of London. This group, without doubt, the finest in the field. Their intonation is impeccable, their rhythm is vital and precise, and their ensemble perfect. While many groups today strive for a “natural” sound, failing all too frequently into the raucous in attempting the raucous, these singers bring a refinement of tone which places them firmly in the aristocratic courts rather than in the barnyards of the period.

The same refinement is extended to the interpretations. Lacking any documentation on the matter, Munrow derived the expressive content from the texts themselves. Thus, each work is individually conceived as to the mood it is intended to create and the instrumentation that mood requires. The use of plucked instruments, for example, in S’on me regarde produces sound of the rarest delicacy, as do the bells in the following piece.

Perhaps the most impressive performances are those of the organa. So often rendered as cold, long, and monotonous, they are imbued by Munrow with an intimate spiritual quality which comes as a surprise in these monolithic creations of the Gothic mind. The long, sustained tones of the tenor are taken by a small chorus accompanied by bells or organ. Above this, soloists are employed for the sinuous melismas of the upper parts. Not only are the interwoven lines clearly heard, but one immediately realizes the virtuoso nature of the vocal writing. Messrs. Bowman, Hill, Elliott, and Brett prove their individual agility and musicianship in the Leonin works and their ensemble mastery in the organum duplum of Perotin.

This, I want to make clear, is a very
special album. It should be treasured, listened to for pleasure, and, for those who want to enrich their knowledge of the Gothic era, dipped into little by little in order to absorb the mass of exquisite detail.

—Stoddard Lincoln

MUSIC OF THE GOTHIC ERA. Leonin: Viderunt omnes; Alleluja Pascha nostrum; Gaude Maria Virgo; Locus iste. Perotin: Viderunt omnes; Sederunt principes. Petrus de Cruce: Aucun ont trouvé. Adam de la Halle: De ma dame vient; J'os bien a m'amie parler. Vitry: Impudenter circumivi; Cum statua. Cluny: Pantheon abluitur. Pusiex: Idæ capillerum; Rachel plorat filios. Machaut: Lasse! comment oublieray; Qui es promesses; Hoquetus David; Christe, qui lux es. Royllart: Rex Karole, Johannis. Anon. (Codex Montpellier and Codex Bamberg): Alle, psallite cum luya; Amor potest; S'on me regarde; In mari misere; On parole de bâtre; En mai, quant rozier sont flouir; Dominator Domine; El mois de mai; O mitissima; Hoquetus I-VII. Anon. (Roman de Fauvel): La mesnie fauveline; Quant je le voit; Zelas familie; Quasi non ministerium. Anon. (Codex Ivrea): Clap, clap, par un matin; Lês l'ormel a la turelle; O Philipp, Franci qui genera; Febus mundo oriens. Anon. (Codex Chantilly): Degentis vita; Inter densas deserti. Early Music Consort of London, David Munrow cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 272.054 three discs $23.94.

Minstrel Dave Van Ronk Sings What Sounds Good, Feels Good, And Makes Sense

Let us now praise famous men who are not as famous as they ought to be. Dave Van Ronk has, for more than twenty years, been familiar to "folk-music" cognoscenti in an area largely confined to New York City and the New England states. He has recorded countless albums for labels big and small without ever catching fire—not apparently caring very much whether he did or not—and he is practically the only minstrel besides Pete Seeger and Judy Collins who has not metamorphosed into the object of a cult, but he has been such a good musician for such a long, long time that he still has the same grainy, gritty voice, still tends to become carried away on ride-out vocal choruses, still plays guitar with beautiful control and taste, and continues to add to a catholic song repertoire that is as interesting and as surprising as Seeger's, Collins', or Leadbelly's.

I don't mean to suggest that Van Ronk should now become the object of a cult, but he has been such a good musician for such a long, long time that cheers—loud and prolonged cheers—are not only much in order but seriously in arrears. Van Ronk is not a "folk" artist in the purist sense—the kind that sings only Ozark Mountain ballads or ditties from the Francis James Child catalog about queens dying in childbirth. He sings whatever sounds good, feels good, and makes sense.

He was one of the first minstrels—there is no other term that describes him better—to recognize the charm and complexity of early "hot jazz" tunes: fifteen years ago he made an album containing a persuasive, soft version of Jelly Roll Morton's Sweet Substitute, and his understandable fascination with Morton has continued. On this new Philo disc he plays a wonderful guitar transcription of Morton's superb piano piece The Pearls, as well as doing a vocal on Morton's Mamie's Blues, said to be based on a song by the New Orleans madam Mamie Desdumes of the early 1900's. Van Ronk's own Sunday Street is as good a tune about a down-and-out as has ever been written, and his reading of Joni Mitchell's That Song About the Midway has a fine ferocity about it. Down South Blues and That'll Never Happen No More are stomp-heel versions based on originals by the Twenties country-blues singer Leroy Carr/Scrapper Blackwell and Blind Blake, respectively (and, in Van Ronk's hands, respectfully). To top the album off, there is a grinding version of what Van Ronk, in his liner notes, describes as "this . . . perfect . . . song": Would You Like to Swing on a Star? It may seem a long way between Walt Disney and Jelly Roll Morton, but both detail the doings of that ultimate bunch of in-laws, the human race. Van Ronk's artistry comes from his acceptance of the whole bunch, with all its warts and winsomeness, tenderness and violence. Van Ronk is one of us, maybe a little better than most.

—Joel Vance

DAVE VAN RONK, Sunday Street. Dave Van Ronk (vocals, guitar). Sunday Street; Jesus Met the Woman at the Well; Nobody Knows the Way I Feel This Morning; Maple Leaf Rag; Down South Blues; Jivin' Man Blues; That Song About the Midway; That'll Never Happen No More; Mamie's Blues; Would You Like to Swing on a Star?: PHIL 1036 $6.98. (Continued overleaf)
Getting Hooked on Emmylou Harris: The More You Hear The More You Want

I am a fan of Emmylou Harris, and that puts her in very select company in my little world. Much as I’ve praised her in private, I’ve probably wound up underrating her in print. The more accustomed to her voice I become, the better I like it; the more I listen, the more I hear. There are subtlety and credibility in the way she emotionally underscores both music and lyrics, plus a distinctive and attractive tonality and considerable phrasing savvy.

An example of this last can be found in the way she refuses to be rushed by Jimmy Work’s awkward wording of the second verse of an otherwise good old country song, *Making Believe*, in her new Warner Brothers album “Luxury Liner.” The choice of that old, lately overlooked warhorse relates to another thing about Harris, her taste. It isn’t infallible (it turns up at least one godawful clinker with every album, in this case Chuck Berry’s *You Never Can Tell*), and it is in danger of sliding into formula, a couple of Gram Parsons songs, a Louvin Brothers song, and something on the order of a Carter Family classic becoming predictable by now in each album. But it turns up offbeat nuggets too, such as Townes Van Zandt’s *Poncho and Lefty* (Van Zandt is every bit as crazy, praise the Lord, as Roger Miller), and it continues to be not a case of what kinds of songs she picks out but which particular ones.

And, of course, her band and producer continue to do their jobs almost as spectacularly as she does hers. I’d rate this one right up there with “Elite Hotel,” where the air is pretty rarified.

—Noel Coppage

EMMYLOU HARRIS: Luxury Liner. Emmylou Harris (vocals, guitar); Emory Gordy (bass); Albert Lee (guitar); John Ware (drums); other musicians. Luxury Liner; Poncho & Lefty; Making Believe; You’re Supposed to Be Feeling Good; I’ll Be Your San Antonio Rose; You Never Can Tell; When I Stop Dreaming; Hello Stranger; She; Tulsa Queen. WARNER BROS. BS 2998 $6.98, © M8 2998 $7.97, © M5 2998 $7.97.

Teddi King: Intelligent Songs Intelligently Sung By One Who Can Sing

Coming upon Teddi King’s new Audiophile album titled “Lovers & Losers” is like opening the door to an unfamiliar room where there lingers the scent of a remembered perfume—the same perfume that a girl who long ago disappeared from your life used to wear and which you didn’t think they made any more. In Teddi King’s case the perfume is the subtlest blending of musical style, drama, forcefulness, sexy wit, and just plain old-fashioned class that I’ve inhaled since the heydays of Mabel Mercer, Portia Nelson, and Felicia Sanders. These great ladies of song—and Teddi King, too—were (are) more than mere Saloon Singers for the Knights of the Furrowed Brow. They were dramatic artists who told you—sang you—fables and stories and vignettes of Life and Love with all the hypnotic grace and skill of a Scheherazade. Ms. King has, apparently, been ripening to a luscious maturity for some few seasons now, but this is the first time I’ve heard her, and, not to beat around the bush about it, you have before you an instant Cult of One.

I have no idea how many lucky others surrendered to her enchantment at her recent live appearances at the Cafe Carlyle in New York, but if you didn’t make it to Manhattan’s upper East Side this recording will give you some idea of the quality of musical sorcery she practiced there. As she weaves her way through these fifteen songs, she uncovers a hitherto hidden note of little-girl anger in Lorenz Hart’s blase, sardonic lyric for *Bewitched*, waltzes through *Wait Till You See Her* with a Garlandish wistfulness, and sings simply and superbly Alec Wilder’s lovely *Blackberry Winter*.

Teddi King is someone really special—not in the we-precious-few sense,
Teddi King! Much, much more!

-Peter Reilly

TEDDI KING: Lovers & Losers. Teddi King (vocals); Loonis McGlohon (piano); Mel Alexander (bass); Jim Lackey (drums). Lovers and Losers; A Ghost of a Chance; Can't You Do a Friend a Favor?; The Wine of May; There's a Man in My Life; A Sunday Kind of Love; Ask Yourself Why; Nobody's Heart; Honeysuckle Rose; Bewitched; Slightly Less Than Wonderful; Blackberry Winter; Wait Till You See Her; Fools Rush In; Be a Child. AUDIOPHILE AP 117 $6.98.

The Inexhaustible, Wonderful, Sublime—And Previously Unrecorded—Haydn

ANTAL DORATI is evidently determined to record every note Haydn wrote for orchestra, and his determination is adding abundantly to our pleasure as well as our knowledge of the works involved. Having completed the symphonies with the Philharmonica Hungarica for London/Decca; having begun the concertos with his wife, pianist Ilse von Alpenheim, and the Bamberg Symphony for Vox; and having made a superb start on a complete opera cycle in Lauasne for Philips, he has now returned to the scene of the first of these projects to give us the heretofore unrecorded set of twenty-four minuets Haydn composed (according to the reasoned speculation of H.C. Robbins Landon, whose performing edition was used in the recording) in 1796 or 1797, probably for a grand ball at Eisenstadt. The depth and joyous nature of Dorati's commitment are shown in his charming postscript to Landon's annotation for the new two-disc London set, in which he suggests a descriptive character for most of the respective dances and the sense they make as a continuous sequence.

Ordinarily one would approach such a collection with some caution and perhaps suggest exposure to only one of the four sides at a sitting, but this is Haydn—this is, as a typical London review of 1794 expressed it, "the inexhaustible, the wonderful, the sublime HAYDN!" Landon describes Haydn's "farewell to dance music in the strict sense" as "these great twenty-four Menuetti"; the adjective is not used casually. Dorati, noting that "These minuets are quite of another type from those in the master's symphonies...real dance music," expands on "how Haydn is able to open doors, penetrate the walls of the palace, intermingling the talk of nobles with the voices of the people, mixes the courtly minuet with dances of peasants, soldiers...foreshadows such future dance music as the Ländler or Schuhplattler and—far on the horizon—the Wiener Walzer."

The scoring is for a largish orchestra (without violas, of course, according to the pattern followed by Mozart, Haydn, and their contemporaries in such productions), with some brilliant passages for various winds. One might cite for particular attention the stunning horns in alt in No. 10, the Schubertian-before-the-fact clarinets in No. 13, the by-no-means-gossamer fairy world evoked in the trio of the festive No. 11. One might, indeed, make a study of all the fascinating trios in their own right: it does not seem at all out of proportion to suggest that these dances are as valuable in their particular genre as Haydn's symphonies and quartets are in theirs.

For the performances, no amount of praise could be excessive, and the sound is first-rate, too, if a trifle bassy. It might be noted that, with the four sides averaging sixteen minutes' playing time, Haydn's other set of minuets—the twelve Katherinentanze of 1792—and perhaps the twelve German Dances as well might have been included in the set, but they are available elsewhere, and there is no question at all about full value—and then some—in this marvelous release. It is, in its own way, quite "inexhaustible...wonderful...sublime."

—Richard Freed

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ABBA: Arrival. Abba (vocals, instrumentals). When I Kissed the Teacher; Dancing Queen; Knowing Me, Knowing You; Why Did It Have to Be Me; Arrival; Tiger; and four others. Atlantic SD 18207 $6.98, ® TP-18207 $7.97, @ CS-18207 $7.97. Performance: Excellent Recording: Excellent

Abba is the Swedish group that hit in 1975 with Waterloo, a rollicking pastiche of every good American and British pop record of the last twenty years. Since then they have had several other hit singles and have issued sundry albums, and I have to tell you right now that I haven’t been able to take this particular album off the turntable for a week. It is a splendid display of sheer know-how, canny songwriting, and cavalry-charge performances. The sass and pizzazz of the group are delightful, and it is obvious that some brainwork has gone into the production, which is also by the group.

Not that Abba’s music is ambitious or “significant”: it continues to be a pastiche of British/American commercial pop, sometimes sophisticated, sometimes pure bubblegum (Knowing Me, Knowing You is an example of the former, and When I Kissed the Teacher of the latter). But it is unabashedly entertaining, and presented with thrill and skill. I haven’t heard as vigorous and well-made an album in years. J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BILLIO’S CARACAS BOYS: Billo ’77. Cheo Garcia, Ely Mendez, Gustavo Farrera, Oswaldo Delgado (vocals); orchestra, Billo Frometa arr. and cond. El Rey; Roberto Ruiz; El Canto Tani; El Coquero; Cosas del Alma; Golpe Para Alla; and five others. THS-2010 $4.98. © THS-2010 $6.00 (from TH Records, 10124 NW 80th Avenue, Hialeah Gardens, Fla. 33016). Performance: Spirited Recording: Fair

According to Billo’s liner notes, he has been playing in Venezuela for forty—count ‘em—forty years, and this album marks the first time he has used singers with his orchestra. He goes on to say that he is proud of the quality of his vocalists (in particular Sr. Oswaldo Delgado, whom he introduces on this album) and that he believes this present group of musicians and singers is the finest one he has ever led.

I will cheerfully testify that Billo’s group is sprightly and full of fun, and that they seem to be having a whale of a time. His is an “old-fashioned” pre-salsa dance band, with dash and precision, and I’m sure it would be great fun to go to a Latin ballroom to hear Billo’s orchestra and to watch the patrons dancing to his music.

Technically, the recording (it was made in a small studio in Florida) tends to pinch the sounds of the brass, and the stereo separation is rather crude, but these deficiencies somehow add to the pleasure of listening, as though Billo’s group were being recorded on the spur of the moment—overheard rather than memorialized. A delightful album. J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

EUBIE BLAKE: Wild About Eubie. Joan Morris (mezzo-soprano); William Bolcom and Eubie Blake (pianos). I’m Just Wild About Harry; Goodnight, Angeline; I’m Cravin’ for That Kind of Love; Boogie Woogie Beguine; and eight others. Columbia M 34504 $6.98. © MA 34504 $7.98, @ MT 34504 $7.98. Performance: Wonderful Recording: Excellent

William Bolcom, whose pianism is as foot-tappingly infectious as syncopation itself, and his talented wife Joan Morris, who can trill the sappiest song into a first-rate piece of entertainment, have done wonders again. Following triumphant appearances together in “After the Ball” and “Vaudville” on the None-such label, they have gone over to Columbia to join Eubie Blake in an affectionate retrospective of songs and instrumental selections by the ninety-three-year-old master. The idiom ranges from the one-step to swing and back to ragtime, much of it reflecting the fruitful partnership Blake began in 1915 with lyricist Noble Sissie.

