HIGH-END STEREO: SENSE AND NONSENSE

USER'S REPORT ON SONY'S PCM-F1 DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDER

TIPS ON CHOOSING HI-FI FURNITURE

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS
- Adcom GFA-2 Power Amplifier
- Ortofon TM20H Phono Cartridge
- Tandberg TD 20A-SE Open-Reel Tape Deck
- Sansui AU-D33 Integrated Amplifier
- Bose 601 Series II Speaker System

DISC SPECIALS
Kid Creole
Susannah McCorkle
Randy Crawford
Digital Schumann
Horowitz at the Met
A New Butterfly
Not that there's anything wrong with the one you've got.

We just had something a little smaller in mind. More like the one you see here.

Technically, it's called a microprocessor or computer chip.

But we like to think of it as a little brain. Because when it's built into our Pioneer receivers, tape decks and turntables, they become more.

They become smart.

And when it comes to getting the most music out of your music, smart components have a lot of advantages over dumb ones.
be instantly stored in the memory. Ready to be recalled just as fast.

**THE CT9-R TAPE DECK: SMART ENOUGH TO FIND NOTHING.**

If you've ever done even a small amount of cassette recording, you've gone through the not-so-convenient fast forward/stop/play/reverse procedure of trying to find the blank area where your last recording left off.

The CT9-R, on the other hand, has a button marked Blank Search. Give it a push and it will find the area that's long enough to tape on, back up to the last recorded piece, leave a nine second space and stop, ready to record.

In about three seconds. Automatically.

And, as if that weren't enough, the CT9-R also has the world's fastest Automatic Bias Level Equalization. In plain English, that means that it takes just eight seconds for Auto B.L.E. to analyze the tape being used (no easy task with over 200 different tapes on the market) and then adjust the deck for optimum performance with that tape. Improving the quality of your recordings faster than you can say "wow and flutter."

**THE PL-88F TURNTABLE: IT WON'T PLAY WHAT YOU DON'T LIKE.**

In the history of recorded music, there has probably been one, maybe two people who like every cut on a record. If you're not one of them, you'll take an immediate liking to the new PL-88F.

It's front loading, stackable and, best of all, it's fully programmable.

Punch in up to eight cuts per side in any order that makes your ears happy. The turntable will automatically skip the ones that don't.

And when you're recording from records to cassettes you'll appreciate the tape deck synchro that automatically places any Pioneer Auto Reverse tape deck into the pause mode when the turntable tone arm lifts off the record. Leaving you free for more important things.

Like listening to music.

The Pioneer CT-9R tape deck, SX-8 receiver and PL-88F turntable. Proof that to get the quality of music you buy quality components for, you don't need a lot of knowledge.

You just need a little brain.

Because the music matters.
Radio Shack's New Receiver
With 7-Band Graphic Equalizer Makes Any Listening Room Perfect

Now—exercise complete control over your music! Realistic's new STA-790 features a seven-band stereo graphic frequency equalizer with slide-action controls that boost or cut audio response by up to 12 dB at 50, 150, 400, 1000, 2400, 6000 and 15,000 Hz. Provides far more precise adjustment than with two or even three conventional tone controls so you get exactly the sound you want. Adjust it to suit your listening room acoustics and personal taste perfectly. EQ bypass pushbutton allows instant comparison to “flat” response.

30 Hz cut pushbutton reduces power robbing hum and rumble distortion. Monitor output power to your speakers with a 21-segment LED display. Exclusive Auto-Magic® automatically fine-tunes and locks-in FM stations.

LED tuning and 5-segment LED signal strength indicators assure you of precise station tuning.

And there's plenty of clean power to deliver all the dynamics that today's music demands. 45 watts per channel, minimum rms into 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.04% THD. Experience the new STA-790 at your nearby Radio Shack—today! Only $359.95.

BUILT AND SOLD EXCLUSIVELY BY

Radio Shack
A DIVISION OF TANDY CORPORATION

Retail price may vary at individual stores and dealers.
Stevie's cassette is SA-X for all the keys he plays in.

When it comes to music, Stevie Wonder and TDK are perfectionists. Stevie's perfection lies in his talent. TDK's perfection is in its technology. The kind of technology that makes our newly reformulated SA-X high bias cassette the cassette that Stevie depends on to capture every note and nuance of every performance. SA-X cassettes give Stevie a new dimension in high bias recording with sound performance which approaches that of high-energy metal. The exclusive TDK double-coating of Super Avilyn particles provides optimum performance for each frequency range. And SA-X's super wide dynamic range and high MOL handle high signal levels without distortion or saturation. Last, but not least, TDK's Laboratory Standard Mechanism gives Stevie unsurpassed cassette reliability, for a lifetime. TDK SA-X—it's the machine for Stevie Wonder's machine. Shouldn't it be the machine for yours?
FIFTEEN ALBUMS WERE CERTIFIED GOLD by the Recording Industry Association of America in July, the first month since January in which certifications equaled those of the same month last year. The July list of records that have sold more than 500,000 copies includes John Cougar's "American Fool" (Riva/Polygram), Juice Newton's "Quiet Lies" (Capitol), Air Supply's "Now and Forever" (Arista), "Stevie Wonder's Original Musiquarium I" (Tamla/Motown), and "Hooked on Swing" (RCA) by Larry Elgart and the Manhattan Swing Orchestra. The movie soundtrack album from Annie (Columbia) and Richard Simmons's exercise album "Reach" (Elektra) were certified platinum (sales of 1,000,000 copies). "Reach," "Now and Forever," "Quiet Lies," and "Hooked on Swing" are reviewed in this issue.

