NEW ELECTRONIC DESIGN ANTIQUATES SO-CALLED "HIGH SPEED" TECHNOLOGY.

Since its inception in the 1960's, there's been a lot of debate as to whether "high speed" is just a lot of fast talk or whether quick rise times and high slew rates are effective in lowering distortion.

Now Pioneer's latest technology brings an end to the heated "high speed" debate. Because Pioneer's new Non-Switching Amplifier design has been recognized as a most significant technological advance. It produces distortion levels so vanishingly low (.005%), its sound purity and specifications are comparable to the very best most expensive power amplifiers.

In fact, further study of Pioneer's new Non-Switching technology will show why "high speed" has become obsolete.

NO MATTER HOW FAST YOUR AMP, IT'S STILL BEHIND THE TIMES.

The truth is, "high speed" is just a fancy name recently given to an electronic technology that dates back nearly two decades. The terms slew rate and rise time were around when most amps had vacuum tubes and transistors were rarities. In fact, the only thing new about the terms slew rate and rise time is their recent abuse.

THE HIGHER THE SPEED, THE BIGGER THE CON.

Kenwood, Sansui, and other manufacturers of high fidelity components boast that their units offer higher fidelity because they offer higher slew rates than the competition.

A slew rate of 200 volts per microsecond (V/us) and a rise time of 0.55 ms is indeed sound impressive. They are at least three, four and sometimes even up to 10 times faster than those found on most of today's equipment.

But the truth is you no more need rates like this to get superior high fidelity reproduction of music than you need to be an Olympic weightlifter to turn the page of this magazine.

HIGH SPEED GOES NOWHERE FAST.

To understand why "high speed" is really "all talk and no action," you must first understand what's meant by slew rate and rise time.

Slew rate is the maximum rate of change or slope of a signal measured in volts per microsecond. Like miles per hour, it's a rate of how fast something is traveling. And in this case that something is the musical signal.

All it takes is a simple calculation to show what slew rate would be necessary to handle the most extremely demanding musical signal.

Let's assume 20,000 hertz to be our musical analog with a peak value of 40 volts which will deliver 100 watts of power into 8 ohms.

The steepest part of the wave, where the slew rate is greatest, is at the zero crossing point. The slope at this point is the derivative of the sine wave with respect to time (dt):

\[ \frac{d}{dt} \sin(2\pi ft) = 2\pi f \cos(2\pi ft) \]

So this extreme case signal only has a slew rate of 5. And if the power was increased to 400 watts, the slew rate would only double.

A slew rate of 200 volts per microsecond like Kenwood boasts, only adds one thing to your amp. A high price tag.

Rise time is the time it takes for a signal to go from 10% to 90% of its peak-to-peak value.

Another simple calculation will show the rise time necessary to handle a 20,000 Hz. sine wave.

The arcsin of -0.8 is the angle at which a sine wave is at 10% of its peak-to-peak value and +0.8 when it's at 90% of its peak-to-peak value.
So the time it takes to go from -53.13° (10%) to +53.13° (90%) is:

$$\Delta t = \frac{53.13 - (-53.13)}{360} \times 20,000 = 4.97 \text{ sec.}$$

And the rise time needed to handle a 40,000 hertz signal is half of that: 7.38 µs.

What's the point? If the rise time is 0.85 µs or faster? Well, some audio companies believe they need it to justify an inflated price tag. And some use it to try to get away from audible distortion they can't rid themselves of.

**IF KENWOOD AMPS HAVE A HIGHER SLEW RATE THAN PIONEERS’, HOW COME THEY ALSO HAVE A LOT MORE DISTORTION?**

Unless you own an eleven-year-old “tube job” it’s safe to say the distorion you’re hearing is not caused by insufficient slew rate and rise time.

In fact, this is the most significant form of audible distortion, and, at the most, be reduced with “high speed” technology. But, Pioneer’s new Non-Switching technology totally eliminates it.

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**DISTORTION. PIONEER’S TECHNOLOGY ELIMINATES IT.**

**THE LESS DISTORTION, THE LESS NEED FOR FEEDBACK.**

An important result of having such a clean, practically distortion-free amplifier is a significant reduction in the need for negative feedback. In most amplifiers, as feedback increases distortion decreases. And frequency response increases in proportion.

But when the amplifier suffers from the problem of switching distortion, even a feedback network that feeds back most of the signal can’t significantly reduce it.

Pioneer, because of its Non-Switching design and Ring Emitter Transistors (RETs) has extended frequency response and totally eliminated switching distortion. Because of these characteristics, feedback is not needed to obtain impressive specifications. And neither are exotic slew rates and rise times. An unheard-of .005% distortion is proof of that.

"...it is certainly a technical achievement of no mean proportions. From our measurements alone, we would have guessed that this was a pure Class A amplifier of exceptional quality, except for the fact that it runs cooler than most AB amplifiers of similar power."—Stereo Review, October, 1979.

**THE TECHNOLOGY OF OUR FINEST AMPS IS ALSO FOUND IN OUR FINEST RECEIVERS.**

Most audio buffs would think technology as advanced as Pioneer’s Non-Switching circuitry would only be found in Pioneer’s latest amplifiers, but the truth is the same engineering can also be found in Pioneer’s finest receivers.

Pioneer’s SX-3800 and SX-3900 do not sacrifice true high fidelity for the sake of compactness in size or savings in price. In fact, the total harmonic distortion in the 60 watt/channel output of the SX-3800 is a mere 0.005% or less. The lowest of any receiver on today’s market. And the price is a lot less than those receivers.

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Read what the August, 1979 issue of Stereo Review magazine said about the $49.95 Minimus-7 mini-speaker by Realistic

"The panelists found the Minimus-7 to be one of the best of the 2-liter speakers and very much a bargain considering its price."

"... sound is 'tight.'"

"... its sense of openness, level of definition, reproduction of musical detail, and stereo imaging were all quite good..."

"... power handling above average." "Good imaging and definition..."

"a good buy."

Mobile Brackets for Minimus-7 Speakers

Enjoy the rich, full sound of the Minimus-7 speaker in your car, van, RV or even your boat. Fully adjustable brackets let you position the speaker at the turn of a thumbscrew. Black finish matches speaker.

Quotes excerpted with permission from the STEREO REVIEW August 1979 article "Nineteen Minispeakers" copyright ©1979 Ziff-Davis Publishing Co. All rights reserved.
NEW PRODUCTS
Roundup of the latest audio equipment and accessories

AUDIO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Car-stereo questions you ought to ask

AUDIO BASICS
Turn the (Car) Radio On

TAPE TALK
Auto Treble Trouble, Cassette Head Wear, Cassette vs. Eight-track

TECHNICAL TALK
Variations on an Amplifier

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CAR STEREO
In features, facilities, and specs, more and more like home equipment

THE COMING WAR OF THE VIDEODISCS
Eyeball-to-eyeball in the marketplace: a helluva way to run a technocracy

MARK KNOPFLE
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Tomas Vásáry’s Mozart Concertos
Singer/Songwriter Lacy J. Dalton
Introducing Teresa
Contrived Costello
Digital Lightfoot
Ramones/The Clash

POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES
Massenet: Werther
Previn’s Digital Debussy

POP ROTOGRAVURE

CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES
The Cleveland’s Beethoven

The Regulars

BULLETIN

SPEAKING OF MUSIC

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INSTALLATION OF THE MONTH

GOING ON RECORD

POP BEAT

SIMELS LIVE

ADVERTISERS’ INDEX
The disease is low frequency feedback. The cure is DiscFoot Hi-Technology Turntable Isolation System.

- Works in combination with existing feet for dramatic reduction of feedback.
- Isolates better than original or "replacement" feet.

Home environments can "upset" a turntable by feeding back both speaker and footfall vibrations. Acoustic isolation of a turntable involves the complex variables of turntable weight, room/floor conditions and audio system placement. The Discwasher DiscFoot has been specifically designed to successfully isolate most turntables in the home environment.

The "Material" Solution
The major components of the Discwasher DiscFoot System are new, "totally engineered" chemical complexes that behave radically different than other plastic, rubber or spring systems. These proprietary compounds are durable and precise in behavior, although difficult and expensive to synthesize. Laboratory and real-world tests justify the use of these unusual materials in the DiscFoot System.

The Telling Test
The oscilloscope photo shows the output of two identical audio systems on the same shelf with their stylus contacting the platters. The shelf is being struck by a rubber mallet. The top trace shows a turntable with absorptive "replacement" feet. The lower trace shows a DiscFoot System operating in conjunction with the existing turntable feet. Note the dramatic (tenfold) improvement in shock and feedback isolation.

The DiscFoot System contains four isolation feet, four platform caps, four furniture-protecting sheets and four special damping pads to adapt DiscFoot units to certain turntables. Additional single DiscFoot units are available for turntables weighing over 22 lbs. The system costs $22.

Diswasher DiscFoot can be found at audio dealers interested in preserving your music.

Diswasher DiscFoot® PRODUCTS TO CARE FOR YOUR MUSIC

1407 N. Providence Rd.
Columbia, Missouri 65201
CIRCLE NO. 16 ON READER SERVICE CARD
PIONEER'S LASER-OPTICAL VIDEODISC player, the VP 1000, goes on sale this month in four markets: Dallas/Fort Worth, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Syracuse, N.Y., and Madison, Wisc. The company plans to expand into four more cities every sixty to ninety days. The unit, which lists for $749, has scanning, freeze-frame, random-access, and slow-motion features in addition to stereo and dual-language capabilities. Also announced by Pioneer is the formation of a new subsidiary, Pioneer Artists, which will produce and acquire videodisc software, primarily of musical performances in the categories thought to be of greatest interest to audio-oriented consumers.

DEBUTING IN THE HOME VIDEO MARKET, Capitol Records has just released its first videocassettes (mono only, of course) in both VHS and Beta formats. Included are the Knack in concert at Carnegie Hall, ex-Jefferson Starship honcho Marty Balin's recent stage show Rock Justice, and approximately twenty-five feature films from the EMI catalog. Price: $49.95 per cassette.

STEREO BROADCASTING BY AM STATIONS has finally been approved by the FCC! Instead of permitting the industry to choose among the five competing stereo AM broadcasting systems, the FCC has specified one developed by Magnavox Consumer Electronics to be used by all stations. Prototype home stereo AM units may be shown to the industry at the Consumer Electronics Show in June in Chicago, but it will probably be six months before such receivers are available in stores. Now, when are we going to get stereo on American television?

FANS OF "THE ROCKFORD FILES" who mourn the TV show's demise should be glad to know that Stuart Margolin, who played petty thief Angel Martin on the series, is making his recording debut with "And the Angel Sings" on Warner Bros. Margolin, who has been called "the Olivier of Slime," wrote most of the material (said to be reminiscent of Chuck Berry and Jimmy Reed) and calls it "country-punk."

A DIGITAL/ANALOG COMPARISON RECORD issued by Vanguard (VA 25000) starts the series "Audiophile Recordings for the Connoisseur." Both sides of the disc contain the same performance of Haydn's Symphony No. 100 ("Military") played by the orchestra of the Mostly Mozart Festival conducted by Johannes Somary. Side one has the performance recorded digitally; side two presents it in an analog recording. You be the judge. All discs in this series will have a list price of $12.98.

THE QUEEN ELISABETH COMPETITION will be broadcast live in stereo via satellite from Brussels, Belgium, by National Public Radio. Documentary programs on June 2, 3, and 4 will include excerpts from twelve concerts by finalists. The winner's concert will be broadcast June 5 at 2:00 p.m. This year's competition, under the patronage of Queen Fabiola, is for violinists. Previous winners have included pianists Philippe Entremont and Vladimir Ashkenazy and violinists David Oistrakh and Leonid Kogan.

CHAMBER MUSIC DOESN'T SELL RECORDS! Right? Wrong! In April the Amadeus Quartet celebrated the sale of their two millionth record. Their latest release on Deutsche Grammophon is Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik and A Musical Joke (DG 2531 253).

FOLK MUSIC IN AMERICA, a series of fifteen albums issued by the Library of Congress, has been completed with "Songs of Death and Tragedy." The new disc, a collection of sixteen songs, surveys ways that death is depicted in traditional American music. Featured musicians include the Blue Sky Boys, Grandpa Jones, and Ernest V. Stoneman. The Library has also issued five LPs of folk recordings first released on 78s in 1942. That series, edited by Alan Lomax, ranges from Afro-American game songs and Anglo-American ballads to music of the Spanish Southwest. Price: $6.50 each. Bought as a set, the fifteen-volume series costs $85. Write Library of Congress Recording Laboratory, Washington, D.C. 20540, for a free descriptive brochure.
Speaking of Music...

By William Anderson

TESTING IN A WICKED WORLD

A young friend tells me that one of his business-school professors holds "the maximization of shareholder profit" to be a corporate manager's sole ethical responsibility. I thought for a while that I was going to have to worry about that, but I've changed my mind. Even if our business community, from multinational oil company right down to the corner grocery store, if I am undismayed that some of this suspicion occasionally falls on Stereo Review, it is because charity compels me to admit that paranoia is the only logical response for someone who genuinely believes that he is surrounded by knaves.

Why does Stereo Review come under such baleful scrutiny? Because we test audio equipment, print the results, and what we print is, in varying degrees, all positive. Right. Paranoia knows the reason for this: a long line of trucks at our back door drop off old wine, young women, and solid-gold amplifiers. Wrong. The real reasons are (1) editorial limitations and (2) editorial clout. The limitations are time, money, and space. An outsider would scarcely believe how much time is consumed by logistics (ordering, unpacking, packing, shipping, record keeping). Yet alone that spent actually testing and writing up a report. There must therefore be tight control over the time (money) spent in preparing reports, even tighter control over the space they take, and a certain amount of record keeping, keeping, just alone that spent actually testing and writing up a report. There must therefore be tight control over the time (money) spent in preparing reports, even tighter control over the space they take in an issue (we have other subjects to cover). Having invested all this time, money, and space, would it be sensible for a manufacturer to present his wares to the very frontiers of technology, to areas not only beyond the limits of hearing, but often beyond the limits of test instruments. In addition, measurement methods are not all standardized, and even where they are, different testers using different test machines in different labs will come up with differing results. A test report in Stereo Review will be seen by something like 1.7 million people, and an entirely innocent error in one could be a disaster for a manufacturer—and his employees. This has taught us to be very careful at every step. No consolation, I know, for those who want to hear that there is some kind of conspiracy; there isn't.

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EDITORIAL CLUT: THE POWER OF THE PRESS IS

For a manufacturer-and his em-

has been known
to masquerade as hi-fi equipment (and even
there are expensive off-brand toys out there
saying, in effect, "Don't buy this")? Yes,
there are expensive off-brand toys out there
masquerading as hi-fi equipment (and even
the majors, being human, have been known
to stumble), but we do not see our responsi-
ability as one of ineffectually policing the en-
tire market but of providing useful guidance
to the best part of it.

Editorial clout: the Power of the Press is
very real—and dangerous if irresponsibly
exercised. Competitive pressures have driv-
en manufacturers to the very frontiers of
technology, to areas not only beyond the
limits of hearing, but often beyond the lim-
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ful at every step. No consolation, I know,
for those who want to hear that there is
some kind of conspiracy; there isn't.
If you're looking for incredible sounding speakers at an affordable price, by all means listen to ours! You'll find that for less money than you planned on spending you can get much better sounding speakers than you dreamed you could ever afford. Polk Audio loudspeakers have received worldwide praise because people recognize that they offer remarkable value. Critical acclaim such as the following makes it clear why Polk speakers have become famous for offering the best possible sound for the money.

"Polk Audio is a small, Maryland-based company whose speakers enjoy an enviable reputation among audiophiles who would prefer to own such exotica as the Beveridge System 25W-1 ($7000 per pair) or Pyramid Metronome ($5200 per pair) but don't have the golden wallets to match their golden ears!" The Complete Buyer's Guide to Stereo/Hi-Fi Equipment

"...the Polk Model 10 is certainly a very fine speaker...the frequency response covers the entire audio range with commendable flatness...the transient response of the Model 10 is absolutely first rate, and the hemispherical dispersion is superb (we cannot recall measuring better dispersion on any forward-radiating speaker). The tone burst response was exceptional...the total effect is of an exceptionally pleasing sonic balance with plenty of spaciousness or 'depth'..." Stereo Review

Polk Audio loudspeakers, starting around $125 each, are available at the world's finest hi-fi stores. Write us for complete information on our products and the location of the Polk Audio dealer nearest you.

Polk Audio Inc. 1205 S. Carey St., Baltimore, Md. 21230 Dept. C9
Distributed in Canada by Edon Acoustics - Ottawa

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After stunning the audio world by going beyond Class-A...
we stunned the competition with this Super-A receiver.

When JVC brought out “Super-A” amplifiers last year, they were hailed as a tremendous achievement. Now, we go a step further with our new line of Super-A receivers. Which means you can get Super-A amplification along with JVC’s 5-band graphic equalizer, a terrific FM/AM tuner, and everything else that has made JVC a premier name in receivers. All for prices you’d expect to pay for conventional class-A/B receivers.

What does Super-A sound like?
By eliminating switching and crossover distortion (you can actually see them disappear on an oscilloscope), Super-A eliminates the subtle harshness which makes some conventional amplifiers hard to listen to. The sound is natural and detailed, with the delicate texture of musical instruments coming through clearly.

At the same time, the R-S33 receiver shown here gives you a hefty 40 watts per channel into 8 ohms, from 20-20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.007% total harmonic distortion. Power like this in a conventional Class-A would cause it to run hot and weigh a ton, to say nothing of costing you a fortune. But the R-S33 costs only $329.95.*

5-band graphic equalizer
With conventional tone controls, you can make only crude adjustments of problems like cartridge peaks, speaker roll-off and room acoustics. But with JVC’s 5-band graphic equalizer, you can make adjustments in five separate tonal regions. So you can boost deep bass without creating mid-bass boominess. Mellow out a voice without cutting the highs. Boost the extreme highs and more.

Traditional JVC quality
With all this going for the R-S33 receiver, you might almost think we cut corners to offer it at such a great price. We didn’t.

As with past JVC receivers, you get a direct-coupled DC power amplifier section. A sensitive tuning section with linear-phase IF stages. Two tape monitors with equalizer and dubbing facilities. LED power meters. And JVC’s patented, error-free Triple Power Protection system.

*Manufacturer’s suggested retail price.

800-221-7502
Just call his toll-free number for the location of your nearest JVC dealer (212-476-8300 in New York State). While you’re there, you might also want to check out our low-distortion, class-A/B receivers, the R-S11 and R-S55. And if you want the extra convenience and accuracy of quartz-synthesized digital tuning, you can get it in our R-S55 and our R-S77 with Super-A.
Holography is the performance itself. "Bob Ajaye... after two days of observing a rather seedy street fiddler, is making much better cassettes than most of the majors are turning out. For me, the main value of tapes is to take my latest disc acquisition so that I can listen to it on my way to and from work; I can make much better cassettes than most of the majors are turning out. I realize that this is basically dishonest, but I usually erase it after I've had a chance to listen to it a few times. I stand a much better chance of appreciating the virtuosity that goes into a well-written review?

Benjamin S. Dunham
Executive Director
Chamber Music America
New York, N.Y.

One can only hope.

Dubbing Rub

I am a tape fan and a computer programmer, so I am still enjoying your excellent March Special Tape Issue—particularly the cover, which gave me something new to lust after.

For me, the main value of tapes is to take a high-quality blank cassette tape and dub my latest disc acquisition so that I can listen to it on my way to and from work; I can make much better cassettes than most of the majors are turning out. I realize that this is basically dishonest, but I usually erase it after I've had a chance to listen to it a few times. I stand a much better chance of getting to listen to a new recording promptly than if I have to wait for a quiet Saturday afternoon to roll around. Besides, it keeps the record itself in mint condition.

Gene Lacy
Houston, Tex.

Cartoonist's License

The John Rouson cartoon on page 80 of the same issue showing a music critic at work in a 180-degree arc facing the listener. "...the result was positively breathtaking! When the lights were turned out, we could almost have sworn that we were in the presence of a real live orchestra." Hal Rogers, Senior Editor — Popular Electronics, May 1979.

"Plain old stereo will never be the same." Arthur Salsberg, Editorial Director — Popular Electronics, May 1979.


"Bob Ajaye... after two days of critical listening called the Carver invention "a giant leap forward for hi-fi. I agree." Larry Klein, Technical Director — Stereo Review, May, 1979.

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"Plain old stereo will never be the same." Arthur Salsberg, Editorial Director — Popular Electronics, May 1979.


"Bob Ajaye... after two days of critical listening called the Carver invention "a giant leap forward for hi-fi. I agree." Larry Klein, Technical Director — Stereo Review, May, 1979.

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The Camel World of satisfaction comes to low tar smoking.
This is where it all started. Camel quality, now in a rich tasting Camel blend for smooth, low tar smoking. Camel Lights brings the solution to taste in low tar.

would, however, characterize as criminal activity the running off of free copies for friends or other copies for sale off the back of a van in the shopping-mall parking lot. I know too many hungry musicians.

Corporate Philistinism
● I was delighted with Editor William Anderson's April column ("Speaking of Music") on the Nonesuch affair. It takes intelligence, perspective, and genuine conviction to speak out in this way.

Philistinism on the part of many of our American corporations involved with cultural or artistic products or services is a fact of life of long standing. Fortunately, it is slowly becoming somewhat tempered by a growing awareness of their humanistic and social responsibilities. What fascinates me, however, is the flip-flop character of corporate policy in this regard, especially as exhibited by our large communications corporations. As Mr. Anderson pointed out, they love the social cachet that attaches to association with the top luminaries of the world of classical music. But more than that, one would think that even in self-interest their fiscally minded top executives would realize that supporting a classical division brings an image of high quality and "class" to the whole corporation in all its activities. And there are few corporations today that would not benefit from upgrading their public image.

FREDERICK STEINWAY
Anherst, Mass.
● American business' consciousness of its social responsibilities can be raised: just demonstrate that it costs money to ignore them. Ford was introduced to a brand-new "bottom line" when it won the Pinto case by the skin of its teeth, the FCC yanked RKO General's broadcasting licenses because of some hanky-panky TV Guide called "a practice most businessmen consider to be normal commercial procedure," and Elektra/Nonesuch was trapped by its recent PR debacle into essentially continuing (at least for now) what director Teresa Sterne had been doing all along instead of quietly folding the label and stealing away. It would be interesting to know how these events have been presented to stockholders.

ARTHUR CROOKSHANK
New York, N.Y.

Digital Star Trek?
● Steve Simels' March review of the soundtrack of Star Trek—the Motion Picture did not do the recording justice. It's not simply "well recorded"; sonically, it's one of the most exciting discs I've heard in a while. From the extremely dynamic bottom end, such as the bass drum in the cut The Enterprise, to the soft, natural sound of the solo piano in Ilia's Theme, the album is certainly well recorded. Score one for Columbia.

What puzzles me, though, is that on the back of the album jacket are the words "Sony Digital Recording." If it is a digital recording, why didn't the producers bill it as such more prominently? If they had, the album would be more appealing to hi-fi enthusiasts and not-so-hi-fi thrill seekers as well, digital being the "in" thing now in sound.

STEVE MITCHELL
Independence, Kan.

The original soundtrack recording for Star Trek—the Motion Picture was a twenty-four-channel analog tape. Sony digital equipment was later used to produce the two-channel disc master. Stereophonic Review reserves the © symbol and the designation "digital-master recording" for analog discs whose first-generation master recording was made with digital equipment. Even this system is a hybrid that will in time give way to the all-digital disc, and such anomalies as the Star Trek soundtrack album, however fine their sound, represent mere temporary expedients.

Arabesque Correction
● Richard Freed's very kind review in April of the Arabesque recording of Delius' Songs of Sunset and Borodin's Polovtsian Dances contains a slight error. Both of these performances are in stereo sound, the Delius for the first time anywhere. The Delius was originally issued by EMI in England in mono on ALP 1983. When Arabesque asked EMI for the tapes, I was able to tell them that the recording was in stereo before.

(Continued on page 14)
The new Sansui G-4700.

A double-digital receiver with all the right numbers.

Digital readouts and digital circuitry. Great specs. And the best price/performance ratio in the business. All the right numbers. That’s the new Sansui G-4700. Just look what we offer:

**Double-Digital Design:** The front panel of the G-4700 has a bright electronic digital readout that shows the frequency of the station you’ve selected; and behind the front panel is one of the most advanced tuning systems in the world.

Sansui’s patented Digitally Quartz-Locked Circuit uses a precise quartz crystal time base to keep your station locked in, even through many hours of listening or if you turn the receiver off and back on again.

Conventional quartz-controlled receivers use analog phase comparison circuits that can become inaccurate because of harmonic interference. Our system uses a new LSIC (Large Scale Integrated Circuit) digital processor that actually counts the vibrations of the quartz crystal to compare to the tuned frequency. The frequency is perfectly locked in the instant you find the station you want.

With this unique Digitally Quartz-Locked system, the G-4700 delivers high sensitivity (15dBf, mono); a better signal-to-noise ratio (75dB, mono); and a better spurious rejection ratio (70dB).

**DC power amplifier:** Power is ample for almost any speaker made, with 50 watts per channel, min. RMS, both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000Hz with no more than 0.05% THD.

And the wide bandwidth DC power amp circuit responds quickly to transient music signals for the most accurate and pleasing music reproduction. What you hear is clean and sharp, just the way it was recorded.

**Electronic LED power meters:** Don’t worry if your present speakers can’t handle 50 watts. The array of fast-acting LED’s (Light Emitting Diodes) on the Sansui G-4700 lets you monitor and control the output level so you don’t damage your speakers.

**Electronic tuning meters:** Two fluorescent readouts help to zero-in on each station with accuracy and ease. Both the signal strength and center-tune indicators operate digitally for precise station selection, and the nearby LED verifies that the quartz circuit has locked in your station.

**Superb human engineering:** A full complement of genuinely useful knobs, switches and jacks gives you complete control over what you hear and how you hear it.

Ask your authorized Sansui dealer to demonstrate the G-4700. Listen to the music. You’ll love what you hear. Look at the numbers. You’ll love what you see.

SANSUI ELECTRONICS CORP.
Lyndhurst, New Jersey 07071
Gardena, Ca. 90247
SANSUI ELECTRIC CO., LTD., Tokyo, Japan
SANSUI AUDIO EUROPE S.A., Antwerp, Belgium
In Canada: Electronic Distributors

CIRCLE NO. 46 ON READER SERVICE CARD
A component system in disguise. If you've always wanted component sound, Mitsubishi has the answer. Our new Auto Modules have all the advantages of component separates, yet feature all the conveniences of an in-dash system.

The CZ-747 with its super-compact chassis, contains the in-dash module tape transport and tuning sections. It features a Sendust head, metal tape bias switch and an electronic tuning system with memory, scan and auto-search. Time-of-day and tuning frequency are digitally displayed and both tape and FM feature Dolby® Noise Reduction.

There's also the CZ-692. It features five AM or five FM pushbutton tuning, Sendust head and metal tape bias. It too has Dolby® Noise Reduction on tape and FM sections.

Add one of the Mitsubishi Power Modules to suit your power requirements. Our Power Modules are available in 8, 20 or 40 watts per channel.

We also offer an optional 5-band Graphic Equalizer Module for complete sound contour control.

The Mitsubishi Auto Modules. A total concept in component stereo for the road. You owe yourself a visit to your nearest Mitsubishi Car Audio dealer.

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In Canada: Melco Sales Canada Inc., Ontario
CIRCLE NO. 34 ON READER SERVICE CARD

cause I happened to have been present when it was made. After a considerable search, EMI found the tapes, which were then edited for the Arabesque release. The Borodin was originally issued in England in stereo on SXLP 30171. Both works had completely different couplings in their English releases.

WARD BOTSFORD
Executive Producer
Arabesque Recordings
New York, N.Y.

Pro Nukes

Steve Simels' remarks about nuclear power in his review of the "No Nukes" album (March "Best of the Month") make me boiling mad. Nuclear energy is the safest, most nonpolluting form of energy we have. What do Mr. Simels and his shallow-thinking cohorts have to offer as alternatives? All major hydroelectric sites are in use and any proposed additional projects are invariably blocked by environmentalists. Coal is plentiful, but again environmentalists block its use, from mining to burning. Development of geothermal energy is also fought by environmentalists who attempt to withdraw favorable areas from utilization. Solar energy is usually held out as the savior, but in reality it offers little practicality in the near future for generation of electricity.

Well-managed nuclear energy offers by far our best hope of energy self-sufficiency. To deny its use is a much greater step toward "both short-term and long-term suicide" as Mr. Simels calls it. If people with Mr. Simels' view get their way, STEREO REVIEW itself will become useless. The only recorded music we will then be able to listen to will have to be played on hand-cranked phonographs.

DAN AVERY
Baker, Ore.

Steve Simels replies: It seems to me that it is a critic's duty to let the reader know where he stands on an issue when it directly relates to a recording like this one. After all, proceeds from the sale of the "No Nukes" album will be going to groups lobbying against nuclear power, and it would have been hypocritical to recommend the set if I were in fact pro-nuke.

Simels vs. CSN

I just knew Steve Simels couldn't resist, in reviewing the "No Nukes" album (March), another groundless, pointless swipe at Crosby, Stills, and Nash—you know, the people who haven't "written or sung a decent new song since 1970." I find myself wondering what can be made of a record critic who has yet to write a valid, coherent review. I think I may have the answer: Mr. Simels finds albums "delicious" and therefore never gets to hear the best parts.

BRUCE CAMPBELL
Port Jefferson, N.Y.
Now there are two approaches to low THD. Ours gives you better sound.

Harman Kardon introduces low negative feedback design for inaudible TIM distortion.

For the last few years, audio manufacturers have been rushing to bring you newer, lower THD levels in their amplifier sections. And every year, they've accomplished this the simplest way they could. By adding negative feedback, a form of electronic compensation.

Unfortunately, this "cure" for THD—typically 60-80dB of negative feedback—creates another form of distortion. Transient Intermodulation Distortion, or TIM, which does far more to degrade the music than THD.

At Harman Kardon, we lowered THD the right way. With a unique circuit design (U.S. Patent #4,176,323) that lets us use just a fraction of the negative feedback typically used.

The result is our new hk700 series High Technology Separates. Built around our low negative feedback amp/preamp combination that delivers a crystal clear, totally transparent 65 watts per channel. You can also choose from a full-featured digital tuner, a phase locked analog tuner, and the most advanced cassette deck on the market.

The world's first cassette deck with Dolby* HX.

Our new metal cassette deck goes beyond metal. It features the all new Dolby HX circuitry for an extra 10dB high frequency headroom and an astonishing 68dB signal-to-noise ratio. With Dolby HX, even an inexpensive tape can perform like a premium metal tape. And a premium metal tape sounds unbelievable.

Our new separates look as good as they sound. Each measures a mere 15" wide x 3" high. As you can see, they stack beautifully.

We suggest you audition them. But only if you're serious. Once you hear the difference low negative feedback can make, you'll never settle for anything less.

(For the location of the Harman Kardon dealer nearest you, call toll-free 1-800-528-6050 ext. 870.)

*Dolby and the double-D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories Inc.
The Model 801 Omnisonic imager from Omnisonix, Ltd., is claimed to make sounds appear to come from many sources in the listening area, depending on the nature of the source material. The device, which contains response-shaping, phase-shifting, and channel cross-coupling circuitry, connects into the tape-monitor loop of a stereo system. Specifications include total harmonic distortion of less than 0.005 per cent from 10 to 20,000 Hz and a signal-to-noise ratio of greater than 98 dB. Input impedance is greater than 25,000 ohms, output impedance is less than 200 ohms, and the maximum output level is 8.5 volts. The unit measures 10 x 6 x 4 1/4 inches and weighs about 2 pounds. Price: $179.95. Omnisonix, Ltd., Dept. SR, P.O. Box 307, Wallingford, Conn. 06492.

In addition to a continuous power output into 8 ohms of 20 watts per channel at no more than 0.02 per cent total harmonic distortion (THD) from 20 to 20,000 Hz, the NAD 7020 AM/FM stereo receiver has an IHF dynamic headroom of 3 dB. It can deliver a maximum short-term power of 72 watts per channel into 2-ohm loads. Figures for intermodulation distortion are less than 0.02 per cent, as is the specification for transient intermodulation distortion. The power-amplifier section also has a soft-clipping feature that provides an audibly smoother overload characteristic. The electrically separable preamp section has a phono preamp designed for low noise with a cartridge connected, minimum cartridge-impedance interaction, and wide dynamic range. The infrasonic filter has a -3-dB point at 15 Hz and falls off at 24 dB per octave. The 12-db-per-octave ultrasonic filter has a -3-dB point at 35 kHz. The tone controls are designed to operate without altering the frequency balance in the midrange. The FM tuner, with a PLL multiplex decoder, has an IHF usable-sensitivity rating of 1.9 microvolts (10.8 dBf), 42 dB channel separation at 1 kHz, and 65 dB alternate-channel selectivity. The FM THD at 100 per cent modulation with a 1-kHz signal is 0.2 per cent in mono. An IC provides the AM circuitry. The front panel has switching for two sets of speakers and one tape deck. Dimensions are 4 1/4 x 16 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches, and weight is 15 pounds. Price: $330.

The Realistic TR-3000 quarter-track open-reel deck has three heads with off-the-tape monitoring. The deck's pushbutton-activated full-logic solenoid transport control provides a constant tape tension that allows switching from the fast-wind modes to play without tape spills or breakage. The two reel motors are high-torque units while the capstan is driven by a servo-controlled motor. Bias and equalization switches optimize the machine for high-bias or normal tapes. Independent mike and line inputs permit built-in mixing. The 7 1/2- and 3 1/2-ips machine has a specified frequency response of 30 to 20,000 Hz ± 1.5 dB at 7 1/2 ips. Total harmonic distortion is 0.9 per cent at 0 VU. Wow and flutter at 7 1/2 ips is 0.06 per cent (weighted rms). Dimensions are 12 7/8 x 16 3/8 x 9 inches. Price: $499.95.
The continuing story of TDK sound achievement.

Part One.

Music has gone through many transitions. Its rhythms, tones and forms have changed dramatically. As have the means of reproducing it. From the first wax cylinder to today’s music machine: the TDK cassette.

TDK pioneering in ferrite technology began over forty years ago. This led TDK engineers to develop microscopic particles which, through their long shape and uniform size, could translate magnetic energy into flawless sound. By 1968 TDK had created TDK SD. The world’s first high fidelity cassette. In 1975, TDK created a revolution. Super Avilyn. Ultra-refined gamma-ferric oxide particles were bombarded with cobalt in a proprietary ion-adsorption process. The resulting TDK SA cassette had higher signal to noise. Higher coercivity. Low noise. A maximum output level superior to anything heard before. Overnight, TDK SA became the high bias reference.

TDK has a philosophy of sound. A belief that total performance is the outcome of a perfect interplay between the parts. It all begins with Part One, the TDK tape. Magnetic powder is first converted into TDK magnetic material in the form of a coating paint or binder. On a giant rotary press and in a dust-free atmosphere, jumbo rolls of tensilized polyester are coated evenly with TDK binder. The tape rolls are edited and leader is inserted at precise intervals. Surgically sharp knives then cut the tape into predetermined widths. The edges perfectly straight. All along the way, TDK tape undergoes thousands of checks. It’s polished to micron smoothness to give better head contact, increase sensitivity and maintain stable output. TDK binder, recently improved, packs more particles on the tape surface. And the whole process is done automatically. Controlled by a central computer brain. From the very first, TDK tape runs true. And so does the sound.

The TDK story will unfold in future chapters. You’ll learn about other key parts and their sound synergy in a TDK cassette. And you’ll draw only one conclusion. Music is the sum of its parts.

The machine for your machine
THE AUDIO PRO TA-150 AM/FM RECEIVER

The finest audio component must do more than merely sound good.

For an audio component to be the absolute finest, it must satisfy all design parameters.

Audiophiles tell us the ideal component is a straight wire with gain. The TA-150's all-electronic design comes closest, which helps explain why its sound rivals the finest separates.

Scientists tell us the perfect machine would have no moving parts. The TA-150 has but one, a single programmable knob.

Designers tell us that form must follow function. The beauty of the TA-150 is that the world's most sophisticated receiver is also the easiest to operate.

Sound, science, and style. The total design approach to audio.

not cause chemical leaching from the record surface and that it eliminates static build-up. The liner wraps around the edge of the disc, eliminating dust pick-up from the paper outer sleeve. The outer sleeve has pre-printed blanks for writing in disc information such as the number of playings. Price: $2.50 for a package containing ten sleeves; available in record shops.

Technics' Class A Power Amplifier

□ The Technics SE-A3 power amplifier (from the company's recording and broadcast division) features class-A circuitry. Rated power output is 200 watts per channel into 8 ohms with no more than 0.002 per cent total harmonic distortion from 20 to 20,000 Hz. Signal-to-noise ratio is 123 dB referenced to full output power. Other aspects of the unit's design are direct coupling throughout, independent left- and right-channel power transformers, low-inductance power-supply capacitors, fast-response power meters with 0.01- to 300-watt display ranges, and switching for two speaker systems. Price: $1,300.