Joan Morris gamely takes on the period stuff with the sly, subtle note of satire that is her hallmark in such numbers as I’d Give a Dollar for a Dime and My Handy Man Ain’t Handy Any More, a double-entendre routine riff with excruciating word play (“‘He never hauls the ashes like he used to do’), but she can also dish it out straight, which she does effectively with the old stopper from Shuffle Along called I’m Cravin’ for That Kind of Love. There’s also a sort of half-serious version of Weary, a blues lament that must have inspired Noel Coward to write Weary of It All for Beatrice Lillie. When the lady isn’t singing, Bolcom is out there making the keyboard jump in Capricious Harlem, or Blake himself, with his even sharper, swifter touch, is delivering the Boogie Woogie Beguine and, later, Eubie’s classical Rag, which he composed only recently in the very idiom he helped make famous in the first place. For a sizzling finale, Bolcom and Blake team up for a duet of Dixie Moon, while La Morris offers vocal winks at the wacky words. As an interlude of sheer delight or even studied soberly (depressing thought) as a survey of the American popular song since the turn of the century, “Wild About Eubie” can be unreservedly recommended. P.K.
DAVID BOWIE: Low. David Bowie (vocals, saxophones); Eno (keyboards, tape treatments); Dennis Davis (percussion); Roy Young (piano); other musicians. Speed of Life. Breaking Glass. What in the World. Sound and Vision. Always Crashing in the Same Car. and six others. RCA CPL1-2030 $7.98, © CPS1-2030 $7.98, © CPK1-2030 $7.98.

Performance: Peculiar
Recording: Deliberately murky

"Low" is, to say the very least, a departure for Bowie, an experiment, and I confess I'm surprised that so much of it comes off as well as it does. It is in reality a collaboration, although it's not billed as such—a Bowie/Eno album rather than the usual Darling David star vehicle. Consequently, your reactions to it will depend primarily on your tolerance for Eno's hit-and-miss avant-gardisms rather than on your fondness for Bowie's electronic egomania. Most of the songs find Bowie's voice mixed almost inaudibly, and the arrangements are highly reminiscent of Eno's post-Roxy Music work, weird psychedelia/surfing stuff like "Here Come the Warm Jets" and "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy."

Personally, though I've never been totally convinced by Eno's deliberately anti-music approach, most of what he has contributed here has an oddly austere beauty, and, since Bowie's singing has always annoyed the hell out of me, the combination of the buried vocals, interesting compositional ideas, and marvelous production makes "Low" the first Bowie album I can listen to. This is certainly more demanding stuff than the phased r-c-b of "Young Americans," and God only knows what his hard-core fans will think of it. But you have to give him credit if only for the commercial gamble involved. Artistically, at any rate, the gamble seems to have been worth it. It's terribly cold, of course—this is still Bowie, after all—but it's... well, interesting. Coming from me, that qualifies as a rave.

S.S.


Performance: Mostly Velveeta
Recording: Good

There's a really charming (you heard me, charming) track here: She's the Only One. Bread, back together again with David Gates at the helm, performs it beautifully and simply against a shimmery acoustic-guitar background, and it is one of those easy, folk-infected songs that automatically spread sunshine all over the place. Most of everything else, unfortunately, is Velveeta-bland, even the stately dramatics of Our Lady of Sorrow ("Just today I watched them as they carried her away") and the "sensitive" blubber of Lost Without Your Love ("I'm as helpless as a ship without a wheel."). As a group, Bread is hardly a quartet likely to give you much pause one way or another. At least She's the Only One proves that they have the occasional ability to charm. But then again, don't we all?

P.R.


Performance: Doom on your doorstep
Recording: Fair

Kim Carnes is a Hitchcock blonde. That is, she looks like one of those cool, elegant ladies you wouldn't hesitate to bring home to mom or to introduce to your boss as proof of your upward mobility, the kind Alfred Hitchcock prefers in his films. On this recording, however, that lady vanishes and Ms. Carnes turns out to be just another Desperate Chick with a throat-catching rasp in her voice and doom-on-your-doorstep delivery. And her songs (she wrote most of the material here), such as All He Did Was Tell Me Lies and He'll Come Home, have all the bance of Emily Bronte.

That Memphis Group Is Back

Starting in 1962 with "Green Onions," Booker T. and the M.G.'s (M.G. stood for "Memphis Group") adapted blues, country, rock, jazz, and common-sense funk into a style of performance that became uniquely their own. By the very early 1970's, they had evolved into rock's only real chamber-music group. Not only were the individual musicians talented and skilled, but they were an ensemble group, as opposed to one with a dominant leader and supporting musicians or—or the other hand—a group of soloists who occasionally, play together for a few choruses of a tune.

The artistry of the quartet could also be found in their approach to material, no matter what the quality, no matter whether it was their own or another's. Where other groups would say, "What can we do with this tune?" or "What can we do to it?" the M.G.'s took a rare and honorable attitude: "What can we do for this tune?"

By 1971, the M.G.'s were experimenting with a sound that was quasi-jazz, but it was right about this time that they split up. Booker T. Jones went off to record several wayward and vapid solo albums, guitarist Steve Cropper became an independent producer, and bassist Donald "Duck" Dunn and drummer Al Jackson, Jr., remained as studio sidemen with Stax Records in Memphis, where the group had its start. Jackson was also a very successful co-producer of many of the early Al Green hits and played drums on Green's recordings. He was murdered in 1975 by a person or persons unknown. A fine man and a fine musician, he is sorely missed.

The remaining M.G.'s have now reunited, with Willie Hall on drums, and I am happy to report not only the return of the group—which is good enough news in itself—but that their artistry is undiminished. Here again we can hear Jones' wonderful equation of romp and melancholy and Cropper's exquisite fills. (Of all the better guitarists I've ever heard, Cropper is the only one who does not need the solo to express either himself or his responsibility to a tune; for a modern guitarist this is amazing.) Dunn's moaning, gutteral bass and Hall's spicy drumming are exquisite.

The M.G.'s are one of the rare groups that know and believe in the mystery of music, and their performances are made of dreams, brains, spit, and dignity. This album is an event.

—Joel Vance

BOOKER T. & THE M.G.'S: Universal Language. Booker T. Jones (keyboards); Steve Cropper (guitar); Donald "Duck" Dunn (bass); Willie Hall (drums). Sticky Stuff, Grab Bag, Space Nuts, Love Wheels, Moto Cross, Last Tango in Memphis, M.G.'s Salsa, The Street Reincarnation. Asylum 7E-1093 $6.98. © ETB-1093 $7.97. © TC5-1093 $7.97.
JOE ELY. Joe Ely (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. I Had My Hopes Up High; Mardi Gras Waltz; She Never Spoke Spanish to Me; Gambler’s Bride; Johnny Blues; and five others. MCA MCA-2242 $6.98, © T-2242 $7.98.

Performance: Not quite Good

The instrumental backing here is by far the best thing about it, and unfortunately you can’t keep track of who’s doing that, as producer Chip Young failed to see to it that the musicians got credited on the jacket. That should be considered strike one against any producer, in my book. Otherwise, though, he did a good job enough, the only other problem being that the thing is recorded at a high volume level and therefore, like a rock record, has a squeezed dynamic range. Ely’s singing and his and two other writers’ songs don’t excite me much. Ely’s voice isn’t bad, but he postures a bit (which doesn’t make him unique among aspiring country singers), and it seems to me he tends to slide a hair’s breadth off pitch. Nice solos are plucked out of these songs by the back-up men, but I can’t get a hell of a lot out of them.

N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JOSE FELICIANO: Sweet Soul Music. Jose Feliciano (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. I Love Making Love to You; The Hungry Years; Loving Her Was Easier; Sweet Soul Music; Funny/Night Life; and five others. PRIVATE STOCK PS 2022 $6.98, © PVS 8300-2022 $7.95, © PVS 5300-2022 $7.95.

Performance: Excellent

Recording: Very good

I was a Feliciano fan (of the raving category) as far back as 1961, when (I do not mean to compare my talents to his) we and dozens of others were allotted the stage at Gerde’s Folk City for fifteen minutes apiece on Monday amateur nights. I used to watch Jose devastate the room, and I held him in awe. Without signing a membership card, I became a Jose cultist, and on those occasions when he played a one-night stand at a club or a concert hall, I dashed to where he was and yelled my item, then as now, is a violent and tenable urge to speak through music, and his instrument is one California group playing Southeastern music as if it had actually been to the Southeast. N.C.

BING CROSBY: Feels Good, Feels Right. Bing Crosby (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Feels Good, Feels Right; Once in a While; As Time Goes By; Old Fashioned Love; Time On My Hands; The Way We Were; and six others. LONDON PS 679 $6.98, © PS-679 $7.95, © PSS-679 $7.95.

Performance: Still honey in that comb

Recording: Very good

The track record and endurance quotient of Bing Crosby require no new testimonials; he was an Englishman, he’d certainly be Sir Bing by now. As it is, he is content to endorse orange juice and make periodic comebacks in places like Carnegie Hall, confounding a willing world which might have thought that at seventy-three it was pretty well time for a crooner to rest his vocal cords. This latest recording, made in London and the first new one from Crosby in some time (Schwann-1 lists only What Life Is and A Couple of Songs With Fred Astaire as current releases, though there are seven older discs in Schwann-2) shows the old master to have lost little of his vocal equipment and none of his charm. The voice sounds a little strange at first, deeper, bassier, and with less of that agile ability to reach at will into the tenor range, but the listener quickly comes to realize that he’s still in the authentic presence of Der Bingle, and to relax and enjoy it.

As ever, when he is most relaxed, Crosby is at his most convincing. When he is plucking hardy perennial’s out of old gardens—Time on My Hands, The Night Is Young and You’re So Beautiful, Once in a While—it’s a particular pleasure to take things slow with him and traverse the romantic musical landscapes of the past. He is less irritating when he’s trying to be wide-awake and upbeat (as in the title song, which somehow doesn’t feel quite good or right at all). Alan Cohen’s lush, over-sweet arrangements are an intrusion. And there’s one kind of made-to-order autobiographical item, There’s Nothing That I Haven’t Sang About, which has the manufactured sound of such self-serving concoctions and is far too cute for comfort. But most of the time the real Crosby is in there doing what he does best, and he’s still good to hear.

P.K.

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STEREO REVIEW
Two new electronic products from Nakamichi may be just what you've been waiting for. The 410 Preamplifier and 420 Power Amplifier are small, compact, beautifully styled and eminently affordable. Measuring less than 9" x 16" and barely 3 1/4" thick, both are timeless design expressions — pure Nakamichi in quality and performance.

The 410 approaches the theoretical limits of error-free amplification. A superb phono section, inherited from Nakamichi's amazing 610 Control Preamplifier, utilizes unique circuitry to minimize noise and distortion while maximizing dynamic range. Three phono input sensitivities accommodate a wide variety of cartridges. There is even a switchable active subsonic filter that keeps rumble and tonearm resonances from degrading sound quality. Additional features include fully defeatable tone control circuits, variable contour compensation, high-output headphone jack, and a 2 dB-stepped precision volume attenuator.

The 420 Power Amplifier is a neat, efficient unit for perfectionists with moderate power requirements. The unique output circuitry originally developed for the Nakamichi 620 virtually eliminates crossover and switching distortions without high idling current. The resulting low operating temperatures ensure long-term reliability. And, like the 620, the 420 employs a super-efficient toroidal power transformer, low negative feedback and faultproof protection circuitry—all of which add up to exemplary performance specifications and an effortless sound quality that belies its conservative power rating.

Let the 410 and 420 add new dimensions to your listening pleasure. See and hear them at a Nakamichi dealer soon. Your ears will thank you. For further information, write Nakamichi Research, Inc., 220 Westbury Avenue, Carle Place, New York 11514.

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410 Preamplifier:
- Phono S/N (HF-A): Better than 80 dB off 1 mV
- RIAA Deviation: Within 0.5 db
- Subsonic Filter: -45 db @ 10 Hz
- Distortion: Less than 0.003%
- Frequency Response: 20-50,000 Hz, +/−0.5 db

420 Power Amplifier:
- Power Output: 50 watts per channel, min. rms @ 8 ohms, 20-20,000 Hz, with less than 3.0% THD
- S/N Ratio (HF-A): Better than 110 dB at rated output
- THD @ 1 kHz: Less than 0.0001% at any power level before clipping
- Frequency Response: 5-50,000 Hz, +/−1 dB

CIRCLE NO. 76 ON READER SERVICE CARD
at home with jazz and funk, and the selection of material here is tailor-made for him. The sequence of *Funny and Night Life*, both written by Willie Nelson, is a mellow killer, and Feliciano’s performance of Neil Sedaka’s *The Hungry Years* cracks the heart. In case anyone has forgotten how remarkable Jose Feliciano always was, this album will serve as a welcome reminder. J.V.

**ANDREW GOLD: What’s Wrong with This Picture?** Andrew Gold (vocals, guitars, keyboards, bass, drums); Kenny Edwards (bass); Dan Dugmore (guitar); other musicians. Hope You Feel; Good; Passing Thing; Do Wah Diddy; Learning the Game; Angel Woman; and six others. ASYLUM 7E-1086 $6.98.

*Performance: Dry... Recording: Excellent*

It might be going a bit far to say that without Andrew Gold there wouldn’t be much happening on Linda Ronstadt’s records, but the superb band Gold leads and the arrangements he’s cooked up for her have certainly been major factors in her success. As a solo artist, unfortunately, he leaves a lot to be desired. His voice is serviceable enough (it’s improving, too—he sounds much more convincing here than he did on his first solo set), and his guitar playing, when it’s on, remains absolutely breathtaking. The problem is that, for all the mid-Sixties English influences on his songwriting, he hasn’t much of a knack for melody, and his albums are pretty bland as a result.

The only noteworthy thing here, in fact, are oldies rearranged in the manner of his work with Linda on *You’re No Good* and *Heatwave*. The old Manfred Mann chestnut *Do Wah Diddy* comes off best, with a tremendous increase in energy compared to the original, but the reggae approach he gives to *Stay* and other albums, at least as disingenuous as those in *Just After Seeing Another Equally British Performance*, is the usual L.A. country-rock, at least as disingenuous as those in *Just After Seeing Another Equally British Performance*. And the usual high level of uninvolving. Where in the past Ray gave us concise, compassionate little stories about little lives and everyday tragedies, today he seems content merely to rail at obvious targets in the most banal language (*Mr. Big Man*) or to deal obsessively with his own psychological concerns, which, frankly, are no more interesting than yours or mine or the average rock star’s. Why this is I can’t say, except that perhaps the Kinks’ commercial success has had some way closed him off from the sorts of people he used to bring to life so vividly. At any rate, here are nine tracks, all of which go on far too long, of which two, *Brother* and the calypso *The Four Mills Man*, are so loose they’re unhinged.