PERLMAN: COOL AND CLASSIC is the first of three telecasts in the series Previn and the Pittsburgh, returning to PBS on October 6. Conductor/pianist André Previn collaborates here with violinist Itzhak Perlman, bassist Red Mitchell, drummer Shelly Manne, and guitarist Jim Hall. The program shows how these musicians made the Angel jazz album "A Different Kind of Blues," which has become a best seller. Check local Public Broadcasting Service stations for exact time.

JAZZ ALIVE!, National Public Radio's prestigious series, celebrates its fifth birthday on October 2 with a four-hour special featuring such performers as Ella Fitzgerald and Stevie Wonder with tapes of a number of great jazz musicians who have died since they appeared on the show. Among these are Bill Evans, Charles Mingus, and Helen Humes. Continuing its sixth season, on October 9 the show salutes Thelonious Monk. On October 16 there is a show from the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. The Modern Jazz Quartet and Dave Brubeck Quartet are the artists on the October 23 program. The October 30 concert is from Carnegie Hall and is part of the Kool Jazz Festival.

PRIZES AND AWARDS: The American Man of Music award given every three years by Phi Mu Alpha (a professional music fraternity) was presented this year to the operatic baritone Sherrill Milnes. ...The Leonie Sonning Music Prize in Denmark was presented to Isaac Stern for his "unique efforts and contribution, both as a violinist and a violin pedagogue, to the international music life."...Composer Conlon Nancarrow, who turns seventy on October 27, has been named recipient of a $300,000 award from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Nancarrow, who has spent the last forty years in seclusion in Mexico, composes only for the player piano. Recordings of his work can be ordered from 1750 Arch Records, 1750 Arch Street, Berkeley, Calif. 94709. ...Congressman Sidney R. Yates (D., Illinois) has received the American Symphony Orchestra League's Gold Baton for his support of the arts.

TECH NOTES: Sony has reportedly developed a means of recording stereo of high quality in addition to a video signal on their Beta-format videocassettes without using conventional analog recording techniques. The system, dubbed AFM, uses frequency modulation to achieve a reported signal-to-noise ratio of 80 dB, 20 to 20,000 Hz frequency response, 0.3 per cent harmonic distortion, and 0.005 per cent wow and flutter. The FM-audio signals are apparently fed to two special heads mounted on the spinning video-head drum. Sony has made no announcement of product availability and has not said whether AFM is compatible with previous Beta formats.

GUIDES TO THE USE AND CARE OF TAPE RECORDERS are available at no charge from Nortronics, a major manufacturer of magnetic heads for recorders. The booklets are "Recorder Care Manual" and "Picture Perfect Guide to Home Video Recording." They will be sent free on request from Recorder Care Division, Nortronics Company, Inc., 8101 Tenth Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minn. 55427.
CARING AND SHARING

ONLY two American audiophiles own the $10,000 Micro Seiki SX 8000 turntable shown on the cover of this issue. I don't know who the fortunate two are, but when they invite friends in to listen to a few records, they must feel a pride of possession similar to what King Francis I of France experienced when he asked his friends over to look at the new painting he had bought from Leonardo da Vinci, the Mona Lisa.

In the article on high-end hi-fi that begins on page 62, Alan Lofft (a new contributor to this magazine) speculates a bit on what motivates people who become obsessive about owning the rarest and most expensive audio components. Their pleasures seem to be intensified variations on the pleasures available to anyone who cares about the things we care about with the people we care about. This is as true of music as it is of equipment. I got increased pleasure from last night's concert at the Mostly Mozart Festival because my friend Tony DeBellis, who was hearing the oboist Heinz Holliger for the first time, was clearly enjoying himself hugely.

Music has been one of the principal ingredients of my long friendship with the painter Edith Battaglia, who lives in Washington. I am indebted to her for bringing to my attention such things as Mozart's Clarinet Quintet and the piano recordings of Dinu Lipatti as well as the cabaret singer Karen Akers and many bossa nova players. She has also made me listen to Herb Alpert with new respect. I have tried to repay Edith in part by sending her recordings by sopranos Montserrat Caballé and Elly Ameling, the pianists Jorge Bolet and Murray Perahia, and the Spanish pop singer Nati Mistral.

I thought I had mined all the pleasure out of the standard orchestral repertoire of symphonies and concertos until a friend, Dave Brunt, a young economist who lives in Denver, asked me to recommend some recordings that would help him to appreciate classical music. "I never know what to ask for in a record store," he wrote. "There are so many thousands of compositions and many different recordings of each one."