Circle 124 on reader service card

Sanyo's AM/FM Receiver with Cassette Player

□ Sanyo's in-dash Model FT C8 receiver/cassette player is supplied with two interchangeable Plexiglas dial plates—one for vertical mounting and the other for horizontal—for use in cars requiring either arrangement. Featured is Sanyo's Automatic Music Select System (AMSS), which can scan the tape in either fast-forward or rewind modes to locate and play the next selection. In addition to normal manual reverse, the unit incorporates autoreverse to change tape direction at the end of the cassette. The FT C8 also includes separate bass and treble controls, an FET front end and PLL MPX decoder in the FM tuner section, and a fader control to adjust sound levels between front and back speakers. The face plate is reversible, being black on one side.

Component-style Deck from Kenwood

□ One of a new series of similarly styled automotive units from Kenwood is the KXC-757 cassette deck. Incorporating autoreverse and Dolby circuits, the deck also includes Kenwood's cassette-standby feature, operable in conjunction with the KTC-767 tuner, which switches on a previously cued-up cassette when radio reception falls below acceptable limits. In addition to Sensuba heads, the KXC-757 features volume-control and cassette-well illumination, automatic cassette ejection when the ignition key is turned off, and bidirectional tape advance that automatically locates the gaps between selections. The deck is adjustable for CrO₂ and metal tape as well; frequency response with conventional ferric tape is said to be 30 to 16,000 Hz. Wow and flutter are rated at less than 0.12 per cent (wms), and the signal-to-noise ratio is 60 dB with Dolby activated. The KXC-757 measures 6 1/8 x 6 1/2 x 2 3/4 inches. Price: $269.

Circle 125 on reader service card

(Continued on page 21)
The 1980 Mazda RX-7 GS

Just one look is all it takes to appreciate the exceptional value of the Mazda RX-7 versus Datsun 280ZX or Porsche 924.

As remarkable as the Mazda RX-7 is on its own merits, it looks all the better when compared with the competition. Because the sleek, aerodynamic RX-7 is virtually everything you could want in a refined sports car—at an almost unbelievable price.

It can reach 0-50 in 6.3 seconds. Its inherently compact rotary engine is placed behind the front axle, for ideal weight distribution and superb handling.

In auto racing, a specially-prepared RX-7 won its class at the Daytona 24-hour race. Another RX-7 set a world speed record at Bonneville.

The smoothness of the rotary engine makes the RX-7 a quiet sports car. All this performance from a car that can attain excellent gas mileage on the open road.

So if you know what you want in a sports car, and you don't want to pay a king's ransom to get it, take a look at the RX-7 GS or S Model. The beautifully-styled, high-mileage, high-performance sports cars from Mazda.

You're also going to like the looks of RX-7 GS standard features.
- AM/FM stereo radio with power antenna
- Side-window demisters
- Cut-pile carpeting
- Tinted glass
- 5-speed
- Tachometer
-Styled steel wheels
- Steel-belted radial tires
-Front and rear stabilizer bars
-Ventilated front disc and finned rear drum brakes with power assist
-Electric remote hatch release
-3-speed automatic transmission, air conditioning, aluminum wheels and sun roof available as options.

$8395*

*Manufacturer's suggested retail price for GS Model shown. S Model $7645. Slightly higher in California. Actual prices established by dealers. Taxes, license, freight, optional equipment and any other dealer charges are extra. (Wide alloy wheels shown $275-$295.) All prices subject to change without notice.

**EPA estimates for comparison purposes for GS Model with 5-spd. trans. The mileage you get may vary depending on how fast you drive, the weather, and trip length. The actual highway mileage will probably be less. California: 16 estimated mpg, 27 estimated highway mpg.

Mazda's rotary engine licensed by NSU-WANKEL.

The more you look, the more you like.
Yamaha's PX-2 linear tracking turntable.  
A class of one.

Yamaha's new PX-2, the flagship of a remarkable new series of turntables from Yamaha, is destined to become the new standard of the audio industry. It is a masterpiece in the art of music reproduction. Totally in a class by itself.

CROSSOVER FREQUENCY
12 Hz "least effect" point

RECOIL
WARP

One of the major performance advancements on the PX-2 is Yamaha's unique optimum mass straight tonearm assembly. This design concept is Yamaha's direct challenge to the industry trend of low-mass tonearms. Among the most significant benefits of optimum mass is that it specifically addresses two of the most critical elements of music signal tonal quality—tonearm resonant frequency characteristics and high trackability with a wide range of cartridges. Tonearm mass is such a critical element in sound reproduction (especially in the low and high frequency ranges) that Yamaha has designed this optimum mass tonearm to ensure its resonance frequency is at the "least effect" point. [See graph.] As a further benefit, the vast majority of available cartridges can be effectively matched with the Yamaha tonearm. Even MC types.

But the optimum mass tonearm is only one factor that puts the PX-2 in a class by itself. There's much more. Like an extraordinary 80dB S/N ratio, with incredibly accurate tangential tracking—constantly monitored by an opto-electronic sensor. The PX-2 is also a study in durability with its solid, anti-resonant monolithic diecast aluminum base. And the combined effect of the hefty platter and the heavy-duty DC motor depresses wow and flutter to below 0.01%.

Yet with all this performance, the PX-2 is deceptively easy to operate. All the microprocessor-activated controls are easily accessible—without lifting the dustcover.

The balance of the turntables in our new line (the P-750, P-550, P-450 and P-350) all incorporate this same optimum mass tonearm philosophy. Each will set new standards for performance per dollar invested.

Visit your local Yamaha Audio Specialty Dealer for a personal test of our remarkable PX-2 and the other superb turntables in our new series. You'll hear music that's truly in a class by itself.

For more information write us at Yamaha, Audio Division, P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA 90622.

*Yamaha cartridges shown (MC-1X and MC-71 on both models are optional.*
side and brushed aluminum on the other. A local/distant switch is included, as is an up/down control for electric antennas. Frequency response is 80 to 20,000 Hz, and power output is rated at 4 1/2 watts per channel. Price: $129.95.

Circle 126 on reader service card

Two-speed Deck
From Marantz

☐ The SD 4000 cassette deck operates at 1 3/4 ips and is said to give extended high-frequency response, improved dynamic range, and reduced wow and flutter at 3 1/4 ips. The deck also has three heads to give off-the-tape monitoring capability with double Dolby circuits. The unit's Sendust-alloy heads provide the high-bias-level performance necessary for metal tapes in addition to superior high-frequency performance and long life. A CompuSkip feature will automatically seek out the next program selection in rewind or fast-forward modes. The rack-mountable unit also has LED peak-level meters, mike/line mixing, switchable multiplex filter, and bias and equalization settings for normal, Cr02, FeCr, and metal tapes. Price: $435.

Circle 127 on reader service card

JBE Turntable from
Lights Fantastic

☐ The JBE Series 3 turntable is claimed to be particularly resistant to acoustic feedback. The weight and density of the turntable's solid slate base is said to reject outside disturbances, resonances, and acoustic feedback. The 4 1/2-pound platter is made of acrylic materials and solid aluminum. The two-speed direct-drive chassis rides on four adjustable "microsorber" feet said to give high isolation from acoustic feedback. The DIN peak-weighted wow and flutter is specified as 0.07 per cent, and DIN B-weighted average rumble is -73 db. To minimize electrical interference with the motor, arm, or cartridge, the turntable's control system and transformer are housed in a separate acrylic-finish box. The turntable comes without an arm but with holes drilled for the standard SME-type mounting. Price: $795. Lights Fantastic, Dept. SR, 229 Newtown Road, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

Circle 128 on reader service card

3M Beta and VHS Head Cleaners

☐ "Scotch" VHS and Beta-format videocassette head cleaners include a prerecorded message telling the user when the video heads are clean. Each cassette contains five minutes of specially formulated tape that cleans recorder heads of dirt and debris in less than 30 seconds. A special process makes it possible for the cleaning tape to feature a video message which reads, "When you can read this message your heads are clean. Stop the recorder now." The life of the cleaning tape is determined by the amount of dirt removed from the heads. Prices: VHS, $28.95; Beta-format, $27.95.

Circle 129 on reader service card

Details...A DIFFERENT KIND OF RECORD CLUB

You can now own every record or tape that you may ever want. At tremendous savings and with no continuing purchase obligations. You can get valuable free dividend certificates, you can get quick service and all the 100% iron-clad guarantees you want. Now you can stop price increases that leave you with less music for your record and tape budget. You can guarantee yourself more music for less money through membership in Discount Music Club.

Look at these benefits:

TREMENDOUS SAVINGS on every record and tape in print—no "agree-to-purchase" obligations of any kind.

DISCOUNTS OF 43% TO 73% off retail suggested list. . . . special catalog features hundreds of titles and artists.

ALL LABELS AVAILABLE including most imports through special custom ordering service. If we don't stock it we'll get it for you.

SCHWANN CATALOG lists thousands of titles, classical, pop, jazz, ballet, opera, musical shows, folk, rock, vocal, instrumental, country, etc.

DISCOUNT DIVIDEND CERTIFICATES Dividend Gifts—Every shipment carries a dividend gift or dividend certificate. Certificates redeemable immediately for extra discounts.

NEWSLETTERS happenings in the world of music, concerts, critiques, new releases . . . special super-sale listings at discounts of up to 73%.

DISCOUNT ACCESSORY GUIDE Diamond needles, cloths, tape cleaners, etc. Discount Music Club is your one stop music and accessory buying service.

QUICK SERVICE same day shipping on many orders . . . rarely later than the next several days. Partial shipments always made in the event of unforeseen delay . . . all at no extra cost to you.

100% IRON-CLAD GUARANTEES on all products and services. Everything is guaranteed factory fresh and free of defects or damages of any sort. Your total satisfaction is unconditionally guaranteed.

Discount Music Club is a no-obligation membership club that guarantees tremendous discounts on all stereo records and tapes and lets you buy what you want . . . when you want . . . or not at all if you choose.

These are just a few of the money-saving reasons to write for free details. You can't lose so why not fill out and mail the coupon below for immediate information.

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PAN ZIP STATE
**Interface:C**

The SuperDome™ tweeter, an E-V exclusive, and the VMRTM vented midrange driver the first to apply optimally vented design to mid frequencies, ensure your music is reproduced without the coloration normally found in other high-efficiency drivers. An honest 30 Hz low end totally eliminates the need for expensive subwoofer assemblies.

When you spend $1,000 for a speaker system, get your money's worth. Audition the Interface:C Series II at your nearest Interface dealer. If you want a speaker that sounds like music, the Interface:C Series II is the one you'll buy.

**Audio Q. and A.**

*By Larry Klein*

**G**iven this issue's focus on the subject of highway hi-fi, I am departing from the usual format of this column in order to address myself to those questions that are (or should be) most frequently asked about car-stereo equipment. Since I find that the car-stereo marketplace is, at the moment, a confused combination of art, science, and silliness, some of my views may be at odds with your own opinions or what you have been told elsewhere. Nevertheless...

**Q.** What do you mean when you refer to car-stereo "silliness"?

**A.** From my point of view, it appears that much of the equipment is designed for a rather unsophisticated consumer, someone who is entranced by a multiplicity of knobs, buttons, flashing LEDs, and lots of power (or at least mid-bass boost), none of which necessarily make much of a contribution to the sound quality in a car.

**Q.** How has this flood of unsophisticated apparatus come about?

**A.** In my view, it is a natural consequence and extension of the car owner's urge to "accessorize" his vehicle. Much has been written in the past about Americans' love affairs with their cars and their tendency to convert their vehicles into living rooms (or bedrooms) on wheels—even before the popularity of the van. The urge to customize is expressed both by chrome-plated engine blocks and over-kill car stereos. The big difference is that only another car lover is likely to appreciate a chrome job, while anyone with two ears—whether car lover or not—is likely to be impressed by a 100-dB sound-pressure level (SPL) of car-stereo mid-fi rattling his ear drums.

**Q.** How much amplifier power do I need in a car?

**A.** This is a difficult question which is answered to some degree in Ivan Berger's article elsewhere in this issue. First of all, how loud a sound do you want? I think it's a bad—or even fatal—mistake to drive in any metropolitan area with a car stereo playing loud enough to drown out fire, ambulance, or police sirens. Of course, that doesn't mean that your system shouldn't have the potential to play very loud, but loud without clean will be psychologically wearing in very short order.

In a car's closed environment sound pressures are established fairly easily (an analogy can be made to headphone listening—if you don't carry it too far). Given the reasonably efficient drivers sold for car use, super-power amplifiers aren't needed unless your intention is to draw blood from the ears of listeners. However, since car-stereo equipment does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Federal Trade Commission's "truth in power-output" advertising rule, some manufacturers rate their equipment somewhat optimistically. A few published power ratings of, say, 40 or 50 watts, when properly deflated, could well turn out to be close to 10 watts per channel at 5 per cent distortion. This means that an amplifier which, on paper, seems over-powered for your needs may work out just right.

I've found that a real 50-watt-per-channel car power amplifier with legitimate hi-fi specs (in regard to frequency response and distortion levels) and driving a good pair of 6 x 9-inch, 20-ounce-magnet coxials in the rear deck of a full-size car is capable of producing a measured 110 dB on peaks without distorting. I suggest, therefore, that 20 watts or so per channel should produce as much loudness as most people would want, as long as the 20 watts are real and not merely a wish-fulfillment fantasy of the manufacturer.

**Q.** What are your suggestions on car speakers?

**A.** For starters, you must realize that car speakers are far more difficult to select, install (mechanically), and position (acoustically) than home speakers (I almost wrote "equivalent" home speakers, but there is no real equivalency involved). First of all, the bass performance of a car speaker cannot go much below 70-80 Hz or so unless the speaker is equalized or mounted with its rear "loaded" by the trunk.

In my opinion, unless you want to play your car stereo very loud, a two-way system is adequate, except that it may present problems in respect to acoustic perspective.

(Continued on page 24)
An in-depth look at the only "plug-in" remote control system you’ll ever need for your home.

You’re in control by remote control.

Simply plug in The Controller™ and the BSR System X-10 modules, and control lights and appliances anywhere in the house by pressing a few buttons. So it’s easy to take control.

There’s no end to all of the control you’ve got.

You can turn on the TV, radio or stereo in the morning to help you wake up without getting up from bed. Or at night, turn on the lights before going downstairs so you don’t have to fumble in the dark. Turn off unnecessary lights and help get your electric bill under control. Or, dim the lights and save energy, too.

And when it’s time to turn in, just push a button and turn everything off. And sleep soundly. But, if you hear a strange noise in the middle of the night, you can press a button to turn on all the lights and scare the daylights out of an intruder.

The Controller is designed to control every room in the house.

By pressing the buttons on the Command Console keyboard, command signals are transmitted over existing household wiring to the module of your choice. The Lamp Module turns on, off or dims any incandescent lamp up to 300 watts. The Appliance Module turns appliances like TVs, window fans or stereos on and off. And the Wall Switch Module is designed to turn on, off or dim any light or lamp up to 500 watts normally operated by a wall switch.

There’s even a Cordless Controller that transmits signals to an Ultrasonic Command Console from up to 30 feet away. So there’s plenty of control for everyone.

Simplicity is built into the system.

No special wiring is needed. Simply plug The Controller Command Console into any wall outlet in any room of the house. Set your personal house code on the console. Then plug your lamps and appliances into the appropriate modules. Set the individual unit code on each module to correspond to the appropriate button on the Command Console keyboard. Plug in the modules. And you’re ready to take control.

For under $100; everything’s under control.

The Controller Starter Kit comes with a Command Console and modules to control lights and appliances at three locations. The system is also sold separately, so you can add to it at any time. And stay in control.

BSR (USA) Ltd., Blauvelt, N.Y. 10913. BSR (Canada) Ltd., Toronto, Ontario.

*CIRCLE NO. 8 ON READER SERVICE CARD

*Manufacturer’s suggested retail price.
Enjoy a profoundly moving, intimate experience.

It’s all too rare when you can fully immerse yourself in music. There are so many distractions... even at home. Household noises, traffic, and perhaps acoustics or loudspeakers which limit enjoyment.

Now we’ve made it simple. Audio-Technica ATH-7 Stereophones were created for those moments when you yearn to close your eyes to the world and find a private space occupied only by you, the composer, and the performers.

So light, comfortable, and cool you are hardly aware of their presence. With the outside world muted as you concentrate on every nuance, every transparent detail... or simply luxuriate in the conductor’s close-up world of sonic pleasure.

Best of all, with ATH-7 Stereophones you give up nothing in sound quality. Nothing. Listen critically to the frequency response range, dynamic range, output level, and overall freedom from distortion. ATH-7 Stereophones have proved themselves in direct comparison with the most distinguished loudspeaker systems yet developed, regardless of price.

Enter our private world of audio pleasure today. You’ll never want to leave. AUDIO-TECHNICA, U.S., INC., 33 Shiawassee Avenue, Dept. 60F, Fairlawn, Ohio 44313.

Q. How do you feel about the use of graphic equalizers?

A. I think they’re a good idea, but five bands are all that most users can cope with. They can restore the bass lost through inadequate mounting or excessively heavy magnets, but heavy bass boost applied to a speaker whose cone suspension and voice coil aren’t designed to take it will cause damage. A bass boost of “only” 3 dB is equivalent to double the power applied from the amplifier. How do you know when you’ve become excessive in your equalization demands? If your previously clean sound becomes muddy or harsh or you hear snapping sounds on peaks, you are about to be in trouble or already are. Excessive treble boost will give no early warning—your tweeters will just quietly burn out.

Q. How can I keep my car-stereo equipment from being stolen?

A. You can’t. But many of the same general rules and precautions that help prevent your entire car from being stolen will help. Anyone who announces to the world with a manufacturer-supplied window decal that there’s a Dynonic speaker or a Kuzoconic receiver installed in his car is asking someone to de-install it surreptitiously. Other advertisements, such as loud free concerts in the parking lot or cassettes strewn on your dashboard, are also come-and-get-it invites. In other words, be discreet and avoid the temptation to show off your equipment visually or sonically. It may be so impressive that others can’t wait to make it their own.

FINALLY, if you’re not going to do the installation yourself (see the note at the end of Ivan Berger’s article), choose your installer with a great deal of care, perhaps as much as you brought to bear on your choice of equipment. Although an installer’s working position may be similar to Michelangelo’s when dealing with the Sistine Chapel ceiling, he surely won’t have the same degree of aesthetic good sense. In short, discuss with him where each element of your system is to be mounted rather than leaving the decision up to him.
The only car tape that eliminates the car.

BASF PRO III is the only one for the road.

Today's more sophisticated car tape systems are every bit as good as many home sound systems-until you start your engine. Then, engine noise, wind, tire whine and car vibration all begin to compete with the sound of your stereo. Until now, the listening environment of a moving car was something less than a moving experience. PRO III has changed all that.

There's an "extra" in every cassette.

Since the playback equalization of most car stereo systems is 120-µs, we designed PRO III at 70-µs. This gives you an "extra brightness" during playback, and it gives your high frequencies an added boost that stand out dramatically above ambient car noise.

Two different layers make all the difference.

PRO III has two separate tape layers for peak performance even under the most difficult listening conditions. The top layer is pure chromium dioxide for unsurpassed highs and low background noise. The bottom layer is ferric oxide for superior lows and great middle frequencies. And it also gives you higher recording levels, so you get clearer, louder playback without cranking up your volume control to compensate.

The guarantee of a lifetime.

Like every BASF Professional Tape, PRO III comes with a lifetime guarantee that covers everything. Should any BASF cassette tape ever fail for any reason, we'll replace it at no cost. PRO III also comes with our patented "Jam-Proof" Security Mechanism-a BASF exclusive that provides smooth, exact winding, alleviates wow and flutter, and puts an end to tape jamming.

Use a tape cassette that gets the most out of your car's sound system. Get the new PRO III from BASF-it's the car tape.

JUNE 1980
WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THIS PAGE SHOULDN'T HAPPEN ON YOUR RECORDING TAPE.
It’s called print-through. And if you think it interferes with your reading, you should hear what it does to your listening.

It happens on tape that has low magnetic stability. Music on one layer of the tape is transferred to music on an adjacent layer, causing an echo.

At Maxell, we’ve designed our tape for superior magnetic stability. So what’s happening to the opposite page won’t happen to your music.

You see, we believe you should only hear the music you want to hear. Nothing less, and nothing more.

IT’S WORTH IT.

Maxell Corporation of America, 80 Oxford Drive, Monrovia, N J 07074
CIRCLE NO. 32 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Audio Basics

By Robert Greene

TURN THE (CAR) RADIO ON

It might not be evident from the tongue-in-cheek cover of this month's issue, but car-stereo cassette/receivers are physically small and designed to put hi-fi into your car with relative ease. It was not always thus; there was once a time when installing even a radio in a car was a Herculean task.

The very first car radios weren't even car radios—they were just big, bulky, battery-operated sets that people dragged out of their living rooms and manhandled into their cars. They worked very nicely, if clumsily, for, say, a picnic: the radio would operate on its own batteries when the car's engine was off, but the electrical interference generated by the engine's ignition made the radio useless when the motor was running. And so, in the late Twenties and early Thirties, some drivers whose love for running. And so, in the late Twenties and early Thirties, some drivers whose love for radios, by that time all-in-one units about the size of a cigar box. Involved in its introduction were such companies as Motorola, Delco, and Automatic Radio—hardly surprising, for they had been in the car-radio business virtually from its beginning. In the mid-Fifties, transistor units began making their appearance in consumer electronic equipment. The first car radios to use them were "hybrids"—part tubes, part solid-state devices. In time the transistor took over completely, permitting the 12-volt car battery to be used directly (voltage had to be stepped up to 200-300 volts for the old tube units). The tube sets, however, had progressed to the point where they produced outputs of 10 to 20 watts—push-pull, or vibrationally driven step-up transformer power supply—while the early transistor units could produce only about 4 watts. Power-supply oscillators (electronic vibrators, if you will) have since been developed to provide the higher voltages the radio's output transistors need to yield more power output.

The further miniaturization afforded by integrated-circuit chips has enabled engineers and manufacturers to create what amounts almost to home hi-fi systems even in a small car. No more wash-line aerials or copper-shielded radios, no more heavy, bulky batteries or radios the size of a breadbox. Now you can get good listening without a lot of hassle—unless, that is, you want to install four four-way speaker systems with a separate biamped four-channel power amplifier, accessory time delay, octave-band equalization, and . . .
fact:
five new Shure Cartridges feature the technological breakthroughs of the V15 Type IV

Plus
Unprecedented stylus protection

the M97 Era IV Series phono cartridges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Stylus Configuration</th>
<th>Tracking Force</th>
<th>Applications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M97HE</td>
<td>Nude Hyperelliptical</td>
<td>1/4 to 1 1/2 grams</td>
<td>Highest fidelity where light tracking forces are essential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M97ED</td>
<td>Nude Biradial (Elliptical)</td>
<td>3/4 to 1 1/2 grams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M97GD</td>
<td>Nude Spherical</td>
<td>3/4 to 1 1/2 grams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M97EJ</td>
<td>Biradial (Elliptical)</td>
<td>1 1/2 to 3 grams</td>
<td>Where slightly heavier tracking forces are required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M97B</td>
<td>Spherical</td>
<td>1 1/2 to 3 grams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 rpm Stylus for all M97's</td>
<td>Biradial (Elliptical)</td>
<td>1 1/2 to 3 grams</td>
<td>For 78 rpm records.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shure has written a new chapter in the history of affordable hi-fi by making the space-age technological breakthroughs of the incomparable V15 Type IV available in a complete line of high-performance, moderately-priced cartridges: the M97 Era IV Series Phono Cartridges, available with five different interchangeable stylus configurations to fit every system and every budget.

The critically acclaimed V15 Type IV is the cartridge that astonished audiophiles with such vanguard features as the Dynamic Stabilizer—which simultaneously overcomes record-warp caused problems, provides electrostatic neutralization of the record surface, and effectively removes dust and lint from the record—and, the unique telescoped stylus assembly which results in lower effective stylus mass and dramatically improved trackability.

Each of these features... and more... has been incorporated in the five cartridges in the M97 Series—there is even an M97 cartridge that offers the low distortion Hyperelliptical stylus! What's more, every M97 cartridge features a unique lateral deflection assembly, called the SIDE-GUARD, which responds to side thrusts on the stylus by withdrawing the entire stylus shank and tip safely into the stylus housing before it can bend.

NEW! M97 Series Era IV Phono Cartridges...
Five new invitations to the new era in hi-fi.
**Astonishing.**

The **ALLISON: FOUR®** system is small enough to be carried easily, and lends itself to convenient placement in any listening room. Yet it is large enough to reproduce the bass range with satisfying solidity and accuracy. Reviewers agree:

"The sound of this diminutive speaker is nothing less than astonishing."  
"Listen to the Four if you possibly can. It is worth hearing—even if you are not shopping for a speaker—just for a demonstration of how good a small box can sound."

Hirsch-Hoack Laboratories  
**Equipment Test Reports**  
**STEREO REVIEW** June, 1978.  
Copyright Ziff-Davis Publ. Co.

"We can honestly say that we have never heard so much bass from such a small enclosure."

Reprinted with the permission of  
**Australian Hi Fi Stereo Buyers Guide** No. 7

"C'est une gamine charmante qui nous a surpris par son respect des timbres et de la dynamique, la grande lisibilité qu'elle donne de la musique."

**HARMONIE**  
Mars 1979

"...we were able to reproduce piano recordings with the immediacy, presence, and volume of the instrument itself. The bass reproduction is very tight and solid, and volume of the instrument itself. The recordings with the immediacy, presence, and dynamique, la grande lisibilité qu'elle donne de la musique."

---

**Tape Talk**

**By Craig Stark**

**Contributing Editor Stark looks over the setup for duplicating cassettes at InSync Laboratories.**

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**Auto Treble Trouble**

Q. Although I use good tape recorded on good home decks, when I play a dub on my car cassette system I have frequent trouble with: (1) a high-pitched "whine," usually most noticeable toward the end of a side; and (2) an intermittent loss of highs, not throughout the entire tape, but modulated at a slow rate. Most of my time in the car is in the state of Florida, where temperatures in a locked automobile tend to soar. Is this the problem?

---

A. The increasing popularity of car-stereo systems has produced a number of reader inquiries basically similar to this one. The last time I bought a new car I checked into the OEM (original-equipment manufacturer) cassette decks available as a factory-installed option and decided that I would do without until I could afford one of the few really good, component-class cassette decks that are designed for custom installation.

Long-distance diagnosis is always dangerous, but I'm inclined to suspect that the "whine" may well arise from slippage between the rubber pressure roller and the back of the tape. There may be too much take-up tension or too much hold-back tension (likely to occur toward the ends of a reel), particularly if the cassette itself is too tightly wound—a possible result of high temperatures inside a locked car.

Again, drive-system irregularities may result in intermittent treble performance, for they will affect the amount of contact between the tape and the tape head. A slow modulation of these irregularities may well point to a rubber pressure roller that has become slightly flattened or glazed—either of which can lead to squeal.

---

**Cassette vs. Eight-track**

Q. I use both cassettes and eight-track cartridges extensively, and I think that better performance is to be found with cassettes. But why should cassettes be better? Is it simply that they don't make eight-track home decks of comparable quality, or that the tapes inside the shells aren't as good, or what?

---

A. On a purely theoretical basis it ought to be possible to realize a slightly higher signal-to-noise ratio and a slightly wider frequency response with a tape system that operates at 3⅞ inches per second (the eight-track cartridge) than with one that runs at 1⅞ inches per second (the cassette). As a practical matter of history, however, eight-track units have been largely a captive of their principal market—the automobile manufacturers—while cassette decks have had to prove themselves by competing primarily in the high-fidelity market. The result is that the eight-track medium long ago developed to the point where it made little economic sense to invest funds and engineering brains in trying to improve its quality level. The opposite has been the case with the development of the cassette. Thus, the cassette medium has

(Continued on page 32)
When it comes to fitting any audio or video recorder, there’s no apparent difference between Fuji and any other brand of cassettes: we all fit the same.

*But there, the resemblance ends.* Because tapes are manufactured to very different quality standards with different materials and technologies, Fuji’s performance is unique.

Take video. Our VHS and Beta cassettes improve performance on any recorder. Providing sharper pictures. More lifelike color. And freedom from noise and distortion.

In audio, our premium FX-I, FX-II and low-noise FL set new standards for accurate sound reproduction. And extended response.

Our revolutionary new Fuji Metal Tape goes even further. With ultra-wide response. Dramatically-improved dynamic range and sound quality comparable to studio open reel recordings.

So, whatever you’re recording—on whatever brand of recorder—discover how good your machine really is. With Fuji—the tape that helps it perform so much better.

**FUJI TAPE**

One brand fits all. Better.

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IF YOU THINK YOUR STEREO DELIVERS GREAT BASS, ALLOW US TO LOWER YOUR STANDARDS.

Right now, your stereo system doesn't deliver bass frequencies much below 50Hz. Simply because that's the limit of most records, tapes and FM signals.

But now there's a way to hear the kind of bass so deep, you actually feel it. With the dbx Model 110 Subharmonic Synthesizer.

Technically, what the 110 does is simple. It samples the low frequency signal of your music, reproduces it a full octave lower, and then mixes it back in.

Musically, what the 110 does is extraordinary. It re-creates the natural subharmonics of the original sound so your room vibrates with a depth of bass you've never heard before. Or felt. Except in a live performance.

Visit your authorized dbx retailer for a demonstration.

Because just one listen to the dbx Model 110, and your standards will be lowered forever.

dbx, Incorporated, 71 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02195. 617/964-3210

CIRCLE NO. 13 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Brand-sensitive Treble

Q. My cassette deck gives very good treble performance when using a variety of high-quality tapes, but with one highly regarded brand of cassette I get consistently less high-frequency sound, particularly in the first ten minutes or so of a side. Can you explain this?

CHARLES CAMPBELL
Indianapolis, Ind.

A. I can try, for the problem you report has come to my attention several times, but my response is more speculation than hard, ascertainable fact. From the tapes you listed that do work well on your deck and the one you mentioned that did not, it is clear that the difficulty does not arise from differences in bias/equalization requirements. As a matter of fact, your first-choice tape and the one you have problems with are as similar magnetically as two peas in a pod, so I suspect that the problem arises from mechanical rather than magnetic causes.

In the manufacture of any product, there are certain "tolerances" involved. The molds used in casting the upper and lower halves of a plastic cassette shell may be within the tolerances of the Philips standard, and the cassette well of your particular tape deck may also be within permissible tolerances, yet the specific combination of tolerances gives a poor result. This appears to be the case in your situation, but since you've found that certain brands of cassettes do work well in your machine, why not simply stick with them?

Because the number of questions we receive each month is greater than we can reply to individually, only those letters selected for use in this column can be answered. Sorry!
Morning Concert

You've driven to the end of the world. Alone.

The engine is still warm.

Amid the roar of the waves and the cries of the gulls, you fire up your mobile high-fidelity system for a morning concert.


Whatever you choose, your system is equal to the task because you've chosen ADS.

The ADS Power Plate 100 Automotive Amplifier and the ADS 300i Automotive Loudspeaker System deliver the kind of power it takes to be heard above road noise, engine noise, and ocean waves. And it's not just brute power, but power with performance, subtlety and nuance — qualities collectively known as musical accuracy.

Easily the most sophisticated automotive audio components available today, the Power Plate 100 amplifier and 300i speakers are exactly what you'd expect from ADS, the company that literally invented mobile high-fidelity.

To find out more about putting an ADS system in your automobile, write ADS, Dept. SR-15, or call 1-800-824-7888 (California 1-800-852-7777) toll free and ask for Operator 483.

The more time you spend with your automobile, the more you owe it to yourself to listen to ADS.

Analog & Digital Systems, Inc., One Progress Way, Wilmington, MA 01887 (617) 658-5100
In a compact and sturdy unit, John Andregg of San Francisco has managed to install not only the electronics of his stereo system, but his record and tape collection as well. The top left portion of the home-built, walnut-veneered cabinet contains, from top to bottom, a Crown D60 power amplifier, a Tapco 2200 ten-band equalizer, another Crown D60, a Crown VFX 2A active crossover, and a Heath AR 1500A receiver.

The small drawer just below this "rack" section holds a top-loading Heath AD 1530 cassette deck, while the drawer just below that contains cassettes and Mr. Andregg's record, tape-deck, and stylus-cleaning accessories. The large drawers all hold records—about sixty discs to a drawer with enough room left so that one can flip through the collection. The drawers use sliders rated for 200-pound loads and will, in a pinch, safely hold a hundred discs each.

Due to the heavy cabinetry and the large number of records, the entire installation is quite massive. Even though it can be moved on its eight casters, Mr. Andregg says no acoustic feedback problems find their way through his Dual 1229 turntable and Shure V15 Type III cartridge. Above the turntable are two 25-watt miniature floodlights which may be slid and pivoted on their mounting rail to fully illuminate a disc—and its associated dust, dirt, and grime—without glare. Turntable illumination is an excellent idea for any installation, though it is rare to find it carried out with such elegance.

Mr. Andregg's background in electronics (he is currently employed as a service manager for a computer company) helped him construct his own loudspeakers using JBL drivers in home-built enclosures. He biamplifies them using the Crown amplifiers and crossover. The resulting sound lets him enjoy his classical, rock, pop, and musical-comedy recordings at their best. His woodworking talent comes in handy in his other hobbies, which include fishing. He makes his own fishing rods and is now working on the restoration of an old lapstreak (the external planks overlap as clapboards do) fishing boat.

Is your system an Installation of the Month? To find out whether it is, send a clear snapshot and a brief description of its components to STEREO REVIEW, Dept. IOTM, One Park Ave., New York 10016.
Everyone knows what Technics direct drive does for performance and accuracy in our turntables. That's why 73 of the top 100 radio stations that use turntables use Technics direct-drive turntables. Now, for only $330, you can record your cassettes with the accuracy of Technics direct drive. And that says a lot about the Technics RS-M45.

So does its tape transport system. Especially when you consider what the RS-M45 has going for it: An FG servo DC direct-drive capstan motor. And while 0.035% wow and flutter can tell you a lot about our direct-drive performance, the world's only limited 3-year motor warranty tells you a lot more.

Equally impressive are the RS-M45's solenoid controls. They not only make switching from one mode to another simple and accurate, they also put minimal strain on the tape transport system.

And to put minimal strain on you, there's the optical RP-9645 remote control unit. With it, all transport functions, as well as record mute, can be operated from your easy chair.

Just as special are the RS-M45's fluorescent VU meters with auto-reset peak-hold. They're fast, electronic and highly accurate. You'll also like Dolby's NR and a S/N ratio of 68 dB.

And if our SX recording playback heads make CrO₂ tape sound great (20 Hz-18 kHz), wait until you hear the increased frequency response (20 Hz-20 kHz) and extended dynamic range of metal.

Technics RS-M45. Direct drive and solenoid controls say it isn't your typical $330 cassette deck. In fact, compared to the leading brands, it's one of a kind. And that's very typical of Technics.

Technics recommended price; but actual price will be set by dealers. 1 Limited 3-year warranty on the direct-drive motor and limited 2-year warranty on the deck itself. Labor and parts. Carry-in service. Proof of purchase required. Warranty is void for commercial use. 2 Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories.

How to tape your records as accurately as Technics direct-drive turntables play them.
One of the fundamental problems in any type of product evaluation is the inevitability of sample-to-sample differences. No matter how well controlled the manufacturing process may be, there will always be performance variations between individual samples of a product. Since it is impracticable to test a large number of samples (which could provide statistical information on such differences), there is always a risk of drawing unwarranted inferences from tests of a single sample.

As a rule, we test only a single sample of any product (two in the case of loudspeakers). A full test of each channel of a stereo component would nearly double the test time, but it would add only slightly to our knowledge of the behavior of a large number of units. It is therefore our practice to test both channels of FM tuners and stereo cartridges completely, but only one channel of a stereo amplifier, headphone, or tape deck. In a tape deck we test the left channel, which is recorded on the edge of the tape and is most likely to show the effects of poor head-to-tape contact. And we have also arbitrarily chosen to test completely only the left channel of an amplifier. The only measurements we make on the right channel are a quick check on clipping power output and distortion at lower levels to verify that both channels are performing similarly. If the left channel is "out of spec" for any reason, we make our full test on the right channel.

It is our view that the proper operation (that is, operation completely within the specifications) of one channel of a stereo amplifier, even if the other one is not as good, is prima facie evidence of its true performance capability. Of course, a malfunction in some part of the amplifier common to both channels, such as the power supply or a protective system, requires testing a second sample.

It appears that many people are not aware of the variations—perfectly normal and not indicative of any fault—that can exist between different samples of any high-fidelity product and even between channels of the same unit. Although a power amplifier is one of the best understood and controlled audio components (with respect to repeatability of measured performance), there are still no two samples of the same model that will measure exactly the same. We have on a number of occasions tested two or three samples of a product and have always found this to be the case.

The distortion curves for a hypothetical power amplifier (see page 38) show typical distortion differences between channels of the same unit. For convenience we have labeled them L and R channels, but they could just as well have been in two different amplifiers. Figure 1 shows that the distortion-vs.-power-output curves at 1,000 Hz are somewhat different in the two channels. In general, distortion can increase or decrease with increasing power output over most of the measurement range. At very low power levels it will usually (but not always) increase, especially when the measurement is made with a distortion meter that includes hum in the measurement. We use a spectrum analyzer that measures only the distortion components, but even so there is a tendency for the distortion to increase at very low power outputs.