**EMMYLOU HARRIS: Luxury Liner** (see Best of the Month, page 80)

**TEDDIE KING: Lovers and Losers** (see Best of the Month, page 80)

**THE KINKS: Sleepwalker**. The Kinks (vocals and instruments). Life on the Road; Mr. Big Man; Sleepwalker; Brother; and five others. ARISTA AL 4106 $6.98.

*Performance: The thrill is gone Recording: Excellent*

There’s something extraordinarily potent about cheap music, as a character in a Noël Coward play once observed. One could have said much the same thing about Kinks albums at times, just as once one might have made a case for Ray Davies as a sort of latter-day Sir Noël. Unfortunately, “Sleepwalker,” the latest effort from Davies and the Kinks, continues the decline in quality that Kinks albums have been demonstrating for at least five years now (with the possible exception of “Preservation Act One”). And again the decline must be counted as Ray’s responsibility, brother Dave having long since abandoned his own songwriting efforts. For better or worse, the Kinks are a one-man show now.

The album is just...well, uninvolving. Where in the past Ray gave us concise, compassionate little stories about little lives and everyday tragedies, today he seems content merely to rail at obvious targets in the most banal language (*Mr. Big Man*) or to deal obsessively with his own psychological concerns, which, frankly, are no more interesting than yours or mine or the average rock star’s. Why this is I can’t say, except that perhaps the Kinks’ commercial success has had some way closed him off from the sorts of people he used to bring to life so vividly. At any rate, here are nine tracks, all of which go on far too long, including *The Four Mills Man*, a few clever lines that remind one that there is talent lurking about here somewhere, and the usual high level of performance from the boys in the band. I had the misfortune to listen to this album just after seeing another equally British production, Richard Lester’s *Robin and Marian*, with Sean Connery and Audrey Hepburn. I cried like a baby throughout it, and I was reminded that once upon a time, far too long a time ago, certain Kinks’ songs had the same effect on me. As cheap music goes, “Sleepwalker” is not very potent. S.S.

**LOUSTIL: Plague**. Locust (vocals and instrumental). Hesitation; Let’s Just Say Goodbye; You’ll Never Know; Madonna; and five others. ANNUIT COEPTIS AC 1004 $6.98.

*Performance: Busy Recording: Busy*

Locust’s execution is good, vocally and instrumentally, but after hearing them sing about “pain” and “emptiness,” I get the impression that they heard about those things and thought they’d better write songs about them if they wanted to be taken seriously. Locust may, with time, become a good band. Some of what they do is precocious, but much of it is simply pretentious. They are talented amateurs who should loosen up and stop trying to pass themselves off as intellectuals. You’re working too hard, kids. J.V.

**TAJ MAHAL: Music Fuh Ya** (Music Para Tu). Taj Mahal (guitar, vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. You Got It; Freight Train; Baby, You’re My Destiny; Suiin’ into Walker’s Clay; and four others. WARNER BROS. BS 2994 $6.98, © M8 2994 $7.97, © MS 2994 $7.97.

*Performance: sloppy Recording: Good*

The eight tunes on this album run an average of five minutes each, which is about three and one-half minutes too long per tune. Each cut has the seed of an interesting song and performance, but the basic ideas are exhausted in about thirty seconds, and the rest of the time is spent in repetition of riffs and figures. Although the musicians supporting Taj Mahal have ability and friskiness, they can’t disguise his garrulous, floundering, vapid leadership. Mahal is a talented man and in his better moments there is no one else quite like him, but his self-advertised “smokey vocals” are, on this occasion, resolutely banal, as if it were the listener’s duty to appreciate him rather than his responsibility to entertain the listener. Only one cut, the calypso *The Four Mills Brothers*, comes close to being a performance, but that is because of the quality of the song and not the delivery. *Freight Train*, the grand “folk song” written by Elizabeth Cotton, which Mahal introduces in a spoken tribute to the lady, becomes a feeble compliment when he fakes the well-known lyrics. I like “loose” music; the doings on this album are so loose they’re unhinged. J.V.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**STEVE MARCH: Lucky**. Steve March (vocals, piano, percussion); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Lucky; Sweet for the Dutchman; It’s Been Real; Stop It!; Croon; and eight others. UNITED ARTISTS UA-674-G $6.98, © UA-EA674-H $7.98, © UA-CA674-H $7.98.

*Performance: Impressive Recording: Excellent*

This impressive debut by Steve March, the son of the late Hal March, is an unusually sophisticated and imaginative album. A good (Continued on page 88)
Needle in the hi-fi haystack.

Even we were astounded at how difficult it is to find an adequate other-brand replacement stylus for a Shure cartridge. We recently purchased 241 random styli that were not manufactured by Shure, but were being sold as replacements for our cartridges. Only ONE of these 241 styli could pass the same basic production line performance tests that ALL genuine Shure styli must pass. But don't simply accept what we say here. Send for the documented test results we've compiled for you in data booklet #AL548. Insist on a genuine Shure stylus so that your cartridge will retain its original performance capability—and at the same time protect your records.

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I'd rather make my money now while I'm young and get out and live the rest of my life enjoying what I've worked for," said Tina Charles, "Britain's Very Own Disco Queen," in a recent London interview. On the basis of her new Columbia album, "I Love to Love," her life after the current disco craze has passed (it will pass, won't it?) ought to be a pretty cushy affair. The American royalty checks that seem certain to rain down on her pretty cushiony affair. The American royalty passed (it will pass, won't it?) ought to be a her life

"I'm not a commercial natural. I advise all carpers, including myself, not to fight it; most of the rest of the world certainly hasn't."

Tina Charles is very, very good at what she does, and what she does here, as she belts and undulates and hip-shakes her way through productions so clever as to be almost diabolical, is to create within the listener an urge to dance so strong that it's just about irresistible. Her album is Entertainment, perhaps not totally professional jazz. Sounds a bit quaint, doesn't it? But the important point is that it works—it entertains joyously and unselfconsciously, and it invites your participation without risking your mental health for the week. And Tina Charles, with her trim, tidy approach, her non-toxic, brash charm, and her wash-and-wear negligee sexiness, is the perfect Director of Activities.

LESS it seem that all of this is merely so much Simple Stuff for the Kids, be assured that some of the work of Ms. Charles and the hypnotic Biddu and Pip Williams, who have done the arrangements and scoring, respectively, is first-rank by any standards. The title song and a wondrously conceived and executed little bauble called Hey Boy glitter with all the promising excitement of a stack of just-won roulette chips being pushed across the table to you. And, if Tina Charles' lucky streak continues in the States, as it has everywhere else, she may very well be the girl who breaks the disco bank. Now, if only I could work up my chops enough to dance to it... .

-Peter Reilly

TINA CHARLES: I Love to Love. Tina Charles (vocals); orchestra. I Love to Love; You Have Set My Heart on Fire; Hey Boy; Take All of Me; Love Me Like a Lover; Why; Hold Me; Disco Fever; Disco Love. CBS CBS 81290 $6.98.

This is a live-recorded, sort of harsh-sounding album, and you can take the title literally (although probably not the way Mayall meant it), for the thing has a bloated, big-band sound. I am, of course, less than enthralled with that, and not very excited about Mayall's inattention to his singing, by far his strongest suit (he'll never be a hotshot harp player if he practices another twenty years). He seems to be on a noncommittal sashay through one song after another, with obese backing hot on his heels and filling up every conceivable hole, and a few spots that might not be holes, with trumpet blares and such stuff. But it isn't an awful album. Mayall takes a nice harp solo or two—his work on style pays better dividends than his work on technique—and there's some duet singing that isn't bad. Call it a mediocre album—unless you always wanted to hear the Casa Loma Orchestra play the blues.

N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CHARLIE MCCOY: Play It Again, Charlie. Charlie McCoy (harmonica, vocals); Ken Buttrey (drums); Terry Dearmore (bass); Buddy Skipper (piano); other musicians. Changes in the Wind; Burning Down; Play the Harp; A Helping Hand; Room to Move; and four others. ABC AB-992 $6.98.

Performance: Offhand Recording: Offhand

The harmonica is more expressive than any number of more respected instruments. The harp is under-respected, probably because a huge number of people play it badly and relatively few play it well. If you want to hear how well it can be played, if you want an idea of how expressive it can be, you can turn to (Continued on page 90)
Realistic adds excitement to hi-fi

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The STA-16 offers versatile hi-fi at low cost. FET/IC front end and PLL multiplex for superb FM stereo. 3.5 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms from 30-20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.9% total harmonic distortion. Ceramic and magnetic phono inputs. Tape outputs. Exclusive Quatravox® synthesizer. And vinyl veneer case.

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Charlie McCoy record. This one isn’t altogether typical, having a Stephen Foster medley plunked into it seemingly out of nowhere (but of course—what better instrument to try that with?), which is very nice but keeps McCoy playing sweeter longer than he usually does at one stretch. But it’s typical enough. McCoy hired a slew of Nashville’s finest musicians and then managed to keep arrangements from seeming crowded, with Josh Graves, the most surprising, most nearly perfect dobro player, cofeatured again on a couple of cuts. And the instrumentation, as usual, is super-tight and agile. McCoy even makes it worth your time to hear Ode to Billy Joe, a difficult song to make interesting with the harp because of its droning melody (a harp needs note changes), so you can imagine what he does with good tunes. He is, through his recordings, my own personal teacher, my guru—there’s no other harp player I can learn as much from—and I’m grateful for this latest lesson.

N.C.

ANN J. MORTON: My Friends Call Me Annie. Ann J. Morton (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Poor Wilted Rose; Molly Jones; Willie I Will; Good Looking Cowboy; Never Should Have Come; and five others. PRAIRIE DUSP PDL-1661 $6.98.

Performance: Service with a smile
Recording: Old style

A friendly girl indeed—Ann J. Morton says Don’t Call Me No Lady and tells the hero of Good Looking Cowboy that “You can ride my horse any old time . . .” and that if he’s looking for a saddle, hers will be just fine. The voice itself is a battle-scarred, backwoods contralto that dishes up the homilies and the cuteties with equal aplomb and with all the weary, cheerful innuendo of a hash-house waitress somewhere in the Southwest. She’s backed by the kind of throbbing electric guitars that haven’t been heard since Minnie Pearl’s teenage days. Ann writes all her own material, and her steam-table philosophy of life is surely best summed up by one of her biggies: Onions and Love Affairs. P.R.

MARTIN MULL: I’m Everyone I’ve Ever Loved. Martin Mull (vocals); Richard Tee (keyboards); Chuck Rainey (bass); Colin Bailey (drums); other musicians. HONOR ROLL: They Never Met; I’m Everyone I’ve Ever Loved; Get Up, Get Down; and seven others. ABC AB-997 $6.98, ® 8185-997-H $7.95, ® 5185-997-H $7.95.

Performance: Cute
Recording: Good

Martin Mull, known of late to millions through his role as the charming wife-beater on Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman, is a songwriter of almost depressingly facile wit and also the purveyor of one of the funniest club acts in the history of Western civilization. Unfortunately, his studio albums are disappointing, lacking both audience feedback and the visual antics of Mull himself.

This one is no exception. Despite some marvelous material (the title tune, a disco parody to end all disco parodies, the thoroughly scandalous Humming Song) and valiant support by an all-star cast including Rob Reiner and Tom Waits, it is only fitfully amusing, which is not what I want from a man who in performance has reduced me to rolling uncontrollably in some very crowded aisles. Get his live set on Capricorn (“Martin Mull and His Fabulous Furniture”), see him in person, and otherwise save your bucks for a really funny album—like, say, the next Bryan Ferry. S.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MILTON NASCIMENTO: Milton. Milton Nascimento (guitar, vocals); orchestra. CIRCLE NO. 10 ON READER SERVICE CARD

THE TRUTH ABOUT HEADPHONE TESTING

Write for a total reprint of the reference paper on headphone testing (AudioScene, August 1976):
Milton Nascimento's new album is filled with super sound, gorgeous arrangements (his own), the soft slur of sung Portuguese, and an atmosphere as lushly heady and sensual as a gardenia in Sophia Loren's décolletage. There's very little real substance here—the songs (again by Milton) all seem to run into one another in form and treatment, and Milton's voice is used as just another instrument in the orchestral effect—but substance would be as out of place here as Rima being a paid consultant to the Audubon Society. I'm not giving out guarantees on how all of this holds up on repeated playings, but it makes a hell of a one-night stand. Superb engineering, incidentally, and probably a must for all of you with superior equipment. 

NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE: Who Are Those Guys? Buddy Cage (steel guitar); John Dawson (vocals, guitar); Spencer Dryden (drums); Stephen Love (vocals, bass); David Nelson (guitar, vocals). I Can Heal You; High Rollers; Peggy Sue; Another Night in Reno; Love Has Strange Ways; and five others. MCA MCA-2248 $6.98, © T-2248 $7.98, © C-2248 $7.98. 

Performance: Much better, thanks Recording: Very good 

Signs of growth in unexpected places are always nice, and I find some here. The New Riders are still as synthetic and middle-class as I always said they were, but here they seem much more professional, much sharper with the details. This one has a sort of Eagles' apprentices sound to it—this will never be a wildly original group—but it has pretty good tunes, improved, more authoritative vocals, and better instrumental balance than I expected. Bob Johnston produced it, and that may be a factor. In any case, good news is good news. 

N.C. 

MICKEY NEWBURY: Rusty Tracks. Mickey Newbury (vocals); orchestra. Leavin' Kentucky; Tell Him Boys; Shenandoah; That Lucky Old Sun; Bless Us All; Danny Boy; and three others. ABC/HICKORY AH-44002 $6.98. 

Performance: Good Recording: Very good 

Mickey Newbury goes Legit in a big way here in a monumental Ronnie Gant production that includes heavenly-hosts arrangements and an orchestral sound not heard since the palmettid days of MGM. He's frequently awash in the middle of all the booming grandeur of such things as Shenandoah and That Lucky Old Sun, but he just keeps belting away like a country Jan Peerce, and it's hard not to admire his guts. The admiration unfortunately ends just about there, and a real impatience takes over: why must the usually unsuspecting public be pulled into these quirky ego trips? Newbury has always been a good enough artist at doing what he usually does, as he proves here in Leavin' Kentucky. Why the urge to be Important? 

P. R. 

PINK FLOYD: Animals. Pink Floyd (vocals and instrumentals). Pigs on the Wing (Part One); Dogs; Pigs (Three Different Ones); Sheep; Pigs on the Wing (Part Two). CO- LUMBIA. JCA-34474 $7.98, © JCA-34474 $7.98, © JCT-34474 $7.98. 

Performance: Sound and fury Recording: Superb 

I never cared much for the post-Syd Barrett Pink Floyd until their last album. Without (Continued on page 93)

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Western swing begins—and ends, many would argue—with Bob Wills. It was Wills who first evolved the style of playing frontier fiddle tunes with a Dixieland beat and combined country string ensembles with horn sections to produce a form of music that was related to the Kansas City swing bands of the Thirties as much as it was to country-and-western. Other Texans (Milton Brown, Bill Boyd) soon put together their own swing groups, but none were as big, brash, or brassy as those of Wills, and none had his instinctive feel for the blues.

Thanks to such new western swing groups as Asleep at the Wheel and tribute songs by artists such as Waylon Jennings, Wills is, ironically enough, more popular now than he was in his heyday. In the Thirties and Forties, artists such as Waylon Jennings, Wills is, ironi-

But, for fans of Wills and/or western swing, "In Concert" is a prize collection. However artful his recordings, Wills was first and fore-
tmost a live performer—he and the Playboys lived for the bandstand, stayed on the road most of the year, and felt they served their purpose best only when the dance floor was packed. Wills himself was the consummate showman, jive-talking to the audience, cajol-
ing musicians, letting out his trademark "ah-ha!" squeal when somebody hit a note he liked. And that's the Wills this album pre-
serves; this is the only album that shows us what it was like when Wills was out there in front of an audience, strutting his stuff, and in this case that alone counts for plenty.