As I surveyed my collection and played over selected recordings before sending them to Dave, I realized that such things as the Beethoven symphonies no longer sounded familiar to me when I listened to them for someone else. I felt more than amply repaid for my efforts when I received a letter from Dave that began, "I am listening to Vladimir Ashkenazy's recording of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 21 and it is sending chills up and down my spine."

A valuable guide in choosing records for him was Stereo Review's "The Basic Repertoire," a pamphlet that lists the most frequently performed classical orchestral compositions with recommended recordings of each. It is prepared as a labor of love every year by our critic Richard Freed. You can order the 1982 updating by sending $1 and a long (No. 10), stamped (40c), self-addressed envelope to Basic Repertoire, P.O. Box 506, Murray Hill Station, New York, N.Y. 10016. The price of this guide to the greatest musical treasures on record is insignificant compared with the cost of even modest hi-fi components. And if you are one of the lucky owners of a Micro Seiki SX 8000, your turntable is still only good for playing records. "The Basic Repertoire" will tell you which records are good enough for such a fine piece of equipment.
MAKE ONE SOUND INVESTMENT
The V15 Type V Phono Cartridge

GET THE SECOND ONE FREE!
LIMITED TIME $50 BOND BONUS


U.S. Technology triumphs again. Throughout the world, leading audio critics have lavished unequivocal praise on the Shure V15 Type V, saying "It may be safe to say that this cartridge's excellent tracking ability is Number One in the world." (Swing Journal, May 1982, Japan). "Without any doubt, THE top range absolutely universal cartridge." (Hi-Fi Stereo, June 1982, France). "...not only lives up to the claims made for it, but in virtually every respect outperforms the best cartridges we have previously tested." (Stereo Review, June 1982, U.S.A.)

The Type V is the world's most innovative, most precision-engineered, and complete phono cartridge system. It offers unequalled trackability and ultra-flat frequency response, a result of the exclusive MICROWALL/Be™ Beryllium stylus shank's incredibly high stiffness-to-mass ratio. Among its many exclusive features, the Type V has the patented Dynamic Stabilizer/DeStaticizer to overcome the major problems of record playback that cause pops, clicks, and mistracking.

Your investment in a V15 Type V will bring you a sophisticated array of important new construction features, performance capabilities, and high technology instrumentation. It all adds up to a truly sound investment that will upgrade the performance of your entire playback system. Shure proves again that the world's finest phono cartridge technology continues to come from this U.S.A. plant in Evanston, IL. See your participating dealer for details.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rick Springfield

In regard to Joel Vance’s review of Rick Springfield’s “Success Hasn’t Spoiled Me Yet” in the August issue, there are a few things I would like to get Mr. Vance, who claims to be a Springfield fan, straight on.

First of all, Rick Springfield is not an actor who plays music on the side; he is a musical performer who does some acting on the side. He is also not a comedian; he is not writing jokes or trying to be funny. He is a singer/writer/musician/actor and does a great job at all four. Springfield is a great songwriter, and every song on “Success” is beautiful, well written, and wonderfully performed.

Rick stated in an interview that he is continuously thinking of and writing new songs, even on the set of General Hospital, and that he does not take the time to keep up with the entire story line of the show, only his own. He does not even take time to attend the General Hospital cast parties. His music comes first. Another thing that any true Springfield fan would know is that his dog, which is part bull terrier and part great Dane, is named Ron, not Ben, as Mr. Vance had it.

SAM MCCLAIN
Donalds, S.C.

Haircut One Hundred

I would like to thank Mark Peel for the positive and well-deserved review of Haircut One Hundred’s “Pelican West” in the August issue. Having been a follower of the group for several months, I was quite pleased to find someone sharing my enthusiasm. Perhaps Mr. Peel’s review may convince my cynical friends that a group with an unusual name can actually be good.

RANDY P. COLLINS
Trenton, N.J.

The Human League

Normally I take Stereo Review’s anti-New Music reviews in stride, just as I did your anti-Progressive Rock reviews ten years ago, but Steve Simels’s August review of the Human League’s year-old album “Dare” was so misinformed that I couldn’t resist writing.

First, “Dare” is the fourth Human League album (if you count the group’s EP as an album), and their first song was released in June 1978! “Travelogue” was released in the U.S., so there’s no excuse for ignorance about the League. Of course, the group splintered after that album into Heaven 17, a funk-oriented electro-pop group that includes musicians from all over the world, and the new Human League, but the latter’s basic sound is still the same as on the debut album, “Reproduction.”

How can Mr. Simels criticize voices as natural as the League’s? Sure, they don’t sing completely on key, but then neither does Mick Jagger! Also, the one truly “throwaway” (that is, formula) song on the album is the one he praises! I’m not saying that “Dare” is wonderful—Heaven 17 represents the better half of the old Human League—but it has a heck of a lot more musicality and naturalness than many of the albums Mr. Simels has recently raved about.

It took America two years to catch on to the Beatles. Waiting until “Dare” is accepted into the mainstream and then calling it a debut album is unforgivable!

MARK SCHMIEDER
Concord, Mass.