At intermediate power outputs most amplifiers have their lowest distortion—most, but not all (note that the maximum distortion in the right channel occurs at about 2 watts, a fairly typical listening level). Sometimes the minimum distortion reading will occur just before the outputs clip. In this example, the distortion at a typical listening level is more than three times as high in one channel as in the other. Is this serious, or is it indicative of a fault in the amplifier? Not at all! By and large, distortion differences of less than a full order of magnitude (a factor of ten times) are of no consequence. If one channel measured 0.01 per cent and the other was 0.1 per cent, we would suspect that something was wrong in the latter channel. Even so, it is highly unlikely that such a difference would be audible under any conditions.

Modern amplifiers have such minuscule distortion levels that we could really dispense entirely with measuring or even discussing distortion. One would be hard pressed to find program material that would audibly demonstrate the difference between distortion readings of, say, 0.002 and 0.2 per cent. Why, then, do we bother with measuring distortion? Partly as a technical exercise that in some cases reveals an impressive engineering achievement on the part of the amplifier designer, and partly because the current FTC rules on advertised power ratings requires a distortion disclosure as part of that rating. In order to verify that an amplifier meets the FTC criteria, it is necessary to test it quite fully over
For those who take recording seriously

The 580 Series

From the economical 580M to the universally acclaimed 582, a 580-Series recorder is not an average cassette deck. It rises above mediocrity. It is designed for the serious recordist—for the person who insists upon the perfection that comes from individual calibration of each tape and the self-contained oscillator and metering that make this possible. With exclusive Asymmetrical, Dif-fused-Resonance, Dual-Capstan Transport, flutter and modulation noise cease to be problems. And, Nakamichi's Double Slot Guides and Tape-Pad Lifter assure perfect tracking and absolute signal stability—so stable as to cause STEREO REVIEW to exclaim of the 582: "What we found astonish- ing...was that this was the first deck...in which the response was identical (within ± 0.1 dB) whether the test tapes were played in the normal forward direction or turned over and played on side two!" Unique Direct-Flux erase head, metal-tape compatibility, and IC logic with remote and unattended operation are common to all 580-Series recorders.

580M2 Head Cassette Deck
Special narrow-gap Sendust record/play head—the pinnacle of combination-head per-formance. 20 to 20,000 Hz ±3 dB with less than 1% THD sets this re-corder apart from the crowd! Dolby* calibration for each channel and each tape.

581 Discrete 3-Head Cassette Deck
Discrete 3-Head tech-nology highlights the 581. S/N more than 66 dB—20 to 20,000 Hz with under 0.8% THD! Dolby* and bias adj ustments with built-in 2-frequency oscillator assures Nakamichi performance with any quality tape.

582 Discrete 3-Head Cassette Deck
Acclaimed by every leading reviewer, the 582 is the ultimate recorder for the serious audiophile. With three discrete heads and full off-tape monitoring, the 582 has become the recorder on which experts evaluate tape!

* Dolby is the trademark of Dolby Laboratories.

For more information, write to Nakamichi U.S.A. Corporation, 1101 Colorado Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90401
the full audio-frequency range and at all power outputs from 0.25 watt to rated power. Once the test program reaches that magnitude, it requires little more effort to measure the full distortion/power/frequency performance of the amplifier.

In Figure 2 is shown a typical plot of distortion at full power vs. frequency. The left and right channels in this illustration seem fairly well matched, but notice that there is still a two-to-one difference in measured distortion at 20,000 Hz. Again, this means little in terms of how the amplifier sounds, but it will to some extent affect the way it is rated. In most recent amplifier designs the maximum distortion occurs at 20,000 Hz. In this example, if the amplifier were rated to deliver 60 watts per channel to 8-ohm loads from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.1 per cent total harmonic distortion, it would be within allowable limits. If the distortion rating were 0.08 per cent, one channel would pass and the other would not, presenting the manufacturer with a dilemma, since his advertising claims that the distortion will not exceed 0.08 per cent in either channel when both are driven to 60 watts anywhere from 20 to 20,000 Hz.

Since we ask that a product submitted for test be checked out by the manufacturer and his test data supplied to us (oddly enough, only a few manufacturers actually comply with that request!), we would expect to be able to duplicate his distortion measurements within normal measurement tolerances. Often we can, but there have been times when we could not. This is a very disturbing situation, both for us and for the manufacturer. Repeatability of measurements on FM tuners is always a "tricky" business, but amplifier measurements are supposed to be "cut and dried."

A major source of discrepancies is the exact procedure followed in the test sequence (it is not specified in any standard, and rarely by any manufacturer or testing agency). An amplifier is supposed to be fully heated by the FTC-mandated one-hour preconditioning period before any measurements are made. We follow this procedure, but some manufacturers do not. Even so, there can be a considerable difference in the amplifier's operating temperature, depending on the immediately preceding history of its operation.

For example, when measuring distortion vs. frequency we start at 20 Hz, making distortion readings at power outputs of -10 dB, -3 dB, and rated power before going to 30 Hz and repeating the process. In that way, we move upward in frequency in a 1, 2, 3, 5, ... progression, making three distortion measurements at each frequency. By the time we reach 20,000 Hz (which is, for most amplifiers, the most difficult part of the test) the amplifier is usually very hot. The temperature rise in its power-transformer windings reduces the voltage available to the output transistors (and thus their maximum power-output capability), and often the transistor amplifier itself is not operating at its best when very hot. The result may be a failure to meet the distortion spec at 20,000 Hz.

When this happens (fortunately, not very often these days) we start again with a cold amplifier, heat it in accordance with the FTC rule, and start our measurement sequence at 20,000 Hz, working our way downward in frequency. If the amplifier passes when tested in either direction, we consider that it conforms both to the letter and the spirit of the regulation.

The message in all this is that the harmonic-distortion characteristics of an amplifier, no matter how impressive they may be, should be viewed only as an indication of the engineering expertise that went into its creation. When the distortion is very low, distortion comparisons between different amplifiers ("Amplifier B has only 0.002 per cent distortion, so it must be better than Amplifier A, with its 0.08 per cent distortion") have little or nothing to do with the listening quality. Remember also that no matter how carefully the distortion is measured, rather large—but inaudible—differences can be expected between different samples of the same model or between channels in a single unit.
Supertuner: Nobody can steal our thunder.

Ever since Pioneer unleashed its Supertuner® technology on car stereo, the competition has tried to catch up. Tried to match our home hi-fi specs. Tried to duplicate our unique, station-grabbing sound.

But the only thing that sounds like a Supertuner is a Supertuner. And Pioneer now offers an entire line. Including the newest Supertuner of all: the incomparable KP-5500 pictured here.

The KP-5500 gives you FM muting to blank the noise between stations. Useable FM sensitivity of 1.1 μV. Selectivity of 74 dB. A capture ratio of 1.7 dB.

Team it with a set of Pioneer TS-695 3-way speakers, and you've got a Supersystem that works audible wonders with tape and FM. Your Pioneer dealer can give it to you at a very reasonable price.

Supertuner by Pioneer. The competition can't give it to you at any price.

PIONEER The Best Sound Going
To find your nearest dealer, toll-free, call: (800) 447-4700. In Illinois: (800) 322-4400.
At first glance, the Aiwa AX-7800U looks like a conventional AM/FM stereo receiver, with a narrow "blackout" dial window extending almost the full width of the panel and a typical complement of knobs and pushbutton switches positioned below the dial area. Turning on the receiver with the square power button at the lower left of the panel immediately discloses its true nature. This highly sophisticated receiver is electronically tuned by a digital frequency synthesizer and has neither dial scales nor a tuning knob. Half-inch-high pale-green numbers in the center of the "dial" cutout show the tuned frequency for both AM and FM bands. An array of red LEDs at the left end of the dial window forms a line whose length is proportional to the tuned station's signal-input level. A small button below it changes the display to read the audio power output (into 8 ohms) from 0.1 to 120 watts. The rated output of the AX-7800U is 60 watts per channel into 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.05 per cent total harmonic distortion.

Other LEDs near the power/signal-strength display show when the receiver is turned on, which display mode has been selected, and when a stereo broadcast is being received. Across the lower half of the panel, most of the controls are conventional in appearance and function. They include small knobs for the bass and treble tone controls as well as the balance and volume controls. Between the tone-control knobs are narrow pushbutton switches that select bass turnover frequencies of 200 or 400 Hz and treble turnover frequencies of 2.5 or 5 kHz. Similar buttons activate the two pairs of speaker outputs. A front-panel headphone jack is always live.

To the right of the knobs are more pushbutton switches; they control loudness compensation, tape-monitor functions, and input selection for phono, aux, and tuner sources. Red LEDs above the buttons which source has been selected. Two more buttons control FM mono/stereo operation and FM muting.

The remaining controls are associated with the digital tuning system of the AX-7800U. The actual tuning is done by pressing one of two large, flat buttons at the right of the panel. Marked up and down, they cause the frequency to shift in the indicated direction when touched momentarily or held in. A small button, with a LED showing the selected mode, controls auto or auto/manual operation. In the latter mode, each momentary touch of a tuning button shifts the frequency by 200 kHz for FM or by 10 kHz for AM. If the button is held in, the receiver scans rapidly, covering the full 88- to 108-MHz FM band or the 530- to 1,610-kHz AM band in about 8 seconds. The scan stops instantly when the button is released, and final frequency adjustments can be made in one-channel steps by light taps on a tuning button.

Touching a momentary-contact button above the tuning controls engages the hold scan feature (a light above that button shows when it has been selected). In hold scan, a momentary touch on one of the tuning buttons causes the receiver to scan rapidly until a station is received, when it unmutes for five seconds. Then it resumes scanning, pausing for five seconds on each received station. At the end of the band, the scan reverses and proceeds as before. At any time, a touch on the hold scan button stops the scanning action on the station being received.

The auto mode of tuning, activated by the auto/manual button described previously, causes the receiver to scan until a signal is received, as in the hold scan mode. However, the tuning stops on each signal, and each subsequent scanning step requires another touch of the tuning button. The band selection (AM or FM) is made with two small momentary-contact buttons below the dial window. To their left are seven similar buttons for six preset station channels (the seventh is a memory button used to move the frequency of any tuned station into the receiver's memory). To do this, memory is touched, followed by one of the channel buttons. At any later time, touching that button will instantly tune the receiver to that frequency, light a LED above the selected channel button, and display the memory location number (a digit from 1 through 6) as a large yellow numeral to the right of the frequency readout. The stored information is retained with the power off as long as the receiver is plugged into an energized a.c. outlet. If power is lost for more than a short time (about a minute in our sample), the memory is lost, and when turned on the receiver will start up at 530 kHz on AM. In normal operation, each time it is turned on it comes on at the frequency to which it had last been set.

The rear apron of the Aiwa AX-7800U has all the input and output connectors usually found on a stereo receiver, including spring-loaded insulated terminals for two sets of speakers, an AM ferrite-rod antenna, and two a.c. convenience outlets (one of them switched). The Aiwa AX-7800U has

(Continued on page 42)
To understand what an MCS Series® Linear Phase speaker can do, you have to understand what a conventional speaker can't do. A conventional speaker can't deliver all the sound it produces to your ear at exactly the same instant. The major cause of this lies in the way a conventional speaker is constructed. As you can see by the diagram, a conventional speaker is arranged with the woofer (bass), mid-range and tweeter (small high-range speaker) mounted so that their outer edges are on the front surface. As you can also see, these speaker elements differ in depth. That means the acoustical centers in the middle of each speaker which actually produce sound are also staggered. And so is the sound reaching your ear. MCS Linear Phase speakers start out with specially designed speaker elements and crossover networks. Then the elements themselves are staggered (see diagram again) in such a way that their acoustical centers are precisely aligned. The result is sound to make you think you've never heard stereo before. But don't take our word for it; listen to your ears. After all, where MCS Series Linear Phase speakers are concerned, one sound is worth a thousand words. MCS Series Linear Phase speakers. Only at JCPenney.

Model 8310 2-way Bass Reflex $119.95 (each)
Model 8320 3-way Bass Reflex $199.95 (each)
Model 8330 3-way Bass Reflex $299.95 (each)

Full 5-Year Warranty on MCS Series® speakers. Full 3-Year Warranty on MCS Series receivers, turntables, takedecks, tuners and amplifiers. If any MCS Series component is defective in materials and workmanship during its warranty period, we will repair or replace it—just return it to JCPenney.

Prices higher in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.
Laboratory Measurements. After driving 8-ohm loads with both channels for one hour at one-third power (20 watts output), the top ventilating grille of the receiver (over the output transistors) was only moderately warm, and elsewhere on the exterior (over the output transistors) was only moderately warm. The outputs clipped at 73 watts per channel for an IHF clipping-headroom rating of 0.26 mV, with a noise level of -75.6 dB. The phono preamplifier overloaded at a reference output of 1 millivolt (mV) was required at the preamplifier input. The A-weighted noise was -77 dB referred to 1 watt. The phono sensitivity was 0.026 mV, with a noise level of -75.6 dB. The phono preamplifier overloaded at a high 240 mV or so at frequencies of 1,000 Hz and higher, and at 20 Hz the overload occurred at 176 mV (referred to the equivalent 1,000-Hz gain). The rise time through the aux input was 5 microseconds, and the slew rate was 14 volts per microsecond. The amplifier response was attenuated at low radio frequencies so that the IHF slew factor was in excess of our measurement limit of 25.

The tone controls had the usual characteristics, with a variable bass turnover and a hinged high-frequency boost or cut. Between the switchable turnover frequencies and the changes resulting from the control settings, the effective low-frequency turnover point could be shifted from under 100 Hz to about 500 Hz. The high-frequency effect began at about 1,000 Hz regardless of the selected turnover frequency, but the shape of the response curve depended on the switch setting.

The FM-tuner section of the Aiwa AX-7800U had an IHF usable sensitivity in mono of 9.8 dBf (1.6 microvolts, or µV) and the stereo sensitivity was set by the switching threshold of 25 dBf (10 µV). The 50-dB quieting sensitivity was 10 dBf (1.7 µV) in mono and 32.5 dBf (23 µV) in stereo. At 65 dBf (1,000 µV) input the distortion was 0.08 per cent in mono and 0.12 per cent in stereo, and the respective signal-to-noise ratios were 74 and 69 dB. The signal-strength

(Continued on page 44)
Discover a classic.

One look, one sip, one taste will tell you... this beer is a classic.

Taste the moment.

Erlanger... only in bottles and draught.
The ATH-7 is a supra-aural headset, resting lightly on the ears without forming a pressure seal against the wearer's head. The adjustment is very easy, involving a single set of perforated spring metal, with an in-plastic foam. The cushions are made of soft vinyl-covered rubber in a range of sizes to fit comfortably, and they mark for left and right ears, and they are so mounted on their supporting yokes that the phones will fit comfortably only when worn in the correct orientation. The smoothness and quietness of a receiver or tuner with digital frequency synthesis are characteristic of the genre, but we continue to be pleased and impressed each time we use such a product. In the AX-7800U there is no question of muting or unmuting noises of any kind. The receiver outputs are silent until a station of suitable strength is tuned in, at which time it is heard clearly and quietly. Some conventionally tuned receivers are that good, but they are the exception. We never heard any switching transients or other unwanted noises from the Aiwa AX-7800U in any mode of operation. This fine receiver would be hard to surpass for any application that does not call for substantially higher power than it delivers, and we think that few listeners are likely to find it inadequate in that respect.

Circle 140 on reader service card

Audio-Technica ATH-7 Stereophones

Audio-Technica's top-ranking stereo headphone, the ATH-7, employs electrostatic condenser elements. Although they require no polarizing voltage or power supply, they must be driven from the speaker outputs of an amplifier through an impedance-matching adaptor that transforms the high impedance of the electret elements to a low value suitable for connection to the nominal 4- to 16-ohm output of a power amplifier.

The ATH-7 is a supra-aural headset, resting lightly on the ears without forming a pressure seal against the wearer's head. The thin, flat diaphragm of each earpiece couples to the ear cavity through an opening about 1 1/4 inches in diameter, and the rear of the diaphragm opens to the outside through a fine mesh that provides some acoustic loading for the transducer. The ear cushions are made of soft vinyl-covered plastic foam.

The headband of the ATH-7 is a light piece of perforated spring metal, with an inner adjustable cloth band that rests on the wearer's head. The adjustment is very easy, and the headband settings do not tend to shift with normal handling. The earpieces are marked for left and right ears, and they are so mounted on their supporting yokes that the phones will fit comfortably only when worn in the correct orientation. The smoothness and quietness of a receiver or tuner with digital frequency synthesis are characteristic of the genre, but we continue to be pleased and impressed each time we use such a product. In the AX-7800U there is no question of muting or unmuting noises of any kind. The receiver outputs are silent until a station of suitable strength is tuned in, at which time it is heard clearly and quietly. Some conventionally tuned receivers are that good, but they are the exception. We never heard any switching transients or other unwanted noises from the Aiwa AX-7800U in any mode of operation. This fine receiver would be hard to surpass for any application that does not call for substantially higher power than it delivers, and we think that few listeners are likely to find it inadequate in that respect.

Circle 140 on reader service card
NO RUM REFLECTS PUERTO RICO LIKE RONRICO.

Puerto Rico is the Rum Island, the world's foremost rum-producing region. And Ronrico is the rum—authentic Puerto Rican rum since 1860. Ronrico's smooth, light taste has been the pride of six generations of Puerto Rican rum masters. One sip will tell you why.

RONRICO: AUTHENTIC RUM OF PUERTO RICO.
The Boston Acoustics A100 speaker system has been designed to minimize many of the performance compromises associated with "bookshelf" speakers, especially when they are placed on the floor. At first glance, the A100 is a moderate-size floor-standing speaker, rather shallow in its front-to-back dimension. It is 30 ½ inches high, 16 ½ inches wide, and 8 ¼ inches deep (an optional wooden pedestal raises the cabinet some 1½ inches from the floor). Despite the frontal dimensions, the shallow depth of the A100 makes it better suited to wall mounting than many bookshelf speakers, which are usually considerably deeper. The A100 weighs 44 pounds.

The A100 is a two-way speaker design with a 10-inch acoustic-suspension woofer crossing over at 1,600 Hz to a 1-inch soft-dome tweeter whose gap is filled with ferrofluid for better heat transfer and mechanical damping. It is relatively efficient as acoustic-suspension speakers go, being rated to deliver an 89-dB sound-pressure level measured at a 1-meter distance when driven by 1 watt. Amplifiers rated at outputs from 15 to 150 watts are suitable for use with the A100. The nominal system impedance is 8 ohms, with a 5-ohm minimum rating.

The woofer is located near the center of the front mounting board, with the tweeter a few inches above it. Both drivers are mounted flush with the front panel. A black cloth grille snaps on the cabinet. The speaker terminals are in the rear, and there are no level adjustments. According to its designers, the A100 achieves excellent spatial imaging and an audible sense of a "big" sound source by virtue of a very flat, well-dispersed midrange response. The manufacturer states that the technical basis for the improvement is the better handling of the transition from half-space to full-space radiation in the mid frequencies. This problem often produces a "boxy" sound quality in bookshelf speakers. Through the choice of frontal dimensions and woofer placement, the frequency of the transition from half- to full-space radiation in the A100 has been shifted downward, thus minimizing any midrange aberrations. Price: $170.

Laboratory Measurements. Our composite frequency-response curve, created by splicing a reverberant-field measurement at middle and high frequencies to a close-miked, low-frequency response, confirmed Boston Acoustics' claims for outstanding midrange flatness. From 150 to over 8,000 Hz, the output varied less than ±1.5 dB. There was a slight increase in output at higher frequencies, to a maximum of +3.5 dB at 13,000 Hz, before it fell back to the midrange level at 20,000 Hz. The low-frequency output rose below 200 Hz, to +4.5 dB at 60 Hz, before dropping at 12 dB per octave below 50 Hz. Including both high- and low-frequency variations (neither of which may exist in the same amounts in another room), the overall response was within +4.5, -1.5 dB from 35 to 20,000 Hz, certainly very fine performance for such a modestly priced speaker.

The system impedance averaged about 7 ohms over most of the audio range, rising to nearly 10 ohms at 600 Hz and 28 ohms at the 46-Hz bass-resonance frequency. The minimum impedance between 20 and 20,000 Hz was about 6 ohms. When the speaker was driven at 1 watt (based on an 8-ohm impedance), the distortion was about 0.5 per cent from 100 down to 60 Hz, rising to 2 per cent at 40 Hz and 6 per cent at 30 Hz. A 10-dB power increase produced a similar distortion characteristic, with
Synthesized Art.

Sony's new receiver creates higher-fi with a computerized tuner, a DC power amp and Pulse Power Supply.

Dream up a stereo test and compare our new STR-V55 receiver work of art with any other receiver you care to hear. Or view.

The measure of the receiver you invite into your home should feature unusually intelligent versatility. Ample power. Inaudible distortion. And an attractive design that speaks with a quality “finish.”

Of course, we'd like to recommend our STR-V55 because we synthesized our newest technology to give you the incredible accuracy of frequency synthesized tuning, a versatile microcomputer and silent, uninterrupted power. The tuner section is so sophisticated that a highly stable quartz-crystal oscillator locks in AM and FM signals for brilliantly faithful reproduction of broadcast programming.

And the microcomputer gives you tuning options that simply don't exist anywhere else.

Memory scan is our latest exclusive tuning advance to span the bands automatically. Press a button and preset stations are automatically tuned in sequence for approximately 3.5 seconds each. Hands-off tuning lets you automatically monitor your favorite stations and simply pressing the appropriate station button tunes in your selection for continuous listening.

Choose auto tuning to capture stations with frequencies that you don't know for certain. A touch of a button precisely finds the next station encountered up and down the frequency band.

Manual tuning lets you approach known frequencies at high speed and then obtains the exact frequency in precise, discrete steps.

And preset tuning instantly recalls any of the eight stations that are stored in our new MNOS (metal nitride oxide semiconductor) memory that can't be accidentally erased.

Our beauty is not only designed for easy viewing, it's coordinated to be proudly displayed. Bright electrofluorescent digits display frequencies. Bright green LEDs in a five-step array show signal strength. And red LEDs pinpoint your favorite stations at a glance.

Consider the power of 55 watts per channel that propels the intimacy of the original performance through Sony's advanced DC amp technology. And a high-gain low-noise phono amp in the preamp section enables you to even use an MC cartridge with your turntable to capture the subtleness of the softest, most delicate music.

It's also important to know that an efficient, compact Pulse Power Supply provides stable DC power even at peak levels. And highly responsive Hi-Fi power transistors artfully reproduce complex wave forms even at high frequencies and full output power.

Sound is so clear that quiet intervals are quiet even at the highest listening levels.

Sony's STR-V55 is more of a receiver because you demand to hear more of your music. Own our masterpiece.
An incredible sound experience awaits you. An experience that technology alone finds hard to explain. You'll hear music of such stunning purity and sensual richness, that you'll wonder how any turntable could make that much of a difference.

That's the secret of Onkyo. The unique ability to take you several steps beyond pure technology to a world of more exciting sound. And we provide it in all our components ... including all five of our turntables.

The Onkyo CP-1030F Fully Automatic Turntable is an outstanding example. Its unique design lets you take much fuller advantage of today's most sensitive high-compliance cartridges ... providing more perfect record groove tracking and more perfect damping of the vibrations that destroy perfect sound quality.

The Onkyo CP-1030F utilizes a uniquely designed low mass, straight-line carbon fiber tonearm and headshell. Its construction assures purer sound even with warped records.

Infrared sensors replace the usual mechanical devices that detect the end of record play ... returning the tonearm more silently to the OFF or REPEAT position. Manual cueing is also smoother and more precise ... with far less lateral drift during stylus descent.

A Quartz-locked DC direct-drive motor ... with an LED illuminated strobe ... assures rotational speed accuracy. And a separate motor controls automatic tonearm movement functions.

The entire turntable rests on a highly stable triple-insulated suspension system to isolate it from room vibrations and sound vibrations from your speakers.

Styling is superb. Silver-grey with black, low lustre metal and a crystal dust cover. Feather-touch control buttons are front-panel mounted, with a full array of LEDs indicating all function settings.

The CP-1030F is just one of five remarkable new turntables from Onkyo. All built for more perfect sound ... both today and into the future.

Experience "the secret of Onkyo" now, at your Onkyo dealer. Hear audio components so advanced, they transcend mere technology.

Onkyo USA Corporation
42-07 20th Avenue
Long Island City, N.Y. 11105
(212) 728-4639

The Onkyo CP-1030F
A remarkably advanced turntable that makes every record sound better, even when warped.
slightly higher readings of 2 per cent down to about 50 Hz, 8.5 per cent at 30 Hz.

The speaker sensitivity was almost exactly as rated, and we measured an 84-dB sound-pressure level at 1 meter with a 2.83-volt input of random noise in an octave centered at 1,000 Hz (nominally 1 watt). The tweeter dispersion was exceptional, with negligible difference between the left and right response curves at high frequencies when the microphone was located in front of the left speaker and 30 degrees off the axis of the right speaker. The tone-burst response was uniformly excellent and proved to be almost independent of the microphone position relative to the speaker.

Comment. The flat measured frequency response of the Boston Acoustics A100 corresponded closely to what we heard as we listened to a pair of them. They are impressively smooth, with a slight tendency toward warmth. Notably absent from the sound was any trace of artificial emphasis in the middle- and high-frequency ranges. However, when the program called for it, the highs were there in full measure, beautifully dispersed and balanced.

We first listened with the pair of speakers on the floor a couple of feet from the wall (which was as close as we could get them). Later we placed them against the wall, with the speaker bases about 26 inches above the floor. There was very little difference in sound between the two placements, and we would consider the A100 one of the few compact speakers we have seen that is equally at home on a shelf or on the floor. That statement applies to their appearance as well as their sound, since they do not look at all out of place on the floor (where their tweeters are much closer to ear level than they would be with many conventional bookshelf speakers). With wall mounting, their shallow depth prevents the A100s from looking too obtrusive, although their large expanses of grille cloth can hardly be missed.

As for the "big sound," they certainly have that quality all out of proportion to their size. The low bass from these speakers distinguishes them from most comparably priced speakers, and they can deliver a very audible 30-Hz fundamental with little obvious distortion. All in all, there was nothing in the sound of the A100 that we did not like or that made us want to switch to another speaker. Even if their size and shape might be difficult to accommodate in some rooms, there should be many more in which they would prove far more suitable than a more conventional box shape. And, in any room, the Boston A100 would be a hard speaker to surpass at or near its price.

Circle 142 on reader service card

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**Marantz SD9000 Cassette Deck**

**The Marantz SD9000 is a two-motor, three-head, front-loading cassette deck with two notable features. First, it is capable of two-speed operation (the doublespeed 3¾ ips and the standard 1⅝ ips), the higher of the two giving it the ability to provide extended frequency response and high-frequency headroom. Second, it has an unusually versatile, microprocessor-controlled transport section which, among other things, allows the user to program, in random order, the sequence in which up to nineteen recorded selections will be heard. Utilizing blank spaces (pauses) between selections to count forward or backward, the SD9000 will fast-forward or rewind under control of a programmed agenda or, at the touch of a different button, will play the selected sections in numerical order.**

The transport portion of the SD9000 uses two d.c. motors, one servo-controlled for the capstan, the other to drive the reel hubs. There is no conventional cassette "well" and door. Instead, after flipping down a dust shield for the tape heads, cassettes are inserted, openings downward, directly against a front panel, making the entire label area visible at all times. All transport modes (REWIND, STOP, FAST-FORWARD, PLAY, PAUSE, RECORD) operate through logic-controlled solenoids, so any sequence of buttons can be pushed without snarling the tape. Light-touch sensor STOP switches are automatically activated if you remove the cassette while the tape is in motion.

The separate record- and playback-head elements are made of a Sendust alloy to ensure long life; they are contained in a single casing. Access to the heads for routine cleaning and demagnetizing is extremely easy, and, for any servicing requirements, slots are provided beneath the removable casing. Access to the heads for routine cleaning and demagnetizing is extremely easy, and, for any servicing requirements, slots are provided beneath the removable casing.

The deck's microprocessor memory) and the information you have stored for correcting any possible mistakes in pressing the correct sequence of pushbuttons.**

The rear panel of the SD9000 contains the usual phono-jack input and output connectors, a remote-control connector (an optional accessory is available), a switched convenience outlet rated at 400 watts, and a 50/60-Hz slide switch that must be set to the power-line frequency. The unit measures 16⅝ x 5⅝ x 11⅝ inches (width, height, and depth) and weights approximately 22 lbs.

*Continued overleaf*
pounds. A 19-inch rack-mount adaptor is available. Retail price: $800.

**Laboratory Measurements.** Our sample of the Marantz SD9000 was supplied with the cassettes used for the factory setup (TDK MA for the metal-tape position, TDK SA-X for CrO₂-equivalent, TDK AD for ferric, and Sony FeCr for ferrichrome). We also tested a number of other premium-grade formulations—at both speeds—and found that, by using the manual bias-adjust control (which could alter the 15-kHz response by about +2 to −5 dB), we could achieve essentially the results shown in the two accompanying graphs.

Playback response was checked using Teac 216 (120-microsecond) and 316 (70-microsecond) test tapes. As the graph indicates, the frequency response was exceptionally flat, well within a ±2-dB variation throughout the 31.5-Hz to 14-kHz range of the test tapes. (The very slightly elevated response at the lowest frequencies is characteristic of a full-track test tape played on a stereo machine and would not occur in normal use.)

As the overall record-playback frequency-response graphs indicate, at either speed the metal-alloy tape provided greater high-frequency headroom at a 0-dB input level than the other tapes did, although the ferrichrome tape (Sony FeCr), which showed the least high-frequency headroom in the measurements, curiously sounded very close to the metal-alloy formulation (and slightly closer to the original than either the ferric or CrO₂-equivalent cassettes) in our informal listening tests. In any event, all the tapes met the manufacturer’s ±3-dB specifications at 1½ ips. (The TDK AD had a ±3-dB peak at 14 kHz, and the metal tape was −3 dB at 20 kHz, but both of these could be brought closer by using the bias control.) At 3½ ips, only the Sony FeCr (+4.5 at 20 kHz, again controllable with the bias-adjust facility) exceeded the same specification.

Using a 0-dB input signal of 1,000 Hz, third-harmonic distortion at 1½ ips measured 0.6, 1.6, 1.9, and 0.7 per cent for the TDK MA, Sony FeCr, TDK SA-X, and TDK AD tapes, respectively. Headroom margins—the additional signal level necessary to raise the third-harmonic distortion to the 3 per cent measuring point—were, respectively, 4.2, 2.4, 1.9, and 4.8 dB, and the corresponding signal-to-noise ratios, on an unweighted basis without Dolby, were 51.2, 47.5, 48, and 49 dB. Switching in the Dolby noise reduction and using CCIR/ARM weighting improved these figures to 65.4, 64.1, 63.1, and 63.1 dB, and using the more traditional 315-Hz test frequency for cassette signal-to-noise measurements added enough margin (using the Sony FeCr tape) to achieve the manufacturer’s 69-dB specification.

At 3½ inches per second the distortion at 0 dB was 0.88, 1.2, 1.5, and 0.7 per cent for the metal, ferrichrome, CrO₂-type, and ferric tapes, respectively, and the corresponding 3 per cent overload margins measured 4.2, 4.7, 2.8, and 4.8 dB. CCIR/ARM-weighted signal-to-noise ratios, using the Dolby system, registered figures of 66.2, 68.5, 56.6, and 63.9 dB (51.6, 50.5, 49, and 49.6 dB unweighted and without Dolby); again, using the conventional 315-Hz measuring frequency improved the signal-to-noise ratio somewhat.

The DIN peak-weighted wow and flutter at the two speeds measured 0.09 (1½ ips) and 0.03 (3½); with the more widely used weighted-rms technique it was 0.044 and 0.025 per cent at the lower and higher tape speeds, respectively. Fast-forward and re-wind times for a C-60 cassette were between 61 and 62 seconds, which is rather fast.

The Dolby indication was accurate (using a Teac MTT 150A test tape) within the resolution of the level display (itself accurate at the indicated points, as checked against our General Radio calibrated attenuator), and Dolby accuracy at −20, −30, and −40 dB was well inside the prescribed ±2-dB limit. An input level of 48 mV (0.048 volt) was required for a 0-dB indication on the display, the corresponding output level being 0.63 volt. With our 600-ohm generator, an output of 0.2 millivolt produced a 0-dB indication through the microphone input, which overloaded at 35 millivolts. The noise level, when using the microphone stage, increased by a maximum of 9 dB.

(Continued on page 32)
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The Revox B760 digital frequency-synthesizing FM tuner follows the high standards of design and construction set by Revox for their tape recorders and other audio components. The B760 is a large unit, and in its operation it differs radically from other frequency-synthesizing tuners presently on the market. Its grey panel and brushed-silver trim match the appearance of other Revox products. Its most obvious function is a large manual tuning knob in the center of the panel, marked to indicate that it tunes in 50-kHz steps. To its left is a display panel, at the top of which appears a large five-digit frequency readout and a display panel, at the top of which appears a large five-digit frequency readout and a display.
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Stereo without an 801 Omnisonic Imager™ produces sound from two distinct sources. Music from the speakers arrives at your ear, but most of it falls to the floor. The result is often "muddiness" and loss of presence. Only two dimensions result — volume level and stereo separation.

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Revox B760 FM Tuner
(Continued from page 52)

and a line-voltage selector for operation from 100- to 240-volt, 50- to 60-Hz power sources. There are antenna inputs for 240- to 300-ohm balanced systems and 75-ohm unbalanced antenna feeders. The special connectors required for these inputs are furnished with the tuner.

The Revox B760 is approximately 17 3/4 inches wide, 13 3/4 inches deep, and 6 inches high. It weighs 26 1/2 pounds. Price: $1,695.

Laboratory Measurements. The Revox B760 proved to be a very sensitive tuner, with a mono IHF usable sensitivity of 11 dBf (2µV, or microvolts) and an even better 50-dB quieting sensitivity of 9.1 dBf (1.6 µV). The stereo sensitivity of 23.8 dBf (8 µV) coincided with the minimum value of the adjustable stereo threshold (the maximum was 51 dBf, or 200 µV). The stereo 50-dB quieting sensitivity was a good 33 dBf (24 µV). It is notable that the tuner quieted very rapidly with increasing signal strength, making it effectively more sensitive than one that might have had the same numerical ratings but whose output contained more noise than distortion at low signal inputs.

A 65-DB (1,000-µV) input ultimate quieting was 76 dB in mono and 65 dB in stereo, with respective distortion readings of 0.06 and 0.31 per cent. The tuner's capture ratio was about 2 dB, and the AM rejection was an excellent 70 to 72 dB. Its internal hum was also unusually low, measuring -77 dB.

The B760 has five tuned circuits in its "front end," and they were responsible for its exceptional image rejection, which exceeded our measurement limit of about 100 dB (it is rated at 106 dB). The in-band selectivity was also better than average, with alternate-channel measurements of 82.4 dB and an adjacent-channel reading of 20.5 dB (the latter is one of the highest we have ever measured).

The frequency response of the B760 in stereo was almost ruler-flat, varying less than ±0.3 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz. The tuner's low-pass filters, although they did not affect its high-frequency response, removed the 19-kHz pilot carrier very effectively, leaving a residual level of only -75 dB. The stereo channel separation was 45 dB in the midrange, falling to about 30 dB at 30 and 15,000 Hz. The audio output was 1.1 volts at the fixed output or the maximum level of the variable output.

Comment. Although the performance of the B760 cannot be faulted, it does have a characteristic that we find annoying in a premium-price tuner. The tuner does not "remember" the last setting of the station-selector buttons. Each time it is switched on, it comes on at the frequency determined by the manual setting of the tuning knob. Also, one soon finds that it is difficult to remember the frequencies assigned to all fifteen station-preset buttons. If Revox provided some sort of labeling system it would be helpful.

Examination of the schematic diagram of the B760 reveals some of the reasons for its high price (though many of its excellent individual performance characteristics can be matched or sometimes bettered by far less expensive tuners). Nothing has been spared in the design and construction of the B760. Every circuit function has been supplied without apparent concern for cost. For example, the i.f. amplifier has a five-stage IC limiter, the stereo decoder uses four ICs plus two transistors, and the FM discriminator is a pulse-counting detector with three ICs and five transistors.

We were surprised to find in our use tests of the Revox B760 that it is d.c.-coupled from the discriminator to the audio outputs. Since our FM audio measurements go no lower than 30 Hz, we became aware of this only when we saw the woofer cones moving in and out at a 0.5-Hz rate when receiving a local "good-music" station which was apparently transmitting record eccentricities and warps without modification!

The overall measured performance of the Revox B760 ranks with that of some of the best tuners we have tested, and its selectivity and interference-rejection capabilities are outstanding. It can be safely said that the Revox B760 will not be surpassed in actual FM reception quality by any tuner one can buy.

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Professional sound is now yours from the moment the Stanton 881S touches your record. The subject of worldwide critical acclaim, the 881S with its patented Stereohedron® Stylus tip reproduces with a stunning sense of presence all the sharp, quick transients such as those found on the finest direct-cut discs, without injecting any of its own coloration. The 881S is the choice of the professional recording industry and brings a new standard to home audiophiles desiring the very finest in sound reproduction.

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MOVIES I HEARD WITH YOU

NOTHING, I think, so tellingly demonstrates the human need for a serious contemporary music (that is, a music to take seriously, not as mere light entertainment) as the perpetual search for something to fill that slot in our own time. Put the blame where you may, music produced in this century by the traditional source of serious music—serious composers—has had only a spotty success with the public, which seems to demand something else.