In Texas, Floyd Tillman is almost as leg-

Tillman has the kind of classic "bad" voice that only country music seems to tolerate—he sings flat, nasal, and with little regard for such niceties as meter. In short, once you've heard him, he's unforgettable, and unless you're a country-music fan you're probably not going to like him. He is as hard-core as Ernest Tubb, a contemporary with a similar style, or Willie Nelson, who clearly copped his fair share of vocal licks from Tillman.

He was also one of the leading songwriters of the late Forties and early Fifties (Slipping

For the uninitiated, "The Bob Wills Anthology" (Co-
lumbia KG-32416) might be a better starting point in terms of seeing what the excitement is all about.

Western swing never really died in its home state; there, it has remained the music of choice wherever working people gather on Friday nights to blow off steam. While so it's merely being rejuvenated around the rest of the nation, in Texas it is being elevated to a status somewhat akin to religious music.

Ờrated with the great Kansas City orchestras; he was also shunned by the country music es-
establishment in Nashville, which frowned on his use of drums, among other things. Though Bing Crosby had a million seller with his San Antonio Rose, Wills himself was virtually un-

Wills, they tended to swing a bit themselves; their Nashville counterparts seldom did. Till-
man (the Hank Williams era), but since the Texas honky-tonk-ers were all under the spell of

In the case that alone counts for plenty.

Wills and His Texas Playboys in Con-
cert" are making his music available once

World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market. World War II ravaged the market.
Barrett's psychedelic anguish and vision, the band's watery surrealism, aimless chromatic meanderings, and preoccupation with sound effects never communicated much to me. But "Wish You Were Here" was something else again. With its marvelously imaginative "Abbey Road"-ish musical trappings, it was a truly moving tribute to the founding member who had fallen prey to the dangers of a life-style. Pink Floyd had all once communally endorsed — witty, bitter, mordant, and above all, honestly felt. I loved it.

I don't much love "Animals," their new one, however. Musically and thematically it's constructed along the same lines as the last, but the subject— their intense contempt for the business of selling art—is just not important enough, or at least they don't make it seem important enough, to justify all the vented spleen. Pity is a rare emotion in a rock musician, but unfortunately self-pity isn't, and "Animals" comes off as just another boring entry in the same boring sweepstakes everyone from James Taylor to Elton John to Lou Reed to you name it has been dabbling in since the dawn of the Seventies. Splendidly played and produced. S.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RACING CARS: Downtown Tonight. Racing Cars (vocals and instrumentals). Calling the Tune; Hard Working Woman; Ladee-Lo; Downtown Tonight; Pass the Bottle; and four others. CHRYSALIS CHR 1099 $6.98.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Good

Racing Cars is a blues-based English group who know what they like and like what they do, which is to make tight, no-nonsense, well-crafted music. They remind me of that fine Welsh group, Ace, who play for the mutual pleasure of themselves and their audience and in the process get a lot of good work done.

If you're tired of intimidating bands that demand much, promise nothing, and deliver less, get hold of this album and recall what it's like to hear a band that works for the listener and doesn't fool around. Racing Cars doesn't do anything spectacular; they're just damned good. The performances are refreshingly professional and flow easily into one another, and this is one of the very, very few albums where most of the cuts are in medium tempo but do not put you to sleep or make you think the band is playing with half a heart and one eye open. In present commercial terms, where bombast or snide jive is the norm, Racing Cars may seem to have little ambition and/or cynical smarts, but I have the impression they would rather deliver the goods than play tricks, and for that we may all be thankful. Nice going, lads, and well done. J.V.

LEON REDBONE: Double Time. Leon Redbone (vocals, guitar); Milt Hinton (bass); Jonathan Dorn (tuba); Dominic Cortese (accordion); other musicians. Diddy Wa Diddie; Nobody's Sweetheart; Shine On Harvest Moon; Melancholy Baby; Sheik of Arabiy; Winin' Boy Blues; and five others. WARNER BROS. BS 2971 $6.98, © M8 2971 $7.97, © M5 2971 $7.97.

Performance: (mumble, mumble)
Recording: Good

Who is Leon Redbone? What is he? But first, how much does it really matter? He does a lot of opening for Bonnie Raitt, and I have great respect for her judgment, but that's getting to be the strongest argument I can make on his behalf. In this album he just mostly messes around, as if it is universally accepted that every grunt or groan he makes is going to be the cat's meow, to use an expression that goes with his repertoire. It played all right for a while and still isn't too bad as a stage act, assuming it's brief, as it usually is. This album isn't really offensive, either—much of it is like his stage act nowadays, with the tuba added and all—but it's starting to seem repetitious to me. Redbone has some tricky moves on the guitar, but he plays with such a muted, soft-finger tone that they don't really grab me. There must be an easier way (on my ears) of seeing that Blind Blake and such characters aren't forgotten. Being hip in a mysterious sort of way is not enough, and neither is being mysterious in a hip sort of way. N.C.
I've been meaning to do my bit to help spread the word about James Talley, a quality troubadour. This album doesn't seem a typical one with which to encounter him for the first time; the songs may be a little less ambitious than some of his earlier ones, much of it has a bluesy flavor, and the populist streak in his writing comes to a head only once, really, in "Migrane Jesse Sawyer." But then it's a pretty good album of whatever sort it is. The songs don't tingle with urgency but are well built; Talley's vocals are clear and sure, the backing and arrangements are excellent (Talley also produced it), and it is all extremely well engineered. What more could one ask? Well, maybe for something more personal—but this one will help you bide your time.

**Performance:** Very good  
**Recording:** Superb

It's becoming more and more obvious that the Runaways are not what they initially appeared to be—that is, the first truly mainstream female rock band—but rather are simply Los Angeles' response to the New York Dolls. The parallels are unmistakable. Both bands were the creations of high-powered hackster/managers; both were supported by small but noisy subcultures in their respective cities; both wanted to be the Rolling Stones when they grew up, even down to having Keith Richard look-alikes (Johnny Thunders in the Dolls, Joan Jett in the Runaways); both are only marginally competent at their instruments. Mannish Boy; Bus Driver; I Want to Be Loved; Jealous Hearted Man; I Can't Be Satisfied; and four others. MERCURY SRM 1-1126 $6.98, @ MCR4-1-1126 $7.95.

**Performance:** Improved  
**Recording:** Likewise

I'm sure someone is going to call this avant-garde, in spite of how much it sounds to me like warmed-over Bruce Springsteen. Then again, the group may not be sufficiently inept on the instruments to qualify for a "visionary" label—although it sure is with the vocals. The punk posing sounds a lot like the Fifties recycled, and it is starting to seem as dull to me as pictures of Ike playing golf did back then. These chaps seem capable of playing well, but singing and writing? Well, I have my doubts.

**THE RUNAWAYS: Queens of Noise. The Runaways (vocals and instrumentals). Queens of Noise; Take It or Leave It; Midnight Music; Born to Be Bad; and six others. MERCURY SRM 1-1126 $6.98, © MCR4-1-1126 $7.95.**  
**Performance:** Improved  
**Recording:** Likewise

"Queens of Noise," the nymphet's second album (and their last, if it fails to sell any better than their first, another parallel with the Dolls) is a slight improvement over their debut disc, largely because of its production. Engineer Earle Mankey has given them a little more thud to their sound, and the result is compelling in a gross kind of way, something like castrati Kiss. But in the long run, it's the same punk posturing and unimaginative tunes we've heard from a zillion other bands. Although they're looking cuter than ever, aurally the Runaways still bore me to tears.

**JAMES TALLEY: Blackjack Choir. James Talley (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. Bluesman; Alabama Summertime; Everybody Loves a Love Song; Magnolia Boy; Up from Georgia; When the Fiddler Packs his Case; and four others. CAPITOL ST-11605 $6.98, © 8XT-11605 $7.98, © 4XT-11605 $7.98.**  
**Performance:** Very good  
**Recording:** Superb

I'm sure someone is going to call this avant-garde, in spite of how much it sounds to me like warmed-over Bruce Springsteen. Then again, the group may not be sufficiently inept on the instruments to qualify for a "visionary" label—although it sure is with the vocals. The punk posing sounds a lot like the Fifties recycled, and it is starting to seem as dull to me as pictures of Ike playing golf did back then. These chaps seem capable of playing well, but singing and writing? Well, I have my doubts.

**THE CHIEFTAINS: Bonaparte's Retreat. The Chieftains (vocals and instrumentals). Chattering Maggie; The First Tuesday of Autumn; Green Grow the Rushes O; Bonaparte's Retreat; and five others. ISLAND ILPS 9432 $6.98.**  
**Performance:** Great day for the Irish  
**Recording:** Very good

The Chieftains are a cheerful group of Irishmen with a formidable grasp of the Gaelic musical idiom, which they employ to fashion artful medleys of reels and folk songs and tone poems based on Irish history. The most ambitious of these, Bonaparte's Retreat (which runs almost fifteen minutes), depicts in music the flight of the chieftains Napoleon forced to leave Ireland to serve in his armies abroad, the defeat of Napoleon in Russia, and the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy. This is a rather heady program for music that relies on the potentialities of such limited instruments as tin whistles, clacking bones, bodhrans, pipes, and concertinas. Yet the Chieftains carry it off, along with the ballads and hornpipes and Kerry slides that round out an unusual and beautifully recorded album.

**STEAMBOAT'S A-COMIN'. Bill Jackson, Tom Williams, Lawrence C. Shoberg, Scott O'Malley, Raymond Bazemore, Charles Harper, Harry Johansen, Michael Cooney, Jay Ungar (vocals); Eliot Stringer (calliope); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Oh, Them Golden Slippers; Wish I Was in Mobile Bay; Georgia Camp Meeting; Old Dan Tucker; Sounding Calls; Dance, Boatman, Dance;**
A steamboat whistle toots, muddy Mississippi water churns in the paddlewheel, a calliope A steamboat whistle toots, muddy Mississippi water churns in the paddlewheel, a calliope. Now the Natchez and the Robert E. Lee, boilers belching smoke and close to bursting, race to St. Louis in a contest whose outcome, disputed in some river towns to this very day, is commemorated here in a lively ballad. The music of Tom Sawyer’s time on this latest release from National Geographic. Here come the showboat to the tune of Oh, Them Golden Slippers. Now the Natchez and the Robert E. Lee, boilers belching smoke and close to bursting, race to St. Louis in a contest whose outcome, disputed in some river towns to this very day, is commemorated here in a lively ballad. There are field hollers and sounding calls—“Mark Twain, quarter less three, half twain, quarter twain . . . .” There are work songs and fiddle tunes, a spiritual, upbeat items like The Glendy Burk, and lively old litanies like Old Dan Tucker. And, to sober the listener lest he wax too exuberant itual, upbeat items like The Glendy Burk, and lively old litanies like Old Dan Tucker. And, to sober the listener lest he wax too exuberant, the liner notes for all this. What Ipi-Tombi sounds like when you simply hear it—relentlessly complete—on these records is an inordinate amount of sound and fury in a pseudo-African idiom that Bertha Egnos, who “conceived, devised and produced” the show and also wrote the music, seems to have manufactured out of dubious sources for the occasion. The mood doesn’t change much whether the members of the tribe—depicted on the cover decked out in beads and plumes—are grinding corn back home or collecting garbage for a living in the white man’s metropolis. I expected to be moved when the tribesmen lament the hardships they witness among the underpaid and overworked laborers in a gold mine, but neither the score nor Gail Lakier’s lyrics were able to induce anything much in this listener beyond a continuous headache. For whatever reason, the only member of the cast mentioned by name in the album is Martha Molefe. Her lament for a hungry child was one of the few outstanding moments in a generally dismal enterprise. I thought the members of the tribe would never go home to their village in the mountains; I was immeasurably relieved when at long last they did. P.K.

MAKING A WISH (Hugh Martin). Original-cast recording. Nanette Fabray, Dean Campbell, Harold Lang, Helen Gallagher, Stephen Douglass (vocals); chorus and orchestra, Milton Rosenstock cond. RCA CBM-1033 $7.98.

Performance: Fabray saves the day Recording: Very good


Performance: Willie is winning Recording: Very good

CALL ME MADAM (Irving Berlin). Dinah Shore, Paul Lukas, Russell Nype, Galina Talva, Pat Harrington, Ralph Chambers, Jay Ve- lie (vocals); chorus and orchestra, Jay Black-ton cond. RCA CBM-1032 $7.98.

Performance: Dinah’s no horn blower Recording: Very good

Digging into its musical comedy archives to produce this series of “Legendary Broadway Shows” on discs, RCA has hit up old footlights and come up with a mixed assortment of mementos from the sometimes overeager—

(Continued overleaf)
"Bound for Glory"

BOUND FOR GLORY is a movie that takes us back to 1936, to the days when Woody Guthrie was trying to feed his family by working as a sign painter and a musician in the Texas Dust Bowl during the depths of the Depression. Woody was the most compelling folk singer and inventor of folk-like ballads of his time. He liked to talk like a left-wing prophet, and he died in agony of Huntington's disease, but I don't think he ever thought of himself as a saint, certainly not when I knew him in the Forties. A saint, however, is what the movie seems to be trying to make of him, a people-lover swathed in incorruptible nobility. This myth-building quality is the main flaw in an otherwise spacious and splendid film, but, as it happens, it doesn't spoil the record devoted to the musical score one bit. There have been numerous tributes to Woody on discs over the years, some recorded "live" at memorial concerts, others mixing ballads with political pieces drawn from the Wisdom of Woody, but none so ingratiatingly blended into concert form as this exceptionally fine recording from the soundtrack of Bound for Glory.