Digital Obsolescence?

It was good to see E. Brad Meyer’s April article on digital recording and Dr. John Diamond’s response in July “Letters.” One cannot but wonder if the proposed standard sampling rate for digital recording is not quite a bit lower than it should be. After all, our best digital efforts are compared to the far-from-realistic reproductions we are used to, and inevitably what sounds superb today will be found on closer acquaintance to be full of flaws, unrealistic. Each new advance in recording technology educates our ears that much more.

Maybe we should recognize that we are entering a new arena of unforeseeable improvement in which it is more reasonable than not to assume that the standards we begin with will be superseded quite soon by better ones, ones we are not qualified at this time to imagine. I think it is quite sensible to assume that my first digital player, and the records to go with it, will be technologically obsolete within a few years of their purchase. But—and this is the overwhelmingly important point in favor of digital—the last day I use them they will sound as good as they did on the first.

Regarding Dr. Diamond’s experiments supposedly showing stress reactions from listening to digital recordings: maybe what he was really measuring was exhilaration and excitement, the desired results of listening to more realistic reproduction.

EDGAR R. JONES
Englewood, Fla.

Associate Technical Editor David Ranada replies: Mr. Jones makes a common mistake regarding digital obsolescence. Any standardized home-playback system is virtually immune to obsolescence due to the development of ‘‘better standards.’’ For example, the nascent Sony/Philips Compact Disc system could be easily ‘‘upgraded’’ (should that ever become desirable) by relatively simple changes in encoding standards and circuitry. New playback circuits could be built to encode or decode according to both old and new playback standards, such tasks are what digital circuits do best anyway. Only the basic physical characteristics of the disc itself must remain fixed (diameter, center-hole size, etc.) After digital audio gets rolling—which it can do only after the adoption of a standard—the cost of a digital disc player will be far outweighed by the cost of an average-size digital-disc collection. The discs must not become obsolete, the way 78’s or cylinders have, but the players can. A change of standard might be difficult and expensive for professional and home digital-audio recording systems, however.

Which B-52’s?

July “Popular Music Briefs” included a piece about the B-52’s and under a nice picture of... Cindy Wilson? Now I know the two girls are hard to tell apart with their wigs on, but that was Kate Pierson, not Cindy Wilson.

KENNETH ROGERS
Slidell, La.

Oops, our mistake.

Promotional 78’s

Steve Simels remarked in April “Popular Music Briefs” that RCA’s 78-rpm promotional record for its Dorsey/Sinatra album “may be the first [such] in over three decades.” Fortunately, this is incorrect. Among the fifteen 78-rpm records issued since the Fifties that are listed in my column “For the Record,” in the Association for Recorded Sound Collections Journal, Vol. XIV, No. 1, there are four promotional 78’s issued by major American labels since the Sixties.

Reprise started the ball rolling with a Randy Newman record in its mythical “78 Speed Series,” issued complete with a hu-
$79 CLOSE-OUT

Sound Detonator
Make your stereo system's sound explode with life, improving the sound quality by 30 to 50%, with this limited $79 close-out from BSR.

EASY HOOK UP
Use your tape monitor circuit, but don't lose it. Just plug the equalizer into the tape 'in' and 'out' jacks on your receiver. We even supply the cables.

As you listen to your records, FM stereo or 'aux', any time you push the tape monitor switch on your receiver you'll hear your music jump up to life.

For your tape deck, simply plug it into the tape 'in' and 'out' jacks on the equalizer exactly as it was plugged into your receiver.

The output from your receiver is always fed direct to your tape deck for recording and with the touch of a button, you can choose to send equalized or nonequalized signal to your recorder.

When you want to listen to your tape deck, just press tape monitor on the equalizer and the tape deck will work exactly as it did before. Except, that now you can choose to listen to it with or without enhancing equalization.

You won't be listening to any distortion or hum. The Sound Detonator has a 95db signal to noise ratio and total harmonic distortion of only 0.013%.

Once you've set your equalizer controls, switch it in and out of the system. Then you'll hear such an explosive improvement in sound you'll think you've been listening to wrong.

It has a frequency response from 5hz to 100,000hz ±1db. And, it's made and backed by a 2 year limited warranty by BSR, the ADC equalizer people. Our $79 close-out price is just a fraction of its true retail value.

CAN YOUR STEREO SOUND BETTER?
Incredibly better. Equalizers are very different from conventional bass and treble controls.

Bass controls turn up the entire low end as well as the low mid-range making the sound muddy and heavy. With an equalizer, you simply pick the exact frequencies you want to enhance.

You can boost the low bass at 60hz, and/or 150hz, and the mid-bass at 400hz to animate specific areas of the musical spectrum.

And, best of all when you boost the part of the bass you like, you don't disturb the mid-range frequencies and make your favorite singer sound like he has a sore throat.

The high frequencies really determine the clarity and brilliance of your music. You can boost the high mid-range at 2400hz, or the high end at 6000hz and 15,000hz, bringing crashing cymbals to life at 15,000hz while at the same time you cut tape hiss or annoying record scratches at 6000hz.