Some generations ago, the more polished productions of popular songwriters were inserted at the ends of classical vocal recitals to represent contemporary times. A whole generation of Americans (and some Europeans) took jazz very, very seriously, as another generation has paid similar obeisance to certain aspects of rock. While there are some individuals (perhaps a growing number who wait breathlessly for the latest production of a Stockhausen, a Carter, or a Wouren, another large group of people have decided that the serious, the "classical" music of our time is the film score.

The case for film scores is a fairly straightforward one. They are produced, for the most part, by skilled, trained musicians who have their roots in the classical tradition but are free to draw upon any music that suits their purpose. So far as musical resources are concerned, virtually all are or can be employed. The music is heard, in many cases, by millions of people (and hearing a piece of music, after all, is the first prerequisite to liking it). And for those who have difficulty apprehending the abstractive expressions of wordless music, the film score has a dramatic meaning impressed upon it by the film of which it is a part. In this way, it is something like ballet, in which, also, when you want to hear the music it is there, and when you don't there is always the dancing—which is what you really came for anyway.

The case against film scores is a more complicated thing. The music, after all, is an adjunct to the main matter at hand, and it is produced and modified to fit the procrustean bed of the script and the film cutter. Unlike in ballet, the music is not the directing force; the action and dialogue are. That much is simple fact, but what flows from it? First, while it may not be impossible to write good music with such restrictions, it is damnably difficult. Second, since the film is, more often than not, a commercial venture, the nature of the music composed for it is probably subject to the approval of someone whose taste and experience lie elsewhere. Third, otherwise serious composers have been known to look down on the whole idea of film music enough that they may produce on assignment what might charitably be called "not their best work." Fourth, the very nature of a film score—start, stop, stand in place—takes away from virtually any music composed for it one vital dimension in particular: that of form. The architecture of a film score is imposed from outside, and it is almost impossible to make it have anything to do with purely musical architecture.

Some of the best composers of film music are aware of this last objection and rewrite their music afterward, producing suites, or fantasies, or syntheses based on the film scores. Some very fine music has resulted from this, though it is not long on form; it would involve total recomposition to pull anything as formally complex as a symphony or a concerto (a real one) out of a film score. But successful as some of this music is, there is the nagging objection that this is no longer film music, but concert music arrived at through the action on screen but intensifying it, telling us what to feel.

APART from merely saying, "Well, I like it and the hell with you," one can go on in two directions from here. One: film music is not serious music, the circumstances of its production requiring it to be no more than skilled craftwork. Or two: we have in film a new art form in which several independent arts are asked to sacrifice certain individual characteristics in order to produce something of a richness that no one of them could manage alone. There can, in short, be film masterpieces (if most films are bad, so are most operas.) You can take your choice. For myself, I tend to flit back and forth.
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THE NEW COUNTRY WOMAN

The ERA is gasping for breath, macho reactionaries are rampant, wet-shirt contests spread like polyester across the land. Germaine Greer waxes irrelevant—and the New Woman finally makes it into country-rock. The lesson, I guess, is that there's a lag built into everything. Look at how long it takes the light of (real) stars to reach us. Look at how long it takes Chrysler and disco to die.

Now that she is here, the New Woman will change things, question things, and the genre does need a shake-up. I would draft a letter of thanks, but I'm not sure whether to send it to Gloria Steinem or Dr. Spock.

For a long time there was only Emmylou Harris, different from Wynette-Lynn-Parton not so much in what she sang or the way she sang it but because her attitudes and assumptions came from a different place and brought with them the assertiveness to run their own show. Harris succeeded because she is a terrific musician, but you teach by example, and she's now quietly teaching attitudes.

Then there was Marshall Chapman, passing through on route to harder rock and bringing up, more clearly, the Dr. Spock connection. Chapman grew up in an affluent home, which almost automatically means a more liberal one than the Wynette-Lynn-Parton shanty. A woman of her age and upbringing grasps the new way of seeing things a lot more easily than does one a few years older from a more conservative background. It's one thing to raise your consciousness, bootstrap-style, and take assertiveness training and auto-repair courses—and it's something else not to have to.

Now, suddenly, over a few months, I've identified three additional high-quality New Women in country-rock: Roseanne Cash, Gail Davies, and Lacy J. Dalton. Their main characteristics are the same as Harris' and Chapman's: they came with knowledge of other musics, they are exceptional musicians, and they don't depend on men for direction.

Roseanne (speaking of affluent homes) is Johnny Cash's daughter, and she produced her album, "Right or Wrong," with her husband Rodney Crowell, one of the better songwriters. They gave it a sound from somewhere between Austin and L.A., but it has an honest country-rock feel. Like Countryman's, Cash's singing is free of traditional country-woman angst and the inhibitions behind it, but her voice has more colors.

Gail Davies sounds more like a 1970s-updated folksike in "The Game," which is not her debut album but might as well be. She produced it, achieving a lovely, spacious, transparent sound. She is free enough of hangups to use soft sounds, with generous portions of acoustic guitar, and to sound soft herself, but she also sounds more self-directed than, say, Patti Smith emulating Mick Jagger.

Lacy J. Dalton, the one from the most rawboned neighborhood—the coal country of Northeastern Pennsylvania—comes closest to a hard-country sound with an old-time rural intensity. But liberated attitudes frolic about her subject matter in her debut, "Lacy J. Dalton," and her delivery is too raw for today's country-and-station wagon set.

Dalton's debut was produced by Billy Sherrill, a formidable Nashville authority figure and seemingly a confirmed doubler in string sweetening and other pop softeners, yet the album has a tough, basic, cross-over-be-damned sound. At least part of this has to be Dalton asserting herself. There's quite a contrast between the earthy Billy Sherrill earmarks on this album and the plethora of same on Janie Fricke's albums. Fricke is a transitional figure: she helped take the whine out of the country female voice, but she didn't come to town to make albums her own way; she came to be a back-up singer and got herself talked into making albums.

The promises of Austin are going unkept. They were men-made promises, although Jessi Colter anticipated the arrival of the New Woman and helped open the gates. Now the quality of these new albums in that kind of near-vacuum could tilt expectations out of whack. And lag will delay and drag the shake-up. But be alert: more New Women are bound to arrive, mixing leather and lace as they damn please. How do you trim a Stetson for an outlaw-consciousness roundup?
And the same name keeps coming forth: Clarion. That's because the technological advances for better efficiency are clearly obvious. Advances like the innovative new C series with four ohm design and broader frequency response. Like high power handling. Like center mounted tweeters with bridgeless construction for more open sound. All at superior values.

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CAR STEREO

Getting your own little show on the road may take more effort than setting up most home systems, but the results are worth it

By Ivan Berger
THERE's good news and bad news about car stereo this year, but none of it is really new news. The good news is that more and more car-stereo equipment offers the features, the facilities, and—most important—the specifications of home equipment. The bad news is that none of this equipment is free to perform as well as it would if it were home equipment, because it's forced to operate in the perverse environment, the moving car.

Let's dispose, as best we can, of the bad news first. When you ride in a car, you're sitting in a very small, quite noisy room with abominable acoustics—and it's only a few feet from a potent generator of electrical interference. You're contending with vibrations that can shake a normally smooth-running tape transport into audible wow and flutter, and with radio-reception conditions that vary from the weakest fringe signal to the strongest, overload-inducing transmission (not to mention multipath and other problems that you can't aim your antenna to correct). To deal with these impossible conditions, you have equipment that must be compressed to fit into compact spaces yet still be rugged enough to be bumped, baked, and frozen throughout most of its incident-filled life. The surprising thing is that car stereo, even against these all but unimaginable odds, usually sounds pretty good. Getting the best from a car-stereo system, however, involves more thought and effort on your part than setting up a conventional home system would.

First question to be dealt with: What kind of electronics do you want? Radio or tape alone? Radio-tape combination? With or without CB (this option is becoming rare)? Should the tape be eight-track or cassette? Do you want an all-in-one receiver, one with a separate amplifier section, or a set of completely independent components? And what level of performance and which features do you really need? Then there are the accessory options: Do you need a booster amplifier, an equalizer, an expander, a delay system? And, lastly, the speakers: Should they go in the dash? Under it? In the doors? On the rear deck? Some place else? Should they be mounted in holes cut into your car's interior paneling, or should they be self-enclosed minispeaker boxes? Do you want two-way or three-way speakers—or one-way or five-way, for that matter? And hovering over all this are the two really basic questions: How much should you spend, and what will you be getting for your money?

SOME hi-fi writers recommend spending half your home-system budget on your speakers alone, but nobody takes that approach for the car. There are inherent limitations in speaker-system size, complexity, and housing for the car that establish a ceiling on car speaker prices. In the lower price strata, of course, speakers will take a larger share of your total budget. (When he tries to cut costs, the designer of electronic equipment can cut back on both features and performance, but the speaker designer has only performance to sacrifice, and there's a limit to how much of that he can get away with.) At the low end of the scale, a pair of reasonably good dual-cone round speakers for your door might cost about $35 to $60, while an in-dash radio/cassette receiver will probably cost you at least $100. So, since the electronics will account for the biggest part of your budget, and since the range of available choice is widest in that area, let's begin there.

The Electronics

Most car-stereo systems provide three program sources: AM radio, FM radio, and cassette tape. Each has a place in most people's car listening: FM brings you high-fidelity stereophonic music (plus, occasion-ally, drama and other things) over most of the country without your having to juggle tapes. Tape, on the other hand, can be heard anywhere—in mountainous areas and even in long tunnels—and lets you play whatever you want, whenever you want to hear it—assuming, of course, that the tape you want to hear is one you've brought along. AM brings you news, weather, sports, traffic information, and talk shows to help you stay awake on long night drives. It also works over greater distances.

Tape doesn't have to be cassette, of course. It can be eight-track, too (once the dominant form), and it might even, in a few years, become microcassette. But since cassettes are the more compact of the two current formats, have a longer operating life, are easier to record on (more and better home recording gear exists for them), and are overwhelmingly the dominant format in new car-stereo units, we'll ignore eight-track from here on in.

- Under-dash Units. If you already have an AM or AM/FM radio in your dash, you may prefer not to replace it but rather to supplement it with a cassette/FM or cassette-only system that mounts under your dash. (The lack of under-dash models with AM coverage shows that manufacturers as-

sume that any buyer whose dash slot wasn't already full would buy an in-dash unit.) They're inexpensive ($100 to $300) and easy to install. Mount them on slide-mounts (these are provided with some Craig and Sanyo models), and you can foil thieves by locking them in the trunk when you park; you can also share one slide-mount unit between two or more vehicles. But they take up knee-room, they are easy to steal if you leave them in place, and they lack most of the deluxé features of the in-dash units.

Here and there, though, the under-dash models come up with some features you won't find in the dash. Pioneer's KP-500, for example, has a circular dial that's far easier to read at a glance than conventional straight ones but wouldn't fit into an in-dash unit. B.I.C. has a two-speed (1 1/8 and 3 3/4 ips) under-dash deck to play the tapes made on the two-speed home decks now sold by several manufacturers.

But for fancier "under-dash" equipment you'll need to spend a lot more for separate-component systems. Most separate car components cost about $200 to $300 each, and you'll need a set of them (tuner, tape deck, preamp, and power amplifier usually) to do what a single in-dash unit does. You'll find a profusion of features: Clarion, Fujitsu Ten, Kenwood, Mitsubishi, and Sony all have units with automatic signal-seeking tuning; Kenwood, Mitsubishi, and Sony have pushbutton station preselectors, too. Fujitsu Ten's digital tuner even has such niceties as beep tones that confirm each press of the button and a digital clock that never buzzes on the hour but has an alarm. Sony has a pulsewidth-modulation (class D) amplifier for greater efficiency. And Fujitsu Ten's preamp and tape deck incorporate remote auto-tune buttons.

(Continued overleaf)
But are separate components really for you? They do give you a chance to mix and match brands, and features just as home stereo components do. However, they're not as easily stacked, and the mounting racks available are each made to hold one manufacturer's components; other brands will be of different sizes. And, too, spreading the controls among several components makes the system harder to operate, while and minimum of features, on the other hand, there's nothing quite as luxe looking as a full set of separates. So you may want them for your van or motor home, where space is less of a problem and the equipment is less visible to potential thieves. And, of course, they'd look just dandy set into the bar of your Rolls Royce.

- The In-dash Mainstream. For most people, the most practical and popular way to go is the in-dash radio/cassette combination. As with home equipment, it runs the gamut from low-cost gear with low performance to expensive gear with high performance and almost every feature and convenience under the sun. In the vast middle ground between these extremes, you'll have a choice, at any given price, between models emphasizing either features or performance.

To date, the major emphasis has been on features—some of them slightly off-the-wall. In part that's because it's easier to demonstrate a feature that does something entirely different than it is to demonstrate an improvement that results in something's being done a little better. But it's also owing to the variety of specification systems, which makes it very difficult to compare performance figures from model to model.

This situation is beginning to clear up, largely through the efforts of the twenty or so major car-stereo manufacturers who set up the Ad Hoc Committee to prepare car-stereo specifications similar to those that exist for home hi-fi. So far, not many of the older spec sheets follow this new standard (I've found only one, for Craig's T-687), but by the time you read this many more will, and the rest should follow later this year. Those manufacturers following the Ad Hoc standards in their spec sheets will clearly say so—and can therefore be trusted over those that don't.

In the meantime, you often have to read between the lines. Amplifier power is the spec most often inflated (see accompanying box), and FM sensitivity too is regularly spiced up a bit for popular consumption. The rest are usually honest, but they are also unclear. The moral is plain: if the specifications are not spelled out in terms as rigorous and meaningful as those for home hi-fi, pay little heed to them. Don't, in other words, buy for specs but for sound—assuming that you can get a meaningful in-car demonstration.

- Features—the Visible Difference. With the now-about-to-be-cleared-up confusion about specifications, the most easily comparable (if not quite the most vital) difference between car-stereo units lies in the features they provide. And there's good news here: features which were luxuries a few years back are now becoming nearly standard.

At about rock-bottom in the price range (roughly $80 to $150), you'll still find a few units with no controls beyond tuning, volume, and tone (treble-cut) plus cassette eject and fast-forward levers. But even in this price class most decks have reined as well as fast-forward, and separate bass and treble cut/boost controls—features you'd have had to pay a little more for only a few years ago. Other major features are likely to involve tape handling. You can now find automatic reverse, for example, in units as inexpensive as Sanyo's under-$100 FT C6, and it has become common in models selling from $150 up. Automatic tape eject is available over a wide price range, too. But not all automatics work the same. Some pop the tape out only when it's wound to its end; others eject it (or provide an audible warning) when you turn your ignition off, thus preventing mechanical problems that can develop when tape and deck are left in the "play" position with the power off.

A third automatic function, auto-replay, is found mainly on $150-$400 decks which don't have auto-reverse (rewind the tape and the auto-replay feature will start the tape playing as soon as it reaches its beginning). Then there are tuning aids to help you find a radio station quickly without taking your eyes from the road. Pushbutton tuning of preselected stations is the most familiar one. The lowest-price pushbutton sets (about $150 up) let you preselect a total of five AM and FM stations, but with restrictions: you may be able to choose between three AM and two FM stations (or vice versa), or have only one button restricted to each band, with the other three settable to either FM or AM. At around the $150 level you begin finding preselects with one AM and one FM station per button, doubling your choice on a five-button set to ten stations altogether.

Other tuning aids appear in even lower price brackets. Most car-stereo models today have interstation muting to eliminate the noise of noise between FM stations (Motorola's $305SX has AM muting too). From about $120 up you'll find switches to defeat the muting so you can receive weak stations that otherwise would not get through. Another feature that relates to weak-signal reception is the local/distant switch; it sets sensitivity to maximum for distant stations, but reduces it to avoid overload from strong local signals.

Mono/stereo switches help fringe-area reception too (when signal strength fluctuates above and below the set's automatic stereo/mono switching threshold), switch mono and stereo. But an integrated switching threshold as a compromise between clean mono and dirty stereo. They also clean up the sound when the signal is above the stereo threshold but muddied with multipath distortion. You'll find mono/stereo switches on some, but by no means all, models from about $60 up.

### WHAT'S WATT?

**AMPLIFIER power ratings** are perhaps the most unexpectedly misleading specifications in car audio. The novice very likely does not know what "selectivity" is, and will therefore ignore it. However, everybody knows that a "20-watt" amplifier is more powerful than a "5-watt" one—but is it? The answer depends on how the power ratings are measured. For example, a "20-watt" amplifier may deliver 20 watts per channel, or 10 watts for each of two channels, or even 3 watts each into four. (Home stereo equipment must specify power per channel, but so far, there's no such legal requirement for car stereo.)

The wider the bandwidth over which an amplifier delivers its rated power, the better it sounds. Most amplifiers can deliver more power at middle frequencies than at very high or low ones. But power is usually most critical at the low end. So an amplifier providing 10 watts from, say, 50 to 15,000 Hz at 1% distortion would deliver a tighter, more solid bass than one that went down only to 100 Hz, or so. That is, when performing adoption of the industry's Ad Hoc specifications, we find car-stereo spec sheets citing power over very limited bandwidths or even just at "1 kHz"—without stating how much with a 1 kHz bandwidth at all. And, when we also found the rather glossy efforts to squeeze out a few more advertised watts by adjusting the distortion reference. Shown in the accompanying table are some examples of this practice from current spec sheets (it should be emphasized that these are some of the clearest power ratings—at least these companies tell you what they mean). The moral? When it comes to car stereo, ignore any power specification that does not specify (a) that it's measured at a reference distortion level of 1% or less, and (b) that it applies down to the lowest frequency your car speakers can deliver. Anything else isn't a spec—it's a campaign promise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertised maximum power</th>
<th>Power at 1% distortion</th>
<th>Power at low distortion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 W/ch</td>
<td>16 W/ch</td>
<td>2 W/ch at 0.8% THD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 W/ch</td>
<td>5 W/ch</td>
<td>4.5 W/ch at 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 W/ch</td>
<td>10 W/ch</td>
<td>8 W/ch at 1% THD</td>
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</tbody>
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while some models above about $300 have Dolby tape playback, noise reduction. Many models from about $180 and up have:

- **Self-adjusting Tuners.** At about the $250 level we begin to find tuner sections that obviate the need for such controls as the mono/stereo switch, at least under most conditions. Under a variety of mysterious initials, acronyms, or trade names (Clarion's "SASC," Craig's "Signal Stabilizer," Kenwood's "ANRC," Marantz's "A.I.R.,” Mitsubishi's "SRC," and Sanyo's "SNC"), these tuners slide smoothly from stereo to mono reception and back again as reception conditions change. This eliminates those irritating staccato mono/stereo transitions and helps reduce multipath distortion too. Some of these tuners do a great deal more. Craig and Sanyo have models that vary their audio bandwidth with changes in signal strength. Marantz's A.I.R.-equipped models vary tuner sensitivity and selectivity too. Sanyo has a "Soft Muting" circuit to fade stations out gently when they grow too weak for listening. But perhaps the most elaborate set of systems for dealing with weakening signals is Kenwood's: its ABSS system automatically relinquishes any station that becomes too weak and tunes in the nearest strong one. But since that next clear station probably won't be playing the kind of music you want to hear at the moment, Kenwood also offers "Cassette Standby," which switches from a too-weak station to whatever cassette you've left cued-up and waiting—but the transport doesn't engage the tape until the standby circuit tells the tape to move.

- **Other Conveniences.** Another feature that can affect both tape and FM is Dolby noise reduction. Many models from about $180 and up have Dolby tape playback, while some models above about $300 have Dolby FM too. (You may even find Dolby FM decoders in some lower-price models, but car-stereo spec sheets are for some reason frequently coy about this.) And if you want still greater noise reduction (on your own taped programs), Royal Sound will soon have dbx noise-reduction decoders as add-ons for two of their models and dbx built into another.

It took car-stereo makers a long time to realize that most tapes are Dolby-encoded nowadays. They were equally slow to recognize that CrO2 and other tapes requiring a playback equalization curve which begins dropping about as common as the older, 120-microsecond type, but where only a handful of models had equalization switches last year, at least two dozen (starting as low as $170) do now.

Since all these features let you hear what's on the tape with reasonable fidelity, the next problem is to find the section of tape you want to hear. Alpine, Kenwood, Sanyo, Sharp, and others have "music-sensor" systems (a miser—hey, they actually sense the silent spaces between musical selections) which stop the tape at the beginning of each piece coming out of the fast-wind mode. Motorola has a model with "Auto-Cue," which lets you hear the tape while fast-winding so you can find your place by ear. And Alpine's 7308 has a digital tuning dial that can also serve as a tape-indexing counter.

- **Digital Dials.** Digital frequency readouts are rapidly replacing conventional dials and pointers (there's even a $140 digital-dial model, Sanyo's FT C10). Digital dials look impressively modern; they pack large, legible numbers into small spaces, and their cost is coming down as demand and production rise.

But more significant is the relationship between digital dials and all-electronic PLL (phase-locked loop) or frequency-synthesis tuning. These tuning methods don't require physical rotation of a tuning capacitor, so a physical dial pointer becomes an expensive nuisance. In fact, with PLL tuning, the cheapest alternative to a digital dial is a dial made of a series of LEDs that light one at a time to show where the pointer would be; Panasonic's "Cockpit," Blaupunkt's "Berlin," and some Roadstar models make use of this system.

Since some electronic tuning employs a quartz "clock," it then becomes simple to use the digital display to show the time of day also. Some models from Sanyo and Sparkomatic can also be set to measure elapsed time—handy for checking travel time. Sanyo even has one with a clock/calendar, and J.C. Penney's MCS 25 ($599), has both elapsed-time and calendar features. Electronic tuning lets you play some other tricks too. It makes it comparatively simple to add such tuning aids as station preselects and auto-tuning, and it eliminates any need for fine-tune manually. This is for safety and convenience when the driver is operating the set on the road.

For preset tuning, virtually every all-electronic tuner has one AM and one FM station per button. And because the buttons need not move pointers or capacitors physically, they can be small, light-touch types that leave more room on the control panel—room that's often occupied by still more station-selector buttons. Various models from Audiovox, Blaupunkt, Clarion, Kenwood, Marantz, Mitsubishi, Roadstar, and others...
CAR STEREO...

have six-button setups for a total of twelve stations (save on the Clarion PE-956A, which has presets for two AM and four FM stations); Fujitsu Ten’s EP-320 “Dashboard Wizard” has a seven-button, fourteen-station preselector.

Sony’s XT-1 component digital FM tuner has ten buttons for ten FM stations—plus an unusual (and unfortunately switchable) Automatic Reception System (PARS). Using PARS, you can load the tuner with a sequence of stations along your driving route. As each fades to the point where it’s no longer listenable, the tuner will switch automatically to the next one. Clarion will soon have a different program- ming system that will use the dial clock as well to shift to preselected stations at presele -cted times.

If preselectors are useful when you know the stations you want to hear, automatic tuning is useful when you don’t. Auto-tuning finds a station for you in any of three ways. In one auto-tune mode, usually called “scan,” the radio tunes to the next strong station on the dial, gives you a several-sec -ond taste of the program, then goes on to the next station until you stop it by pressing a “hold” button. In the second mode (usual -ly called “seek” or “seek”), the tuner stops at the first strong station it finds after you release its button (on some sets, this same system is used for “manual” tuning). The third mode, called “memory scan” and found on such models as Marantz’s CAR-427, scans through the stations in the pre -selector memory. Prices for auto-tuning units begin at about $250.

Most car-stereo units scan in only one di -rection; at the end of the band they either reverse direction or “wrap around” to the other end. A few, such as Motorola’s 830SXR, do it in both directions. Though too dim to read for day -light use can be annoying in the dark, the better models have some sort of dimming system. On most it’s a manual switch, but various models from J. C. Penney, Blau -punkt, and others have photocell sensors that dim or brighten the digits in accord -ance with light conditions.

Incidentally, AM and FM aren’t all you can receive on some tuners: you can listen to the sound of VHF television channels 2 to 13 on Roadstar’s RS-2141 receiver, or with an add-on converter available from Kraco. That same converter (and several Kraco in-dash receivers) can pick up National Weather Service broadcasts. Some Motoro -la units can pick up travel-advisory broad- casts at the far extremes of the AM band, and a few European sets can pick up short-wave too.

- The Output End. The radio and tape sec -tions are only part of the story, for the am -plifier and tone-controlling sections certain -ly bear a great deal of responsibility for what you hear. Such niceties as switchable loudness compensation are common in sets costing $150 or more. And there are models above that level whose tone-shaping facili -ties go beyond the usual bass and treble controls. Grundig, for example, has one model with three-band equalization, while Panasonic, Fujitsu Ten, Kraco, and Road -star all have models with built-in five-band equalizers. Several companies have built-in bass boost (such as Fujitsu Ten’s “DSS”), and Concord has models with “Bass EQ” and “Trellie EQ”—actually, adjustable turn -over points for the bass and treble controls. And Concord’s pitch control brings off -speed tapes up or down to the right key.

- Biamping. Another way to improve tone quality is by “biamping”—feeding woofers, midrange, and tweeters from separate ampli -fiers. The technique is used in elaborate home hi-fi systems to, among other things, reduce distortion caused when peak power demand in one part of the spectrum reduces the power available for another. That can make a system with a 20-watt bass ampli -fier and a 5-watt treble one sound as good as a single amplifier with somewhat more than 25 watts of power. In a car, that’s the efficient way to go, for the 5-watt amplifier can operate directly from the car’s 12-volt electrical system, with no need for a more powerful amplifier’s voltage-raising power supply. Jensen and Sanyo were among the first to hoist the biamp banner on the road; now Audiovox, Roadstar, Concord, and others are joining them either with electron -ic crossovers in their in-dash units or by of -fering them as accessories. And Concord’s HPL-510 is designed to operate either as a self-contained 20-watt unit or as a biamped system with its internal amplifier providing only the treble and midrange and an exter -nal amplifier supplying the bass.

- External power amplifiers aren’t used only for biamplification. Since fitting a very high-powered amplifier section into an in -dash unit isn’t easy, most car-stereo units above the 20-watt level come with their power-amplifier sections on separate chassis and linked to their preamps by cables. Or the amplifier is in a module all by itself, but with preamp-level outputs to feed whatever power amplifier the buyer chooses.

And since this, in turn, has sparked the sale of amplifiers with preamp-level inputs, many low-power receivers from about $150 up now have preamp outputs in addi -tion to their speaker-level ones. Such units may be used by themselves when you first buy them and upgraded later by adding a higher-power amplifier.

- Amplifiers, Boosters, Equalizers. Origi -nally, the only add-on amplification you could get for your car system was a “boost -er” which amplified whatever signal came out of the speaker-output connections. Boosters, as such, are still around, generally with lower powers and prices. Power ampli -fiers (generally called just “amplifiers”) de -signed to be driven by preamp-level input signals are becoming much more popu -lar because the signal they’re amplifying is cleaner than it would be if it had al -ready passed through an inexpensive power -amplifier stage.

Many power amplifiers nowadays have both speaker-level and preamp-level inputs, so you can use them with anything. These make especially good sense if you want to upgrade your present, low-cost system in stages. First add the amplifier, using your stereo’s preamp outputs if it has them or its speaker outputs if (as is more likely) it does not (then you can replace your home preamp or equalizer with a car preamp, and your power amp with a power amp). Then you can put the preamp unit into that.

Today’s car-stereo amplifiers incorporate some interesting technology. Probably the most unusual is the Dynamic Compliance circuitry in the ADXS-22 and HPA-45 amplifiers (70 and 20 watts per channel, respectively, into 4 ohms, with the HPA-45 delivering 25 watts per channel into 2-ohm loads). Concord calls it an “auto -matic equalizer”; speaker-cone motion is sensed and compared with the amplifier’s output, and the difference provides a cor recting signal that adjusts the amplifier’s performance as required for flat response.

Another technology new to mobile sound (and far from common in home stereo sys -tems) is pulsewidth modulation, used in the aforementioned Sony XM-1 component amplifier. Biamplification is far more com mon in the car than it is in the home, though some espousing it in amplifiers and asso ciated preamp/control units or equalizers are Alpine, Audiovox, Jensen, and Sanyo, though several companies offer separate crossovers as well.

Four-channel amplifiers are growing common—though not for quadraphony. In -stead, the idea is to feed each speaker with a separate amplifier, allowing front/rear bal ance to be controlled before the amplifier stage rather than by a power-wasting con trol placed between speakers and ampli fi ers. This system is a natural for biamping, too, of course. Among those offering four-channel amplifiers are Audiovox, Blau -punkt (including one model with built-in time delay), Jensen, Kenwood, Marantz, Panasonic, and Sanyo. Sanyo, incidentally, uses a somewhat different system in their PA-110 and PA-500 units (and have their own motorized front/rear faders remotely controlled from either of two San yo equalizers. If biamping is your appli cation for these amplifiers, you should know that some of the models have unevenly di vided power; you can feed more power to your woofer, less to your tweeter (or more to one end of the car than the other).

As amplifiers become more powerful, cooling them becomes more of a problem. Heat sinks frequently occupy as much vol -ume as the rest of the amplifier—which is why both ADS and Kenwood have ampli fi ers of low, flat construction to maximize the heat-dissipation area. ADS’ Power Plate amplifier (their first amplifier model, though they’ve built speakers with built-in amps) also has such features as a turn-on noise suppressor, a subsonic filter, and three switchable equalization curves to match in -finite-baffle and open-back speakers, large finite-baffle speakers, small-midsize and small minis—all three of which ADS makes. There are now even companies that specialize in amplifi ers—such as Linear Power, with one preamp and five power amps from 20
CA(R)VEAT EMPTOR!

For these reasons you might find it best to buy your car stereo (particularly if it's a complex, expensive setup) from a local installer who is prepared to do the installation and guarantee the results. Try to find one with a good track record, so to speak, who'll be happy to have you ask some previous satisfied customers about his work. For those do-it-yourselfers for whom electrical wiring and mechanical installation hold no terrors, the Crutchfield Corporation (1 Crutchfield Park, Dept. SR, P.O. Caller 1, Charlottesville, Va. 22906) is set up to sell products through the mail and provide whatever kits and/or toll-free phone consultations are necessary to get the installation correctly. Car/stereo compatibility does not come automatically, but only through careful shopping, both for the equipment and the installation of same. Do it right and you'll end up with a system that will provide—to coin a phrase—miles of smiles.

—L.K.
Steve Simels has a little talk with a man who doesn’t give much away.

"ROCK-AND-ROLLERS," sang Ian Hunter, "you’re all the same." But the truth is they’re not, at least in my experience. Oh sure, a lot of them are just plain stupid, which is the first major disillusionment fledgling rock journalists suffer when they start doing interviews, but by and large the ones I’ve met have been closemouthed and gregarious, uninteresting and witty, jive and sincere, egocentric and self-effacing—in other words, as varied a lot as the rest of us.

The point is, of course, that they can and do surprise you. Just when you figure you’ve got them all pegged as something or other, you meet somebody who doesn’t conform at all to the stereotype. Which is why I was surprised speechless when I met Mark Knopfler, the writer and guiding force behind Dire Straits (a band widely celebrated for its musicality) and he told me without cracking a smile that he doesn’t "particularly like music."

He also (so I had been told) doesn’t particularly like journalists. He confessed to Melody Maker’s Richard Williams that the lukewarm notices for "Communiqué," Dire Straits’ second album, were a predictable, rather boring example of the British press’ habit of "setting ‘em up and knocking ‘em down," and while we here at Stereo Review regarded the record somewhat more enthusiastically (it was a 1979 Record of the Year runner-up), it is possible that the difficulty I had in getting him to open up was a result of that prejudice. Nevertheless, it would be fair to say that of all the rock stars I’ve encountered on their good days, he’s the only one to whom a one-word characterization of "reticent" would apply. He is, in fact, probably the most guarded, cautious, obviously secretive fellow I’ve ever talked to, and, though I’ve chatted with other guitar heroes who took great neurotic pains to minimize their own accomplishments, Knopfler genuinely seemed more at ease talking about everything from philosophy to the weather. Anything but music, his or other people’s.

Whether this decision to play things close to the vest stems from simple insecurity, a Dylanish attempt to create a mystique (after all, Dylan is a big musical influence on him, about which more later), my own ineptitude as a questioner, or simply a passion for privacy I wouldn’t venture to guess. Perhaps it’s all of the above. Reticence is certainly an unusual trait for anyone involved in such a public pursuit as rock-and-roll (especially if they’re successful), but it seems less of an anomaly in this case when you realize that it also comes across in Knopfler’s music. It may, in fact, have been one of the reasons Dire Straits hit as big and fast as they did. There were, to be sure, other reasons: the tension between the atmospheric American idioms (mostly drawn from country and the blues) and the vividly drawn portraits of specifically English milieus (Wild West End, for example), Knopfler’s remarkably fluid and architectural playing, the understated intelligence and grace of the songs, and the band’s brilliant performances. But there was also a fascinating undercurrent—of mysteries left unsolved, secrets not revealed. It speaks volumes, for example, that when Knopfler did a session with Steely Dan recently (he considered their invitation a compliment), he took great care “not to give away my best stuff.”

The best stuff, I suppose, is on Dire Straits records, at least for now. The day I got their first album in the mail I
disappointingly in relation to the first, him about the second album's selling stuff. "I think," he said when I asked dane, dadle of the night."

On the current state of the rock art he was more laconic. "I hate most of what I hear coming out of L.A. I won't say anything bad about individuals, because I don't know those guys, but the music bores me. Then again, I may be hearing the wrong stuff. I just got my first stereo, and I don't have anything to play on it."

FAME, however, appeals to him, at least on certain levels. "What's nicest about fame," he said with a laugh when I suggested that people were now idolizing him the way he looked up to his early heroes (Scotty Moore, Presley's guitarist on the Sun sessions, and James Burton, who performed a similar service on the Fifties Ricky Nelson hits), "is knowing that kids are copying your licks. We were staying at a Holiday Inn on the last tour, and we sat in with the lounge band. We were sitting around at the bar, having a drink, when we heard them start *Sultans of Swing*, and they had the chords wrong. So we showed them how to do it."

Knopfler is twenty-nine now, and though he's had other career stints, including working as a journalist himself (for the Yorkshire *Evening Post*, where his stuff was, from all accounts, exceptionally good), he told me, "I always knew I was going to be a musician." And he has hinted that Dire Straits may be only a temporary thing (a prospect that no doubt sends chills along a few spines at Warner Communications). Besides the Steely Dan sessions, he has already done a Dylan album, worked with such luminaries as Bonnie Raitt, and publicly declared that what he would really like to do is tour as Van Morrison's lead guitarist.

But the Dylan connection, it seems to me, is the most crucial, both in terms of his music and how he relates to a pesky little snoot like me. Dylan, you will remember, was nearly impossible to pin down through the Sixties; he was nearly as famous for turning interviews into absurdist exercises as he was for his songwriting. Though this was partly an arrogance born of amphetamines, it was also quite clearly calculated to protect himself, to ensure that, like a character in one of his songs, he never made a foolish move.

Knopfler was weaned on Dylan, as was most of his generation. You can hear it in his singing and in the mathematical precision of his guitar work. Had he been older, I have no doubt that the Dylan album he would have played on would have been "Blonde on Blonde" rather than "Slow Train Coming." But I think you can detect a ghost of the Sixties Dylan in how he chose to deal with me. He wasn't obnoxious or mean; in fact, he was charming in his way, and even his silences could not hide the alert intelligence behind the taciturn responses. But mostly it was obvious he knows that whenever he talks to a journalist he is in some sense appearing (in Dylan's phrase) with his Mark Knopfler mask on.

That being the case, I couldn't resist trying to pry at least one bit of candor out of him, fittingly enough about his experience playing with the now Born Again Mr. Zimmerman. What was it like, I wondered, after all this time, to get a chance to work with a guy you've idolized since you were a teenager and then find, suddenly, that he's gone . . . well . . . Somewhere Else?

The lack of precision in my question irked Knopfler, and he stared at me for a moment.

"How do you mean that?"

"Well," I said, "was there ever a moment--during a playback, perhaps--when you found yourself shaking your head and thinking, 'My God, what am I doing here? This guy's a religious nut?'"

And at that he threw his head back and laughed out loud for the only time during our talk. Then, just as abruptly, he stopped, smiled, and folded his arms like Jack Benny. In short, nothing was revealed: as the man says, he doesn't give away his best stuff.

recall I experienced an epiphany of sorts. I was not, you see, expecting anything special. I knew the group had a decent following in Europe (the album broke in Holland and Germany long before it did in England), and I had a pretty good idea what their basic sound was, both from having read reviews in English music papers and from a live cut on an import Pub Rock anthology ("Live at the Hope and Anchor"). But, though the reviews had been intriguing (Melody Maker said they were doing "the music Eric Clapton wishes he could but currently can't"), the band sounded merely okay to me, something like a cross between Dr. Feelgood and a so-so Southern boogie band.

Once I heard the thing, though, I was, like nearly everyone else, played it for utter knockout. The music was sparse, sinuous, and insinuatingly sexy, but above all it was as American as Dust Bowl ballads and John Ford cowboy movies. What hit so hard about it was that the entire thrust of the English punk/New Wave movement, with which the Straits were aligned in terms of public perception if not their own temperament, was profoundly anti-American, perhaps an (overdue) English attempt to establish an indigenous pop culture which for the first time in twenty years did not look out across the Atlantic. English kids, we were told, were bored to death with imitating our American, perhaps an (overdue) English attempt to establish an indigenous pop culture which for the first time in twenty years did not look out across the Atlantic. English kids, we were told, were bored to death with imitating our
did not have anything to play on it."