Although nobody could sing for Woody the way Woody sang for himself, with that curious mixture of laconic detachment and emotional conviction, and no record ever made could replace the ones he made, David Carradine just naturally has a better voice and is able to convey much of both the coolness and the emotional fervor of the real Woody without resorting to mimicry. When he sings Ho-bo's Lullaby and Oklahoma Hills and So Long, It's Been Good to Know Yuh—he sings scarcely more than half a dozen of Woody's ballads in all, by the way—you feel you're in the presence of a voice as stubbornly and penetratingly honest as Woody's own, and bringing that off is of itself no mean feat. His treatment of Deportee is especially telling. But there is more to this record than the singing of David Carradine. The credits read "Music by Woody Guthrie adapted and conducted by Leonard Rosenman," and Rosenman's contribution is manifestly a large one. He has taken Woody's tunes and woven them into a strong, sinewy score in a style reminiscent not so much of the folk music of the Forties as of the American classical style of the period—the lean rhetoric of Roy Harris and Paul Creston and the Aaron Copland of the Third Symphony, with an appropriately generous helping of flourishes on accordions, harmonicas, and guitars. So skillfully is the orchestral track woven in with the vocal interludes that the result is a single, integrated musical program instead of the usual assortment of snippets and repetitious excerpts. As a concert evoking both the memory of Woody and the tribulations of his time, therefore, the recording drawn from Bound for Glory is no duplication of earlier "tributes" to Woody's memory but deserves a place on the record shelf on its own merits, right up there with Woody's own albums. —Paul Kresh

BOUND FOR GLORY (Woody Guthrie-Leonard Rosenman). Original-soundtrack recording. David Carradine (vocals); orchestra, Leonard Rosenman cond. Hard Travelin'; This Train Is Bound for Glory; The Drifters; I Ain't Got No Home; So Long, It's Been Good to Know Yuh; Ho-bo's Lullaby; Dust Storm; Pastures of Plenty; Do Re Mi; Running for the Train; Arrival in Los Angeles; Oklahoma Hills; Howdidi; Hitchhiking; Ramshackle; Curly Headed Baby; Talking Dust Bowl Blues; This Land Is Your Land; Deportee; On the Road Again; Going Down the Road; This Land Is Your Land (Reprise). UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA 695 H $7.98, @ UA-EA695 $7.98, © UA-CA695 $7.98.
JAZZ

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

GARY BARTZ: Ju Ju Man. Gary Bartz (alto and soprano saxophones, clarinet, synthesizer, vocals); Charles Mims (piano); Curtis Robertson (bass); Howard King (drums); Syreea (vocals). My Funny Valentine; Straight Street; Chelsea Bridge; and two others. Cat.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Good

Saxophonist Gary Bartz stepped into the jazz limelight as a member of Miles Davis' group and subsequently proved himself worthy of attention through a series of fine albums on the Milestone and Prestige labels. His last Prestige album, "The Shadow Do," was a disastrous step into that twilight zone of tasteless pap sometimes called jazz-rock, but what might have killed the reputation of Gary Bartz only spared it, and this album offers happy testimony to his full recovery.
Syreea (the former Mrs. Stevie Wonder) handles My Funny Valentine admirably, soulfully weaving a vocal pattern into threads of melody sensitively executed by Bartz on alto; her voice is clear, and she pays attention to the lyrics. Bartz's alto is again heard on Coltrane's Straight Street, a bouncy exercise in control, and he gives Billy Strayhorn's Chella

COUNT BASIE: Basie Jam #2. Count Basie (piano); Clark Terry (trumpet); Al Grey (trombone); Benny Carter (alto saxophone); Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis (tenor saxophone); Joe Pass (guitar); John Heard (bass); Louis Bellson (drums). Doggin' Around; JJJJump; Mama Don't Wear No Drawers; Kansas City

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Throughout his long career as a bandleader, Count Basie—now approaching seventy—has periodically taken time out from his big band to swing with a smaller group. There were the famous 1939 Decca quartet sessions with the downy All-American Rhythm Section, the classic Dickie's Dream/ Lester Leaps In Kansas City Seven date for Vocalion that same year, the 1942 All-American Rhythm Section sides with Buck Clayton and Don Byas, and—throughout the Fifties and Sixties—many more for Columbia, Clef, Roulette, Impulse, and Verve. Columbia recently issued an excellent two-record Basie anthology ("Super Chief"—Columbia G 31224) that includes some of the classic Basie combo sides from 1939 and 1942, and a few of the Impulse and Roulette recordings remain in the catalogs. But, as far as it is that these sides are still available, it is even more heartening to see that the tradition continues.
This album of Basie in a small-band setting, recorded last year, is a late follow-up to "Basie Jam" (Pablo 2310-718), which was made in 1973 and released in 1975. Again it's an eight-piece band, but since the two sets have only tenor man Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis and drummer Louis Bellson in common (plus, of course, Basie himself), each has a character of its own. As one might expect, Basie's economic, ultra-relaxed style sets the tone and mood of this session, which, as the album title implies and like its predecessor, has the nature of a jam session but involves a modicum of head arrangement. The rhythm section is not quite as feathery light as that famous one of old, but guitarist Joe Pass fills Freddie Green's shoes acceptably with admirable support from bassist John Heard and drummer Louis Bellson, a man of impeccable taste. There is excellent work by all the horn players, but special mention is due Benny Carter, who—only months away from his seventieth birthday—is still an extraordinary performer.

According to a producer's note on the back of this album, Norman Granz intends to record Basie with other combinations in the future; let's hope Mr. Basie makes a full recovery from his recent illness, and that there will (Continued on page 99)

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CIRCLE NO. 38 ON READER SERVICE CARD

MAY 1977

CIRCULAR CORD SHIELD
Since much of the music in Verve's new reissue series was originally recorded by Norman Granz, it valuably complements his current activity on Pablo and is a reminder of the importance of his past contributions in the documentation of jazz history. His values and policies have, fortunately, remained the same regardless of fashion, and he continues to treat musicians with more consideration and generosity than is common in this field. Moreover, he grants them considerable freedom in the studio, and this has usually been amply repaid. Johnny Hodges, for example, made some excellent albums without supervision of any kind (several remain unissued) but was always careful to remember, once "Norman likes the blues." When Creed Taylor took over responsibility for the label, he was not, like Granz, his own boss, but answerable ultimately to the company's accountants. Shrewd and intelligent, he adopted different methods that were also successful, but he ended up by falling into the trap—however lucrative—of over-elaborate production.

The 1957 Porgy and Bess will inevitably be compared with Granz's recent RCA set by Cleo Laine and Ray Charles. As well, since Charles does in several instances, there is nothing in the RCA recording to compare with Armstrong's There's a Boat Dat's Leavin' Soon for New York. Ella Fitzgerald is more natural and less dramatic than Cleo Laine, although the latter's treatment may be more appropriate to an "opera" that seems to have the influence of Evans, while Tate, usually heard in more conservative contexts, rises confidently to the occasion. The jam session set (2508) is an essential document of jazz history. His values and current activity on Pablo and is a reminder of Norman Granz, it valuably complements his own boss, but answerable ultimately to the company's accountants. Shrewd and intelligent, he adopted different methods that were also successful, but he ended up by falling into the trap—however lucrative—of over-elaborate production.

The jam session set (2508) is an essential document of jazz history. His values and current activity on Pablo and is a reminder of Norman Granz, it valuably complements his own boss, but answerable ultimately to the company's accountants. Shrewd and intelligent, he adopted different methods that were also successful, but he ended up by falling into the trap—however lucrative—of over-elaborate production.

The Wes Montgomery album, recorded thirteen years later than the Parker one, is easy to appreciate. The opener, No Blues, swings from the first bar and contains superb choruses by Wynton Kelly, who also provides good support throughout. Three tracks on the second side have been wisely divested of the wretched, dubbed-in backgrounds that probably helped the guitarist to his grave. The fact that organ records are now less abundant adds some interest to Montgomery's 1966 encounter with Jimmy Smith on the fourth side. Nothing very stimulating happens, but they converse comfortably like a couple of old friends. The piano collection by the modern masters (and mistresses) is, like the curate's egg, very good in parts. It is useful to have its illustration of both "the state of the art" and the uneven course of jazz evolution. Three movements from Mary Lou Williams' Zodiac Suite were recorded at the Newport Jazz Festival of 1957 and were introduced verbally in typical humorous fashion by Dizzy Gillespie. Backed by a powerful big band, she plays with an authority that seems to have digested
Kelly in 1965, on the other hand, knew exactly what his goal was and went straight at it on *Blues on Purpose*.

Now that this series has saluted all the fashionable figures in the Verve catalog, it is hoped that it will begin to mine the rich resources left by such artists as Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge, Ben Webster, and Johnny Hodges—particularly the early Hodges records—as has already been done, if clumsily, in European releases.

—Stanley Dance

be many more albums as good as this one. While we’re at it, let’s also hope that Mr. Granz sees fit to lower his prices. It is hard to understand why Pablo records should sell for a dollar more than most other albums, especially when one considers the stingy black and white covers.

C.A.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**LOUIE BELLSON: Louie Belson’s 7.** Louie Belson (drums); Blue Mitchell (trumpet); Dick Nash (tenor); Pete Christlieb (tenor saxophone); Ross Tompkins (piano); Grant Geissman (guitar); John Williams (bass). *Now and Then; Body and Soul; Dig; My Old Flame;* and six others. CONCORD JAZZ CJ-25 $6.98 (from Concord Jazz, Inc., P.O. Box 845, Concord, Calif. 94522).

Performance: Excellent

Recording: Excellent remote

Louis (or Louie, as he bills himself these days) Bellson is a drummer of remarkable technical facility and good taste who won a Scholastic Foundation music award when he was a senior in high school and has since propelled some of the greatest big bands in the land, including those of Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Basie, and Ellington. He often works with his wife, Pearl Bailey, and is a regular at the Concord Summer Jazz Festival where this album was recorded last year. The album is a splendid one from all standpoints, the artful performances of Bellson’s impressive septet having been expertly recorded by engineer Phil Edwards, who has captured every nuance of sound with a clarity and balance usually reserved for studio recordings.

The program is equally well balanced, a good blend of the old and the new, the bouncy and the ballady. Particularly pleasing in the latter category is a five-song medley highlighted by Blue Mitchell’s squeezed-out reading of "It Might As Well Be Spring" and a mellow trombone version of "Body and Soul" that might well have you looking (in vain, I believe) for Dick Nash albums. Mr. Belson is his impeccable self throughout; drummers tend to be exhibitionists, but Bellson knows when to hold back, and the only time he really steps front and center—for a number entitled "Roto Blues"—he gives us a superb demonstration of his skill and the flexibility of "Roto Toms," which are drums that can be finely tuned with a full octave range that gives the drummer melodic possibilities hitherto all but denied him. The album has many more salient features, but you really ought to hear them for yourself.

C.A.

**PAT BRITT: Starrsrong.** Pat Britt (flute, soprano, alto, and tenor saxophones); Gary Bartz (tenor); Hugh肥 (bass); John Blake (drums). *Anatomy of a Love Affair;* and three others. CATALYST 7612 $6.98.

Performance: Good

Recording: Good

Neither Pat Britt nor the other four members of his group have gained much attention away from the West Coast, probably because they are good without being exceptional. Judging by Herb Wong’s notes for this album, the quintet seems to consist of local celebrities. But there is something lacking in their music, and I believe that something is a lack of direction. There are so many different individual and collective styles to be heard on this record that one is tempted to ask the real Pat Britt Quintet to stand up. Perhaps next time around?

C.A.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**BENNY CARTER/DIZZY GILLESPIE: Carter, Gillespie, Inc.** Dizzy Gillespie (trumpet); Benny Carter (alto saxophone); Tommy Flanagan (piano); Joe Pass (guitar); Al McKibbon (bass); Mickey Roker (drums, vocals). *Sweet and Lovely; Night in Tunisia; Broadway;* and three others. PARADISE 2310 $7.98, © S10-781 $8.98, © K10-781 $8.98.

Performance: Eloquent

Recording: Very good

Imagine a topnotch, driving rhythm section flowing like water, and two outstanding, imaginative horn players effortlessly skipping perfectly coordinated notes across it. If you can grasp that metaphor—bearing in mind that the two horn players are Dizzy Gillespie and Benny Carter, and that the rhythm section is春秋 and Tommy, Mike Mancelo (keyboards), and any further word from me. Get it? By all means, do.

**CHICK COREA: My Spanish Heart.** Chick Corea (keyboards); Aruaga String Quartet; Marty Pomroy (violin); Stanley Clarke (bass); Steve Gadd (drums); other musicians. *My Spanish Heart; Love Castle; The Gardens; Day Dance; Night Streets; The Hilltop; The Sky; Wind Dance; Armando’s Rhumba; Prelude to El Bozo; El Bozo (Parts I/II); Spanish Fantasy (Parts IV);* POLYDOR PD-2-9003 two discs $9.98, © POL-ST2-9003 $11.98, © POL-CT2-9003 $11.98.

Performance: Half marvelous

Recording: Very good

I have no doubt, after hearing this double-disc album, that Chick Corea is a superior pianist with superb technique, a spottily imagination, and a delicate touch. But I also have no doubt that he clutters and smoothes his talents by trying to do too much all at once, and the result is that he over-reaches. He has recorded enough material in both for two LP’s, but he—or someone—should have edited it down to a single disc. His attempt to make grand, sweeping statements causes him to drag in pop jazz, and current Latin clichés. Some of what he plays—the better moments—is absolutely gorgeous, but too much of the rest is make-work flapdoodle. Still, when he’s good, he’s awfully good.

J.V.

**LARRY CORTELL: The Lion and the Ram.** Larry Coryell (vocals and guitars); Michael Philip (trumpet, violin); Mike Mandel (keyboards); others. Larry’s Boogie; Stravinsky; The Fifities; Toy Soldiers; and six others. ARISTA AL 4108 $6.98.

Performance: Nimble

Recording: Good

I can do without Julie Coryell’s lyrics about licking the wounds of love, and Larry Coryell’s rendition of them doesn’t exactly turn me on, either, but most of this album is instrumental and worthy of anybody’s attention. This is basically the Eleventh House group led by the rhythm section of previous albums (one on Vanguard, one on Arista). What makes “The Lion and the Ram” so worthwhile is Coryell’s fine guitar playing, a nimble exercise that is more akin to the work of Big
Bill Broonzy and Blind Willie Johnson than it is to the overrated calisthenics of the late Jimi Hendrix.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

EARL HINES: Earl Hines at Saralee's. Earl Hines (piano). Alice Blue Gown; I Want a Little Girl; Don't Take Your Love from Me; and three others. FAIRMONT FA-101 $6.98 (from Fairmont Records, P.O. Box 3392, Santa Monica, Calif. 90403).

Performance: Stunning
Recording: Very good

Pianist Earl Hines will be seventy-four this year. He has been playing professionally for more than fifty years, and, had he stopped working forty-nine years ago, his first recordings alone would have assured him certain prominence in the annals of jazz. Fortunately Hines did not stop performing, and, amazingly, he has never stopped progressing. His improvisational skill is as great today as it ever was, and his technique is simply dazzling.

This album was recorded in 1974 at the Santa Monica home of concert pianist Saralee Halprin. The selections average eight minutes each, and Hines fills every second with the most exquisite piano playing you are ever likely to hear. Obviously relaxed in the informal setting of a home, he is playing better than I have ever heard him—and that is really saying something, for I have heard him on many occasions when his brilliance overwhelmed me. And if you think Hines' music is that of another era, get an earful of Don't Take Your Love from Me—it is an extraordinary highlight of an album that is simply remarkable.

BOBBY HUTCHERSON: The View from the Inside. Bobby Hutcherson (vibraphone); Manny Boyd (soprano and tenor saxophones); Larry Nash (piano); James Leary (bass); Eddie Marshall (drums). Later; Even; Laugh, Laugh Again; For Heaven's Sake; and four others. BLUE NOTE L710-G $6.98, © EA710-H 6.98.

Performance: Good vibes
Recording: Good

Vibist Bobby Hutcherson became interested in music twenty years ago after hearing Milt Jackson. At thirty-five, he is still playing à la Jackson, though ten years have passed since some critics hailed him as the first modern vibes player to have liberated himself from that duet of the post-Hampton school of vibes men. This is a quintet recording without the embellishments (voices, synthesizers, etc.) the Blue Note producers seem so fond of, and that in itself is a relief, but it is also a very excelling album. All five men play correctly, but the tunes are dull, the arrangements tedious, and the overall effect somniferous. It's like good cocktail music: you don't mind talking over it.

MARIAN MCPARTLAND: A Fine Romance. Marian McPartland (piano); Frank Tate (bass); Ted Moore (drums). Send In the Clowns; Silent Pool; This Masquerade; Feelings; and six others. IMPROV 7115 $5.98.