You can also boost or cut specific midrange frequency areas to add or subtract vocal, trumpets, guitars or whatever instrument ranges you prefer.

THERE'S MORE
You can push a button and transfer all the equalization power to the input of your tape deck. So, if you have a cassette deck in your car, or a personal stereo that you wear, you can pre-equalize your cassettes as you record them with no cables to switch.

Now you can get all the dramatically enhanced sound wherever you are. This is an especially great feature for bass starved portables and high-end starved car stereos to make them come alive.

WHY A CLOSE-OUT
BSR is a very large company. Somebody decided to market equalizers under both their ADC subsidiary and the BSR names. Well, we never thought it was a very practical idea. And, now they seem to agree.

From now on you'll only see ADC equalizers. But, because they didn't know what to do with these that were labeled BSR, we got them for a song.

So, you can go to any HiFi store and buy an ADC equalizer made by the parent company BSR, or you can get this super BSR equalizer while our limited supply lasts for only $79.

Oh yes, if you want to know more about BSR, they also own DBX, the noise reduction company and if you're familiar with the X10 remote control system for your home, that's BSR too.

THE FINAL FACTS
There are 14 slide controls each with a bright LED to clearly show its position. Each control will add or subtract up to 12db. (That's a 24db range!)

There are separate sound detonation slide controls for each channel at 60hz, 150hz, 400hz, 1000hz, 2400hz, 6000hz, and 15,000hz.

There's an LED VU meter to show the relative channel output levels of the left, right and average of both. Plus there's a meter level control. It's 16-9/16" wide, 7-1/2" deep, and 3-9/16" tall.

PUT LIFE INTO YOUR MUSIC RISK FREE
Prepare for a shock the first time you switch in this unit. Instruments you never knew were in your music will emerge and bring a lifelike sound that will envelop you and revolutionize your concept of your home stereo.

Hook this BSR into your system and really give it a workout. If you aren't 100% satisfied for any reason, simply return it to DAK within 30 days in its original box for a courteous refund.

To order your Sound Detonator BSR EQ-2 Stereo Frequency Equalizer risk free with your credit card, simply call the DAK toll free hotline or send your check for only $79 plus $6 for postage and handling. Order Number 9420. CA residents please add 6% sales tax.

Wake up the sound in your stereo. Your sound will explode with life as you detonate each frequency band with new musical life.

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CIRCLE NO. 11 ON READER SERVICE CARD
There’s only one way to play it.
There’s only one sensation this refreshing. Low ‘tar’ Kool Lights. The taste doesn’t miss a beat.

KOOL LIGHTS

Kings, 9 mg. ‘tar’ 0.8 mg. nicotine av per cigarette by FTC method.

morous press release probably around April Fool’s Day in 1968. Capitol commemorated Tennessee Ernie Ford’s twentieth anniversary with the label by a special 78-rpm disc of Sixteen Tons and his first record, I’ve Got the Milk ‘Em in the Mornin’ Blues, in February 1969. Liberty followed with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band doing Mr. Bojangles backed with Uncle Charlie Interview No. 2 & Spanish Pandango. Last came the 1974 United Artists 78 promoting its American release of “The Golden Age of the Hollywood Musical” with original soundtrack recordings of Lullaby of Broadway and We’re in the Money. Even later 78’s were regular issues on minor labels. Full discographic data will be found in my column. I would be very interested in receiving information about any 78-rpm discs issued since 1960 not listed there.

MICHAEL BIEL
Radio-TV Department
Morehead State University
Morehead, Ky. 40351

Cover Up

- What a very pleasant innovation for the July cover of STEREO REVIEW—a picture of a beautiful woman enjoying her music!

J. W. COLE
Ontario, Canada

Jussi Bjoerling—Again

- June’s “Letters” included an announcement of the publication of a Jussi Bjoerling Discography by Jack W. Porter’s Jussi Bjoerling Memorial Archive. This work was initiated by me ten years ago with continual important contributions by Porter. However, this edition was produced by Porter without my knowledge or consent from a photocopy of the manuscript that I had sent to him for checking. Porter has arbitrarily changed the title, the order of authors’ names, and the foreword. He has not had access to my latest corrections and additions, and I cannot take responsibility for all details in the text.

The originally planned publication by the Swedish Music History Archive has now been delayed by the complicated legal and economic situation caused by Porter’s arbitrary action. I hope to publish in the near future a revised and completed edition in English, and I will be grateful for any additional information from STEREO REVIEW readers about Bjoerling’s recordings.

HARALD HENRYSSON
Västanvägen 17, S-14600 Tullinge
Sweden

Leopold Stokowski

- The Leopold Stokowski Society aims to promote interest in the work of the late conductor, whose centennial is being celebrated this year. Society members receive a bi-monthly newsletter and have access to cassette recordings of Stokowski’s performances. Interested readers may write to me at the address below.

SYLVAN LEVIN
7 East 78th Street
New York, N.Y. 10021

STEREO REVIEW
Illegitimate child

Now with Mura Red Set III

Rip-off or spin-off, you've never heard sound like you'll hear from the Mura Red Set III headphones you can get for only $5. But, there's a catch.