The rest of our chat was more mundane, typical musician/businessman stuff. "I think," he said when I asked him about the second album's selling disappointingy in relation to the first,
The Coming WAR OF THE VIDEODISCS

By David Ranada

The troops have been mustered, the battle lines drawn, and the trenches dug for what seems to be the coming War of the Videodiscs. Even as you read this, armaments are being manufactured, secret weapons developed, and propaganda composed for the advertising salvos that will be aimed at ruthless competitor and innocent consumer alike. This war will not cost any lives, change any borders, or reallocate any natural resources. But it will cost a lot of money and it will determine the way we Americans (and a good part of the rest of the world) listen to our stereos, watch our TVs, use our home computers, and teach our children—in short, how we receive and disseminate video, audio, printed, and computer-compatible information for a long time to come.

What is the cause of the upcoming battles? Over the past decade or so, technology has spawned several ways of recording and playing back the very high frequencies of the video range on plastic discs, discs that are relatively inexpensive, not too difficult to manufacture, and easy to play. These discs can retain not only video signals but digital audio (in any number of different formats) and large amounts of computer data in unprecedented "packing densities" as well. The businesses involved in the development, manufacture, and possible standardization of a videodisc format are therefore not only such giants of home entertainment and consumer electronics as Philips, RCA, Zenith, Matsushita, Pioneer, Columbia, MCA, and Sony, but also the giants of the not inco-
Checking SelectaVision disc and stylus life on the test bench (photo courtesy RCA)
"A laser could read not only 'optical' videodiscs but stylus-read ones as well...."

the various portions of a digital audio-disc system (disc size, rotation speed, player electronics, etc.) be with any existing or proposed videodisc system?

At this point only one thing seems clear: digital audio will not be obtained by connecting a digital audio adaptor meant for videotape recorders to the video output of a videodisc player. While this approach will work, it is a waste of both hardware and software. Digital-audio VTR-adaptors contain much circuitry designed to compensate for certain operating principles of VTRs and television. This rather expensive aspect of VTR adaptors can be eliminated with videodiscs if there is no requirement that the output from a videodisc player playing a digital audio disc resemble a video signal. Also, requiring a digital audio disc to retain its digital information in a video format is a waste of disc space, reducing playing time considerably without increasing the disc's reliability or freedom from error. None of the prototype disc systems in the accompanying chart encode digital audio as video signals.

Even with the elimination of this option, there remain dozens of others: some far more crucial. Among these are transducer technology (stylus or laser, with or without grooves), modulation method, the size of the undulations engraved on the disc, the rotation rate, disc size, and center-hole diameter, in addition to the "normal" digital-audio parameters of encoding scheme, sampling rate, and error-correction formats. Not all options are available at all times. For example, Sony's 3PM (three-position modulation) code for digital audio discs is not compatible with the stylus/groove interactions of SelectaVision. There are, however, several interesting aspects to some of the choices.

A laser could read not only "optical" videodiscs but stylus-read ones as well, though the laser and stylus systems available now are not physically compatible. For example, RCA uses laser playback of SelectaVision discs in the mastering and quality-control portions of the production process. Similarly, a stylus meant for a grooveless disc can be designed to read grooved discs too. It is possible (but not very likely) that a standard groove geometry can be arrived at, or at least that a standard playing mechanism can be developed that will take many videodisc formats. But it is perhaps already too late to hope for such logical standardization. Corporate as well as engineering egos are involved, not to mention all the R&D dollars already spent.

Audio Minidiscs

Philips' and Teldec's digital audio systems both feature small-diameter discs. I think this is a great idea. A small disc for digital audio is more portable, easier to store, requires less raw material, and sacrifices no audio quality. Dr. Toshi Doi, manager of Sony's digital audio project, estimates that a 12-inch digital-audio disc can ultimately be made that will hold two channels of sixteen-bit-encoded sound and play up to 14½ hours per side. Reducing the disc size in this situation will obviously not involve too great a sacrifice in playing time (imagine all of Wagner's Ring or the complete Beatles on one disc).

Pressing-plant machinery will have to be modified to press small digital audio discs, of course, but the whole problem of videodisc "compatibility with analog-record production" has been overstated. Even the most "analog-like" videodisc system (RCA's) has required extensive modification of pressing machinery and production processes. Optical videodiscs, being of layered construction, resemble analog audio discs even less. Because of the fragility of the information (before the application of protective plastic coatings, if any) and the minute size of the grooves or laser-read "pits," videodisc pressing plants have to be kept far cleaner than audio-disc operations; some even have air-filtration systems.

We have been concerned here mostly with matters of a technical nature, and have picked only some of the high (or low) spots in the whole video/digital-audio-disc field for discussion. Artistic and social issues raised by the two new media have not even been touched upon. Naturally, the major question is who and how many will buy these video products if and when the technology is standardized. Will you be willing to pay extra for a separate digital audio player or video/digital adaptor of some kind? Or, as some in the industry believe, will you be satisfied with two good channels of FM videodisc audio along with colorful pictures? I am sure that I won't be satisfied until I see a defect-immune, stylus or laser-read digital audio disc on the market. At least I think I'm sure.
Right to the finish, its Canadian spirit stands out from the ordinary. What keeps the flavor coming? Super lightness. Superb taste. If that's where you'd like to head, set your course for Lord Calvert Canadian.

The unique spirit of Canada: We bottled it.
Music and writing are not my only pastimes. Like Ruth Draper's Mrs. Clancy, I've always kept up my Italian, for example, and anybody who really knows me will tell you I'm nothing if not well rounded. I do a bit of broadcasting, I'm an active ex-smoker, and I've even raised exotic Oriental cats. As a juror I eventually worked my way up to the position of foreman of a grand jury that heard testimony in more than thirty murder cases, and now I've made a modest beginning as a judge, confining my activities so far to the performing arts.

Earlier this year I made a "judicial" out-of-town debut in Hicksville, a Long Island suburb of New York, where I was one of a panel of judges in a local competition for pianists and organists. It was part of the 1980 Keyboard Entertainer Search conducted by the Baldwin Piano and Organ Company under the sponsorship of the Liberace Foundation for the Performing and Creative Arts.

Liberace apparently has a good bit on his mind besides his piano-shaped swimming pool, his bank accounts, and the copy of the Sistine Chapel ceiling painting in a bedroom of his Las Vegas home. He feels that if his talents had not been recognized years ago, he might still be performing under the name Walter Buster Keys at the Wunderbar in Warsaw, Wisconsin.

In announcing this talent search, he said, "Amateur nights and contests provided me valuable experience and incentive when I needed it most. I want to do what I can to help undiscovered talent get a start." Providing that help is the goal of the nonprofit Liberace Foundation, which is supported in part by the proceeds of the Liberace Museum opened last year in Las Vegas.

My fellow judges in the New York part of this contest were mezzo-soprano Joan Morris (RCA ARL1-3089), organists Lee Erwin (Angel DS-36092) and Donald Kinnier, and singer/pianist Steve Ross (Stolen Moments 1938). We were assured by Jack Romann, who represented Baldwin, that we would not be hearing any contestants who could not play well. Those had already been eliminated in the preliminaries. We were to look for entertainment talent among the five organists and five pianists selected from New Jersey and New York.

The play-offs were held in a covered shopping mall at Mid-Island Plaza in Hicksville, and the contestants were required to perform on a portable stage set up between a noisy electronic handwriting-analysis machine and the Four Queens Ice Cream Parlor. All ten played well even in this unlikely venue, but when we considered style, apparent enjoyment of the act of entertaining, and the ability to establish rapport with an audience, the judges did not have to deliberate long before choosing pianist Wladziu Valentino Liberace, a.k.a. Walter Buster Keys, and Angie Calandra of Brooklyn and organist Jack Candy of Wappingers Falls, New York. The way they communicated with the audience made it clear that both have had considerable experience entertaining in clubs. I hope that by the time you read this both will also have reached the world finals in Las Vegas, where the first prize is $10,000 and an opportunity to perform with Liberace himself.

Soon after I got back from Hicksville, I served as a judge in the district auditions for the Metropolitan Opera National Council at the YMHA in New York City. The audition program administered by the Council in the United States, Australia, and Canada has a forty-five-year history of discovering and encouraging young opera singers. The auditions are no longer a competition for a Met contract, but a number of prizes and scholarships are awarded along the way.

This year in the New York district alone there were 120 applicants to be heard in four days. A panel of three judges heard the first sixty singers, and I served on the second shift with journalist Bridget Paolucci and soprano Adele Addison to hear the rest. Each singer performed an aria of his or her choice and was prepared to sing any one of four others if the judges wished to hear more. Each entrant got to sing for about ten minutes.

A few no-shows cut our total down to fifty-six or fifty-seven, but in only two
The woods are not exactly full of undiscovered musical talent, but contests and awards are helpful in bringing to light a few worthy candidates for fame and fortune.

days that’s a lot of singers. Practically all were sopranos. How many times can you hear “Va, laisse couler mes larmes” from Massenet’s Werther before you feel like crying yourself? Not many. Even if you like sopranos. Even if you love Massenet.

Although two clear winners had emerged in Hicksville, I came back convinced that the woods are not full of talented keyboard performers ready to inherit the Entertainer of the Year title the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce awarded to Liberace (again!) for 1980. At the YMHA it depressed me that the level of singing was so poor among operatic hopefuls in New York, of all places. At moments I longed for the sound of a handwriting-analysis machine, and my heart bled for certain candidates who were pleasant, attractive young people without the basic vocal equipment even to think of an operatic career.

Despite the poor overall quality, the judges found four worthy candidates to send on to the Eastern Regional Auditions a couple of weeks later. I attended the Regionals just as an observer (more experienced judges were on duty), and that restored my faith in the future of operatic singing in America. A single weeding out had made an enormous difference, and in one pleasant afternoon we heard the fifteen singers selected from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. The four prize-winners that afternoon — sopranos Margaret Vasquez and Lauren Wagner, bass Kevin Langan, and baritone Thomas Woodman — are unusually gifted, and I shall watch their progress with interest. All four did well in the national finals in March.

Why should they struggle to reach the finals if there is no longer a Met contract at the end of the auditions trail? In addition to prize money, there is a great deal of prestige attached simply to getting into the finals, and a young singer gets to be heard by a lot of influential people along the way.

On February 9 you may have heard the American heldentenor Edward Sooter, who dramatically replaced the ailing Richard Cassilly in the title role of Otello on the Metropolitan that day. A native of Kansas who has made his career in Europe, Sooter was a finalist in the National Council auditions during his student years back in 1960, but did not win a contract. This year after his Met broadcast debut I asked him if the auditions had been influential in his career. “Oh, golly, yes!” he answered. “I made the finals, you see, and got to sing on the stage of the Old Met with [Ignace] Strasfogel — ‘Winterstürme’ from Die Walküre. That meant a lot of encouragement for me and also brought me support from outside. People thought if I was good enough to reach the finals at the Met, I must be worth helping.”

There is something very appealing about young performers — perhaps it is their vulnerability — that makes people want to help them. This is in part the motivating force behind the many contests, scholarships, and awards programs that form a talent-scouting network for young musicians of all kinds across the country. There are so many competitions, in fact, that I wonder how a promising artist can possibly escape notice.

Not all the prizes are awarded in competitions, however. Nominations in the Avery Fisher Artist Program, for example, are made only by its advisory board. The annual Avery Fisher Prize has gone to such young American instrumentalists as pianists Murray Perahia and Emanuel Ax, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, and clarinetist Richard Stoltzman. This year’s prize has just been awarded to pianist Richard Goode, and the 1980 recital awards for instrumentalists at an earlier phase in their careers went to pianist Mona Golabek and cellist Sharon Robinson.

The underwriter of these awards is, of course, Avery Fisher, the hi-fi manufacturer turned Maecenas in his retirement. He describes the awards as one of the ways in which he acknowledges a debt to music. “I wanted to give something back to music,” he told me recently, “and I feel privileged to be able to help some of these young artists in their careers.”

Perhaps that’s why I take a special interest in the career of soprano Sheri Greenawald (a favorite in St. Louis and San Francisco). She was a member of the Hunter College Opera Workshop when I was on its board of directors, and I feel a measure of pride whenever I read one of her reviews. Similarly, I want all the young artists I’ve heard in competitions this year to do well. After all, the management of the Wunderbar in Warsaw, Wisconsin, also felt they had a personal stake in the matter when Liberace performed as soloist with the Chicago Symphony. When he returned to Warsaw, they were so proud of him that they billed him as Liberace, his real name, but added “the former Walter Buster Keys.”

By William Livingstone
Billy Joel
(Photo by David Gahr for Columbia Records)
On the basis of his jubilantly assured work in "Glass Houses," new on Columbia, it appears that Billy Joel will survive not only the well-intentioned ministrations of his few analytical admirers but those of his inanely trendy merchandisers as well. Survive? He triumphs! Intellectual pop abstractionists—the Rock Establishment—are busy sifting Proletarian Realism out of the wreck of the New Wave, and they are Not Amused by Mr. Joel. His admirers try defensively to place him in a cozy folk/ethnic context, the most popular theory at the moment being that he is an American McCartney with a dose of sociological steroids and a shot or two of blue-collar testosterone. And his merchandisers are aggressively trying to sell him to a haggard public already armpit-deep in the ersatz thrills and shudders of Punk, as if he were some sensitive plants so beloved of the New Wave, and continuously entertained by an altogether separate kind of work he began to do in the early seventies, but I can give you odds that you'll hear for yourself. I can't give guarantees for any of this; get "Glass Houses" and you'll be regularly amused, often touched, and regularly entertained by an album that I found reminiscent of—and as beautiful as—his already classic Just the Way You Are.

Interestingly, a new, wryly charming facet of Joel's talent is beginning to move front and center here. It's Still Rock and Roll to Me is one example: it manages to be simultaneously satirical, endearing, and hilarious as the put-down, put-upon hero wonders aloud, "Everybody's talkin' bout the new sound/Funny, but it's still rock and roll to me." Sleeping with the Television Set On is another. It has the kind of droll but unregretted sadness of lived experience that one might expect more from a French chansonnier than from a kid from Long Island, but it works beautifully. Perhaps the most charming of all is All for Leyna, a kind of affectionate recap of those wonderful old doo-wop songs that knocked (almost) everybody out in the Fifties. And my particular favorite is a moody, gritty ballad called Through the Long Night that I found reminiscent of—and as good as—his already classic Just the Way You Are.

But you mustn't take only my word for any of this; get "Glass Houses" and hear for yourself. I can't give guarantees, but I can give you odds that you'll be regularly amused, often touched, and continuously entertained by an album you'll be playing again and again.

Billy Joel has come a long way since the dreamy sentimentality of Piano Man. But the last chorus reveals that other, rather smaller concerns are driving him to the borderline: "I need a doctor for my pressure pills/I need a lawyer for medical bills/I need a banker to finance my home/I need security to back my loan..."

"...his able talent places him among the best American songwriter/performers...."
Man, and an even longer way since his first recordings over a decade ago, when he started out with a group called the Hassles and "graduated" to become half of a team known as Attila. He needs neither defensive admirers nor fast-buck merchandisers, for his secure and able talent places him among the best American songwriter/performers now working. (All through this album, incidentally, I kept thinking, "Eventually he's going to do a Broadway show, and won't that be something") "Glass Houses" proves that it is all there: the music is there, the ideas are there, and the ability to execute both superbly is there. Billy Joel has reached an exciting and singular moment in his career: the first big crest. But there are going to be more of those—just as there were for, shall we say, Irving Berlin?

—Peter Reilly

Tamás Vásáry: Mozart Concertos: Uncontrived Eloquence In Every Bar

In some twenty years of recording for Deutsche Grammophon, pianist Tamás Vásáry has given us some extremely tasteful performances of the music of Chopin and Liszt; he has recorded those composers' concertos as well as numerous solo works, plus an especially appealing Debussy collection and all the concerted works of Rachmaninoff. Having established himself in our minds with this sort of repertoire over such a long period, Vásáry might not be immediately thought of in connection with Mozart, but he has in fact performed Mozart's music frequently, both as pianist and (since 1973) as conductor, in this country as well as Europe. Now DG has issued a record on which he conducts two Mozart concertos from the keyboard: No. 14, in E-flat Major (K. 449), and No. 26, in D Major (K. 537, the so-called Coronation Concerto). The orchestra is the Berlin Philharmonic, and the result is surely one of the most beautiful presentations of Mozart concertos ever put on disc.

It is the music that impresses here, and admiration for the performances comes as an afterthought. But these performances have everything: scholarship, insight, finesse, and no little poetry. In the first regard, it may be noted that Vásáry has deleted the spurious bar before the first-movement cadenza in K. 449, and that he does not play the usual Mozart cadenzas in K. 537 since they were actually composed for an earlier concerto (K. 451, in D Major, a delicious and unaccountably neglected work); he provides his own cadenzas for K. 537 and the finale of K. 449, all of which are eminently suitable. In the second regard, his approach in both works is markedly more expansive than what we have been accustomed to. There is no heaviness or self-consciousness of any sort, and neither is there any trace of surface glitter: the intimacy that is the essence of K. 449 is magically realized, and K. 537, which is so often spoken of as a sort of weak link in this magnificent chain of concertos, reveals a depth beyond what many of us have been able to acknowledge before.

This is, of course, not merely a matter of slower pacing or "relaxation": the Larghetto of K. 537 gains here from being taken a little more briskly and flowingly than usual, as well as from some very apt (but rather seldom attempted) ornamentation. There is uncontrived eloquence in every bar of the solo playing, the conducting is by no means perfunctory (even the Berlin Philharmonic does not always respond on this level with such gorgeous wind playing), and Vásáry's blending and balancing of the two elements are superb. So is the recorded sound, both warm and crystalline. There simply has not previously been a recording of K. 537 as thoroughly successful as this one. Listeners accustomed to a perkier treatment of the opening movement of K. 449 may enjoy returning to one or two of the other fine versions (and there are some splendid ones), but I suspect that the greater depths plumbed by Vásáry, and what I have already alluded to as his poetic realizations, will make this the record to which one returns most often, and with the deepest pleasure, for both works. If
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Not only is the overall sound audibly improved, but stylus and record life are significantly extended.

To experience the demonstrable advantages of ULM, bring a badly warped record to your Dual dealer. Listen to it played with the ULM tonearm and cartridge. (All nine new Dual turntables feature this system.)

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Breakthrough is a word Realistic seldom uses, but nothing else describes the STA-2200. And the critics agree. The heart of the tuner is the quartz-locked, microprocessor circuitry that ends mechanical tuning problems.

Radio Electronics magazine puts it this way: "On the whole, the receiver embodies a great many design features, most of them concerned with the ease of use and convenience of accurate tuning."† Bright fluorescent digits display each station's frequency with absolute accuracy, and computer-type tuning automatically scans up or down the FM and AM bands. You can store any six FM and any six AM stations in the microprocessor for instant touch-button recall.

Radio Electronics also says: "The STA-2200 is a joy to use."† For example, you can command the receiver to sample each station in the memory, then touch-select the one you want. There's also Dolby® FM Noise Reduction, LED signal level indicators, and the display doubles as a quartz clock.

Stereo Review summed up the STA-2200's tuner by saying it "worked to perfection." And Stereo Review said "...because of its clever design and pleasing layout, we have assigned a VERY GOOD R.E.A.L. rating to the STA-2200."†

Advanced MOSFET Amplifier

The STA-2200 uses a new breed of power transistors called MOSFETs. Their ultrahigh-speed operation brings you stunningly accurate sound reproduction through superior linearity, superior slew rate and inaudible TIM.

Radio Electronics says "The unit seems quite conservatively rated in terms of power output, as well as rated distortion, delivering a clean 72 watts per channel at mid-frequencies and just under 70 watts per channel at the 20 Hz and 20 kHz frequency extremes for its rated total harmonic distortion of 0.02%."† You can monitor the output with the 10-step, dual range output LED power indicators.

Stereo Review reports "There are no signs of skimping in any area of its design or construction." The amplifier features go on and on. We've included 11-step bass and treble controls with turnovers for controlling ranges below 150 Hz and above 6 kHz, tone defeat, monitor and dubbing controls, Hi-MPX filter. And more!

Says Stereo Review: "With the STA-2200, Radio Shack has made it perfectly clear that the technical sophistication responsible for the overwhelming success of the TRS-80® computer system has been applied very effectively to their high fidelity products."*

We couldn't have said it better. Thanks, guys!

Radio Shack

The Nationwide Supermarket of Sound

*Quoted by permission from Hirsch-Houck Test Lab Report, Feb., 1980, Stereo Review. (Copyright Ziff Davis Publishing, all rights reserved)
The STA-2200 is 599.95, at participating stores and dealers, price may vary. Dolby® is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories.
this signals the beginning of a complete cycle of the Mozart concertos from Vásáry, so much the better—provided he is not asked to mass-produce the subsequent installments but is given the time to make them all as exceptional as this one.

—Richard Freed


Let's Make a Little Room for Singer/Songwriter
Lacy J. Dalton

NEW WOMEN are providing the action in country-and-something music right now, but knowing that and being ready for the debut album “Lacy J. Dalton” are two different things. My reaction, after four or five listens, is still “Whew!” (It makes the job a lot easier when one's feelings speak up so clearly). After some deserved single success with her conventional but exciting Crazy Blue Eyes, young singer/songwriter Dalton—who sang rock on the way up, along with r- & b and even jazz—has hooked up with producer Billy Sherrill to deliver an effort that is oddly straight country and yet rocks like mad.

That’s probably because Dalton herself so naturally covers both those bases. She has a raw intensity that—honestly—reminds me of Hank Williams. The sound of her might remind you of several people—Buffy Sainte-Marie, a Donna Fargo that isn’t harmless, and even (faintly, in one cut) Edith Piaf—but, basically, raw is the key word for her sound. It works like another famous raw voice, Bob Dylan’s, in that it seems to skip a step in getting to where the listener lives.

As a writer (usually a co-writer), she seems utterly sure-handed, as if her relationship with the English language is the kind of affair that is going to stay fresh and active. Again, you might think of Donna Fargo, or of anyone who’s been around too much to stay cooped up inside the conventions of earlier country-music women. There’s a blue-note quality in her songs, and no small amount of rock-and-roll.

Sherrill, who usually does the opposite, gives this one the hard-edged, bar-band sound it calls for. It is a fairly straight country backing—Charlie McCoy’s doing his best work in years—except that each song is given as much beat as it needs, usually an ample but not unattractive amount. This is rightly keyed to the singing, which has more than enough grit to lead every charge.

Anybody who can make me stop and listen to Tennessee Waltz can do most anything; Dalton does it with some crazy, off-the-beat phrasing that not only makes the song a new experience but draws McCoy, who’s seen them all come and go, outside himself and into some inspired surrealism. In subtler ways, she has that effect on all the musicians, and the cumulative difference isn’t what you’d call subtle. Looks like we’re going to have to make room for Lacy J. Dalton.

—Noel Coppage

LACY J. DALTON. Lacy J. Dalton (vocals); the Jordanaires, Janie Fricke, Annie Hughes (backing vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Crazy Blue Eyes; High Like an Angel; Honky Tonk Man; Carolina Come-On; Beer Drinkin’ Song; Tennessee Waltz; Late Night Kind of Lonesome; Losing Kind of Love; Are There Any Cowboys Left?; Turn My Head Around. COLUMBIA JC 36322 $7.98, © JCA 36322 $7.98, © JCT 36322 $7.98.

A Notably Successful Program of Songs
By Rachmaninoff
And Chausson

ACLRIOUS combination indeed is Nonesuch’s new album of songs by Sergei Rachmaninoff and Ernest
Not a "major" song composer, but these six songs, which in-
clude the large-scale and somewhat un-
characteristic La Caravane, nonetheless manage to encompass all the ele-
gance and refinement of the French mélodie. They are sung with just the
right blend of emotional involvement, textual clarity, and vocal naturalness.
The more passionate Rachmaninoff songs get a different treatment, of
course, but the passion there is never excessive.

Both composers wrote demanding piano parts, but they pose no problems
for a musician of Gilbert Kalish's re-
sources (though I found his handling of the postlude to The Harvest of Sorrow
somewhat understated).

We have two exceptional artists here in repertoire that may be new to them,
but which they have obviously studied
penetratingly and prepared with care.
Technically, the disc is flawless. As I
said, a feast.

—George Jellinek

Rodney Franklin
Reveals a Spectrum of
Compositional Skills
And Performing Gifts

W e would not expect a gifted
young jazz pianist coming into
his own today to sound like Teddy Wil-
son, Art Tatum, Erroll Garner, or any
other of those titans of yesteryear who
shaped the art of keyboard improvisa-
tion. To do so, he would not only have to
be a miracle-child incarnate, but he
would have to have been isolated from
all the influences that have fused jazz
with more recent popular modes. And
so, if the artist in question were a twen-
ty-one-year-old product of the fusion
age, his style would very likely owe
something to, say, Herbie Hancock and
Chick Corea, and if he were a true tal-
ent, not merely imitative, he would un-
doubtedly have something to say in his
own right.

Which brings us to young Rodney
Franklin, whose new Columbia album
"You'll Never Know" reveals an impres-
sively versatile and remarkably in-
tegrated musical personality. Defying
the inhibiting strictures of categories,
Franklin has fashioned the diverse se-
lections on this fascinating album with
the evident intention of laying out the
whole broad spectrum of his composi-
tional gifts and performing skills. On
Felix Leo, The Groove, and the title
track he strikes out confidently and un-
selfconsciously in a rhythmically ac-
cented popular vein, employing voices
in a manner that would seem to belong
to an album of a different sort. But he
raises these songs to another aesthetic
level entirely through his agile pianis-
tics, crocheting intricate patterns over
the simple, basic lines. He can switch
deftly into more introspective moods
too, as in God Bless the Blues, an intel-
ligent and sensitively shaped tribute to
his musical roots, the solo-piano Jour-
ney, brief but chromatically rich, and
The Watcher, in which he and an en-
samble of young contemporaries draw a
variety of textures and voicings from
Miles Davis' classic In a Silent Way.

Franklin's formidable assets as a
pianist include a subtle mastery of color
and shading and a technical facility so
certainly unacknowledged. As for those
of Chausson, so few of his considerable
output have been recorded that finding
six of them on one disc, and so lovingly
rendered, amounts to a minor feast.
Perhaps he was not a "major" song
composer, but these six songs, which in-
clude the large-scale and somewhat un-
characteristic La Caravane, nonetheless manage to encompass all the ele-
gance and refinement of the French mélodie. They are sung with just the
right blend of emotional involvement, textual clarity, and vocal naturalness.
The more passionate Rachmaninoff songs get a different treatment, of
of course, but the passion there is never excessive.

Both composers wrote demanding piano parts, but they pose no problems
for a musician of Gilbert Kalish's re-
sources (though I found his handling of the postlude to The Harvest of Sorrow
somewhat understated).

We have two exceptional artists here in repertoire that may be new to them,
but which they have obviously studied
penetratingly and prepared with care.
Technically, the disc is flawless. As I
said, a feast.

—George Jellinek

JAN DE GAETANI AND GILBERT KALISH.
Rachmaninoff: Oh, Do Not Grieve; Li-
tao; Christ Is Risen; The Answer; To the
Children; A Passing Breeze; How Long
Sincs Love; The Harvest of Sorrow. Chaus-
on: Amour d'Antan; Le Charme; Le Temps
des Lilas; Les Papillons; Le Colibri;
La Caravane. Jan DeGaetani (mezzo-so-
prano); Gilbert Kalish (piano). NONESUCH
H-71373 $4.96.

Rodney Franklin
Reveals a Spectrum of
Compositional Skills
And Performing Gifts

W e would not expect a gifted
young jazz pianist coming into
his own today to sound like Teddy Wil-
son, Art Tatum, Erroll Garner, or any
other of those titans of yesteryear who
shaped the art of keyboard improvisa-
tion. To do so, he would not only have to
be a miracle-child incarnate, but he
would have to have been isolated from
all the influences that have fused jazz
with more recent popular modes. And
so, if the artist in question were a twen-
ty-one-year-old product of the fusion
age, his style would very likely owe
something to, say, Herbie Hancock and
Chick Corea, and if he were a true tal-
ent, not merely imitative, he would un-
doubtedly have something to say in his
own right.

Which brings us to young Rodney
Franklin, whose new Columbia album
"You'll Never Know" reveals an impres-
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The Watcher, in which he and an en-
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variety of textures and voicings from
Miles Davis' classic In a Silent Way.

Franklin's formidable assets as a
pianist include a subtle mastery of color
and shading and a technical facility so
secure that he can make the keyboard
work hard for him without apparent ef-
fort. Perhaps he moves easily on this
professional level because he started so
young. As a kid growing up in Berkeley,
California, he attended a university
laboratory school where they were ex-
perimenting in teaching jazz to the very
Unique qualifications.
For example, a tweeter mounted directly in the grille.
It's the Jensen 6½" Coax II car stereo speaker. And by putting the 2" tweeter where it is, we've improved the high frequency dispersion. And slimmed down the speaker.

Experienced treble-shooter....for better dispersion.
High frequencies can be tricky... they usually just want to travel straight forward. But the up-front position of this direct radiating tweeter helps disperse those highs throughout the whole car.

So whether you install these speakers low in your front doors or back in the rear deck, you can be sure you're going to hear all of the treble this unique speaker has to offer.

Beefed up music.
That's what you'll get from the 6½" Coax II. Music with plenty of meat on its bones. Music with a frequency response that stretches from 50 Hz to 40,000 Hz.

Not only from the tweeter in the grille. But also from the 6" woofer behind it. This woofer's hefty 16 oz. magnet and large 1" Nomex® voice coil serve up a second helping of full, balanced bass. While a responsive rim suspension and meticulous cone design give this speaker extra sensitivity.

This highly efficient, 4 ohm Coax II will handle up to 50 watts of continuous power. And make the very most of it.

A slimmed down speaker.
No extra fat on this speaker... it's only 1½" deep and it fits your current 5½" cutout. So it will fit in more car doors, more rear decks, and more tight spaces than ever before.

The Jensen 6½" Coax II is also easier to install, thanks to its new uni-body construction. The grille is permanently affixed to the speaker unit. Which not only makes installation easier, but also means a sturdier speaker with less vibration.

Excellent references.
Give a listen to the new Jensen 6½" Coax II's. The speakers with the grille-mounted tweeters.

We think you'll agree that they're just the right speakers to fill the position in your car.
Whether you are about to buy your first high-fidelity component or your fifteenth, you need to have all the facts you can get your hands on if you want to insure your complete satisfaction. Yes, the audio field is a complicated one, but Stereo Review has been running a kind of monthly seminar on the subject for almost two decades now, furnishing the kind of basic buying, installation, and operating guidance you can get nowhere else. Today, over 525,000 readers use it monthly as the first, best textbook in their on-going audio educations. If you have come a little late to class, here's your chance to catch up. Any questions you may have about How to Buy, How to Set Up, How to Use, or How to Understand audio equipment are probably answered in one or more of the reprints listed below.

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young. By the time he was in second grade he could play alto sax and organ, at nine he won an award as soloist with his school jazz band, and before he got to high school he had led his own combo. Since then he has been a pianist with the innovative saxophonist David Murray.

Precocity in itself is no guarantee of a larger mature talent; special instruction has enabled many a bright kid to master musical mechanics in pre-adolescence without its ever leading anywhere. But there is ample indication here of a mind at work, a sensibility that articulates the musical thinking of an entire generation. It is easy to appreciate Rodney Franklin right now as a young musician whose eclectic approach reflects the contemporary musical world into which he has just moved. But if he is as good as I think he is, he'll not be content to leave that world as it is; he'll try to change it.

—Phyl Garland

RODNEY FRANKLIN: You'll Never Know.
Rodney Franklin (piano, Rhodes piano, bass guitar, vocals); Vincent Spaulding (electric guitar); Harold Foreman, Paul Jackson (bass guitar); Tony St. James, Randy Merritt (drums); Kenneth Nash (percussion); Dean Holzkamp, Mel Martin (flute, soprano saxophone); Ray Pizzi (bass clarinet); Phyllis St. James, Lisa Roberts, Brooks Hunnicutt, Audrey Franklin (vocals). Felix Leo; God Bless the Blues; The Watcher; Journey; The Groove; You’ll Never Know; Return; Parkay Man. COLUMBIA NJC 36122 $7.98.

RODNEY FRANKLIN: a musical mind at work

JUNE 1980

83

C. P. E. Bach’s

Hamburg Symphonies:

A Major Symphonist
At His Creative Peak

ONCE again, with Philips' new recording of the Hamburg Symphonies, we have evidence that Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, and even the great music historian Dr. Charles Burney were more than justified in their admiration for the music of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. At a time when Mozart and Haydn were casting their carefully chosen musical language in classically balanced structures of Apollonian restraint, J. S. Bach’s oldest son was still working with the rather spas tic language of the Sturm und Drang movement and evolving from it Dionysian forms based more on emotion than on logic.

The four Hamburg Symphonies of 1780 were written at the composer’s creative peak, and they place him on the map as a major symphonist of the eighteenth century. The music is powerful, dramatic, and passionate. It is brilliantly orchestrated as well, and demands virtuoso playing on the part of all the instrumentalists. The English Chamber Orchestra rises to the occasion and gives the music an electrifying performance. Each individual part sparkles as it ricochets through the mosaic textures. Conductor Raymond Leppard is not afraid of rapid tempos, and he whips his players into a fury appropriate to the Sturm und Drang style. On the other hand, he is not afraid to linger over the contrasting sighing and weeping figures of the Empfindsamer style that counterbalances the violence of the Sturm und Drang. In short, these readings are superb and completely right. The “Hamburg Bach” is presented here as what he really was: a powerful, original composer.

—Stoddard Lincoln


Performance: Ups and downs
Recording: Good

The times of Neal Shulman's and Rex Fowler's lives have included more critical than commercial success for their band Aztec Two-Step, but the boys have hung on for several years by adapting little by little to the current musical times. Here they adapt a little more. No, they don't come under the influence of New Wave; they go the other currently fashionable direction, toward a cooler image and more sophisticated production. Occasionally they take it too far and turn out something annoying, such as "You Who," but that's balanced by things of a similar nature that really click—She; Boys; Never Stop; and five others.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BOBBY BARE: Down & Dirty. Bobby Bare (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. Good for Nothing Blues; Numbers; Some Days Are Diamonds; Tequila Sheila; Rock Star's Lament; Crazy Again; Tecumseh Valley; and six others. Columbia GC 36323 $7.98, © JEA 36323 $7.98, © JET 36323 $7.98.

Performance: Incredibly Bare
Recording: Good

Bobby Bare is equal parts Penrod, Peck's Bad Boy, and a Huckleberry Finn old enough to be technically "grown up," whatever that is. A beery, trash-talking old boy, "a struttin' rooster," as he says in an outrageous Shel Silverstein song called Numbers, he also comes across, singing, as basically gentle and great company to have around—and even though he doesn't write much any more, he has taken on, with age, the additional image of a shrewd social observer. Vocally, of course, they have not compromised anything and remain first-rate; it is as songwriters and recorders that they are mised anything and remain first-rate; it is a little more. No, they don't come under the current musical times. Here they adapt little by little to the current musical times. Here they adapt a little more. No, they don't come under the influence of New Wave; they go the other currently fashionable direction, toward a cooler image and more sophisticated production. Occasionally they take it too far and turn out something annoying, such as "You Who," but that's balanced by things of a similar nature that really click—She; Boys; Never Stop; and five others.

GEORGE BURNS: I Wish I Was Eighteen Again. George Burns (vocals); orchestra. A Wish I Was Eighteen Again; Nickels and Dimes; The Baby Song; Old Bones; A Real Good Cigar; and five others. Mercury SRM1-5025 $7.98, © 81-5025 $7.98, © 41-5025 $7.98.

Performance: Maudlin
Recording: Good

I think this is a lugubrious mistake by the great George Burns. When the album arrived I had happy expectations that it would be one of his hilarious duh-duh-doo runnings of songs that killed vaudeville—an act he's been doing, and delighting millions with, since shortly after Appomattox. Instead, it seems to be a half-serious attempt to actually sing.

I'd like to draw a discreet curtain over the whole thing, but the title song has been getting some chart action. It's one of those

Explanation of symbols:
© = open-reel stereo tape
@ = eight-track stereo cartridge
© = quadraphonic disc
© = digital-master recording
© = direct-to-disc

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol ©

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.
maudlin, sunset-years pieces of special material that would probably send Burns' fellow octogenarian stars (Fred Astaire, Ruth Gordon, Gloria Swanson) directly to their local roller-discos to skate off their disgust. And the rest of the album is full of the sort of commercial, cornball stuff that would seem a lot more plausible coming from some anonymous C & W hack than from George Burns. That cigar-flicking, horny, mellowed-out old dandy that he's played to our delight all these years—everyone's ideal reprobate uncle or grandfather—is so much more appealing than the saccharine sentimentalism he's impersonating here that I can only surmise someone must have slipped a tranquilizer into his cigar. Say you're sorry, George. P.R.