Performance: Fine
Recording: Very good

Marian McPartland, whose musical embroideries normally appear on her own Halcyon label, recorded this set for Improv last year during an engagement at Downtown, a jazz spot in Buffalo, New York. The repertoire is mostly familiar, ranging from Kern and Sondheim to Stevie Wonder and Leon Russell and including a medley of Ellington tunes. There is also a very sensitive, beautiful rendering of Feelings, which—although I am beginning to tire of the tune—I find myself going back to repeatedly. Most impressive, however, is Ms. McPartland's own Silent Pool, a stunningly haunting composition that ends side one. It ought to lead to a whole album of McPartland music—perhaps Marian McPartland the record-company owner will consider releasing such an album.

C.A.

KIRK NUROCK. Kirk Nurock (piano). Straight No Chaser; Giant Steps; A Night in Tunisia; and five others. ADAMO ADS 9504 $6.98 (from Adamo Records, 29 Washington Avenue, South Nyack, N.Y. 10960).

Performance: Interesting
Recording: Very good

Pianist Kirk Nurock is as new to me as the label on which he records, but he plays a mostly familiar, well-chosen program, and he does it in a manner that is strictly his own. His technique is a bit rigid, his style somewhat impetuous and at times over-embellished, but judging from the cover photo he is still quite young and there is enough talent in evidence to give rise to great expectations. Unlike Keith Jarrett, Paul Bley, and Steve Kuhn (all of whom have gone the solo route), Nurock's
music is extroverted, which is not a fault except that he sometimes seems to lose control. Despite such criticism, I rather like this album because Nurock is original and he obviously has something to say that has not been said before—time will surely remedy any difficulties he has in expressing himself.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

FLIP PHILLIPS: Phillips' Head. Flip Phillips (tenor saxophone, bass clarinet); Mickey Crane (piano); Milt Hinton (bass); Mousie Alexander (drums). Spanish Eyes; Love Story; Nancy; Fat Tassie's Ass; and five others. Choice CRS 1013 $6.98 (from Choice Records Inc., 245 Tilley Place, Sea Cliff, N.Y.)

Performance: Silken Recording: Good

Flip Phillips was part of the 52nd Street scene in the early part of the Forties (most notably with trumpeter Frankie Newton). He was playing clarinet then, but he switched to tenor just prior to joining Woody Herman and what was to become the celebrated First Herd. In 1947 he became a member of the now famous Philharmonic portable jam-session troupe, firmly establishing himself as a crowd-pleaser through a frenetic, live recording of Perdido, which remains as good an example of musical prurience as we are ever likely to hear.

That Phillips has a more artistic side to him is already a matter of record, and, thanks to this album, so is the fact that—though he has virtually kept himself off the scene since 1960, living in Florida—Flip Phillips remains a superb tenor player. The album is a joy from beginning to end, and should you wonder where Phillips' head is at these days, I suggest you give Fat Tassie's Ass a spin; the set's only please goes on to a most prepossessing and sensitive reading of Body and Soul, and romps to an end with Jeeps Creepers, a 1938 item introduced by Louis Armstrong. There is good support throughout by pianist Dolo Coker, a Stitt mainstay twenty years ago, drummer Clarence Johnston, and the wonderfully bouncy bass of Allen Jackson.

C.A.

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SEAWIND. Seawind (vocals and instruments). We Got a Way: You Gotta Be Willin' to Love (Part II); He Loves You; The Devil Is a Liar; A Love Song/Sea wind; Make Up Your Mind; and ten others. CTI CTI-5002 $6.98, @ CTR-5002 $7.98. Recording: Very good Performance: Youthful and boppish

SEAWIND is actually no other than the wonderfully bouncy bass of Allen Jackson.

C.A.

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May 1977
J. S. BACH: Brandenburg Concertos (BWV 1046-1051). Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger cond. LONDON STS 15366/7 two discs $7.96.

Performance: Gluey
Recording: Thick

Karl Münchinger’s reading of the six Brandenburgs is characterized by an uncomfortable discrepancy between two stylistic approaches to the music. Although the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra specializes in works conceived for a relatively small complement of players, their forces are still far too numerous to achieve the clarity demanded by such works as the Brandenburg Concertos. Certainly clarity could be achieved through careful use of separate bowings and highly articulated lines, but, unfortunately, Mr. Münchinger prefers a lush string sound and a pervasive legato more appropriate to works of the Romantic era than to the Classical and Baroque repertoire. The result is a gluey, thick sound which obscures the severely linear part-writing that is such a vital component of these pieces. The soloists, on the other hand, are thoroughly versed in Baroque style and play clean, highly articulated lines that are in complete contrast to the mushy tutti playing. This creates an unpleasant dichotomy of style.

Another disturbing factor in this album is the insensitive balance between the harpsichord and the other instruments. The former is so soft that one barely hears it in the Fifth Concerto (in which the harpsichord is, after all, one of the soloists), and one rushes for the volume control in order to hear the cadenza at least at a reasonable volume level. This is all the more a pity because of the fine, solid playing of Igor Kipnis. Especially interesting is his realization of the final chords in the slow movement of the First Concerto and his tasteful interpolation between the two movements of the Third. Surely he deserves a few more decibels than the stingy ration he gets here.

S.L.

J. S. BACH: Piano Transcriptions (see Collections—Wilhelm Kempff).

J. S. BACH: Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord. Paula Robison (flute); Kenneth Cooper (harpsichord); Timothy Eddy (cello). VAN-GUARD VSD 71215/6 two discs $13.96.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Everything about this album is good. Paula Robison is a very clean flutist; her intonation is perfect and her rhythm precise. Kenneth Cooper is also an extremely neat and accurate performer, with a nice sense of rhythm and a fine feel for the harpsichord, and Timothy Eddy, an excellent cellist, offers discreet support in the works for continuo and flute. In short, everything here is that on the written page; nothing has been overlooked. But nothing has been added either. There is no sense of a fresh look at the music (which may need a fresh look, for it has not been that long since it was decided that several of the sonatas were not written by Johann Sebastian), nor is anything brought to it through the use of Baroque performance practices. Therefore, the records spin on with the same goodness throughout and never once is the listener arrested by anything particularly outstanding, different, or original. One fine feature, however, is the balance. The engineers have put the harpsichord sound on an equal footing with the flute sound so that one can, at last, hear the two treble lines in an ideal balance and comprehend their intricate contrapuntal relationship.

S.L.

BALAKIREV: Symphony No. 1, in C Major. USSR Symphony Orchestra, Yevgeny Svetlanov cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR-40272 $6.98.

Performance: Hearty
Recording: Generally good

It is always good to see this marvelous symphony get some attention; it is one of the most spectacularly attractive things of its kind, but, inexplicably, it never turns up on our concert programs. The performance recorded here is one of Svetlanov’s best jobs, and the sound, if a little fiery in spots, is generally very good too. But the 1955 Beecham recording happens to be one of his best jobs, and that, as Aunt Effie used to say, is goin’ some. It is still available (Seraphim S-60062), and I still find Sir Thomas’ way with this score incomparable. Svetlanov’s general approach is actually similar in outline, but he does not match the Beecham magic. He simply has a heavier hand and lacks Sir Thomas’ refinement when it comes to shaping a phrase, and the wind soloists in the Russian orchestra do not show up too well against those of the Royal Philharmonic at its peak. The Seraphim sound is hardly showcase quality, but it doesn’t get in the way, and the price is barely more than half that of the new disc—whose appearance is to be welcomed for calling attention to the music and reminding us (in a liner blurb, in fact) of the really indispensable Beecham version.

R.F.

BARTÓK: Five Songs, Op. 15; Five Village Scenes; Five Songs, Op. 16; Eight Hungarian Folk Songs. Elizabeth Suderburg (soprano); Béla Siki (piano). TURNABOUT TV-S 34592 $3.98.

Performance: Lyric and intense
Recording: Very good

Béla Bartók was composer who was very ex-}erverted and dynamic in his chamber music and very inward and personal in his songs. There are essentially two types of Bartók songs: the art songs, represented here by Opp. 15 and 16, and the folk-song settings, represented here by Slovak and Hungarian sets. None of them are very often performed and thus are not easily heard in concert, let alone on records. This recording contains the best of both worlds, and the performance is forgettable. The voices are impressive, the singing fine, and the accompanying playing generally good. The sound is less than ideal, but that is often the case with records of this type.

R.F.

Explanation of symbols:
① = reel-to-reel stereo tape
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The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.
This recording—of the songs only—gives some feeling for the bite and wit of the original tale of con artists, dupes, shills, whores, buried treasure, stool-pigeons, lovers, and the law. But it would have been done better simply and with more vivacity and edge. I won't belabor the title, but this recording is a bit of a... E.S.


The best of Emil Gilels' recorded performances of Beethoven convey a powerful delineation of the music's architecture together with dead-accurate passage work and rhythm. So it is here with the well-known *Funeral March* Sonata and the much less familiar but delightfully quirky No. 16. Gilels does not underline the theatrical aspects of the Op. 26 slow movement; his treatment is carefully measured and highly effective in its cumulative impact. What pleases me most about this record, however, is hearing him unbind sufficiently to capture so beautifully the skittish humor of the opening movement of No. 16. There is good, clean piano sound throughout both sides, though the instrument is a mite hard in tone—a characteristic common to most of Gilels' solo discs I have encountered on the DG label.

D.H.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**BEETHOVEN: Piano Sonata No. 21, in C Major ("Waldstein"); Variations and Fugue in E-flat, Op. 34 ("Eroica").**

Emmanuel Ax (piano). RCA ARL-1-2083 $7.98.

Performance: Richly satisfying. Recording: Excellent.

To the formidable pages of the *Waldstein* Sonata Emanuel Ax brings urgency, virility, and grandeur of conception, yet in no way does he "push" the music's inherent momentum, as is too often the case in virtuoso performances. He is masterly in his subtle variations of tempo and dynamics, particularly in his treatment of dialogue sequences in the end movements. To the lengthy variations on the theme that Beethoven had used in a contradans...
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Performance: Spirited
Recording: Mushi

This is a spirited, poetic performance: the Scottish musicians play well and the music is impressively shaped. Païta is not afraid of righthand and even tempo changes, but they are always within an expressive concept and justified by a superb feeling for phrase movement. The strong spirit of the performance, however, is compromised—particularly in the fast movements—by the mushy recorded sound.

E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Fiery
Recording: Superb

It is a measure of Seiji Ozawa's growth in musical maturity over the past decade that his new DG recording of Berlioz's enormously complex and varied Roméo et Juliette can hold its own very well indeed against the best of earlier recorded versions—in my opinion, those of Colin Davis, Charles Munch, and Arthur Toscanini.

Ozawa, like Davis and unlike Munch, favors a volitile approach to which he adds something of the fire and vigor of Toscanini. Munch perhaps brings a bit more magic to the music of the Scène d'amour, and Toscanini's delineation of the Queen Mah Scherzo in the 1947 NBC broadcast (issued in 1969 on RCA LM 7031) remains incomparable, but Ozawa sets a blistering pace for his own reading of this bit of musical sorcery and the Boston players carry it off superbly. Aside from the spirit and magnificent nervousity of his reading as a whole, Ozawa really scores over the competition in the quality of his soloists, who are one and all superb. Shirley-Quirk in his singing for Colin Davis may emerge as a more compassionate Friar Laurence, but José van Dam is marvelously authoritative, and one can well understand that he might indeed put the fear of God into the feuding families in the music's final pages. For this reason, Berlioz's finale comes off under Ozawa's baton more convincingly than usual. Special praise is due the New England Conservatory Chorus, which is a model of delicacy and flawless enunciation in the early pages and of high-powered splendor at the end.

Topping off the whole is a splendid recording job that not only captures the detail and stately grandeur of the music—most notably in the Bull music—but also manages most effectively the varied distance effects called for, both explicitly and implicitly, by Berlioz's altogether remarkable score. I'm not about to throw out my Davis, Munch, and Toscanini recordings of Roméo, but I'm certainly going to add this one to my library.

D.H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Performance: Distinctive
Recording: Some rough spots

This is the first release under Stokowski's new contract with Columbia, which runs to his hundredth birthday with an option for a ten-year renewal. The flair that distinguished his first recordings of this material, made in Philadelphia nearly a half-century ago, is very much in evidence here, but the sound is much less smooth than what RCA had been doing for him recently, with distressing congestion and occasional lack of bottom in some of the heavier passages in L'Arlesienne. This side, by the way, is attributed to "Bizet/Stokowski," which, unless there is some retouching I failed to notice, would seem to relate only to the cuts in the sequence. Unlike Stokowski's 1952 version for RCA, this one is not complete: in the Suite No. 2 he has gone back to his old Philadelphia practice of performing only the second part of the Pastoral (the little Provençal dance), and the Intermezzo is omitted altogether. Well, these are surely the kindest cuts of all, and the freshness and elegance of the rest in Stokowski's hands may override the sonic shortcomings (though they will a many, of course, make them all the more regrettable).

The Carmen side, which fares better sonically, includes all the music of the two suites, even the instrumental settings of the Seguillé and Habanera. The magic of the early Philadelphia performances may not be fully recaptured here, but, except for the extraordi-nary Toscanini account of the Suite No. 1 (Victrola VIC-1263), there is no more recommendable version of the Carmen Suites than this: no big surprises, no fussiness, just more loving care than any other stereo version communicates.

R.F.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Good

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Brahms clarinet quintet have been relatively few and far between. I still enjoy the elegant, lyrical performance recorded for Angel in 1965 by Gervase de Peyer with the Melos Ensemble, but in its own way this new made-in-America reading by young Richard Stoltzman and the youthful Cleveland Quartet is equally fine. Their approach is more overtly expressive and less autumnlly restrained than some of us may be used to, but, as Bernard Jacobson indicates in his penetrating liner notes, there is no reason to be bound by fancied psycho-biographical considerations in dealing with this music.

The reading here is strong, but by no means lacking in tenderness where called for, and Mr. Stoltzman's clarinet work is top-drawer. The recording is more closely miked than Angel's, but the internal balances are excellent. I would rate this album the equal of Angel's, with one's personal taste as the only deciding factor in making a final choice.  


Performances: Careful  
Recordings: Quite good

Jan Ladislav Dussek, that fascinating composer whose wanderings took him over the face of Europe, wrote an assortment of keyboard sonatas whose content, scope, and technique have puzzled musicians from the day they were conceived. Some of these works were written for his technically limited students and reflect only too well, through their banal melodies, these young ladies' profoundly vulgar taste. Others, however, were written to display the composer's own brilliant technique and embody some of the most exalted piano music composed during the confused transition from the Classical to the Romantic style. But in all cases the sonatas are interesting and worth study, and Frederick Marvin is to be congratulated for this ambitious project which will ultimately bring all the sonatas to the public on records.

The four sonatas on these discs, among the grandest of the lot, range from the sublimity of the *Etüde Harmonique*, Op. 61, to the most embarrassing material used in the final movements of the two sonatas from Op. 35. One of the problems of performing these works is holding them together: they are very loosely structured, they wander, they are excessively padded. Mr. Marvin, sensitive to minute detail, very often uses so much rubato and so many agogic accents that the overall line is lost. In order to bring off the large contours of these sprawling movements, it is necessary to drive through to the most important cadential points without stopping for the niceties, a thing Mr. Marvin, in his obvious love for each note, is unable to bring himself to do, and this is especially apparent in the final movements of the Op. 35 sonatas. His approach frequently leads to a loss of virility and direction. For example, the first movement of the F-sharp Minor Sonata, after the introduction, is marked agitato. Mr. Marvin's slow tempo and detailed reading of the ubiquitous sighing figure kills the agitated grief.  