It was spawned by Sony. And, it's an entirely new technology. No more cheap paper speakers and heavy magnets. Sound is reproduced with such clarity and power that it will send shivers up and down your spine.

Sony's MDR-3 headphones sell for up to $65 and they've been worth it. Last year DAK introduced our own unbranded $5 version of the headphone that we felt was very close to Sony's.

But, now we've gone strictly legit. The headphones we are giving you now, still for only $5, are the fabulous Mura Red Set IIIs. You'll find them in most quality HiFi shops around the country competing with Sony's.

We've been selling them for $29. Why not check your local HiFi store's price.

Then, we challenge you to compare the Mura Red Set IIIs high quality sound to Sony's. But, there are two things you ought to know.

 Thing one. If you don’t like the Mura headphones better than Sony’s, not only can you return them and get your money back, but we’ll also give you a free gift for your time and trouble.

 YOU’VE BEEN THERE BEFORE

You may already be familiar with the sound produced by these headphones. If you’ve ever sat in the very front row during a symphony concert, or right in the middle of a live jazz band, you know the spine tingling thrill of the full rich sound that envelops you.

If you sit even 10 rows back, you lose the feeling. You still listen to the music, but you can’t touch or taste the sound.

It’s only when you sit right up front that the sound is alive with electricity. It’s the same sound you get with Sony’s MDR-3s and the Mura Red Set IIIs.

 ILLEGITIMATE CHILD

Not recognized by law as a lawful offspring. The technology is new. Up until the Sony featherweight headphones were introduced, most headphones were simply uncomfortable miniature speaker systems that you wore on your ears.

The Sony breakthrough was made possible by changing the cheap paper speaker cones to mylar diaphragms, and by using the powerful rare earth magnet Samarium to move the diaphragms.

The mylar diaphragms are much more accurate than paper and have a drastically improved dynamic range. The result is a headphone that weights less than 2 ounces and yet produces 20-20,000 hz sounds better than a theater sized loudspeaker system.

Sony fathered the technology for these headphones and obviously has no connection to DAK or Mura, but the technological heritage will become vividly apparent when you compare the sound of these marvelous headphones.

ADOPTED—NOW OF ROYAL BLOOD

Now instead of an unbranded offspring, you get a pure blooded thoroughbred.

Mura’s mylar diaphragms actually consist of a dome shaped inner tweeter plus a stiffered outer cone low frequency piston for awesome bass.

Even Mura’s cable is impressive. It’s made of special anoxic copper wire to reduce high frequency signal attenuation. The first 4 feet are terminated in a mini plug to fit all pocket stereos.

The extension cord lets you roam up to 12 ft.

Plus, you get an 8 foot extension cable (a $4 value) that ends in a standard 1/4” phono plug to fit your home stereo.

And Mura Red Set III phones are backed by a full 2 year manufacturer's limited warranty for your protection.

THE CATCH

 Thing two. We are losing our shirts on the Mura Red Set IIIs, but we’re looking for audiophiles who use audio cassettes.

If you buy top name TDK and Maxell cassettes, you probably pay $3.50 to $4.50 each for a 90 minute cassette.

We want you to try DAK’s new Gold Label MLX ultra high energy, normal bias cassettes. Not at $4.50 or even at $3.50 each, but at a factory direct price of just $2.49 for a 90 minute cassette.

We challenge you to compare the frequency response, dynamic range and signal to noise ratio of our new Gold Label MLX to Maxell UDXL or TDK SA. If they win, we'll not only give you back your money, we'll give you a free gift for your trouble. And, DAK’s come with a deluxe hard plastic box, index card and a limited 1 year warranty.

WHY, YOU MAY BE ASKING?

You're very valuable to us in the form of future business. Over 160,000 customers have responded to bonuses like this. We find most of you keep buying once you've tried our cassettes and our prices, and that's a gamble worth taking.

NOT A BAD CATCH

DAK manufactures a cassette with no problems and great sound. We’ve been hot on the heels of the frequency responses of Maxell and TDK. The tape we made last year had a great frequency response up to 14,000 hz.

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To order with your credit card, call the DAK toll free hotline or send your check for only $24.90 for the 10 MLX90 minute cassettes, plus $5 for the incomparable Red Set IIIs and $3 for postage and handling for each group. Order No. 9422. CA res add 6% sales tax.

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CIRCLE NO. 12 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Ed Meyer is a member of The Acoustical Society of America. An engineer by profession. A frequent audio consultant to government and industry. And president of Myer-Emco audio showrooms of Washington, D.C.

For the last 15 years, Ed Meyer has recommended Luxman High Fidelity Components to his clientele. "People here are very wise, very educated, very thoughtful about their high fidelity requirements and purchases. I've always been proud to recommend Luxman. The components sound superb, look superb. And they're of lasting value."

For the Luxman audio expert nearest you, call toll-free, 800-421-1395. In California, 800-262-4150. ©1982 Luxman/Division of Alpine Electronics of America, Inc., 3102 Kashiwa Street, Torrance, California 90505.