LACY J. DALTON (see Best of the Month, page 79)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DARTS. Darts (vocals and instrumentals). Get It (While You Can); Don't Say Yes; Cool Jerk; Don't Look Back; Don't Let It Fade Away; Can't Get Enough of Your Love; and five others. POLYDOOR PD-1-6250 $7.98, © ST-1-6250 $7.98, © CT-1-6250 $7.98.

Performance: Bull's-eye! Recording: Very good

Darts is an English group that somewhat resembles our Sha Na Na—but with a difference. Sha Na Na takes on Fifties/Sixties rock as a joke, an excuse for a burlesque stage show. Darts, going over the same material, treats it in music-hall fashion, striking a delicate balance between nostalgia and satire. They seem genuinely interested in these songs as vehicles for performance and sentiment, whereas Sha Na Na uses them for knockabout buffoonery. Darts has had three hit albums and seven hit singles in England.

The tracks on this first American release are selected from Darts' three British albums. Half of them were produced by Tommy Boyce, an American who, in partnership with Bobby Hart, used to write material for the Monkees. The others, which are far more interesting, were produced by that brilliant zany Roy Wood, the original mover of the Move. Though he is not credited on the jacket, I suspect that Wood is also responsible for some of the arrangements and the multitacked saxophones, especially on the entrancing 'Can't Get Enough of Your Love,' a Darts original. Other standout tracks are 'It's Raining,' one of the group's hit singles; 'Get It (While You Can),' a happy evocation of the old Motown sound (the same that producer Richard Perry has lately been applying to Bonnie Pointer's solo records); and 'Don't Say Yes,' a re-creation of late-Forties rhythm-and-blues composed by the group's resident saxophonist, Horatio Hornblower. As a digest if there is a short but exhilarating example of boogie boogie piano, One off the Wrists, by Mike Deacon. Darts' medley outstanding, foldered, and I wish you much enjoyment of them. J.V.

THE FLYING LIZARDS. The Flying Lizards (vocals and instrumentals). Der Song von Mandelay; Her Story; Russia; Summertime Blues; Money (That's What I Want); and five others. VIRGIN VA 13137 $7.98, © TP 13137 $7.98, © CS 13137 $7.98.

Performance: Genius at work! Recording: Average

How's this for a movie scenario? An enterprising young English art student named David Cunningham, putting together four-track tape deck, decides that if Sid Vicious can make a buck with this new-fangled rock-and-roll stuff, so can he. He then makes a crude-as-can-be demo tape of the instrumental part of the old Motown classic Money and asks his girl friend in to sing it. After about an hour it becomes obvious that she couldn't carry a tune in a lorry, so in desperation he asks her merely to recite the lyrics. When he listens to the playback he realizes that it is off the wall enough to be a hit and that overeducated critics would undoubtedly bury each other in reams of impenetrable prose declaring it to be Art. So he takes it to Virgin Records, who concurred, and before you can say "semiotics," it's a world-wide disco smash with great reviews—all at a production cost of about $35.

This is an especially inspiring tale since it's all true. Now we have a full album's worth of Mr. Cunningham's low-budget productions, and while I do think Virgin should be selling it at a reduced price (fair's fair), that in itself may be the cream of the jest. In any case, some of it is what you'd expect from a guy who's let his reviews go to

Sandy Linzer, who has done similar work with Dr. Buzzard's Original Savannah Band and who has written hit songs for numerous other pop artists.

 WHICH brings us to Teresa herself. Her voice lies somewhere between Donna Summer's (warmth and tone) and Stephanie Mills' (focus and projection), and that's a nice place to be. She never pushes; she has power enough without need for excess head tones. She's also very comfortable with lyrics, inspiring real belief both as Be Bop Betty and as the serious, sad young woman of I Got Love for You Ruby. Teresa's a new artist to be watched. —Edward Buxbaum

TERESA: Class Reunion. Teresa (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. South Side High School Class Reunion; Be Bop Betty; Like an Old Time Melody; Steal Him Away; Happiest Day of My Life; I Got Love for You Ruby; You Can Do Magic. DREAM DA 3502 $7.98, © D8 3502 $7.98, © DC 3502 $7.98.

Introducing Teresa
his head, and some of it is absolutely
inspired lunacy (the version of Summertime
Blues is the funniest thing I've heard since
Stan Freberg). This kid is either a genius or
the sharpest con man since P. T. Barnum
sold tickets to the Egress.

S.S.

DAVID GATES: Falling in Love Again. Da-
vig Gates (vocals); instrumental accompa-
niment. Can I Call You; Where Does the
Love Go; She Was So Young; Silky; and
six others. ELECTRA EF-251 $7.98, @ EF8-
251 $7.98, © ETC-251 $7.98. Performance:
From silly to sturdy Recording: Very good

David Gates, former lead singer of Bread, is
shown on his album cover tanned and grin-
ing and wearing a fur jacket that must be
the envy of all his friends. He has a healthy
respect for the words of his own songs—a
respect they only infrequently deserve.
They're mostly about love (what else?): love
of a strange lady "sitting down in the front
row" at one of his performances who "sets
[his] soul on fire"; love of some woman he
just can't get up the courage to call on
the phone; and so forth. None of these ballads
ever rises much above the commonplace,
and Gates' peculiarly nasal voice is of little
help. When he gets off That Subject,
though—as in the sturdily constructed bal-
dad 20th Century Man, with its bitter words
about the world's takers; Chingo, a paean of
gratitude to a hustling helper; and Starship
Ride, with its offer of an interstellar voyage
winding up at the singer's place, "a little
cavern in the desert out of Venus City"—
the material sounds less silly and more ab-
sorbing, and he somehow manages also to
do it more justice.
P.K.

ANDY GIBB: After Dark. Andy Gibb,
Olivia Newton-John (vocals); instrumental
accompaniment. Desire; After Dark; Warm
Ride: Dreamin' On; Someone I Ain't; and
five others. RSO RS-1-3069 $7.98, @ ST-
1-3069 $7.98, © CT-1-3069 $7.98.
Performance: Schlock art
Recording: Expensive

And here we have another Art Schlocko re-
lease, courtesy of the Stigwood Organiza-
(Continued on page 89)

"I DON'T know why you can't see that he is
only the imposter." Elvis Costello claims
(possibly about himself) in his latest, "Get
Happy!!" A bit later, after buring some
words under the instruments, he adds:
"When I said I was lying, I might have been
lying."

Could be. "Get Happy!!" does seem in-
tent on chasing you around in circles. Pro-
ducer Nick Lowe talks in the liner notes
about the "extra music time" you're get-
ting; the album does contain twenty pieces,
but it turns out that only four run longer
than 3/4 minutes. In all, there are 38/4 min-
utes of music, more than most pop albums
contain but not as much more and less
than you'll find on some. Then there's the
gamesmanship about which side is which:
what's listed as side one on the jacket is side
two on the label, and vice versa. The cover
has such a cheap, gaudy, ultra-simple, in-
stant-remainer-bin look to it that you
know it took some planning, and the music
has a similarly contrived offhandedness.

Superficially, some of it might be taken as
a passing nod to rhythm-and-blues. Ev-
erybody else with Establishment approval is
dabbling in r- & b, it seems, preparing a lis-
tener's mind. This one leaves the im-
pression that it was consistently rhythmic at
the expense of other elements, rhythmic to
the point of being choppy, and that a lot
of it was wrapped in Booker T-style organ
lines. And there is a cover of a Sam and
Dave tune, I Can't Stand Up for Falling
Down, in there (the only other one Costello
didn't write is I Stand Accused, and it goes
out to be deliberately unsophisticated (the
riot act, for example, is merely what his girl
friend is going to read to him). New Am-
sterdam presents a geographical problem
both figuratively and literally: it was the
former name of New York City, but, on the
other hand, the album was recorded in Hol-
land. The song's zingiest lines are the fairly
reined-in "I step on the brake to get out of
her clutches" and "I talk double-Dutch to a
real double duchess" (there is no double-
Dutch in Old Amsterdam, of course, as
anyone from P.S. 101 could tell you). In
some ways it is like a hickory nut; the shell
is hard to crack, and, once you get inside,
the kernel is smaller and more common-
place than you expected.

There is also less to the presentation than
there's made out to be. Costello's vocals do
contain emotionalism, almost an over-
wrought sound a couple of times, but not all
that much actual passion. This, I think, is
why I am reminded of Bowie. The main dif-
fERENCE in how Costello sounds, from one
song or vignette to another, seems to depend
on how loudly he's singing; when he quiets
down you hear more texture and nuance. I
think he sings with some abandon in Motel
Matches, which is head and shoulders
above everything else on the record, but
most of the other stuff seems to be acted—
which seems somehow to go with so many of
the pieces being taken at the same tempo.
Lowe's production is unfussy, but the sound
varies from clear to somewhat tinny around
the vocals. In keeping with the tail-chasing
nature of the project, I can't tell whether
that's from doctoring or neglect.

WHAT I think happened was that Costel-
lo and Lowe saw the "danger" of becoming
too smooth for the latest thing in Now, which
seems to want much wilder, woolier,
more primitive New Wave antics than Yester-
day would have dreamed, and they've
gone out of their way to roughen up their
New Wave in such a way that even the
dance floor, which means the fashions that
go with it have to be increasingly outrage-
os in order to top themselves. A would-
be point rider has to move fast to stay ahead
of the increasingly commercial herd that's
building up behind. Costello's energy and
verve are not exactly compromised in "Get
Happy!!", but they are too often subverted
to contrivances.

—Noel Coppage

ELVIS COSTELLO AND THE ATTRA-
CTIONS: Get Happy!! Elvis Costello and the
Attractions (vocals and instruments). I
Can't Stand Up for Falling Down: Black
and White World; Five Gears in Reverse; B
Movie; Motel Matches: Human Touch
Beatenn to the Punch: Temptation; I Stand
Accused; Riot Act: Love for Tender:
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Modern: King Horse: Possession: Man Called
Uncle: Clowntime Is Over; New Amster-
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Gordon Lightfoot takes a turn for the quiet in "Dream Street Rose," a subtle album that at first seems oddly impersonal coming from Lightfoot, a private man who, as private men sometimes do, tends to make his work intensely personal. And at first it seems regressive; the songs sound (superficially) like some he was writing ten years ago, and the instrumentation, including the return of acoustic guitars to prominence, sounds (superficially) like the pre-"Endless Wire" stuff. A casual first impression might be that it is some kind of retreat from the experimentation of that last album.

That impression would be wrong, for this is the musicianly side of Lightfoot stretching out to bring you a lot of little new things rather than a few big new things. In fact, it represents a refinement of the lyrical aspect of his lyrics. The words of Sea of Tranquility, which at first seem so ignorably casual, gradually ingratiates themselves because they have an easy rhythm reminiscent of one of our better poets: "There's rivers of rainbow and grey mountain trout/And little dark holes where the varmints hang out..." Sea is a fantasy, if, on the surface, a still-obtainable one—a place of otters and frogs and spotted groundhogs—but the song's language is both literal and symbolic at once. Make Way purports to be off-handedly autobiographical while it points out one of the ways (practice!) But it, too, is symbolic; it uses a bluesy tune to keep its optimism under control, and there's an under-the-surface tension in it. Mister Rock of Ages is a sort of prayer Lightfoot does now and then (Too Late for Praying is a prime example), and it is also talkative between the lines. It shows that Lightfoot has distanced himself more than the usual amount from this type of material. It is nonlinear the way the blues can be, a series of couplets that don't seem to need to be in any particular order.

That song and several others, including Hey You ("Hey you, upon this ship of fools/I think I found you bending your own rules"), also represent refinements in Lightfoot's way of lifting clichés out of everyday language (or, in the case of Whisper My Name, everyday tunes), mixing them up into his own special blend, and giving them another dimension of meaning. This, of course, is what the fine arts have always done with the folk arts. One of the ways Lightfoot shows that he's more artist than journalist is pretty much to ignore the transitory cliché (his language is never super whatchacall hip) in favor of the long-term one: "bless my soul." "sad repair." "time on your hands," even "beneath the halo'd moon"—stuff the old folks and the young folks can understand. Not to mention the future folks.

Of course it isn't the perfect album for all seasons. The kids can't very well bop to it, if that's what you want. And the inclusion of Leroy Van Dyke's The Auctioneer—which Lightfoot's been doing live, faster than this, for years—has a tacked-on quality. It's one of those songs best kept on the stage and out of albums. Apart from that, the album's biggest "failing" is that it can sound like background music if you want it to. It doesn't break down any barricades to get through to you. It has a way, though, of sneaking around them. By the time you realize you're really listening, you may be hooked.

—Noel Coppage

Gordon Lightfoot: Dream Street Rose. Gordon Lightfoot (vocals, guitar); Terry Clements (guitar); Rick Haynes (bass); Pee Wee Charles (pedal steel guitar); Barry Keane (drums); Michael Omar- tian (synthesizer, accordion, organ); other musicians. Sea of Tranquility; Ghosts of Cape Horn; Dream Street Rose; On the High Seas; Whisper My Name; If You Need Me; Hey You; Make Way for the Lady; Mister Rock of Ages; The Auctioneer. WARNER BROS. © HS 3426 $8.98, © W8 3426 $8.98, © W5 3426 $8.98.
tion. Andy Gibb, youngest of the Bros. Gibb (though never a Bee Gee), whose adolescent looks, voice, and appeal seem to be stretching into his early middle age, now appears in his third solo album. Almost solo, that is, because his decorative female counterpart, the even more ever-youthful Olivia Newton-John, appears with him on two tracks, Rest Your Love On Me and I Can't Help It. Somehow, in the midst of all the grandeur befitting their status as clean-cut pop millionaires, they still manage to come across as a cute, trendy couple who've just bought their first house in a development in Erewhon, New Jersey. After all, they are positioned in the market at the same place James Stewart and June Allyson were twenty years ago, aren't they? On his own, Andy contributes his pop single hit Desire, which in his boyish performance turns out to be more of a slight yen. The entire production is as grandly unbelievable as one of those thousand-dollar pinafores Metro used to whip up for Miss Allyson.

DARYL HALL: Sacred Songs. Daryl Hall (vocals, keyboards, synthesizer, mandar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Sacred Songs: Something in 4/4 Time; Babs and Babs; Urban Landscape; and six others. RCA AFL1-3573 $7.98, © AFS1-3573 $7.98, © AS1-3573 $7.98. Performance: Chaotic. Recording: Thick mix.

In 1971 John Lennon released a solo album with much primal screaming on such ditties as Mother and God. He was later quoted as saying that at times he thought it was his best work and at others he was embarrassed to listen to it. I don't know if Daryl Hall docs or will feel the same about "Sacred Songs," which he recorded in 1977 under the direction of producer Robert Fripp, but I find it an embarrassing album.

Listeners familiar with the r-e-b flavor of records by Hall and Oates may be startled by the material on this disc, all of which was evidently strongly influenced by Fripp. The songs are highly emotive without being explicit about what they are supposed to reveal. The arrangements are hyperactive—not to say manic—and Hall's singing, especially on such ghastly items as Without Tears, is simply haywire. I have the impression that Hall felt he was being direct and simple and, above all, sincere. But he seems overwhelmed by his emotions and thus out of control as a performer. Perhaps making the album was a cathartic experience that left him cleansed, but that's no reason to inflict it on listeners.

RICHIE HAVENS: Connections. Richie Havens (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. Every Night; You Send Me; Dreams; Here's a Song; Fire Down Below; and five others. Elektra 6E-242 $7.98, © ET8-242 $7.98. Performance: Loud. Recording: Good.

Richie Havens' latest is one of those overly extended, overly processed, overly calculated efforts that strain for importance and relevance but end up sounding empty. Havens is still an awesome guitarist, as he proves easily on Mama, We're Gonna Dance or any of the other tracks. Vocally he's always made more sound and fury than meaning, and nothing's changed in that department. Even with the run-of-the-mill songs here there's the gnawing distraction of Havens' pretentious tendency to inflate his own musical rhetoric, treating even the most up-front lyric as if it were crammed with cryptic symbols. Well, as far as I'm concerned it's the aural equivalent of Velvetea. With pimientos, maybe. P.R.

BILLY JOEL: Glass Houses (see Best of the Month, page 75).

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE LONELY BOYS. The Lonely Boys (vocals and instruments). Take It Easy; The Lover; Hot Summer; New Town; Lonely Boys; I'm Confused; It's Only Love; and five others. Harvest ST-12030 $7.98, © 8XT-12030 $7.98, © 4XT-12030 $7.98. Performance: Excellent. Recording: Very good.

With lower-class British accents so thick you could spread them on a crumpet, the Lonely Boys charge out of the grooves and into the realm of happy caprice. Basically, they are a pub band—funny, entertaining, and straightforward. They are a classic example.

(Continued on page 92)
Most of the original punk-rock bands are by now long gone, but the Ramones and the Clash, pioneer punk standard-bearers in America and England, respectively, are doing more than just hanging in there (knock wood). Both have enjoyed good press, and both have built followings just large enough to suggest to their record companies that they are each one album—or single—away from that all-important commercial breakthrough. And with the Ramones' “End of the Century” (Sire) and the Clash's “London Calling” (Epic), both have released what could well be that one album.

Yet the two bands have less in common than either their greatest fans or their greatest detractors care to admit. To give but one example of this difference: when the Ramones sing about war, as they often do on their new album, they are talking about something that happens in comic books; when the Clash addresses the same subject, they are talking about what they see as a historic inevitability. In England punk was basically a middle-class pop-art movement, often intentionally frivolous. What the Ramones needed was a way of presenting their *reductio ad absurdum* scenarios so more people would get the joke.

For this the Ramones turned to Phil Spector, the early-Sixties producer whose “wall of sound” technique was an antecedent of the group's own sonic blitz. “End of the Century” is a triumph for Spector as much as for the Ramones; for the first time since his production of solo albums by John Lennon and George Harrison a decade ago, he shows sympathy with a currently popular musical style rather than simply imposing his old form on a new artist.

Underneath that fuzzy guitar and blurry rhythm section, the Ramones were always a pop group at heart. Their allegiance was to the two-minute single, but their albums were always carefully, if not conspicuously, polished. Those brief guitar breaks (not even solos, really), the occasional harmony—these were not whims but calculated effects. But on “End of the Century” the Ramones are for the first time a hard-rock band with soloists, with accompanying musicians, and with overdubs of double-timed acoustic guitars and double-tracked lead vocals from Joey Ramone.

The Clash's new producer, Guy Stevens, mastery of the tongue-in-cheek and sincere. "Chinese Rock," a much older song, sounds more like the group's previous recordings.

If the second side of the album had only half the majesty of the first, I'd make no complaint. But there is a very steep falling off, beginning with a remake of the Spector/Ronettes classic Baby, I Love You. The cheesy string arrangement is an act of self-mutilation on Spector's part, and Joey's lead vocal is embarrassingly inept. Even so, there are encouraging signs. On this and several other tracks Joey at least attempts to strike some vocal pose other than irony, previously his only stock in trade. Besides Baby, I Love You, his only major failure on this side is in the scurrilous This Ain't Havana—which a little irony might, ironically, have saved from the implications of its blatant (though trendy) anti-Latin stance.

Side two also has a remake of the Ramones' movie theme song, Rock 'n Roll High School, which would be quite superficial except (influence tracers please note) that it makes more explicit the group's debt to the Beach Boys.

Like the Ramones, the Clash wastes no time in getting down to business on "London Calling." It is obvious right off, with the title song, how much the Clash's rhythm section has tightened up; bassist Paul Simonon and drummer Topper Headon pound this one home, the doomsday bass complementing Mick Jones' menacing guitar.

From the raw rage of their epochal first album to the fiery precision of this third one, the evolution of the Clash has been one of the most engrossing spectacles in recent pop music. All along the way there has been vacuously absorbing old styles and techniques and appropriating new ones. Although nothing on "London Calling" quite comes up to the three British singles (particularly Complete Control) the group released between their first two albums, it would take a real pickpocket to find much wrong with this two-disc set.

The Clash's new producer, Guy Stevens, makes a difference here, as do the accompanying horns and keyboards, but most of the progress can be attributed directly to the band. Jones has become one of our most powerful hard-rock guitarists, and lead singer Joe Strummer, though he can still shout with the best of them, is continually developing new shadings in his vocals (Jimmy Jazz here is his most effectively understated performance yet). As a songwriting team, the two are unwaveringly inventive, capable of pouring lots of detail into a song without slowing its pace.

The Clash draws on nearly everything that has come before them, but without really aping anything. Reggae, which they have always worked with so knowingly, is represented here by Rudie Can't Fail, Lover's Rock, and Revolution Rock. But, on both Jimmy Jazz and Wrong 'Em Boyo, they also dig back into the r- & b that helped shape reggae. Boyo is a classy piece of rock phrasemaking as good as the title song, Chinese Rock.
song; it gives a new twist to the Stagger Lee legend, a New Orleans musical staple, and supports it with horn charts drawn from Frankie Ford's Sea Cruise. Brand New Cadillac is updated rockabilly, and the music (though not the lyrics) of I'm Not Down sounds like it could have been written by Jimi Hendrix. On The Card Cheat the group takes a few tips from Phil Spector. Yet, despite all these easily traceable influences, the Clash still sounds like no one else.

Thematically the new songs are also more expansive, in this respect continuing the progress the Clash's second album made over their first. The lyrics are much less specifically British, more international, with almost as many references to nuclear meltdown as to war. They manage to draw morals (as in Wrong 'Em Boyo and Death or Glory) without being overly moralistic; they condemn drug consumption among the upper crust without ignoring their early fans knew all along: these groups were built to last. The continuing vitality of both bands proves more than the Clash, but they're still growing. Their original premises and have managed to add performance -robbing residual head demagnetizer whistle as it eliminates head wear! Proper Care! Factory Fresh end of the Century. You can have your turntable restored by mid '80s! Enlarge Sire SRK 6077 $7.98, © MBS 6077 $8.98, © MBS 6077 $7.98.

THE CLASH: London Calling. The Clash (vocals and instrumental); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. London Calling; Brand New Cadillac; Jimmy Jazz; Hateful; Rudie Can't Fail; Spanish Bombs; The Right Profile; Lost in the Supermarket; Clamdown; The Guns of Brixton; Wrong 'Em Boyo; Death or Glory; Koka Kola; The Card Cheat; Lover's Rock; Four Horsemen; I'm Not Down; Revolution Rock; Train in Vain. Epic E2 36238 two discs $9.98, © E2A 36238 $9.98, © E2T 36238 $9.98.
John Denver's "Autograph"

John Denver may be a celebrity and a pop favorite of yours of several years' standing, but until his latest album—"Autograph" on RCA—I fear I kept my opinion of him stacked rather carelessly in the limbo of my mental trivia bank. It was not that I disliked him, only that I had very little opinion about him at all. And if I did think of him, it certainly wasn't while going around (for days) humming Sweet Surrender or reveling in his Christmas album with the Muppets. No, he was more likely to come to my mind at stray, odd times, such as while I watched TV's dear old Aunt Cora peddle her good-to-the-last-drop coffee with the whole album. Now, if he would only refrain from flashing that ear-to-ear bone and Crosses, the faintly formal, Elizabethan-reel-like quality that's always present in authentic bluegrass fades completely, to be replaced by an airily taut sound that's as bracing as the cold air in the Arctic regions. Wrangell Mountain Song is about. Denver and Okun have drawn some interesting developments out of a standard American form, and I wonder where else interesting developments out of a standard American form, and I wonder where else they, and others, will take it.

Denver's voice here is still full of the kind of just plain happiness and high spirits that made him a star in the dour Seventies, and that has a lot to do with why I am impressed with the whole album. Now, if he would only refrain from flashing that ear-to-ear smile quite so much (luckily, the album cover shows him with his mouth closed) every time he appears on TV (where he seems to be advertising some as yet unintroduced brand of miracle toothpaste), I think I could find it within myself to become a fan. On second thought, maybe I always was and didn't know it. —Peter Reilly

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MADNESS: One Step Beyond. Madness (vocals and instrumentals). One Step Beyond: My Girl; Night Boat to Cairo; Believe Me; Land of Hope and Glory; The Prince; Tarzan's Nuts; and eight others. Sire SRK 6085 $7.98, © M8 6085 $7.98, © M5 6085 $7.98.

Performance: Delightful
Recording: Good

Madness plays the Beatles to the Specials' Rolling Stones in the ongoing British ska revival. Which is to say that, rather than dealing in social issues and funk, they play exuberant, sometimes deliberately silly songs with terrific musicianship and flair. Here, a cartoon band, really (visions of Heckle and Jeckle danced in my head by the middle of side two), and, though I have no idea how accurately they've caught the essence of the genre, they sound wonderfully right to me. Questions of purism aside, if you're looking for something unlike anything else you've probably been hearing lately (in New York City, if you actually play this stuff on the radio all the time), you should grab this album immediately. S.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MAMMATAPEE. Mammatapee (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. Sweet Poison; Girl, I Wanna Get Right Up Next to You; Something on Your Mind; Don't Bite the Hand (That Feeds You); Rock Across the Nation; Caught Up in the Race; and four others. WARNER BROS./WHITFIELD WHK 3171 $7.98, © M8 3171 $7.98.

Performance: Monstrously good
Recording: Good

Never having heard of a mammatapee, I was led by the cover illustration of this album to believe it must be one of Godzilla's more violent winged cousins, one of those terrifying specimens that creep forth from television sets in the wee hours after the sitcoms are safely tucked away. However, a check of the album's contents provided reassuring evidence that Mammatapee is an eight-legged creature, one part female and three parts male, that can sing up a storm of deliciously funky music, especially when it is put through its paces by veteran producer Norman Whitfield. Evidently, it was nur-

(Continued on page 94)
Inside, the redesigned seats offer more side support during hard cornering. Of course, the features that have long made the Celica GT such a good value (like a 5-speed overdrive transmission, AM/FM stereo radio and full instrumentation) are still standard.

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Lullaby; Love This Time; The Greatest Love of All; Golden Pony; Vagabond; and five others. COLUMBIA JC 36335 $7.98, © JCA 36335 $7.98, © JCT 36335 $7.98.

Performance: Distractingly
Recording: Tasteful

Not even her airless, whiplash performances, fraught, simply fraught, with sophisticated and worldly emotional pain, can convince me that Jane Olivor is much more than a clever little girl backing around in Ma's ankle-strap shoes doing her Faye Dunaway imitation. Nor does her habit of evicerating every semicolon in a lyric to drag out its meaning persuade me that she's an actress of much depth. Time and again here, as Olivor struck one Delartian vocal pose after another (her big number is Distractingly, very Distractingly), I got the impression that she was sashaying in front of a mental image of herself as the Greatest Star in the World. Even a couple of bands of that sort of fluff from a Streisand or a Parton is enough already. In Olivor's case it is also assuming something that isn't true. Her best effort is on Manchild Lullabye, the first track, after which it's all fairly repetitious. The production, by a variety of loving hands, is so “tasteful” that a Vivaldi concerto might sound like rude noise in comparison.

P.R.

JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ: Through My Eyes. Johnny Rodriguez (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. What'll I Tell Virginia; One Sided Love Affair; One Affair Later; Where Did It Go; I'll Go Back to Her; and five others. Epic JE 36274 $7.98, © JEA 36274 $7.98, © JET 36274 $7.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

This is probably the most honest and straightforward packaging of Johnny Rodriguez to date, and it's much more satisfying than most of his albums. Billy Sherrill's production is not without tricks of the trade and fancy little spectacles, yet it bends from song to song and always features Rodriguez-or, where it bends to sound like Waylon Jennings' band (in I'll Go Back to Her, written by Waylon), Rodriguez and Jennings singing harmony. Rodriguez has been teetering for some time on the brink of going either way in country music. A pro-

3M STEREO REVIEW
tégé of Tom T. Hall, he seems to have the stuff to join Hall and Waylon and Willie and Mickey Newbury and a few others in the faction worth saving, but most of his previous recordings have cast him in the Conway Twitty anything-for-a-hit mold, all gimmick songs and Nashville Sound. Here the turn is definitely toward songs worth doing and, a little less definitely, toward keeping production small enough for its britches, and in this environment Rodriguez shows us a good, honest baritone and some little feeling for lyrics. He should do it again, only more so.

N.C.

SUE SAAD AND THE NEXT. Sue Saad and the Next (vocals and instrumentals). Gimme Love/Gimme Pain; It's Gotcha; Prisoner; Young Girl; I Me Me; and five others. PLANET P-4 $7.98, © PT-4 $7.98, © PC-4 $7.98.

Performance: Plastic
Recording: Excellent

There are, unfortunately, going to be a lot of albums like this one in the near future, most of them (but hardly all) from Planet Records, which, as you may know, is the creation of Richard Perry, heretofore responsible for the world's most opulent, sterile overproductions (for the likes of Leo Sayer, Carly Simon, and others) but now a Born Again Punk Rocker. Perry's conception of punk rock, however, amounts to getting a bunch of slick session players to affect leather jackets and sneers, then to record lightweight pop songs that sound more like Jay and the Americans than the Sex Pistols. In the case of Sue Saad and Company, the results are not entirely unattractive: in another life, Ms. Saad would have been Lesley Gore (I mean that as a compliment), and the band makes reasonably attractive noises. But the whole thing is so L.A. Plastic, so calculated about being streetwise, that these minor virtues are pretty much irrelevant.

S.S.

SHOOTING STAR. Shooting Star (vocals and instrumentals). You Got What I Need; Don't Stop Now; Higher; Just Friends; Bring It On; Tonight; and four others. VIRGIN VA 13133 $7.98, © TP 13133 $7.98, © CS 13133 $7.98.

Performance: Tedious
Recording: Fine

Virgin has a (deserved) reputation for being one of the more esoteric labels, but since the record biz does not live by esoterica alone, it was only a matter of time until even they had to sign somebody really commercial. Shooting Star, their first American acquisition, is that somebody—in fact, six somebodies. They're a Midwest stadium band with techno-rock overtones in the grand tradition of Foreigner and Kansas. To their credit, Shooting Star does not wallow in Foreigner's repulsive misogyny, and they're nowhere near as cosmic or flaky as Kansas. But, by the same token, they're working a genre that's about as played out as one can get, and I dearly wish bands like this would just go away for good. Of course, if I were sixteen I'd probably love them. Hmm...

S.S.

(Continued overleaf)
Rachel Sweet is an eighteen-year-old mighty mite from Akron, Ohio, who hit it big in London but has now returned home to favor us with a series of road tours. Her first album (“Fool Around,” Stiff/Columbia JC 36101), released last year, was captivating and multidirectional. Much of it was gritty rock, but it also dealt easily with Top-40 pop, country, and a peculiar musical-lyric form I shall call “nymphet gothic”—a bizarre, eerie mix of cabaret-style world-weariness and pre-adolescent romanticism. Sweet’s producer and principal songwriter for that album was Liam Sternberg, and repeated hearings gave me the impression that there might have been a Svengali/Trilby relationship between him and Sweet.

But Rachel Sweet’s new album, “Protect the Innocent,” shows that she is very much her own woman. The production is now by the Innocent,” shows that she is very much her own woman. The production is now by

almost.

Though I prefer her as a balladeer, Sweet is also an exceptional belter, as most of the album’s contemporary songs (such as Jeal-

ous, I’ve Got a Reason, and Foul Play) demonstrate. And she can also work over older material and make it her own, as she does with New Rose (written and first recorded by the Damned), Baby, Let’s Play House (cut by Elvis Presley at his 1954 Sun dates), and New Age (a Lou Reed song from the Velvet Underground days).

In fact, the only complaint I have about “Protect the Innocent” is that the back-up musicians—all British—are not identified. This is a serious error, since they are absolutely first-rate and their contribution to the album’s success is a major one. But Rachel, you’re remarkable. Stay as Sweet as you are.

—Joel Vance

RACHEL SWEET: Protect the Innocent.

Marc Tanner Band (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. Recordings: Very good. Performance: Good and very good.

This album demonstrates that Marc Tanner and his band are hard-working and conscientious, but they don’t always connect emotionally. Much of the material, despite its studied craftsmanship, is still on the apprentice level: the ideas are there, and the

THE SINGERS UNLIMITED: Just in Time.

The Singers Unlimited (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Recordings: Good. Performance: Good and very good.

The quartet of vocalists whose disembodied faces shine forth from the cover of this album have a way of taking such perfectly good, time-honored ballads as Comden and Green’s Just in Time and, with the help of arranger Gene Puerling, turning them into pure mush. A waltzing Honeysuckle Rose, a Someone to Watch over Me you couldn’t trust to stay awake that long, a My Foolish Heart rather more foolish than most, and a Zip-a-Dee Doo-Dah entirely devoid of the high spirits it exuded in the Disney movie are also among the casualties.

P.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

STONE CITY BAND: In ‘n’ Out.

Stone City Band (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. Recordings: Good. Performance: Good and very good.

Rick James, the latest Wunderkind to burst from the Motown stable, is said to produce a kind of music called “punk funk” (or funk punk?). To me it sounds like nothing more than disco-flavored popular soul with a few extra references to drugs and freaking-out in the lyrics. And the members of the James gang look more like peacocks than punks. Oh, well, it’s the music that really counts.

This album features James’ back-up group, the Stone City Band, in a set that is at least halfway exciting. The first side, all glossily professional disco-derived fare, does not generate much heat in spite of the steady pulse. But on the second side, the one that accounts for the “Special Merit” rating, all the selections are underscored with a Los Angeles Latin flavor that gives the music real buoyancy and brightness. The use of a minor key in the title track, In ‘n’ Out, is pulled off with exceptional cleverness, and the melody is hauntingly lovely.

At times the music is reminiscent of War’s earlier efforts. The entire side is such a delight that I can forgive Rick James, as producer and arranger, for the utter bombast of the opening “overture.”

P.G.

MARC TANNER BAND: Temptation.

Marc Tanner Band (vocals and instrumentals); Hold Your Head Up; Hot and Cold; And You Do; Lonely Street; Temptation; and four others. Recordings: Good. Performance: Good and very good.

This album demonstrates that Marc Tanner and his band are hard-working and conscientious, but they don’t always connect emotionally. Much of the material, despite its studied craftsmanship, is still on the apprentice level: the ideas are there, and the

(Continued on page 98)
No compromise
Winston Lights didn't compromise on great taste to get low tar. Why should I?

Winston Lights taste good like a light cigarette should.

words come through, but something lacking, some indefinable x factor, prevents it from clicking.

There is one notable exception, however: Hot and Cold does indeed click in every way—melody, hook, arrangement, sentiment. Weisberg should have been the single from the album, but for reasons unknown the single release is a rehash of Rod Argent's Hold Your Head Up, a literal remake of the original that neither betters nor even equals it. Tanner needs another two or three albums to break through, and I hope his label will sustain him because I have the feeling the results will be worth the wait. J.V.

TIM WEISBERG: Tip of the Weisberg. Tim Weisberg (flute); David Minor (bass); Rick Jaeger (drums); Bobby Wright (keyboards); Todd Robinson (guitar). Pork Chops; La Paz; Intimidation; Do Dah; and four others. NAUTILUS O NR7 $16.50.

Performance: Good
Recording: Gtious

Here you have a live-mixed, digitally mastered rock instrumental album. Surely a first. Unfortunately, rock instrumental music is basically boring. Oh. I liked those in Tommy, but only because I knew that in a minute we'd get back to our story. That these rock is attested to by their simple construction and underscored by emphasis and quotes in the liner notes to the effect that Tim Weisberg considers himself a rock musician and not a jazz musician. As far as really getting up and rocking goes, they don't do that. They'd probably be more boring if they did. But I could see some of the pieces working in radio programming—and of course the engineering is simply glorious, achieving an extraordinary spaciousness and clarity. Pop flutists tend to be breathy, undisciplined, and underaccomplished and probably could be not only a jazz musician but a classical musician if he wanted to. That smoothness translates here as coolness, though, which just enhances you one step closer to muttering about elevator music with a beat. N.C.

STEPHANIE WINSLOW: Crying. Stephanie Winslow (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Oh Mister; Don't Go; I Can't Remember; I've Been a Fool; Say You Love Me; and five others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3406 $7.98, © M8 3406 $7.98, © M5 3406 $7.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

C & W ham seems to be Stephanie Winslow's staple dish, to judge by the five songs here that she wrote. Her performance style, however, has a heavy pop-ballad glaze that gets her into Crystal Gayle territory. She's good enough, in a fancied-up way, in such things as the title song and her own Let This Child Sleep Tonight, but the overall flavor is strictly home cookin'. P.R.

COLLECTION


Performance: From duds to gems
Recording: Variable

This grab-bag of postwar blues contains different styles and accompaniments from the primitive to the fairly fancy. All the recordings were quickie sessions for cash on the line, and the attentive reader of record labels may be amused to see that producer Fred Mendelsohn is credited with writing every one of the tunes. Small blues labels of the 1940s and 1950s customarily registered copyrights in the names of their staff since blues artists didn't inquire about, didn't know about, or were shortsighted about publishing rights and royalties.

There are gems, duds, and sturdy performances in this collection. Sunnysland Slim and John Lee Hooker are in the sturdy-performances category—always good for a listen. We will pass by the duds to hurry on to the gems. The first is by Blind Willie McTell, using the nom du disque of "Pig n' Whistle Red," on A to Z Blues, a catalog of the bodily injuries a cheating girl friend is going to receive. McTell recorded for Victor and its cut-price subsidiary Bluebird in the 1920s and 1930s; A to Z Blues, made at least twenty years later for Savoy, shows he had lost none of his winning vocal and twelve-string guitar style.