(Continued on page 109)
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(Continued on page 112)
Although there are so many Bach-cantata recordings hanging around these days that one may well believe they grow on trees, good performances of them definitely do not. A fine performance of one, in fact, is a carefully tended hothouse flower. The problems are many: What instruments were used? How do you obtain obsolete instruments and locate players sufficiently skilled to execute the difficult and idiomatic writing? How many players should be involved? Do you use boy sopranos or women? Finding soloists who can negotiate the instrumentally conceived writing and sing stylistically is also a problem, along with all the even more specific musical problems I shall not even attempt to list. In the fifteen cantatas recorded on seven relatively recent discs from three labels, we are presented with well worked-out solutions, quite different from one another, by three different conductors: Gustav Leonhardt, Helmut Rilling, and Karl Richter.

Gustav Leonhardt's Telefunken album is one of an ambitious series which will eventually include all the Bach cantatas. Telefunken's policy is to be as authentic as possible by using old instruments and performing in a style as close to Bach's as can be reasonably worked out by modern scholarship. Certainly this goal is an admirable one, but anyone who has listened to such recordings must admit that the results are a mixed blessing. The album under scrutiny is a case in point. Cantata 51, "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen," not only contains one of the most frightening soprano parts ever written, but it also demands the utmost skill of a Baroque trumpeter. Marianne Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told Kweksilber begins bravely, but she sounds intimidated by what she has probably been told...
coloratura singing. Here too, mention should be made of how well an extremely difficult continuo part is handled.

The Richter discs prove an all-important point in the performance of old music: effective and moving performance does not depend entirely on the use of authentic instruments and performance practice. What really counts, what speaks to us today and ultimately proves the worth of a piece of music, regardless of when it was written, is good, solid musicianship, common sense, and soloists who know how to communicate.

—Stoddard Lincoln

J. S. BACH: Cantatas: Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen (BWV 51); Falsche Welt, dir trau ich nicht (BWV 52); Widerstecher doch der Sünde (BWV 54); Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht (BWV 55); Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen (BWV 56). Mariannne Kweksilber (soprano); Seppi Kronwitter (boy soprano); Paul Esswood (alto); Kurt Equiluz (tenor); Michael Schopper (bass); Hannover Boys' Choir and Leonhardt Consort with additional players, Gustav Leonhardt cond. TELEFUNKEN SKW 1411/2 two discs $15.96.

J. S. BACH: Cantata, Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntere Jagd (BWV 208). Helen Donath, Elisabeth Speiser (sopranos); Wilfrid Jochims (tenor); Jakob Stampfli (bass); Figuralchor of the Gedächtniskirche, Stuttgart, and Bach Collegium, Stuttgart, Helmut Rilling cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 3297 $3.50 (plus 95¢ shipping charge from Musical Heritage Society, Inc., Oakhurst, N.J. 07755).

J. S. BACH: Cantatas: Ach lieben Christen, seid getrost (BWV 114); Siehe zu, dass deine Gottesfurcht nicht Heuchelei sei (BWV 179). Kathrin Graf, Gabriele Schnaut (sopranos); Else Paaske (alto); Kurt Equiluz (tenor); Wolfgang Schöne (bass); Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra, Karl Richter cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 2533 306 $7.98.

J. S. BACH: Cantatas for Whitsun: O ewiges Feuer (BWV 34); Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt (BWV 68); Er ruft seinen Schafen mit Namen (BWV 175). Edith Mathis (soprano); Anna Reynolds (alto); Peter Schreier (tenor); Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (bass); Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra, Karl Richter cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 2533 312 $7.98.

J. S. BACH: Cantatas: Du wahre Gott und Davids Sohn (BWV 23); Bisher habt ihr nichts gebeten in meinem Namen (BWV 87). Edith Mathis (soprano); Anna Reynolds (alto); Peter Schreier (tenor); Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (bass); Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra, Karl Richter cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 2533 313 $7.98.
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*Reprints marked with Asterisk $1.50. All others, $1.00. Minimum order $2.00.
Lily Pons, Coloratura Assoluta

For most of the years covered by Columbia's three-disc Lily Pons anthology (1941-1954), no opera singer in America rivaled that diminutive diva in popularity. Petite, vivacious, innately theatrical, she was the multimedia delight of millions. She was, already by 1941, a recording veteran: her foreign recordings preceded her Metropolitan debut of 1931, and for a full decade (1930-1940) before she went to Columbia she was the treasured property of the rival Victor label. Producer William Seward, longtime friend of the late soprano, nonetheless has a point in asserting that "in terms of her vocal maturity and artistic expression she considered the Columbia recordings as her musical maturity and artistic legacy."

But then records never did Lily Pons justice. She was charm personified on stage; her fragile Gilda and firebrand Rosina are forever engraved on my memory. Vocally, by the Callé-Sutherland standards of today, she was far from perfect. There was at times too much breathiness in her tones, and her florid work, though always respectable, missed the ultimate polish and exactitude. And yet she was a consummate singer: the overall technical level throughout this lengthy program is amazingly high. Her upper register was exceptionally Pons was almost unique in her habit of transposing music upward; you will find an imposing F in alt at the conclusion of the Mad Scene, and at least three high E-naturals are scattered through the program. The Meierbeer and David arias show her artistry most impressively.

The voice itself was small in size but well placed, and she was no mere coloratura warbler. Her poignant "Ah, fors'e lui" is no less effective than the florid "Sempre libera" which follows it. Her tone was sweet and sensitively modulated, and she had an enchanting way with French and Russian songs. Above all, she was neither dull nor predictable; even her Olympia (Tales of Hoffmann) was more a living doll than a mechanical one. I remember doing a radio interview with her in 1968, en route between one of her homes (Palm Springs, California) and another (Cannes, France). Officially, at the time, she was sixty-four, but now it seems that she was actually seventy. No matter: with twinkling eyes, mercurial, irrepressible, she was still the eternally youthful Lily.

There are some wonderful memories tied up in this set, and they will be further enhanced by a rare group of photographs taken on stage, backstage, in Hollywood, overseas with the troops, etc. There is a discography, but no texts and only sketchy annotations.

The sound, however, is surprisingly good. Intentionally or otherwise, an incomplete take of Donizetti's "Il faut partir" has been included.

—George Jellinek

...her Olympia was more a living doll than a mechanical one...


This is a most welcome reissue, particularly for the 1952 collaboration of the young Fischer-Dieskau and the revered veteran Wilhelm Furtwängler. The German conductor's tempos may seem on the deliberate side in the Songs of a Wayfarer, but the impact of words and music are only that much greater—the anguished convey'd "Ich had' ein gliihend Messer" becomes almost physically painful here. The Kindertotenlieder recording suffers somewhat from a rather reticent orchestral backing, but Fischer-Dieskau's contribution is musically and vocally of the utmost distinction and sensitivity. I am among those who prefer these lovely, poignant cycles sung by a feminine voice. If you share my preference, this is the disc to buy.

—D.H.


RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Meyerbeer: Le Prophète. James McCracken (tenor), John of Leyden; Marilyn Horne (mezzo-soprano), Fides; Renata Scotto (soprano), Berthe; Jules Bastin (bass), Count Obershul; Jerome Hines (bass), Zacharie; Christian du Plessis (baritone), Mathisen;
Jean Dupouy (tenor), Jonas; others. Ambroise Opera Chorus; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Henry Lewis cond. COLUMBIA M4 3340 four discs $27.98.

Performance: A noble try
Recording: Good

In one of his letters, Hector Berlioz gave this summation of Meyerbeer's Le Prophète following its 1849 premiere: "... The score contains some very fine things side by side with some ridiculous ones. But the fiend's show will make everything pass muster." That seems like a just and even kindly appraisal. But the "splendor" has faded considerably since 1849, and I am afraid those "funny and detestable" elements seem even more noticeable in this, the opera's first complete recording.

One could begin with Scribe's slapdash and frequently silly libretto, more contrived than any atelier for the Paris Opera had no tenor idiom. (Azucena followed some four years later.) The vocal ensembles, however, frequently suffer from impure intonation, and the Carolyn March is rather rough in sound. There are some cuts in the music—the second verse in the tenor's "Sur Berthe moi" should not have been omitted. But, in all fairness, enough of Le Prophète has been preserved in this undertaking—far be it from me to ask for more.

Performance: Vigorous, stylish
Recording: Good

This is an attractive collection of orchestral Moussorgsky, most of it edited after the composer's death by Rimsky-Korsakov and others. Among the operatic excerpts, the Khozanta, the prelude and acte are the best performances. There is fine poetic communication in the prelude, and a real sense of tragic power is conveyed in the music depicting Prince Golitza's departure for Siberian exile. The Capture of Kars strikes me as the most effective of the independent orchestral pieces. Its main theme, by the way, is the same folk tune used by Tchaikovsky to preface the finale of his string serenade. Night on Bald Mountain. USSR Symphony Orchestra, Yevgeny Svetlanov cond. MELODIA/ANGEL SR-4073 $6.98.

Performance: Vigorous, stylish
Recording: Good


Performance: Vigorous, stylish
Recording: Good

This is a nice collection with a number of fine performances from the orchestra and the chorus. There is fine poetic communication in the prelude, and a real sense of tragic power is conveyed in the music depicting Prince Golitza's departure for Siberian exile. The Capture of Kars strikes me as the most effective of the independent orchestral pieces. Its main theme, by the way, is the same folk tune used by Tchaikovsky to preface the finale of his string serenade. Night on Bald Mountain. USSR Symphony Orchestra, Yevgeny Svetlanov cond. MELODIA/ANGEL SR-4073 $6.98.

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Performance: Vigorous, stylish
Recording: Good


Performance: Vigorous, stylish
Recording: Good


Performance: Vigorous, stylish
Recording: Good
Concerto is, for Mozart, almost conventional (it is based on his standard piano-concerto rhythm, which he did overwork a bit); the lovely slow movement and the brisk, buffa finale, however, are good stuff. The A Major, K. 488, is, of course, part of that great series that came later. What a slow movement! What a finale!

Pollini and Böhm take us through all this in what is by now Standard Modern Classical Style: clean, vigorous, not too fast, and with a gentler lyric touch than was common a while back. This produces a grateful, graceful Mozart, but it overlooks one important aspect of the music: its obvious operatic affinities. Operatic emoting aside, though, these are attractive performances recorded and produced in high-class classical German style. E.S.


Performance: Just right
Recording: Suave

Since everything about both of these performances is just right, projecting these joy-filled works in the most convincing way imaginable, there seems little point in cataloguing their particular virtues. Fremaux has a fine orchestra in Birmingham, a fine chorus too, and his superb soloists share his deep feeling for the Poulenc idiom. The engineers have come through with a suave, well-balanced recording which allows us to hear just how superior the Birmingham horns are, in the concerto, to those of the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra under Pretre in the otherwise equally perspicuous version with Gabriel Tacchino (Angel S-36426, backed by Tacchino’s splendid account of Poulenc’s Aubade). Norma Burrowes easily holds her own against the soloists in the two other current recordings of the Gloria, though the Carteri/Pretre version (Angel S-33953, with Durufle in the Organ Concerto) has the historical/sentimental value of having been recorded in the composer’s presence. It comes down to a matter of couplings and of which Poulenc works one may be willing to duplicate or do without, but both performances on the new disc strike me as having at least a slight edge over the best of their respective predecessors. R.F.

PROKOFIEF: Sonata in C Major for Cello and Piano, Op. 119 (see FRANCK)

ROSSINI: Arias (see Collections—Frederica von Stade)

SCHUBERT: Piano Quintet in A Major (D. 667, “Trout”). Tashi (Peter Serkin, piano; Ida Kavafian, viola; Fred Sherry, cello); Joseph Silverstein (violin); Buell Neidlinger (double-bass). RCA ARL1-1892 $7.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Only a few months ago in these pages I indicated my preference for Peter Serkin’s 1966 Vanguard recording of the Trout Quintet (with Scheider, Tree, Suyer, and Levine) as against the then two most recent versions, and I was hoping that Mr. Serkin and his present collaborators might equal or surpass the earlier achievement, so remarkable for its sheer exuberance and youthful ardor.

The new recording is a good one in terms of performance with a rather close microphone placement that underlines the rhythmic thrust brought to the opening movement. However, comparing the old and new performances, movement by movement, I find I still prefer the old, not only for its greater spontaneity and its retention of the first-movement repeat, but also because I prefer the somewhat brighter and more spacious recorded sound. Perhaps the best point of comparison is in the famous variation movement where the double-bass has the tune with the piano providing the sparkingly decorative obbligato. There is no question in my mind as to which recorded performance brings this off best.

D.H.


Performance: Strong and brilliant
Recording: Good

Presumably, it will not be too long before the Guarneri Quartet completes its traversal of the mature Schubert string quartets with the last of the series and the least represented in the catalog, No. 15, in G Major. Meanwhile, let me say that this strong and forthright reading of Death and the Maiden augurs well for the future. There is no romantic moaning.
verses of Liederkreis link human emotions to which Op. 42 is based relate to interactions of disc-mates, probe intimate human feelings in These two Schumann song cycles, excellent

Performance: Good Recording: Good

These two Schumann song cycles, excellent disc-mates, probe intimate human feelings in different ways. The Chamisso poems on which Op. 42 is based relate to interactions of man and woman, while the Eichendorff verses of Liederkreis link human emotions to a wide range of subjects, mostly drawn from observing nature.

Janet Baker’s excellence as a song interpreter has been proved on countless occasions, and it is documented time and time again in this recital as well. It is hard to resist tones of such voluptuous quality, and her sense of coloration and her imaginative command of dynamics add dimensions to her singing that are extraordinary. This said, I must nonetheless concede that she is not up to her own exalted vocal standard here; her vibrato is occasionally wider than it should be, and the tones above the staff are not fully centered. In both cycles she surpasses Elizabeth Schwarzkopf’s recent versions (Angel S-37043), but I prefer Elly Ameling’s lighter-toned and vocally more assured rendition of Frauenliebe und Leben on Philips 6500 706. I miss, in particular, the rapture Miss Ameling imparts to “Helft mir, ihr Schwestern.”

Miss Ameling also enjoys better rapport with her pianist partner. Daniel Barenboim is a sensitive collaborator, but, in this instance, a rather self-effacing one in such voice-piano dialogues as “Er, der Herrlichste von allen.” The recorded sound is very fine. G.J.

SCHUMANN: Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54 (see GRIEG)


Performance: Spirited Recording: Good

Since to all intents Dmitri Shostakovich began his professional career playing piano for silent movies in order to feed his family during hard times, it is not surprising that elements of cinematic action music keep cropping up in his music. Thus, the rediscovery of his first full-scale film score, done for a silent in 1928-1929, has both historic as well as stylistic interest.

During the interregnum between the last days of Lenin and the full accession to power of Stalin, many young Russian composers, dramatists, and artists were drawn to the works of their colleagues in post-World War I Germany, in particular the cabaret-style productions with music by the then young Weill, Kienek, and Hindemith. This music was a counterpart of the music-hall style being cultivated by the young Parisians, but in Berlin it was endowed with a far more ferocious irony and politically leftist thrust.

Certainly the young Shostakovich was influenced by that movement when he wrote The New Babylon. Since the film scenario deals with the Paris Commune of 1871, there is much parodying of Offenbach along with collage elements juxtaposing the frivolous-capitalistic and the serious-revolutionary. The scoring for a largish pit band is highly effective, and the early pages of the music are good fun to listen to. About halfway through, however, things begin to pall and one’s end reaction is that The New Babylon is more interesting as history than as music. The performance is zestful, the sound good. D.H.