LUXMAN
High Fidelity Components

CIRCLE NO. 38 ON READER SERVICE CARD
ADS's Wood-Cabinet Minispeaker

The Model 300W speaker from ADS is similar to the company's Model 300C in that both systems have 1-inch soft-dome high-frequency drivers. However, the 300W has an American black-walnut veneer finish instead of the 300C's "high-tech" aluminum cabinet. The 300W's enclosure also has solid walnut corner bolsters and a black metal grille. Also new in the 300W is the low-frequency driver. Its Stifflite cone material and butyl-rubber surround are said to give a longer and more linear cone excursion as well as increased power-handling capability.

Frequency response is given as 68 to 20,000 Hz ± 3 dB. The crossover slopes are 12 dB per octave and center around 2,500 Hz. Nominal power rating is 50 watts, and output with a 1-watt input is 90 dB sound-pressure level at 1 meter. Rated system impedance is 4 ohms. Dimensions are 8 1/2 x 6 3/4 x 5 3/4 inches. The speaker can be used with the optional F400 speaker stand or WB400 wall-mount brackets. Price: $349 per pair.

Circle 120 on reader service card

Thorens Turntable Takes Two Tone Arms

For the audiophile with special requirements, the Thorens TD 226 turntable offers the 78-rpm speed and provisions for mounting two tone arms for different applications. The Thorens TP 16 arm is recommended for general low-mass, low-friction applications, and the SME III arm is suggested for still lower-mass or damped operation. Also available for use with the TD 226 is the Thorens VCM vacuum system, which holds the record firmly on the platter mat by suction; the resulting strong platter-to-disc coupling is claimed to prevent mechanical resonances in the disc and to stabilize the disc surface. A low-speed d.c. servomotor drives the TD 226's platter with a rubber belt. An adjustable suspension system isolates the tone arms, platter, and chassis from the base, dust cover, and platter-drive motor. For added convenience, a light for illuminating the platter is mounted on the rear of the base.

Other features of the basic turntable include a pitch control (±6 per cent) and a 12-inch, 7-pound, dynamically balanced platter. Wow-and-flutter is given as 0.035 per cent (DIN 45507). Weighted rumble is -72 dB (DIN 45539). The effective length of the TP 16 tone arm is 9 inches. Effective mass is 7.5 grams and lateral tracking error is 1.5 degrees maximum. Pivot-bearing friction is 1.5 milligrams in the vertical and horizontal planes. Cable capacitance is 190 picofarads. Dimensions of the TD 226 are 83/16 x 26 1/6 x 18 3/8 inches; weight is about 50 pounds. Prices: TD 226 without tone arms, $1,250; with TP 16, $1,425; with SME III, $1,700; with both tone arms, $2,075. The VCM system costs an additional $540.

Circle 121 on reader service card

Carver FM Tuner Reduces Multipath Interference

The Carver TX-11 quartz-locked digital-frequency-synthesis FM tuner has circuitry that is said virtually to eliminate multipath distortion and distant-station noise while providing full stereo separation. A charge-coupled delay line helps substitute a multipath-free L + R signal for the distant-station signal. Carver's original TX-9 and TX-10 models used a digital-frequency-synthesis circuitry that is said virtually to eliminate multipath distortion and distant-station noise while providing full stereo separation. Carver's TX-11 model uses a charge-coupled delay line to help substitute a multipath-free L + R signal for the distant-station signal.

Kenwood Receiver Switches Audio and Video

Kenwood's KVR-510 audio-video receiver is a digital frequency-synthesis model with the capability of switching both audio and video signals. Video switching is done on video-component r.f. outputs. The unit has inputs for either two videocassette recorders or a VCR and a videodisc player as well as TV, a video game/computer, phono, AM/FM, auxiliary, and one audio tape recorder. Circuitry also permits dubbing between VCRs and from normal audio inputs to a VCR. An "Enhancer" circuit produces simulated stereo sound from mono sound sources by means of phase manipulation.

The receiver is rated at 30 watts per channel output power into 8-ohm loads (45 watts into 4 ohms). Total harmonic distortion and IM distortion are both 0.08 per cent or less. Phono signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) is 72 dB with a 2.5-millivolt input RIAA playback-response accuracy is ±0.3 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz. Six presets are available in the tuner section, which has a usable sensitivity of 1.9 microvolts (µV) and a 50-dB-quiescent sensitivity of 40 µV. Stereo S/N with a 1,000-µV signal (65 dB) is 71 dB. Capture ratio is 1 dB, image rejection 45 dB, and alternate-channel selectivity 50 dB. The AM section has an S/N of 50 dB. Dimensions are 17 3/4 x 4 1/2 x 12 3/8 inches; weight is 10 1/2 pounds. The receiver's appearance matches Kenwood's KV-901 VHS-format VCR. Price: $399.

Circle 122 on reader service card
**New Products**

**Technics Turntables**

- The fully automatic Technics SL-30 turntable utilizes the Technics-developed P-mount system for direct installation of a cartridge without additional adjustments. P-mount cartridges are standardized for tracking force, external dimensions, connector shape, stylus-tip position, and center of gravity. The turntable does, however, allow for slight adjustments of antiskating force.