The other standout is Kid Man Blues by Memphis Minnie, who not only shouts, but guffaws, squalls, and mutters while her back-up combo takes an instrumental passage. There is a whopping technical flaw in the recording—the sound suddenly dims and then comes up again—but it only adds to the gloriously ramshackle atmosphere. Minnie's singing and the barrelhouse accompaniment are regally sleazy. J.V.

AVA CHERRY: Rippe! Ava Cherry (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Love Is Good News; Single Woman, Married Man; Gimme Your Lovin'; and four others. RSO RS-1-3072 $7.98, © 8T-1-3072 $7.98, © CT-1-3072 $7.98.

Performance: Sincere
Recording: Very good

A sincere debut album by a female pop vocalist may not sound like big news, but it is. Ava Cherry sings her way through seven songs in this album, five of them in the contemporary dance-music mold and two ballads, Curtis Mayfield's Love Is Good News and the rather obvious Single Woman, Married Man. She has a rich, strong, chesty voice that is easy to listen to, and she avoids that gospel-based freewheeling current crop of vocal debutantes favors. Her recording has also been intelligently engineered; we can hear just what she sounds like even on the heavier, dancer tracks, such as Gimme Your Lovin', where she introduces a welcome gusiness.

Where There's Smoke There's Fire ("taking me higher, higher, higher"), a good dance production supported with non-stop bongos and some of the more obvious disco tricks, shows some signs of life, but in general the material here isn't good enough to lift all of the vocalist's sincerity to special heights. Still, in these days of overproduced and undertalented performers, a decent album like this does count for something. What's yet lacking is a sure instinct for the music, the kind of merging of voice and style that creates a personality. Ava Cherry is promising, but "Rippe!!" she's not. E.B.

CRISTINA. Cristina Monet (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Jungle Love; Mama Mia; Blame It on Disco; and three others. ZE ZEA 3300 $7.98.

Performance: Maybe a joke
Recording: Good

Who is Cristina Monet and what does she want? She is clearly no singer. Her water-thin voice wobbles and wobbles its way through this record, uncertain in pitch and deficient in power. If someone had told me this was Jacqueline Onasis' debut album, I would have believed it. It's that bad. But what's going on behind Cristina—and it's a lot—is to the credit of some very talented people. August Darnell, who wrote all but one song and produced the album, and Andy Hernandez, who arranged and orchestrated it, were both associated with Dr. Buzzard's Savannah Dance Band in the gold days. The contributions here vary from the so-so Jungle Love to the very exciting fast-tempo Don't Be Greedy, (Continued on page 100)
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1515 South Manchester Avenue, Anaheim, California 92803
On a March evening back in 1943, a musical called *Away We Go!* opened in New Haven. It was based on an earlier (1931) play by Lynn Riggs called *Green Grow the Lilacs*, the music was by Richard Rodgers, and the book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. It dealt with the efforts of a wholesome cowboy named Curly to marry a girl named Laurey way out West in Indian territory around 1900.

By the time *Away We Go!* got to Boston, the title had been changed to *Oklahoma!* to which an exclamation point was added when the show reached the St. James Theatre in New York. The choreographer, Agnes de Mille, reported later that she was unable even to give away the ten tickets she had bought for the opening on March 31. But that night, and in years to come in theaters all over the world, *Oklahoma!* was received with rapturous acclaim. Miss De Mille made a victorious return to Broadway by re-creating her original choreography for the show's recent revival, and it's running at the Palace as you read this.

*Oklahoma!* was a landmark in a number of ways. It was the first show in which Rodgers collaborated with Hammerstein. It was the first musical (unless you count the 1927*Show Boat*) in which all the music and lyrics were written by the same man. It was the first virtually complete original cast recording of a musical show was available on discs. An LP transfer of that recording—unfortunately in electronically simulated stereo—is still available on the RCA label. A high-spirited affair it is, too, with such stars as Alfred Drake, Celeste Holm, Howard da Silva, and Lee Dixon singing most of the songs under the energetic direction of Jay Blackton, the original conductor. The sound is flat, and the rechanneling has introduced a distressing echo, but the performances tingle with life.

The news, however, is that the Broadway revival prompted RCA to record a complete version of the show with the new cast, and the results are exhilarating. The whole thing flows and pulsates from start to finish. The singers may not be household names, but they're all expert performers. Laurence Guittard (Curly) and Christine Andreas (Laurey) have full-bodied, fittingly bucolic voices and make all the most of their famous duet, *People Will Say We're in Love*, as well as Curly's opener, *Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin*, and Laurey's *Many a New Day and Out of My Dreams*. The *Surrey with the Fringe on Top* goes clip-clopping along as charmingly as ever, and Harry Groener as Will Parker is convincingly wide-eyed when he returns to the farm and expatiates on the wonders of *Kansas City*.

Martin Vinodich is in glorious form as Jud, the rejected suitor, in his almost operatic solo (popular *Lonely Room*), and Christine Ebersole is altogether lovable as Ado Annie, the girl who *Cain't Say No*.

Now, back in 1964 Columbia released a recording of *Oklahoma!* with a cast that was, if not "original," quite magnificent, including John Raitt as Curly, Florence Henderson as Laurey, Irene Carroll as the buttermilking Aunt Eller, folk singer Jack Elliott as Will Parker, Phyllis Newman as Ado Annie, and Ara Berberian as Jud. It's still in the catalog (OS 2610), and both on a purely musical level and in terms of recorded sound—especially considering its age—it is even more satisfactory than the new RCA release. (Philip J. Lang's orchestrations in particular lend color and tang to the production.) Anyone who has that disc could it miss?

On the *Black Hole* side, nothing is developed enough to give us time to work into the spirit of the dance; everything ends in that same distressing fade. Worse, only the first of the four themes is actually from John Barry's film score. That main theme is a bit on the martial side, though arranger Harold Wheeler sees to it that there are enough separate levels to work up some interest. But it's downhill from there. *Clearmotion* and *Space Sentry* are toneless exercises, arranged according to the Meco formula for blaring horns, sweeping strings, and synthesized guitar. The final theme, *Meteorite*, is given such emphasis that Forties horns that it comes out sounding like Duke Ellington playing disco. I don't know if this was intentional, but it is fun.

**OKLAHOMA!** *(Richard Rodgers—Oscar Hammerstein II)*. Broadway-cast recording. Laurence Guittard, Christine Andreas, Mary Wickes, others (vocals); chorus and orchestra, Jay Blackton cond. RCA CBL1-3572 $8.98; © CBK1-3572 $8.98.

which cleverly mixes a very simple tune with syncopated rhythms right out of Dr. Buzzard's jazzy top drawer. "A" for effort also for *Temporarily Yours* with its winning combination of a hot dance beat and a dreamy melody. But it doesn't matter how good the support is when center stage is held by an amateur vocalist.

E.B.

**MECO:** *Music from "Star Trek" and "The Black Hole".* Various instrumentalists. *Clearmotion; Meteorites; Space Sentry; Star Trek Medley*; and three others. *Casa Blanca* NBLP 7196 $7.98, © NBL8 7196 $7.98, © NBL5 7196 $7.98.

**Performance:** Bombastic but fun

The news, however, is that the Broadway revival prompted RCA to record a complete version of the show with the new cast, and the results are exhilarating. The whole territory around 1900.

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*Oklahoma!* was a landmark in a number of ways. It was the first show in which Rodgers collaborated with Hammerstein. It was the first musical (unless you count the 1927*Show Boat*) in which plot, lyrics, music, and dances appropriate to the locale were truly integrated with each other (some *sic, and dances appropriate to the locale*). It was the first show in which the title had been changed to *Oklahoma*, to *string*—especially considering its age—it is even more satisfactory than the new RCA release. (Philip J. Lang's orchestrations in particular lend color and tang to the production.) Anyone who has that disc could it miss?

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**Performance:** Bombastic but fun

This is a strange recording to be coming from a man who has made a career of creating disco versions of film soundtracks. Every band in this Meco album just trails off at the end, which is a real disservice to dancers. Despite the excitement potential, the net result is a series of downers.

The *Love Theme* from *Star Trek* opens with a spaced-out intro that demonstrates the superb engineering care that has gone into the recording, and until its unfortunate fadeout it works well enough. And the familiar *Theme from "Star Trek"*, which comes out as a virtually straight reading of the TV soundtrack with lots of bass added, captures the childlike innocence of the whole Trekkie phenomenon. How could it miss?

On the *Black Hole* side, nothing is developed enough to give us time to work into the spirit of the dance; everything ends in that same distressing fade. Worse, only the first of the four themes is actually from John Barry's film score. That main theme is a bit on the martial side, though arranger Harold Wheeler sees to it that there are enough separate levels to work up some interest. But it's downhill from there. *Clearmotion* and *Space Sentry* are toneless exercises, arranged according to the Meco formula for blaring horns, sweeping strings, and synthesized guitar. The final theme, *Meteorite*, is given such emphasis that it comes out sounding like Duke Ellington playing disco. I don't know if this was intentional, but it is fun.

**TWO TONS O' FUN, Two Tons o' Fun (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Do You Wanna Boogie, Hunh?: Just Us; Got the Feeling: Gone Away; and three others.** *Fantasy* F-9584 $7.98.

**Performance:** Bigger than life

Recording: Good

If you're a fan of Sylvester, the androgynous darling of the discos, then you already know about *Two Tons o' Fun*, the pair of generously endowed former gospel singers, Martha Wash and Izora Armstead, who not only back him up quite effectively but also supply much of the trumpet and body in his performances. Both of them have big, full voices that pack as much power as their physical proportions would lead one to expect. They certainly have come a long way from the choir stall.

Most of the material on this debut album is run-of-the-mill disco, or perhaps a little better than average, delivered with the nec-
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*Manufacturer’s suggested retail price as of Jan., 1980.
FOLK

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
MARY O’HARA: Mary O’Hara’s Ireland.
Mary O’Hara (vocals, Celtic harp). An
Cranh Ubbhall; She Lived Beside the Anner;
Cicláin a Chuairchín; Kitty of Coleraine;
Róisín Dubh; Down by the Sally Gardens;
and twelve others.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
MARY O’HARA: Mary O’Hara’s Ireland.
Mary O’Hara (vocals, Celtic harp). An
Cranh Ubbhall; She Lived Beside the Anner;
Cicláin a Chuairchín; Kitty of Coleraine;
Róisín Dubh; Down by the Sally Gardens;
and twelve others.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
JESS WALTERS: Sings Classic Folk Songs.
Jess Walters (vocals, guitar); Hector Garcia,
Drew Thomason (guitars). Go Down Moses;
Song of the Volga Boatmen; Wayfar-

STRANGER; Scarborough Fair; Hush Little

Bible; and eight others. MUSICAL HERIT-

AGE SOCIETY MHIS 4107 $5.95 (plus $1.25
postage and handling charge from Musical
Heritage Society, 14 Park Road, Tinton
Falls, N.J. 07724).

Performance: Classy
Recording: Very good

Jess Walters was born in Brooklyn in 1908,
but he got over his Brooklyn accent and
made his way onward and upward as a mu-
sical performer until he became a leading
baritone with the Royal Opera. Covent Gar-

ON 1947 until 1960, spent the next five years

singing with the Netherlands Opera, and
then went on to teach voice at the Univer-
sity of Texas. In this recording, devoted
entirely to spirituals and traditional folk-
songs. Mr. Walters shows the value of a trained
voice in dealing with even the rawest musi-
cal materials. At the same time, he has a
strong feeling for the idiom of a song, shift-
ing styles to accommodate every sort of
specimen from a Cuban mountain dance to
Hava Nagilah, and never patronizing any-
thing, even Shortnin’ Bread, out of
which he manages to shape an entire mini-
drama. The voice is aging and not always
ture, but the manner is exemplary.

(Continued overleaf)
JoAnne Brackeen

FEMALE instrumentalists, especially pianists, have actively contributed to jazz since it first took on a recognizable form, but it was not until the late Seventies—when the feminist movement made us take a retrospective look at sexism and other forms of discrimination—that the public at large discovered the extent of that contribution. JoAnne Brackeen stands out in the long line of distinguished women pianist/composers, which today includes Lovie Austin, Lil Armstrong, Mary Lou Williams, Marian McPartland, and Toshiko Akiyoshi. No newcomer to jazz, Brackeen was born in Ventura, California, in 1938. The largely self-taught pianist entered the professional arena on the West Coast (playing with Dexter Gordon, Teddy Edwards, and other tough tenors) and moved to New York in 1965. She began to attract national attention five years later when she joined Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers, and her reputation grew wider still in the mid Seventies when she was a regular member of Stan Getz’s group.

Brackeen has been on her own for the past three years or so, performing in clubs (mostly in the New York area), making records of her own compositions (a side of her talent that definitely bears watching), and generally gaining the growing respect of musicians and critics as her following increases. While her recordings have for the most part appeared on small labels, fellow pianist Bob James recently gave Brackeen a boost by recording her for his Columbia-label (mostly in the New York area), making records of her own compositions (a side of her talent that definitely bears watching), and generally gaining the growing respect of musicians and critics as her following increases. While her recordings have for the most part appeared on small labels, fellow pianist Bob James recently gave Brackeen a boost by recording her for his Columbia-

—Continued on page 106

ART BLAKEY AND THE JAZZ MESSNGERS: Reflections in Blue. Art Blakey (drums); Valerie Ponomarev (trumpet); Robert Watson (alto saxophone); David Schnitter (tenor saxophone); Dennis Irwin (bass); James Williams (piano). E.T.A.; Mishima; Ellington Medley; My Foolish Heart; and four others. TIMELESS/MUSE T1 317 $7.98.

Performance: Fresh
Recording: Deadened

Decades come and decades go, but Art Blakey continues to run that hornet of new talent called the Jazz Messengers. This latest Blakey release was recorded in Holland toward the end of 1978, with the same personnel as “In This Corner,” the excellent set released by Concord Jazz last year. Unlike that set—a live recording from a San Francisco club—this one was made in a studio, but not, I’m afraid, a first-class one; the sound lacks the resiliency of a studio designed with regard for acoustics. That and the lack of a live audience to respond to might account for the disparity between the Concord Jazz release and this one. Still, this is not an album to be totally dismissed. There are fine moments by tenor saxophonist David Schnitter, alto man Robert Watson, and pianist James Williams—all three of whom also contribute compositions—and leader Blakey still propels his ensembles with remarkable drive and precision. I recommend this album, but only if you already have the group’s Concord Jazz disc. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ELLA FITZGERALD: The Duke Ellington Songbook. Ella Fitzgerald (vocals); the Duke Ellington Orchestra. Caravan; Day Dream; Perdido; I Got It Bad and That Ain’t Good; and fifteen others. VERVE VE-2-2535 two discs $8.98. @ CT-2-2535 $8.98.

Performance: None better
Recording: Adequate

This is a reissue of a set of truly classic 1957 performances by Ella Fitzgerald of songs by Duke Ellington. Fitzgerald was in her finest flower vocally at the time, and her collaboration with the Duke on some of his most famous works produced a series of tracks that may stand as her most glowing testament to her own talent. There was plenty of room for critical nit-picking about similar Fitzgerald albums—“The Cole Porter Songbook,” “The Rodgers and Hart Songbook,” etc.—because if she has one flaw it is probably that she doesn’t handle intricate lyrics very well. But with the easy, colloquial words that Ellington’s writers provided for his music she rides to the kind of
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triumphs few singers are lucky enough to achieve on records. There's one magic moment after another as she and the Ellington Orchestra make music together with the high, dazzling style and abandon that made them unique. No one is better than Ella Fitzgerald in this repertoire, not even twenty-three years later.

P.R.

RODNEY FRANKLIN: You'll Never Know (see Best of the Month, page 80)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE GREAT JAZZ TRIO: Milestones. Hank Jones (piano); Ron Carter (bass); Tony Williams (drums). Lush Life; Hormone; I Remember Clifford; Mr. Biko; and three others. INNER CITY IC 6030 $7.98.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Good

This two-year-old session is the sixth Inner City release by the Great Jazz Trio, a group that has done much to bring the talent of pianist Hank Jones to the attention of a new generation of jazz writers and fans. After all, when a musician is in a position to join forces, on an equal footing, with such formidable colleagues as Ron Carter and Tony Williams, his talent is obviously not to be taken lightly. Or so, one imagines, the thinking goes. This is not to suggest in any way that Hank Jones—or, for that matter, this trio—does not have a long-term contract with an American label. C.A.

CHUCK MANGIONE: Fun and Games. Chuck Mangione (flugelhorn, electric and acoustic pianos, vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Give It All You Got; You're the Best There Is; Piña Colada; and three others. A & M SP 3715 $8.98, © ST 3715 $8.98, © CS 3715 $8.98.

Performance: Crisp and funky
Recording: Excellent

This lively new album shows that Chuck Mangione and his funky flugelhorn have obviously been busy lately doing more than just Memorex commercials. The high point on this occasion. But it's hard not to respond with a melting heart to the other long jazzy number with a Latin flavor that really builds to a fevered climax. The low edge that is the Mangione hallmark.

Like the trio's previous releases—two of which featured the addition of a saxophonist (Sadao Watanabe and Jackie McLean, respectively)—"Milestones" was originally made by and for the Japanese East Wind label, and that points up another deplorable fact: in a sense, we are having to import our own music. You will find that even more ludicrous after hearing the outstanding performances in "Milestones." It will make you wonder why Hank Jones—or, for that matter, this trio—does not have a long-term contract with an American label. C.A.

Age could not wither nor custom stale the incredible and unique sound Joe Venuti could draw from his fiddle. Just listen to Venuti's performance of Fascinating Rhythm or Honeysuckle Rose or Undecided, and you'll hear wonderful music making, not just unique sounds. When Venuti goes too far from his Twenties roots in attempting to accommodate newer, flossier material, as he does in Alex North's Theme from Spartacus and the Jobim-Bonfa Samba de Orpheus, he makes some quirky performing choices, sounding like a speeded-up Palm Court reject in the former and like a slightly bedizened Nashville sideman, a long way from home, in the latter. But practically everything else here bears the indelible stamp of a pop master.

The reason: superb drivers. Our celebrated 1" air-spring tweeter, a sophisticated crossover and an extraordinary 4.5" bass woofers.

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SRT14-A record contents

Transient response, recorded signal velocity, anti-skating compensation, IM distortion, and a host of other performance characteristics.

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The usefulness of the SRT14-A is not confined to the nontechnical listener. Included on the record are a series of tests that call for the use of sophisticated measuring instruments, such as oscilloscopes, chart recorders, and distortion analyzers. These tests permit the advanced audiophile and professionals to make precise measurements of transient response, recorded signal velocity, anti-skating compensation, IM distortion, and a host of other performance characteristics.

SRT14-A record contents

CARTRIDGE TRACKING, HIGH FREQUENCY. Consists of a two-tone signal (16,000 and 16,300 Hz) that repeatedly swoops to a high level and returns to a fixed low level. The level and quality of the audible 300-Hz "difference tone" indicates pick-up quality and mistracking.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE, 20 kHz to 25 Hz. Uses one-third octave bands of pink noise, centered on twenty-nine frequencies over the audio spectrum, compared with reference tones at three levels.

SEPARATION, LEFT-TO-RIGHT. Uses test tones consisting of one-third octave bands of pink noise recorded in the left channel with reference tones in the right channel, to check leakage from left to right.

SEPARATION, RIGHT-TO-LEFT. Same as Test 3, with channels reversed.

CARTRIDGE TRACKING, LOW FREQUENCY. Uses a single 300-Hz tone that repeatedly swoops to a high level, producing buzzy tones if the cartridge is misadjusted or inferior.

CHANNEL BALANCE. Two random-phase noise signals, one in each channel, produce sounds heard separately to allow accurate setting of channel balance.

CARTRIDGE AND SPEAKER PHASING. A low-frequency signal alternates in and out of phase in the two channels to allow proper phasing of cartridge and speakers.

Step-by-step instructions

Included with the SRT14-A is a detailed instruction manual, complete with charts, tables, and diagrams. This takes you step by step through the testing process. It explains the significance of each test. It tells you how to do it. It clearly describes any aberrations in system response. And it details corrective procedures.

The final step

Start getting the most out of your stereo system. Make the SRT14-A your next record purchase. Just complete the coupon and mail it along with your remittance...today!
Country-rock heart throb MARSHALL CHAPMAN ("Marshall," Epic JE 33192) is caught live at the Bluebird in Bloomington, Indiana (immortalized in that matchless movie Breaking Away). For those of you who've never seen Ms. Chapman work, it should be noted that she's caught about to go into a dance called the Alligator, which may be described as suggestive in the same sense that Hitler could have been described as right-wing. Guess you'll have to wait for the videodisc.

—

Seen here perfecting their Ayatollah Khomeini impressions at New York's Studio 54 are none other than superstars DIANA ROSS and LIZA MINNELLI (both between albums at the moment, but hang in there, sports fans). The occasion: a bon voyage party for (temporarily) departing co-owners Steve Rubell and Ian Schrager, mere hours before they were to accept the hospitality of the state. Can't tell you how sorry I was to miss it.

—

By Steve Simels

Paging George Raft! The INMATES, England's blues-wailing revivalists ("First Offense," Polydor PD-1-6241), are posed against the dank, forbidding walls of Hollywood's favorite correctional institution, Sing Sing. No jokes about captive audiences or caged birds, please.
It's Got a Good Beat and You Can Dance to It

Department: Yes, that's (almost) ageless pimp e-cream salesman DICK CLARK welcoming (who else?) the BEAT (Columbia JC 3619F) to a recent segment of American Bandstand. Dick, of course, is clearly miffed to find that these guys aren't John, Paul, George, and whatisname. Nevertheless, the Beat went on, performing two songs from their debut album.

That's the Godfather of Soul, funkmeister JAMES BROWN ("The Original Disco Man," Polydor P0-1-6212), in the company of New York City Mayor Ed Koch at City Hall, where Brown received the Martin Luther King Entertainer of the Year award recently. If clothes are any guide, it would appear that Brown's business is doing better than Koch's these days.

Bill/Gibbons of Z. Z. TOP "Doggello," Warner Bros. HS 30121 proudly displays his custom-tailored, Texas-styled guitar with an unprecedented Gibson serial number: "I want to be accepted like Bo Derek.

And in a related incident later that very night, we find the Who's PETE TOWNSHEND ambling up to Meatloaf back-up singer KA'ILA BAYT'D in the palatial dressing room of New Haven's Teardrop Place. Townshend's button celebrates not his late drummer but a surly another of Mr. Loaf's back-up singers, Eller Foley (not pictured). Well, it's not over his heart.

The mod-ishly dressed young adult attempting to bite the head off a live microphone here is, of course, the Who's ROGER DALTREY, caught in the act during his band's most recent performance at the New Haven Coliseum. The smiling face adorning Daltrey's chest badge is a bit of a memorial: look closely and you might be able to see that it's the late Keith Moon. Gone but not forgotten.
BABBITT: Arie da Capo (see MARTINO)

C. P. E. BACH: The Four Hamburg Symphonies (see Best of the Month, page 83)


Performance: Incompatible
Recording: Right there

Arthur Grumiaux plays Bach beautifully. Within the framework of a rigid beat, he offers a luxuriant tone, long lines, and careful articulation and rhythmic fluidity to shape its lines. Grumiaux maintains such a rigid beat that he forces an inappropriate rhythmic stiffness on the harpsichord, and by using a constantly rich tone that is seldom articulated, he produces a sound barrier that clogs anything the harpsichord does. From what can be heard of it, Christiane Jaccottet's playing is highly articulated and brittle. Thus, although both artists are very fine indeed, their approaches to the music are incompatible and as a result one hears much less than what Bach wrote.

With the Titanic album by Carol Lieberman and Mark Kroll, one enters quite a different world. Lieberman uses an English violin and bow from the mid eighteenth century and with them produces a beautifully focused, sweet sound that balances perfectly with the harpsichord, thus enabling us to hear all three parts of the music on an equal footing. Both artists play simply, with a natural approach to articulation that avoids fussy mannerisms. The sonatas sound fresh and wholesome; Bach speaks for himself. Many artists have addressed themselves to these wonderful sonatas, but very few have solved the problems of balance and incompatibility of the means of expression of the two instruments. Miss Lieberman and Mr. Kroll have, and at last we can enjoy these wonderful sonatas, but very few have solved the problems of balance and incompatibility of the means of expression of the two instruments. Miss Lieberman and Mr. Kroll have, and at last we can enjoy these works in their full richness.

CHAUSSON: Songs (see Best of the Month, page 79)


Performance: Straightforward
Recording: Very good

I have enjoyed all of Garrick Ohlsson's Chopin recordings, and I found much to enjoy in this one, though a little less than I hoped for. The nocturnes, I think, must be the trickiest of all Chopin categories to bring off as a single body of works, and Ohlsson's approach is an eminently sensible one. I like his straightforwardness: there is no heaving or swooning here, and such solid musical integrity as Ohlsson displays serves this particular trinity, and he seems to be embarked on a Beethoven piano-sonata cycle for Philips that may provide something of a foil to the older Claudio Arrau's cycle on the same label. Kovacevich has the notes, structure, and communicative substance of Opp. 101 and 109 wonderfully in hand: the tenderness, the fierce quirkiness, the intellectual challenge (as in the Op. 101 fugue), the humor (as in the third variation of the Op. 109 finale)—all are there and in beautiful proportion. Topping off the musical satisfactions of this disc is the presence, under Kovacevich's hands, of a superb piano superbly recorded.

D. H.

BARTÓK: String Quartet No. 3 (see RA-VEL)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Richly satisfying
Recording: Topnotch

In company with Vladimir Ashkenazy and Maurizio Pollini, Stephen Bishop Kovacevich (just Stephen Bishop before 1975) typifies the younger generation of pianists who have become total masters of their art and craft. Judging from his recordings thus far, Kovacevich appears to be the classicist of this particular trinity, and he seems to be embarked on a Beethoven piano-sonata cycle for Philips that may provide something of a foil to the older Claudio Arrau's cycle on the same label. Kovacevich has the notes, structure, and communicative substance of Opp. 101 and 109 wonderfully in hand: the tenderness, the fierce quirkiness, the intellectual challenge (as in the Op. 101 fugue), the humor (as in the third variation of the Op. 109 finale)—all are there and in beautiful proportion. Topping off the musical satisfactions of this disc is the presence, under Kovacevich's hands, of a superb piano superbly recorded.

S.L.

Explanation of symbols:

- open-reel stereo tape
- eight-track stereo cartridge
- stereo cassette
- four-channel disc
- digital-master recording
- direct-to-disc

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol ®

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.
M y reaction to the Cleveland Quartet's recently released RCA recording of Beethoven's six early quartets, the Op. 18 set, closely parallels that of my colleague Eric Salzman in his "Best of the Month" review last November of the same group's album of the middle quartets. I am thoroughly taken with the combination of (seemingly) effortless agilità, rhythmic vitality and flexibility, and feel for structure and the big line that are displayed here. To add to the bargain, producer Jay David Saks and his engineers have come up with an outstanding recording of masterpieces that have, over the past generation, been recorded by virtually every major string quartet. The Cleveland Quartet cellist Paul Katz. He does a wonderful job of letting us in on what it takes to develop a meaningful and (collectively) personal interpretation of masterpieces that have, over the past generation, been recorded by virtually every major string quartet. His commentary on the whys and wherefores of tempos and dynamics—taken both from Beethoven's manuscripts and early editions of these works—is not only illuminating in itself but convincingly explains the rationale behind the group's performances.

I await with more than usual interest the Cleveland Quartet's response to the greatest challenge of all—Beethoven's late quartets.

David Hall
Performance: Exquisite
Recording: ideal

I can fairly well promise that if you want to own a recording of Duparc's songs you're not likely to find a better one than this. There have been others in the past (most no longer available) that might be said to be equally good—but not better. For those who don't know the Duparc songs, then, the question becomes one of why they should want to own any recording of them.

As an advocate, I find it helpful to be able to say that they are, almost every one, masterpieces, among the greatest songs in the French language. But, at least to non-Frenchmen, this is not the most immediately appealing music. You have to get into it, you have to hear it over a few times, you have to understand the text and appreciate the way words and music have been woven together into the most extraordinary art form. One willing and able to do this will find in the mélodie, and in Duparc's in particular, an exotic and individual view of the world coupled with a mode of expression that, on its own terms, is as natural, unforced, and idiomatic as folk song—and a good bit more sensually beautiful.

Duparc left little to posterity: seventeen songs (thirteen are here), an orchestral piece, a few minor works. His was a strange career, ending in mid-life, and he was no born musical genius. But he learned the techniques well enough to get down, in some works, exactly what he wanted, and he left us gorgeous songs which, though their idiom might be said to range from Schumann to Debussy (and an exotic and individual view of the world), are, on their own terms, as natural, unforced, and idiomatic as folk song—and a good bit more sensually beautiful.

This record was made by Valois in France in 1971, and it may even have appeared here before on another label (I remember specifically several of Kruysen's records, though not this one). Certainly at the time of recording Kruysen had the ideal voice for this music and all the sensitivity and intelligence one could want in a singer. The accompaniments that Noël Lee gives him are simply brilliant. Granted, a part of the effect is due to the fine Bösendorfer piano and a part to a just recording, but Lee is one of the most underappreciated artists in the world today and his playing here is stunningly good.

With all this, it's a pity to report that though French texts are supplied with the record, English translations are not. Brush up your Baudelaire. —James Goodfriend
Some of Edvard Grieg's best music is to be found in the Slitter, but it is not of the "pink bonbon filled with snow" type that has most often represented the Norwegian master. The Slitter are Grieg's arrangements of Norwegian Hardanger fiddle dances, and in arranging them he engaged in no bowdlerization or prefettising but dug into the tunes like a Bartók. In fact, though, the Slitter were published in 1903, and Bartók and Kodály's first work in the folk-music field did not appear until 1906.

Lyrical melody is abundant in the Slitter but it is married to a wealth of complex melodic ornamentation and supported by drone basses, modal harmonies, polytonality, and free dissonances. This is both extraordinarily beautiful and very gutsy music that is our distant century and draws very little, if at all, on the Classical-Romantic tradition. A certain amount of sameness of key and rhythm (there are four main types of dance music represented here) is inevitable, but Grieg's methods of contrast and variation are most effective in their own way, and since there are seventeen individual dances, no single one goes on too long.

Eva Knardahl (this is Volume 11 in her complete set of Grieg's piano music) plays her not only with the clean technique, musicality, and delicacy of her earlier records, but with a power and gusto that ideally suit the music, and the sound of her Bosendorfer has been cleanly and vibrantly captured.

—James Goodfriend

GRIG: Violin Sonata No. 2, in G Major, Op. 13 (see SAINT-SAENS)


Performance: Strong
Recording: Beautiful

Continuing in the French organ tradition of César Franck and Marcel Dupré, the works of Jean Langlaís and Jean-Jacques Grunenwald are liturgically oriented tone poems in which the improvisations are translated into volup- tuous sonorities. Although lesser practitioners of this art are all too apt to produce things that sound like selections from The Phantom of the Opera, the tradition has produced many stunning works. David Britton's disc features some of the finest music of the genre.

Playing the splendid organ of the First Presbyterian Church in Trenton, New Jersey, Britton makes full use of its tremendous variety of stops. Despite some of the thick textures and dense harmonies of the music, the sound Britton produces is always bright and clear. He never wallows in the sound for its own lush sake but pushes through to the climaxes, thus shaping the works according to their structure. With a crisp rhythmic approach and a keen sense of phrasing, he brings out the underlying logic of this music, often so clouded by coloristic devices that one feels stifled in amorphousness. Britton brings a clarity to these works which forces one to consider them in a new light. Recommended. —S.L.

GRUGNENWALD: Hymne aux Memoires


DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 090 three discs $29.94.

Performance: Elegant
Recording: Soft-focused

The six quartets of Opp. 71 and 74 actually constitute a single set that Haydn composed in 1793 for his second visit to London, although they were dedicated to Count Apponyi and have been known as the "Apponyi Quartets." But they haven't been known enough by any name: several of Haydn's earlier quartets, particularly those of Opp. 20 and 33, have enjoyed a great deal more circulation. In these, the first quartets he conceived for performance in a concert hall rather than a drawing room, with an intensity and symphonic character that identify them as companion works to the London symphonies, have tended to be relatively neglected. The last of the six, the splendid G Minor, known as the "Lakmé Quartet" or The Rider, in which Beethoven's roots seem especially clear, has enjoyed more exposure than the other five. The Alban Berg Quartet's recording of the G Minor (Telefunken 6.41302 or Aspekte AF6.42283) remains incomparable, but the Amadeus Quartet, which recorded Opp. 74, Nos. 1 and 3, for Deutsche Grammophon more than twenty years ago, brings a great deal of distinction to its performances of these works. For more than three decades without a change in personnel, the Amadeus has exhibited an elegance especially suited to this repertoire, and it is very much in evidence here, especially in the inner movements. The nobility of the slow movements and geniality of the minuets are realized here as perhaps no other quartet active today could do, and there is a similar showing of enlivening wit in the outer movements. In sum, a highly enjoyable set, if perhaps not quite the last word.

Before spending as much as thirty dollars for these quartets, it might be in order to consider alternative recordings, available at one-half to one-third of that price.

There is, first of all, a similar set by the American String Quartet in its complete Haydn series (London STS15325/15327). Here the inner movements may seem somewhat prosaic after the Amadeus performances, but the American brings greater crispness and dash to the outer movements almost without exception, and the London recording is much brighter-sounding (the DG set is conspicuously less vivid in this respect). For super-economy, there is the Griller Quartet on two discs instead of three (Bach Guild HM-41 and 42SD). The Griller has a few problems with intonation (very few), and of course the seconding in each opus group is sandwiched between the other two, with an interruption for turnover between its movements, but there is great spirit in these performances, and the sound, for all its
Previn's Digital Debussy

DEBUSSY's *Images pour Orchestre* (a set of three) is his most difficult orchestral work—difficult for the performer and difficult for the hearer. Not that it is hard simply to listen to it—the music sweeps by like a wind-blown cloud—but it is hard to hear it as one of Debussy's great masterpieces (which it undoubtedly is) because the music seldom comes off that way in performance. What we commonly get is a rather flashy showpiece flanked by two rather pallid *grisailles*—if, in fact, the conductor involved chooses to give us the *grisailles* (*Gigues* and *Rondes de Printemps*) at all.

It is fascinating, therefore, that Angel chose the Debussy set as the repertoire for its first digitally recorded release, for the digital technique allows us to hear the music as never before on records (and only rarely in the concert hall). The three *Images*, though not predominantly *pianissimo* music, beg for an extension of the dynamic range downward, allowing us to hear degrees of quietness, silence, and near silence, to distinguish related but not identical timbres at a low dynamic level. This is precisely what the digital technique offers, and I would call Angel's first use of it an almost unqualified success. If there are flaws they lie in the music's dropping, at times, too precipitously into silence (a characteristic, perhaps, of the technique) and a rather subtle favoritism toward the winds at the expense of the strings (a decision of the producer). The surfaces of the disc (analog, of course) are remarkably good, but they are not really good enough for this recording technique.

I don't think I have ever heard André Previn's Debussy before; he certainly has not recorded much of it. If this disc is any sample, I hope he goes through the whole canon, for I don't know any conductor around today who plays it this well apart from Boulez and (in a special way) Karajan. To a certain extent, Previn here is feeling out this music, exploring for himself what there is in it. He looks for subtleties of color and shading in the *Images*—and finds them everywhere, for minute distinctions of timbre are one of the things this music is all about. In spite of the fact that Debussy initially planned the *Images* for keyboard, the richness of orchestral detail and the counterpoint of colors is almost overwhelming.

There are seldom less than five or six things going on simultaneously on different pitch and dynamic levels, and in the metamorphosis of a single line from one instrumental color to another one can hear the birth of such musical concepts as those of Varèse. Previn carries us along with him on this exploration, and if there are still things in the score that are not heard, unquestionably he (and the recording) gives us more than we've ever had before.

The recorded competition in the *Images* is the Columbia recording by Boulez and the Cleveland Orchestra, an out-and-out astonishing record when it first appeared. Boulez's tempos are faster (Previn's tend toward the slow, and the music sometimes takes on a tentative feeling), he manages some of the tricky rhythmic transitions a mite better than Previn, and he has a way of snapping off phrases with an assurance that Previn does not even attempt. There is no question that he is a master of this music, but, whatever he actually got out of the orchestra, what finally ended up on the disc is no match in coloristic subtlety for what Previn gets. The Columbia recording, actually, is quite good, but it does not explore the subtle distinctions as Previn's does: the quiet percussive elements are either inaudible or almost vulgarly apparent, and when the music gets really complex, the individual sounds tend to come together in a neutral mass rather than retaining any individuality. Still, Boulez is not a recording to be with.

There is, by the way, a certain confusion about the correct order of the *Images*. Both Previn and Boulez place them according to the indications in the printed scores, but there are three works were composed in the opposite order, and Jean Barraqué, in his often probing book on Debussy, actually cites them in that reverse order. The three all had premieres independent of one another, and it is altogether possible that Debussy himself never heard the complete set in an orchestral performance. Still, the scores have a point. To end with *Gigues* is anticlimactic. To end with *Ibéria* requires a vulgarization of the last measure (which is what we all too often hear when it is performed alone). Only *Rondes de Printemps* ends naturally, and in some ways that whole work seems to be a kind of gigantic coda to all the preceding music.