SHOSTAKOVICH: String Quartets Nos. 8 and 15. Fitzwilliam String Quartet. L’OISEAU-LYRE DSLO 11 $7.98.

Performance: Intense Recording: Very good

This is one of the most depressing records I have ever heard, but it is also a moving document of a kind. The Quartet No. 15 was one of the composer’s last works. Alan George, the violist of the Fitzwilliam Quartet, points out (in a reminiscence of the composer) that Shostakovich was writing his own requiem just as certainly as Mozart wrote his. The difference is that Mozart’s Requiem is full of affirmation in the midst of despair while Shostakovich created despair in the midst of what is supposed to be affirmation. (Overleaf)

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Whew!

Next to this, the Eighth Quartet is almost jolly; it doesn't have a single adagio and only three largos (out of five movements). The work is based on a motif derived from the letters of the composer's name and is full of quotes from earlier works. Still, it is no Hel- denleben. Not all of the quotes are from Shostakovich's own work; one is an old revolutionary song entitled Longing in Prison.

The works are performed with great intensity and devotion by this young English quartet. But don't expect anything particularly life-affirming.

E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SHOSTAKOVICH: Trio No. 2, in E Minor, Op. 67. FAURÉ: Trio in D Minor, Op. 120. Hans Pålsson (piano); Arve Tellefsen (violin); Frans Helmerson (cello). HNH 4007 $7.98 (from HNH Distributors Ltd., P.O. Box 222, Evanston, Ill. 60204).

Recording: Idiomatic

Performance: Excessively rich

The urgency, compassion, and mordant wit of the Shostakovich E Minor Trio put the work on a level with the composer's eloquent piano quintet and the finest of his string quartets; it is not a piece to be tossed off casually. This Swedish performance is even more compell-

ing than the fine Beaux Arts version on Philips (6500.860, coupled with the Ives trio), and the unexpectedly rich sonic frame provided by Robert von Bahr is a decided plus. The Fauré trio might seem an improbable coupling, but why not? The two works would surely be welcome together on a recital program, and both are gloriously realized here. The Fauré performance, as soaring, intense, and radiant as the music itself, is simply the finest presentation of the work I have ever heard, on records or otherwise.

Frans Helmerson has been heard in impressive recordings of Bach and Kodály, and he and Hans Pålsson have recorded together the cello sonatas of Prokofiev and Franck; Arve Tellefsen, the Norwegian concertmaster of the Swedish Radio Orchestra, has made a brilliant recording of the Nielsen Violin Concerto for EMI. The three together constitute a formidable and exciting new chamber-music ensemble whose further recordings must be awaited with the highest expectations. In the meantime, this is an altogether exceptional release, not to be missed on any account.

R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Idiomatic

Recording: Good

This appears to be the first LP devoted entirely to music of the founder of the great Strauss dynasty, the father of the Waltz King; since it includes neither the Radetzky March nor any other piece most of us are likely to know, it qualifies in toto as a discovery. The performing ensemble numbers twenty-six ("the classic strength of the Strauss orchestra"), and the disc, the second volume in the MHS "Biedermeier Dance Music" series, carries the impressive imprimatur. "Works performed in their original settings from manuscripts in the
Vienna Municipal Library. Produced by order of Felix Slavik, Mayor of Vienna. The mayor's order has been carried out with obvious love and enthusiasm, and the result should make him an international hero.

Father Strauss was born in 1804 and died in 1849; the works recorded here were composed between 1827, the year of Beethoven's death, and 1845, a year after Johann II's debut with his own orchestra. Actually, the Radetzky March does make a brief appearance: it is quoted in the Jubilation Quadrille, composed in 1841 for the nameday of the Empress Maria Anna. If the other tunes are less familiar, they are hardly less fetching. The celebrated (but rarely heard) Bull-Raketen Waltz, dedicated to the Turkish ambassador, is colored with "Turkish music" effects, but it is thoroughly Viennese in its insinuating lift and piquant wind figures. The spicy little Hungarian Galop, the vivacious polka, and indeed all seven pieces in this collection are gems. If "adorable" seems too mawkish a term for this music and its unsurpassably idiomatic presentation, call it "gemütlich"—but don't fail to order a copy. R.F.


Performance: Variable
Recording: Very good

The 1967 Horenstein recording of the Pathétique has been available for some years as an EMI import, but even in Vanguard's excellent processing I'm afraid it doesn't represent the late maestro at his best. There are lovely details throughout the introductory pages, but there is no urgency in the build-up toward the first decisive climax; indeed, the reading of the first movement as a whole seems carefully studied and lacking in vital rhythmic impulse. The 5/4 movement comes through with a certain cool elegance, but not much charm. The excitement of the march movement is vitiated by a curious slowing down of tempo just at the point where the music begins its crescendo toward the all-out assertion of the march proper. The mournful finale fares best on the whole, but it too lacks the intensity characteristic of the most memorable readings. The best features of this disc are the superb playing of the London Symphony, the brass section particularly, and recorded sound of a brilliance and clarity that can stand up to today's best. D.H.

VERDI: Macbeth (see The Opera File, page 48)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VIVALDI: Concertos for Oboe in A Minor (RV 463); in C Major (RV 447); in G Minor, Op. 11, No. 6 (RV 460); and in C Major (RV 450). Heinz Holliger (oboe); I Musici. PHILIPS 9500 044 $7.98, © 7500 443 $7.95.

Performance: Superb
Recording: Wonderful

Nothing but superlatives should attend the appearance of this remarkable album. The music is Vivaldi at his best, with an excessively rich palette of harmonies, textures, and figurations, and the oboe playing of Heinz Holliger is, as usual, perfection itself. Holliger's ability to toss off violinistic figuration on the oboe is staggering. He has, in addition, a fine sense of articulation, and he provides ima-
native ornamentation. I Musici's solid, driving support brings this happy partnering to the highest level of ensemble playing. Vivaldi lovers, oboe lovers, treat yourself to this marvelous disc! (Those who may be mystified, as I was, by the "RV" numbers cited above should know that they refer to a new catalog of Vivaldi's compositions by Peter Ryom, published in 1973. While they are not given on the record, the corresponding Pincherle numbers of the four concertos are, respectively, P. 89, P. 41, P. 339, and P. 50.

S.L.

VIVALDI: Concerto for Oboe, Violin, and Organ (P. 36); Concerto for Violin and Organ (P. 274); Concerto for Violin and Organ (P. 311); Concerto for Four Flutes, Four Violins, and Two Organs (P. 226). Andrés Isori (organ); Monique Frasca-Colombier (violin); Michel Gia- bourreau (oboe); Paul Kuentz Chamber Orchestra, Paul Kuentz cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 652 $7.98, © 3300 652 $7.98.

Performance: Solid

Although Vivaldi never wrote any keyboard concertos as such, he preoccupied himself with the coloristic properties of the organ in these four wonderful concertos. Putting aside the organ's full grandeur and treating it more like an oboe or a flute, the Venetian master pits it against and pairs it with violin, oboe, and/or flutes. The flat, white sound of the organ here combined with various solo strings and winds is striking, and we are treated to a fascinating series of textures and sonorities.

While the performances on this disc are not outstanding, they are clean, well put together, and/or flutes. The flat, white sound of the organ here combined with various solo strings and winds is striking, and we are treated to a fascinating series of textures and sonorities.

The market for piano transcriptions of Bach's works is probably not what it used to be, and those of us who question the "necessity" for such things, note that authentic performances are so easy to come by, may be missing some altogether worthwhile listening experiences. More than a few of Bach's own compositions, after all, were transcriptions of a similar sort; the tradition should hardly need justifying now. Granted that not every transcriber is a Bach, not every musician is a Kempff, either, and it is gratifying to have this collection of some of the most effective arrangements the venerable pianist has fashioned and performed over the last four decades or so.

The annotation advises that Kempff's setting of the melodies from Gluck's Orfeo was made "to extend the art of playing legato," and this quality is very much evident in all the pieces presented here. The "Wochet auf" transcription, be it noted, is based on the choral aria in the Cantata No. 140, not on Bach's own instrumental setting as the first of the six Schübler chorales; this and the piece we all know as Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring seem to generate their own flow, and the legato quality is felt even amid the glitter of the Sinfonia to Cantata No. 29 (which is the same music as the Prelude to the final partita for violin solo). The shortest piece on the disc, "In dulci jubilo," is the essence of majestic simplicity and should be enough to convert anyone. Eloquent playing and good piano sound make this a most appealing package.

S.L.

WALTON: Sonata for Violin and Piano (see ELGAR)

WOLF: Italian Serenade (see SCHUBERT)

FRANK PATTERSON

Lightness, charm, and pure intonation

MUSIC OF THE GOTHIC ERA (see Best of the Month, page 78)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Tasteful

This record is a cross-section of the John McCormack repertoire, a baker's dozen of his most celebrated "titles." Frank Patterson, whose bright Irish tenor is already familiar from previous releases, sings elegantly and effortlessly, with lightness, charm, and pure intonation. In attacking the notes he may not match the pinpoint accuracy of his legato predecessor, but in all respects he does him honor. In any case, this is no slavish imitation: Patterson favors some appoggiaturas McCormack regarded as unnecessary, and the rather over-ornamented "O sleep, why dost thou leave me" is not in the McCormack manner. Still, the illusion is strong at times that we are hearing the great John himself in modern sound—and that is high recommendation. The orchestrations are tasteful, well played, and captured in rich sound.


Performance: Good

Recorded: Good

The young Hungarian soprano Sylvia Sass zoomed into international prominence as a result of her highly praised Violetta at the Aix Festival of 1976. In the present sequence of rarely heard Mozart arias she justifies her reputation but offers more in the way of bright promise than complete fulfillment. Her agreeable voice handles all demands fluently, though her tone is not even in all registers. Her singing is decidedly more effective in soft passages (quite lovely in the concluding Cavaradossi in K. 272) than in music conveying passion. "Ch'io mi scordi di te?" is a gem of an aria with a delightful piano obbligato; his legato sensibly played by the equally youthful Andras Schiff, lacks involvement and vitality. With all that, there is talent here in abundance. Miss Sass has a future.

G.J.


Performance: Uneven
Recording: Good

A potentially excellent idea—a sequence of little-known songs by Puccini, Mascagni, Leoncavallo, et al.—is frustrated here by the obvious fact that Renata Scotto was in poor vocal estate at the time of this recording. There are some bright spots—Pizzetti’s impressionistic I Pastori, Leoncavallo’s charming Sérénade Française, and Toschi’s magical Malla—but most of Scotto’s renditions are flawed. Her top notes are shrill, and she tends to lose true pitch in emotional climaxes.

Full texts and translations are provided, but the annotations are of little value. What made Puccini write new words to his own melody (from the third act of La Bohème) to create the song Sole e amore? When did he write Merti all’avviso (in which Manon Lescaut is quoted)? Why did Respighi choose French texts for his songs?

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Performance: Expert and endearing
Recording: Very good

Frederica von Stade’s second solo recital (for a different company than the first) finds the young mezzo in congenial repertoire, with the Mozart side slightly in the lead. Her soprano-like timbre is ideal for Zerlina, her breathless-amorous Cherubino is a good replica of a stage characterization that has been admired on two continents, and the two arias from La Clemenza di Tito, with their elaborate bass clarinet obbligatos (played here by George Petrierson and Bas de Jong, respectively), are expertly and elegantly rendered. On the Rossini side, too, the artist winningly meets the contrasting challenges of elegiac expression and Virtuosic agility.

Minor reservations must be voiced, however: Von Stade’s Rosina, though not lacking in temperament, sounds a shade too studied, not spontaneous enough. And the floriture (in “Parto, parto” as well as the Rossini arias), while fluent by the usual standards, fall short of the style to which such paragons as Baker, Berganza, and Horne (the list is alphabetical) have lately accustomed us. The orchestral accompaniments are nicely articulated and warm in sound, but the tempo for the Otello aria is far too languid.

ABC CLASSICS
For a review of the ABC Classics first release, which includes works by J. S. Bach, Blow, Handel, Couperin, Haydn, Mozart, and Stoltzer, see “Going on Record” on page 54.

MAY 1977
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Introducing the Staff...

When a personal opinion, particularly a publicly expressed one, grate on our nerves, one of the commoner responses is to ask, either under or at the top of our voices, just who that sound so familiar to her 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.

Assistant Music Editor

Vivienne Winterry Goodman

Can a girl from deep in the heart of Texas find happiness in New York City as the Assistant Music Editor of the world’s most widely read music and equipment magazine? In the case of Vivienne Winterry Goodman, who currently occupies that position, the answer is a resounding yes, and the reason, unsurprisingly, is her lifelong love of music.

Vivienne grew up in the midst of an intensely musical family in Dallas. "When it was a small town—but don’t write that," she cautions, though whether that’s for personal or civic reasons she declines to say). Her father was a fiddler "who could play anything he heard," and his home was a haven for many of the best musicians in the city.

The home also contained a wind-up phonograph, and Vivienne recalls that the family record collection included a strange disc of the sounds of hunting dogs that only she and Contributing Editor Richard Freed seem to remember. Fortunately for Vivienne, who had started violin lessons while very young, the collection also included "all the Red Seal artists—Heifetz, Elman, Zimbait, Kubelik." And with "a great record background like that," Vivienne had soon acquired enough skill on her chosen instrument that by the time she was a teenager she was not only teaching and giving concerts and lectures throughout the Southwest, but had joined the Dallas Symphony Orchestra as well. While she was still quite young, her hopes for a full-time career as a professional musician were dashed by an automobile accident which put her out of commission for a time (and from which, I hasten to add, she has fully recovered).

Having begun to dabble with music journalism, Vivienne eventually gravitated to the Big Apple, where a photographer had asked her to work on background material and write some captions for a book he was preparing. She wound up doing two books, and later she began to write essays for the Lewisohn Stadium concerts program book, which is fondly remembered by many New Yorkers. Having retained an intense interest in performing—now on an amateur level—she helped to establish Chamber Music Associates at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. This organization is dedicated to bringing together people who play, no matter at what level, from beginners to virtuosos. She is particularly proud of this accomplishment.

Vivienne is one of those who can actually say, "I got my job through the New York Times." She came to STEREO REVIEW in 1963 "only to do a few days work," she says, but she has been here happily ever since, functioning as the editorial right arm for the rest of the musical staff of the magazine. Her varied duties include research, helping maintain liaison with record companies, and seeing to it that the reviewers stay on schedule. This last task is a difficult one, which she performs with tactics ranging from cajolery to terrorism.

Currently, she resides in Manhattan with her husband Johnny and an elegant Persian cat named Miss America. Perhaps because of her Southwestern background or perhaps because she has traveled a good bit in Mexico, Vivienne’s tastes in music include a fondness for Latin popular singers such as Jorge Negrete, Imperio Argentina, Amalia Rodrigues, and more recently Nati Mistral. When she plays records, Vivienne tends to listen to Mozart operas, Italian operas, and lots of Mahler, in addition to string quartets.

Weekends at home and summer vacations in Maine are enlivened for her by get-togethers of her amateur chamber music quartet, some of whose members have been regulars for almost twenty years. Dvořák is one of the composers she most likes to perform. "But we also play endless Haydn and fathomless amounts of Beethoven," she says, "and we do a lot of exploration among neglected works, such as those of Charubin. Making music in this way is the ruling passion of my life."

Drummond McInnis

STEREO REVIEW

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