PREVIN'S Digital 'Debussy' of three) is his most difficult orchestral work—difficult for the performer and difficult for the hearer. Not that it is hard simply to listen to it—what we commonly get is a rather flashy showpiece flanked by two rather pallid *grisailles*—if, in fact, the conductor involved chooses to give us the *grisailles* (*Gigues* and *Rondes de Printemps*) at all. It is fascinating, therefore, that Angel chose the Debussy set as the repertoire for its first digitally recorded release, for the digital technique allows us to hear the music as never before on records (and only rarely in the concert hall). The three *Images*, though not predominantly *pianissimo* music, beg for an extension of the dynamic range downward, allowing us to hear degrees of quietness, silence, and near silence, to distinguish related but not identical timbres at a low dynamic level. This is precisely what the digital technique offers, and I would call Angel's first use of it an almost unqualified success. If there are flaws they lie in the music's dropping, at times, too precipitously into silence (characteristic, perhaps, of the technique) and a rather subtle favoritism toward the winds at the expense of the strings (a decision of the producer). The surfaces of the disc (analog, of course) are remarkably good, but they are not really good enough for this recording technique.

I don't think I have ever heard André Previn's Debussy before; he certainly has not recorded much of it. If this disc is any sample, I hope he goes through the whole canon, for I don't know any conductor around today who plays it this well apart from Boulez and (in a special way) Karajan. To a certain extent, Previn here is feeling out this music, exploring for himself what there is in it. He looks for subtleties of color and shading in the *Images*—and finds them everywhere, for minute distinctions of timbre are one of the things this music is all about. In spite of the fact that Debussy initially planned the *Images* for keyboard, the richness of orchestral detail and the counterpoint of colors is almost overwhelming. There are seldom less than five or six things going on simultaneously on different pitch and dynamic levels, and in the metamorphosis of a single line from one instrumental color to another one can hear the birth of such musical concepts as those of Varèse. Previn carries us along with him on this exploration, and if there are still things in the score that are not heard, unquestionably he (and the recording) gives us more than we've ever had before.

The recorded competition in the *Images* is the Columbia recording by Boulez and the Cleveland Orchestra, an out-and-out astonishing record when it first appeared. Boulez's tempos are faster (Previn's tend toward the slow, and the music sometimes takes on a tentative feeling), he manages some of the tricky rhythmic transitions a mite better than Previn, and he has a way of snapping off phrases with an assurance that Previn does not even attempt. There is no question that he is a master of this music, but, whatever he actually got out of the orchestra, what finally ended up on the disc is no match in coloristic subtlety for what Previn gets. The Columbia recording, actually, is quite good, but it does not explore the subtle distinctions as Previn's does: the quiet percussive elements are either inaudible or almost vulgarly apparent, and when the music gets really complex, the individual sounds tend to come together in a neutral mass rather than retaining any individuality. Still, Boulez is not a recording to be with.

There is, by the way, a certain confusion about the correct order of the *Images*. Both Previn and Boulez place them according to the indications in the printed scores, but there are three works were composed in the opposite order, and Jean Barraqué, in his often probing book on Debussy, actually cites them in that reverse order. The three all had premieres independent of one another, and it is altogether possible that Debussy himself never heard the complete set in an orchestral performance. Still, the scores have a point. To end with *Gigues* is anticlimactic. To end with *Ibéria* requires a vulgarization of the last measure (which is what we all too often hear when it is performed alone). Only *Rondes de Printemps* ends naturally, and in some ways that whole work seems to be a kind of gigantic coda to all the preceding music.

Perhaps nothing so shows off the richness and complexity of the *Images* as hearing, directly afterward, the *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune*, as one does on this Previn disc. Masterly as that work is, revolutionarily as it was, it seems almost primitive in comparison, its focus almost continually advancing for our inspection more than two or three simultaneous musical events. There are many fine performances of the work, but Previn's primary competition is again Boulez, and here, I think, Boulez takes first place. Previn's digital recording quality is better, of course, but its superiority is not in coloristic subtlety for what Previn's does; the *Rondes de Printemps* ends naturally, and in some ways that whole work seems to be a kind of gigantic coda to all the preceding music.

—James Goodfriend

MARTINO: *Triple Concerto for Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, and Contrabass Clarinet with a Chamber Orchestra of Sixteen Players.* Anand Devendra (soprano clarinet); Dennis Smylie (bass clarinet); Leslie Thimmig (contrabass clarinet); Group for Contemporary Music, Harvey Sollberger cond. BABBITT: *Arie da Capo.* Group for Contemporary Music, Harvey Sollberger cond. 

**Performance:** Spectacular

**Recording:** Excellent

Milton Babbitt started out in music as a clarinetist, so it is appropriate that one of his principal pupils, Donald Martino, should have dedicated this Triple Clarinet Concerto to him for his sixtieth birthday. Martino, himself a clarinetist, has taught at Princeton, Yale, Harvard, the New England Conservatory, and the Berkshire Music Center. His music is very highly worked out in the Babbitt serial manner but with many links to tradition, especially that expressionist rag from old Vienna. The concerto is an energetic work, written with neatness, economy, and invention, but for most people the outstanding feature is certainly going to be the extraordinary sound of the three clarinets.

The Babbitt Arie was written in 1974 for the Da Capo Chamber Players. The name of the group was the obvious inspiration, not only for the title of the composition, but also for its form, a series of “arias” or solos for five players—flute, clarinet (doubling bass clarinet), violin, cello, and piano—all interwoven in Babbitt’s characteristically complex manner. Don’t be fooled by the references to arias and da capo! This is much more abstract, far-out music than the Martino (the master is much less traditional than the pupil). Babbitt is the great American master of serialism, and, unlike the more volatile Europeans, he has stuck to his guns over the years.

The performances make all the difference in this music; without really good players you can’t tell the mistakes from the music. In this case—in both cases—the Group for Contemporary Music, long our leading performance organization for serial and serial-related music, not only gives us the assurance of accuracy but achieves the closest identification with the music. The recordings are superb.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**MOZART: Idomeneo.** Nicolai Gedda (tenor), Idomeneo; Adolf Dallapozza (tenor), Idamante; Edda Moser (soprano), Elektra; Anneliese Rothenberger (soprano), Ilia; Peter Schreier (tenor), Arbaces; Eberhard Büchler (tenor), High Priest; Theo Adam (baritone), Vöge of the Oracle; others. Leipzig Radio Chorus, Dresden State Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt cond. ARABESQUE 9054+4. Four discs $28.92, © 9054-4L $28.92.

**Performance:** Very good

**Recording:** Fairly good

To the various miracles that occur during the considerable performance span of Idomeneo, I would add two non-mythological ones. The first is that an opera regarded as hopelessly passé for more than a century now has four entries in the Schwann catalog—as many as Gounod’s Faust (possibly the most popular opera of that same century). And the second is that all four recorded versions may be recommended as worthy of Mozart’s marvelous score.

The new Arabesque release, a recording originally issued by Electrola in Germany around 1972, is the most complete version. (Scaramph SIC-6070, on two discs, is the oldest and most heavily cut; its commendable aspects are limited to the singing.) All the musical numbers of the original Munich production are here, including even the arias for Idamante and Idomeneo (Nos. 27 and 31 in the score) that Mozart himself chose to omit when he prepared Idomeneo for the Vienna stage. There are some cuts in the recitatives—as there are in all other recordings—but this is the version most likely to please scholars. Happily, however, the set’s virtues transcend scholarliness. Hans

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CIRCLE NO. 40 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Schmidt-Iserstedt, who died shortly after it was recorded, believed in Idomeneo as drama. His conducting may not have the vitality of Colin Davis' (Philips), but it is sensible, free of eccentricities, and quite effective. And the singers allow little room for criticism.

Idomeneo's demanding part has been ably served on records before, particularly by Wieslaw Ochman (Deutsche Grammophon), but no other interpreter matches Nicolai Gedda overall in his eloquent handling of the recitatives, which reveal much of the character's inner struggles, or his stylish execution of the arias. Anneliese Roth-nerberger portrays Ilia's warm femininity just as persuasively as Edda Moser projects Elektra's near hysteria. Vocally, both sopranos are captured in near-peak form.

Adolf Dallapozza (an Austrian whose command of Italian is good enough but not nearly as fluent as his name would suggest) is a good, if not outstanding, Idamante. That role is very well sung (though Teutonically inflected) by Peter Schreier in the DG set. On this one, on the other hand, Schreier sings the less important role of Arbaces, again very well, and gets to sing both of that character's arias. (The entire role is almost dispensable dramatically, yet Mozart wrote first-rate music for it.)

The technical quality of the Arabesque set is disappointing. Not only is its overall sound inferior to that of the DG and Philips sets, but something must have happened in the transfers to cause distortion on sibilants and loud passages.

G.J.

MOZART: Piano Concerto No. 9, in E-flat Major (K. 271); Concerto for Two Pianos, in E-flat Major (K. 365). Alfred Brendel (piano); Imogen Cooper (piano in K. 365); Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner cond. PHILIPS 9500 408 $9.98, © 7300 616 $9.98.

Performance: Crisp

Recording: Excellent

The Brendel/Marriner survey of the Mozart piano concertos is within sight of the halfway mark with this Philips release. Crispness and utterly clear articulation are the dominating characteristics of Brendel's performance of the twenty-year-old Mozart's K. 271, and Marriner's orchestral collaboration is in essentially the same vein. Personally, I like a little more "give" and a somewhat lighter touch in this music, as in, for example, the recording Vladimir Ashkenazy and the late István Kertész made for London a decade ago. The brilliant finale comes off best here (if you notice a different final cadenza after the minuet episode, remember that Mozart wrote two separate sets of cadenzas for this concerto).

The Two-piano Concerto, a charmer of a piece, is the real success of this disc. The young English artist Imogen Cooper plays the secundo. The music can take the vigor applied throughout the opening movement, and the slow movement emerges here as the last word in elegance and fluidity—"like oil," to use Mozart's phrase. The finale goes with tremendous zest and brilliance, topping off what for me is an unusually successful realization of this piece. Marriner and his players are in fine form, and the recording is flawless throughout. A half "Special Merit" anyhow.

MOZART: Piano Concertos Nos. 14 and 26 (see Best of the Month, page 76)

MUSSORGSKY: The Nursery (see Collections—Elisabeth Soderstrom and Vladimir Ashkenazy)

PROKOFIEV: The Ugly Duckling, Op. 18 (see Collections—Elisabeth Soderstrom and Vladimir Ashkenazy)

PUCCINI: La Bohème. Katia Ricciarelli (soprano), Mimi; José Carreras (tenor), Rodolfo; Ingyar Wixell (baritone), Marcello; Håkan Hagegård (baritone), Schu-nard; Robert Lloyd (bass), Colline; Ashley Putnam (soprano), Musetta; Francis Eger-ton (tenor), Parpignol; Giovanni de Angelis (bass), Benôl; William Elwin (bass), Al-cindoro; others. Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Colin Davis cond. PHILIPS 6769 031 two discs $19.96, © 7699 116 $19.96.

Performance: Good but unexceptional

Recording: Very good

Was a new La Bohème really necessary? A glance at the Schwann catalog might prompt the observer to argue otherwise. But opera fans aren't glancing, they are buying: this new Philips set is doing very well in the stores as my review is going to press.

The technical quality of the Arabesque set is disappointing. Not only is its overall sound inferior to that of the DG and Philips sets, but something must have happened in the transfers to cause distortion on sibilants and loud passages.
Katia Ricciarelli and José Carreras, the principals, are the set’s main attractions. Miss Ricciarelli, in good voice throughout, portrays a touching and tender Mimi, unexaggerated in her emotions but always believable in the character’s changing moods.

Mr. Carreras has always displayed the signs of a potentially ideal Rodolfo: handsome, poetic, impulsive, youthful-sounding. The potential is still there, but it is only partially realized, for vocally he is inconsistent here.

Ashley Putnam projects a lively Musetta without overindulgence. She is among the role’s best recorded interpreters. The Marcello of Ingvar Wixell displays the Swedish baritone in his familiar emphatic form: vital and energetic, lacking only a mellifluous Italian sound. After a surprisingly colorless beginning, Hakan Hagegård comes into his own in Act IV, but Robert Lloyd, despite his appealing tones, makes virtually no impact with his Coat Song.

This is simply not a La Bohème to elicit superlatives: it is an efficient, businesslike Colin Davis investment in Italian opera, which may result in musical dividends in the form of crisp attacks, firm rhythms, and transparent orchestral textures, but which leaves one, if not unmoved, certainly dry-eyed. There are no disturbing eccentricities here, no severe misjudgments of tempos, no Karajan-like mannerisms, but neither is this a Bohème of heartfelt natural spontaneity à la Serafín (London 1208). And in terms of vocal luxuriance, it does not equal Seraphim S-6099 (De los Angeles/Björling), London 1299 (Freni/Pavarotti), or London 1208 (Tebaldi/Bergonzzi).

RACHMANINOFF: Songs (see Best of the Month, page 79)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Suave
Recording: Excellent

Anyone who has tried to sort out the printed score of Rameau’s “ballet héroïque” Les Indes Galantes eventually comes to understand the curious arrangement of the music into arbitrary “concerts” that have little to do with the story they are supposed to express. What comes as a surprise, however, is that the original publication also included some thirty keyboard arrangements by Rameau himself of various instrumental symphonies and dances. Harpsichordist Kenneth Gilbert edited these transcriptions for Heugel, Paris, and has now recorded a selection of them for Harmonia Mundi.

Gilbert is a rare example of the scholar-performer. Having gone through the study of the intricacies of French performance practice, he has emerged with a thoroughly musical style of playing that incorporates the incredibly detailed ornamentation and rhythmic alterations in an easy, flowing manner; it is a delight to hear. The music itself is vintage Rameau: suave, sophisticated, and rhythmically contagious. S.L.

(Continued overleaf)
**The operas of Jules Massenet enjoyed something of a revival during the Seventies, and his Werther, in particular, is still riding high. Deutsche Grammophon’s recent recording (reviewed in April) has barely entered the catalog, and already we have a newer version from Angel. With its altogether felicitous casting, the Angel set scores most impressively where the DG one failed most conspicuously: capturing the Gallic essence of Massenet’s music. This might at first seem like a puzzling observation, for neither set offers French principals—DG’s Russian Charlotte, for example, is no less French than Angel’s American one, and in the title role one can only choose between one Spanish tenor (Placido Domingo) and another (Alfredo Kraus).

But music, not mere nationality, is the point here. DG’s Elena Obraztsova is an interesting, at times compelling singer, but she was not happily cast as Goethe’s expressing young matron. Tatiana Troyanos’ somewhat aloof interpretative style, on the other hand, suits the character’s passivity to perfection, and, moreover, she is entirely convincing in the closing scene when, confronted with the tragedy that her passivity has caused, she allows her emotions to pour forth unchecked. Throughout, she conveys warm femininity and sings with consistent tonal beauty, though the characteristic flutter in her tones somewhat beclouds her pronunciation. No such reservation applies to Alfredo Kraus, whose diction is a model of clarity. In other ways, too, his Werther is nearly ideal: sensitive, fastidiously musical, and elegantly phrased—if at times too lachrymose for my taste (I grant that melancholy is not congenial to the character of Goethe’s hero). There is no question about Kraus’s stylistic mastery, but I could not help remembering Domingo’s fuller, more imposing tones in the climaxes, with their flatter ring in the top register, or wishing that somehow the best qualities of these two remarkable Spaniards could be combined in one unsurpassable supertenor.

For the rest, I have only praise. The role of Albert, so often colorless as portrayed by a less gifted artist, emerges as a major contribution when Matteo Manuguerra interprets it, and, though Christine Baubaux may not quite steal her scene, she offers a charming Sophie. Jules Bastin is a good, characterful Belfrad, and, for once, even the hearty duettists Schmidt and Johann are strongly cast. Michel Plasson and the London Philharmonic provide an attractive orchestral frame for all the fine singing, and the recorded sound is absolutely first-rate.

—George Jellinek

**MASSENET: Werther.** Tatiana Troyanos (mezzo-soprano), Charlotte; Alfredo Kraus (tenor), Werther; Matteo Manuguerra (baritone), Albert; Jules Bastin (bass), Belfrad; Christine Barbaux (soprano), Sophie; Philip Langridge (tenor), Schmidt; Jean-Philippe Lafont (baritone), Johann; others. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Michel Plasson cond. ANGEL S2CX-3894; three discs $27.94, © 42XN-3894 $27.94.

**RAVEL: Quartet in F Major.** BARTÔK: Quartet No. 3, in C-sharp. Sequoia String Quartet. DELLOS @ DMS 3004 $17.98.

Performance: Good to superb
Recording: Rich

To the best of my knowledge, this disc by the California-resident Sequoia ensemble is the first digitally mastered string-quartet recording to be generally marketed in this country. The string quartet presents recording problems different in character from those which Delos dealt with so successfully in Susann McDonald’s harp recital disc and Carol Rosenberger’s altogether remarkable impressionist piano program. I recommend listening to the Bartók side of this record first, for what digital mastering can do in laying bare the fantastic sonorities of the Hungarian master’s string quartet is nothing short of thrilling. The nocturnal opening, followed by a fierce dance episode, will afford more than adequate demonstration. The performance as a whole is vital and well articulated, though toward the end the music lacks the fierce tension the Juilliard Quartet gave it.

Problems arise in the Ravel—not out of the performance itself, which is notable for its warmth, vitality, and command of nuance, especially in the slow movement, but because the music, in my opinion, demands a tighter and less highly colored acoustic ambiance than it receives here. The broad tonal washes of the Bartók gain from the somewhat reverberant and rather highly colored acoustics of the Immaculate Heart College Auditorium in Los Angeles, but the pizzicato pages of the Ravel second movement lose their all-important see quality amid the reverberant character of the hall (it does help to cut the playback level somewhat). The Ravel side is further troubled by a curious “ringing” or hum condition at about 300 cycles, which was evident in both copies of this record that I had on hand but nowhere else on the eleven other digitally mastered Delos sides in my possession. By all other standards, however, this is an excellent Ravel disc, and, like all the other Delos records I have heard, it is blessed with flawless pressing.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**ROREM: Miss Julie (Highlights).** Judith James (soprano), Miss Julie; Ronald Madden (baritone), John; Veronica August (mezzo-soprano), Christine; others. Orchestra, Peter Leonard cond. PAINTED SMILES PS 1388 $9.98 (plus 60¢ postage from Painted Smiles Records, 116 Nassau Street, New York, N.Y. 10038).

Performance: Artful
Recording: Excellent

With the possible exception of Samuel Barber, it’s hard to think of an American composer who can so well capture the essence of the human voice than Ned Rorem. His songs yield increasing pleasure on each re-hearing, and this recording of his opera based on Strindberg’s Miss Julie reveals the full range of his many musical skills. Miss Julie was not fortunate in its first production at the New York City Opera in 1965, but last year the New York Lyric Opera Company performed a pruned, re-worked version to considerable critical praise. The revised version, presented at the NYU Theatre in New York on April 5, 1979, was recorded, and this listener’s only complaint is that we might have been given the full range of his many musical skills. Miss Julie was not fortunate in its first production at the New York City Opera in 1965, but last year the New York Lyric Opera Company performed a pruned, re-worked version to considerable critical praise. The revised version, presented at the NYU Theatre in New York on April 5, 1979, was recorded, and this listener’s only complaint is that we might have been given the full range of his many musical skills. Miss Julie was not fortunate in its first production at the New York City Opera in 1965, but last year the New York Lyric Opera Company performed a pruned, re-worked version to considerable critical praise. The revised version, presented at the NYU Theatre in New York on April 5, 1979, was recorded, and this listener’s only complaint is that we might have been given the full range of his many musical skills.
sages of dialogue. Even in this abridgement the flow of the piece is preserved, and the libretto that comes with the record supplies connective passages that clearly describe the events omitted. This is subtle music but entirely accessible, and the record, with Veronica August a versatile and suitably arrogant Miss Julie, Ronald Madden believably coarse but seductive as the valet she can never really own, and a strong supporting cast under Peter Leonard's ardent direction, should stimulate a new interest in one of the most singable American operas ever penned.

P.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Electrifying
Recording: Vivid


Performance: Dryish
Recording: Dryish

Two months after Elmar Oliveira won the gold medal in the 1978 Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, I heard him and Jonathan Feldman play the Franck sonata in Washington; I have remembered the performance as an electrifying one, and the new recording indicates that my memory did not exaggerate. This is music making of a very high order, exuding genuine respect and affection for the material and transmitting those qualities by means of abundant but tastefully reinued vigor, rich tone, and solid technical security. The partnership is a full one, with Feldman very much in the picture and providing more than mere "accompaniment." I get the feeling that he and Oliveira developed both their enthusiasm for the work and their interpretation of it together, and that they still allow for a good deal of give-and-take in performing it. Their performance breathes freshness, spontaneity, and uncommon communicativeness, and so it is also in the overside Saint-Saëns sonata, a less familiar but eminently lovable work filled with delightful discoveries. There are one or two rough spots (the very last note of the Saint-Saëns seems not quite dead on), but the exuberant sweep and overall stylishness that so vividly both sides of this disc are what leave the most lasting impression even after a dozen hearings. Columbia has provided vivid, well-balanced sound to match and fine notes by Peter Eliot Stone.

The Columbia jacket is emblazoned "Debut Recording," although the record is not Oliveira's first (perhaps the reference is to the duo?). The Pelican release does appear to represent the disc debut of Christian Bor; he has impressive credentials, good technical equipment, a good sense of style, and a well-known and admired pianist as his partner. Other things being equal, many might find the seldom-heard Grieg G Major Sonata more enticing than the much-recorded Franck; but other things so often

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have a way of not being equal, and in this case there is the matter of flair, which Oliveira displays so winnily and which Bor seems to lack. His playing is sound, tasteful—and rather dry. He is not helped by the dryish acoustics of the recording locale or by the sonic limitations of the piano, rather in the background, particularly in the Saint-Saëns. For the Grieg, I continue to favor the second Heifetz recording (the one with Brooks Smith, now in RCA CRM6-2264), while the Oliveira/Feldman disc is something I would be happy to have regardless of duplications of either or both titles.

R.F.

SCHOENBERG: Herzwächte (see WE- BERN)


Performance: Affectation Recording: Good

Rudolf Serkin playing Schubert has always been a special treat, and an all too rare one among his recordings. In these unhurried, rather understated performances of the Op. 142 Impromptus there is a feeling of intimate reflection, as if Serkin were remembering the music for his own pleasure rather than playing it for the public. His playing is filled with authority and affection, but it is also a little too loosely organized to bring the music fully to life. The touching simplicity in the playing of No. 2, in A-flat, suggests that playing the notes so unaffectedly may have served as an aide-mémoire in the process of full reconstruction that took place in his inner ear. What we hear is the pure and undisturbed nature of a wistful outline of all four pieces, and this is heard in some discomfort, despite the essentially good recording of the piano, because of the extremely gritty surfaces (on both copies of the disc that reached my turntable). Both Daniel Barenboim (Deutsche Grammophon 2510896) and Alfred Brendel (Philips 6500.928) offer fuller realizations of these intriguing and dramatic works, and, in addition to quiet surfaces, their recordings offer better value as well. Barenboim's disc including the four Impromptus of Op. 90 (D. 899), and Brendel giving us the third set of Impromptus, known as the Drei Klavierstücke (D. 946), is within seconds of Arturo Toscanini's 1950 NBC Symphony reading. Like Giulini and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Carlos Kleiber cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 124 $9.98, 5301 124 $9.98.

Performance: Toscaninnian Recording: Good

Did I say some months ago in these pages something to the effect that Carlo Maria Giulini and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra had given Schubert Unfinished about as good as it could be? Well, there is more than one way to skin a cat. Carlos Kleiber has given some interest to the way of the radiant spontaneity and sympathetic response of both Sergiu Luca and Joseph Kalichstein to this music, and to note other as they play it, is so thoroughly and joyously in the Schubertian spirit that comparisons, as they must on this level, become meaningless. I can say, though, that these are the first performances I've heard in the last twenty-five years that not left me feeling I had to go back to the old Angel series by Johanna Martzy and Jean Antonietti (revived in part briefly on the Maco label) to hear how these pieces really ought to sound. Every phrase is unexcagerately alive, and both partners show a regard for tonal beauty that never gets in the way of the radiant spontaneity and momentum of their performances. The recording itself is a fine one in respect to richness, clarity, and balance, the pressing is clean, and there is an excellent set of notes on the music by Robert Winter. In short, it's a marvelous record, not only irresistible but, I would think, indispensable.

Ordinarily the foregoing would constitute a complete review, but in this case I can't help adding that this was one of the last releases Teresa Sterne saw through the production cycle before her separation from RCA. It is a remarkable attempt on the part of all involved not to have made that extraordinary decision, which became a cause célèbre throughout the musical community (see James Goodfriend's "Going on Record" in March and William Anderson's "Speaking of Music" in April), but we could have expected a second disc to complete this Schubert cycle, as well as completion of various other noteworthy series begun some time ago—Gilbert Kalish's Haydn keyboard sonatas, Paul Jacobs' Debussy, etc.

R.E.
and to telling effect. The ethereal quality he brings to the final pages of the symphony gives his reading a very special poignancy unmatched by any other performance I have heard.

The performance of the D Major Symphony from Schubert's eighteenth year is likely to raise a few eyebrows, for Kleiber gives us no easygoing Haussmusik treatment, but rather a razor-sharp one of extraordinary brilliance and tautness. The allegretto movement will be the main eyebrow raiser, since most performers I have heard treat it as almost an andantino. Kleiber opts for a pacing comparable to that of the allegretto of the Beethoven Eighth Symphony, whose première in Vienna was about a year before Schubert composed his essay in D Major. The menuetto also goes at a brisk pace, with the Vienna players doing a delectable job with the Landler-style trio, and the tarantella-like finale is simply astonishing. The recorded sound is good on the whole, if somewhat weighty in the lower middle register. Like just about all of Carlos Kleiber's orchestral discs so far, this one can be called brilliantly provocative—thrillingly innovative for some, outrageously heretical for others.

D.H.


Performances: Barenboim delightful

Recordings: Okay

Two more contrasting performances cannot be imagined. Barenboim's Fantasie is youthful, fiery, not particularly romantic in the small things, but impressive and heroic in the large. Rubinstein's is small-scale, tentative, burnt out, with only an occasional flicker. This never-before-released recording was made in 1965, and its companion pieces, the Novelleten, have strength and character. So it does not appear as though great age was the culprit. My guess would be that Rubinstein had never played the Schumann Fantasie and was, in effect, sight-reading at the session. Certainly there were good reasons why RCA did not choose to release the recording then, and it would have been kinder to leave it in the vaults even now.

The Barenboim disc is a delight, with the neat and simple Kinderszenen as a perfect foil to the Fantasie. The Kinderszenen are far from mere kiddie fare, but, as we realize from this performance, contain some of Schumann's most ingenious and expressive thoughts in simple guise. I don't care for the resonant piano sound, but in other respects this is a highly recommended recording.

E.S.

R. STRAUSS: Die Aegyptische Helena. Gwyneth Jones (soprano), Helena; Matti Kastu (tenor), Menelaus; Barbara Hendricks (soprano), Aiithra; Willard White (bass), Altair; Curtis Rayam (tenor), Daud; Birgit Finnilä (contralto), the Omniscient Mussel; others. Kenneth Jewell Chorale; Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Antal
SATIE will want Arabel's new release of music by Erik Satie without knowing anything more about it than its contents, for there are pieces in it that they have probably never heard before. The material was recorded (presumably by Pathé-Marconi) in 1974, but to my knowledge it has not previously appeared on records in the U.S.

You get considerable variety for your money. Geneviève de Brabant, the longest work here, was composed in 1899 but orchestrated only after the composer's death by the conductor Roger Desormiere. It consists of an instrumental introduction or Entrée des Soldats (which keeps coming back), a long unaccompanied recitation (in the original French) of the story of Sainte Geneviève, a chorus straight out of Offenbach, two affecting arias for Geneviève, a call of hunting horns, an aria for Golo, a brief cortege, and an even briefer closing number for Golo and chorus (again right out of Offenbach). This whole panoply of music and speech makes no sense whatsoever unless one is aware (the fact is buried in the Grove's Dictionary of music and speech makes no sense whatsoever) of the Grove's Dictionary of music and speech makes no sense whatsoever, the songs walk the line (or perhaps the line is here even being created) between the serious and the not so, and their texts, most by J. P. Contamine de Latour (of whom I have never heard in any other context), begin to raise the question of whether he was or wasn't (he also wrote the text for Geneviève de Brabant). The remaining three songs, Daphné (a strangely moving song built on a nonsensical pun and perhaps a prime example of magical surrealism), Le Chapelet (similar in effect and broader in scope of Alice in Wonderland), and La Diva de l'Empire (a café song and a whole different kettle of poisons), are, in comparison, almost familiar masterworks.

Mady Mesplé and Aldo Ciccolini handle these songs with typical French grace and deadpan expression, as if they know perfectly well what is serious and what is not—but are not telling. I can't think of a more affecting way to perform them—all but one, that is. The Diva de l'Empire is really a Belle Époque pop number and needs the services of a chanteuse rather than of a serious artist. A couple of them have recorded it (particularly a lady named Colinette), but the records are lost in the dustbins of time. So, better this clean, straight performance than nothing (or even whatever else is currently available).

HELEN is less grandiose and less bewilderingly complex than the earlier Die Frau ohne Schatten (1919), but its libretto is nonetheless entirely too verbose for the good of the drama. A further handicap—in my view, at least—is the strong Wagnerian cast of some of Hofmannsthal's verses. Fortunately, the music gives wings and radiance to the overblown lines; it soars in glowing colors reminiscent of Die Frau ohne Schatten, with a magical orchestration that at times recalls the transparency of Ariadne auf Naxos as well. Whatever one may think of the text, the music justifies this opera's presence in the record catalog.

This performance serves the opera well enough, though it may not convert any non-believers. Strongest among the singers is the young American soprano Barbara Hendricks as the sorceress Alithra, who creates the illusion of the two Helens (see synopsis for details) to make Melenaus forgive, if not forget, the past. Miss Hendricks copes laudably with the role's demanding tessitura, with its unreasonable downward extension, and imparts an impish touch to her lively characterization. Hers is an altogether admirable portrayal, beautifully vocalized.

As displayed on the album cover, Gwyneth Jones appears to be the very incarnation of the alluring mythological Helen. Voilà, though, she falls considerably short of the ideal; her achievement is not inadequate, but it is not always pleasing tonally. The music of Menchulus is largely declamatory except for a rather effective arioso in Act I, and it is surprising to learn that Strauss wrote this music with Richard Tauber in mind (the tenor chose Lehár's Friederike instead). Matti Kastu's portrayal of the an-
JUNE 1980

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two discs $24.95 (from Gothic Records, P.O. Box 533, Murray Hill Station, New York, N.Y. 10016).

Performance: Muscular
Recording: Bright and clear

Twenty-five years ago I described organist Catherine Crozier’s work as “notable for its rhythmic vigor, strong sense of line, and effective calculation of weighted sonority in terms of registration.” On the basis of this richly varied recital played on the Theodore Kuhn Co. tracker-action organ in New York’s Alice Tully Hall, I find no reason to alter that characterization.

Miss Crozier’s handling of the familiar Bach Fantasia and Fugue is that of a strict constructionist, as is her playing in the “Sei Gessrusset” partita, and I would have welcomed a little more flavoring of the “meat and potatoes” here. But the twentieth-century repertoire is quite another matter. The Hindemith sonata gets a very strong reading, and Miss Crozier’s taste for stark registration and powerful rhythmic pulse lends the music the special quality that has often led me to equate the best of Hindemith’s work with the expressionist sculpture of Ernst Barlach. The Dufay partita is neo-Bach in spirit with a sinuously lovely pentatonic-flavored Bicinium interlude prefacing the brilliant fugue-finale. The passacaglia by Czech composer Miloš Sökoša is a brilliant neo-Liszian essay.

However, the only contemporary work here that comes within hailing distance of the Hindemith is in terms of effectiveness and craft is Ned Rorem’s somewhat Messiaenic A Quaker Reader—in essence eleven meditations or ruminations on Quaker lore and texts from which Miss Crozier has chosen a half-dozen of the most striking. Since Composers Recordings recorded the entire work on the Alice Tully Hall organ as performed by its dedicatee, Leonard Raver, a direct comparison of the CRI disc with this one is of more than passing interest. In general, Miss Crozier tends toward a more sinewy approach, while the Raver recording corresponds more to the music’s poetic aspects.

Comparison of the sound of the analog-recorded CRI disc with that of Gothic’s essay in digital mastering brings up a problem I have mentioned before: if the hall itself and the microphone placement are not just so, the new technology will do nothing to enhance the final result. Indeed, the employment of such procedures places a premium on optimum acoustics, proper microphone placement, and careful disc processing. Taking as a test the Rorem piece with the greatest dynamic and coloristic contrast, The World Is Silent, I found that CRI not only achieved a better sonic focus but was also better able to convey the placement of the ranks of pipes.

In fact, what bothered me about the Gothic album from the start was a seeming excess of midrange pipe-work, which to a judge from photographs could be the result of both the disposition of the pipes themselves and the acoustic characteristics of Tully Hall (I have found it rather bass-shy). Gothic’s production team of Fred Miller and Harry Minz can produce magnificent organ discos, as attested to by Frederick Swann’s Franch album (analog-recorded, performed on the Riverside Church organ in New York). I hope that for future digital recordings Gothic will find a more congenial instrument in another hall. D.H.

JAN DE GAETANI AND GILBERT KALISH: Songs of Ruchmannoff and Chausson (see Best of the Month, page 79)

MUSIC WITH THREE RECORDERS.
Ricci: Sonata in A Minor; Canzon La Rosignola. Scheidt: Paduan in A Minor; Anon: Sonata in G Major for Three Recorders and Continuo; Chaconne, Three Parts upon a Ground, in F Major. Quadro Hotterterre; Frans Brüggen (recorder), TELEFUNKEN 6.43265 AW $9.98, © 4.43265 EX $9.98.

Performance: Fine
Recording: Fine

Although three recorders can yap and twitter and at times sound out of tune even if they are not, they can produce moments of pure, silken sound that are quite ravishing. On this disc such moments are to be found in the works of Riccio and Scheidt, where the organ binds the recorders together and the cello supplies a firm base. The pieces are compositionally the most interesting ones as well, and they make the record well worth the investment.

The strongest suit of the Quadro Hotterterre is its ensemble. They play as one, and the abrupt and frequent tempo changes required in the seventeenth-century sonatas and canzonas are beautifully handled. S.L.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Exquisite
Recording: Excellent

The Pro Cantione Antiqua is an all-male group—allos, tenors, and basses—and thus, on the record jacket, the here very necess.

(Continued on page 129)
FLOYD VIVINO is a short, driven young man who has for the last seven years almost singlehandedly kept the great tradition of the TV kid-show-for-adults alive. As Uncle Floyd, he holds court every weekday evening in a low-budget surrealist free-for-all broadcast over a UHF station in the wilds of West Orange, New Jersey, whose other programming consists largely of public-service shows in Polish (I am not making this up). His set is closet size, the props pure thrift-shop, and the supporting cast, whose duties include cackling insanely off-camera at every moth-eaten joke in captivity, seem to have studied comedy, as James Wolcott observed, under the creature from the Black Lagoon.

Uncle Floyd’s sponsors include a local construction firm, a magic shop, and a tattoo parlor in Carlstadt. His fans include the Ramones and David Johansen (both of whom frequently appear on the show), Bruce Springsteen (about one hundred thousand viewers in the New York metropolitan area, and the author of this column, who can’t recall having so much fun in front of the tube since the halcyon days of Soupy Sales).

Floyd is, in short, a genuine local hero in the process of moving from cult figure (a phrase he doesn’t like because it “frightens parents”) to aboveground star, the star of one of the most likely show-biz sagas in recent memory. To his credit, he has vowed never to leave Channel 68, at least until most singlehandedly kept the great tradition of the TV kid-show-for-adults alive. As Uncle Floyd, he holds court every weekday evening in a low-budget surrealist free-for-all broadcast over a UHF station in the wilds of West Orange, New Jersey, whose other programming consists largely of public-service shows in Polish (I am not making this up). His set is closet size, the props pure thrift-shop, and the supporting cast, whose duties include cackling insanely off-camera at every moth-eaten joke in captivity, seem to have studied comedy, as James Wolcott observed, under the creature from the Black Lagoon.

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The latest Bastion of Good Taste to fall before Floyd’s barbarian legions was not less than Manhattan’s prestigious Bottom Line, the premiere rock-showcase night club in the country. In late April, Floyd packed the joint for six consecutive shows (the place seats five hundred), and those of us who fought our way in got more than our money’s worth.

Though not quite a family affair, there was a little something for everybody, beginning with a wonderfully seedy wedding band headed by one of Floyd’s brothers. There was Looney Skip Rooney, who told off-color stories about Passaic with a prurient gleam that put me in the mind of a depraved infant. There was David Burd (whom you may have heard delivering the truly awful one-liners on the recent radio spot for Elvis Costello’s “Get Happy”) demonstrating the fine art of rock-and-roll violin playing with a stirring one-finger rendition of Louise, Louie. There was the inimitable Muggsy with impersonations of rock stars Bruce Springsteen, Pot Roast, and Neil Yuck.
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