- The SL-30 has a quartz phase-locked-loop direct-drive d.c. motor with an integral rotor/platter. A doubly isolated suspension system and die-cast aluminum base help reduce the effects of external vibrations. Automatic sensors detect the size of the disc on the platter and place the tone arm accordingly. The straight tone arm is equipped with a four-pivot ball-bearing gimbal suspension system. Its effective length is slightly over 9 inches and its effective mass (without cartridge) 7.5 grams. Arm/cartridge resonance with a P-mount cartridge falls near 10 Hz. Wow-and-flutter is rated as 0.025 per cent (wrms); rumble is given as −78 dB (DIN-B). Dimensions are 17 x 41/4 x 141/4 inches with dust cover; weight is 133/4 pounds. Controls are mounted on the outside of the base. Price: $220.

**AudioSource’s Ultra-Miniature Loudspeakers**

- AudioSource’s LS-Six “Personal Speakers” can be plugged directly into any small portable FM or tape player and are meant to provide low-level listening in a variety of permanent and mobile settings. They are acoustic-suspension speakers and have a rated frequency response of 150 to 20,000 Hz. System impedance is 20 ohms; sound-pressure level at 1 meter with a 1-watt input is 84 dB. The speakers use a single 50-millimeter high-compliance driver mounted in an aluminum case with metal grille. Dimensions are 3 1/2 x 3 1/2 x 12 1/2 inches; weight is 11 1/4 pounds. Price: $39.95 each. AudioSource, Dept. SR, 1185 Chess Drive, Foster City, Calif. 94404.

**JVC Video Recorder**

- JVC’s HR-2650U VHS-format videocassette recorder (right in photo) can record and play stereo soundtracks using its self-contained, switchable Dolby-B noise-reduction system. The video circuitry employs a four-head system for superior image quality at both SP and EP speeds. Three playback speeds (SP, LP, and EP) and two recording speeds (SP and EP) are available for recording up to 8 hours (depending on tape length). Special video controls include shuttle search in either direction, slow motion at half normal speed, fast motion at three times normal speed, frame-by-frame advance, and still frame. The VCR can be powered by the TU-26U (left) tuner/timer, a car battery, an optional power supply, or rechargeable NiCad battery packs. A full-function infrared remote control is included. Separate audio microphone and line inputs are provided as well as video inputs and outputs and a radio-frequency output. In SP mode the audio frequency response is given as 100 to 10,000 Hz ±6 dB. Audio signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) is better than 46 dB (Dolby on). Video S/N is greater than 45 dB, picture resolution is 240 lines. The companion TU-26U tuner/timer/adaptor is a fourteen-day/eight-event design for away-from-home recording or timeshift viewing. A channel-lock system prevents accidental changing of channels after programming. A cable-ready unit, the TU-26U receives 105 UHF, VHF, mid-, and super-band cable channels. The unit can also charge NiCad battery packs for the HR-2650U. Price for the complete system: $1,495.

**First Lightweight, Miniature Phones From Signet**

- Two new Signet headphones, the company’s first lightweight, miniature models, use samarium-cobalt rare-earth magnets and oxygen-free copper wire in their earpieces and cords, features said to reduce distortion and improve output levels. Both models come with mini stereo phone plugs for use with personal portable equipment and include mini-to-1/4-inch adaptors for use with home equipment.

The Model TK11 has a rated frequency response of 30 to 20,000 Hz and weighs slightly less than two ounces. A ball-joint pivot on each earpiece eases adjustment for
THE V-95RX.

YOU CAN'T EVEN HEAR ITS BEST FEATURE.

This is the Teac that's quicker than the ear. It features Real Time Reverse. When your cassette comes to its end, a miniature infra-red sensor activates either the independent forward or reverse capstan (as appropriate). Its unique four-channel permalloy record/play head is repositioned. And the tape reverses course. All in an astoundingly swift 0.15 seconds. So quick, the gap is virtually inaudible. In record or play. And you'll never have to flip a cassette again.

Yet this is just one feature of an extraordinary deck which also offers the unusual option of both Dolby NR* and dbx** noise reduction. Plus Computomatic. So you can program in advance the exact cuts you want. Along with a three-motor transport system. And an optional full-function remote control.

The V-95RX. You won't know if it's coming or going.

TEAC® MADE IN JAPAN BY FANATICS.
New Products

a more comfortable fit. The Model TK20 (shown) has a frequency response of 25 to 20,000 Hz and weighs about 1 1/2 ounces. The unit features a fully rotating yoke-and-pivot suspension system for vertical and lateral adjustments. The headphone also folds down to fit in a belt-loop carrying case (supplied). Prices: TK11, under $50; TK20, under $80.

Circle 127 on reader service card

Low-Priced Dual Turntable

The Dual 505-1, the lowest-priced single-play turntable the company has ever produced, includes Dual's dynamically balanced Ultra Low Mass (ULM) tone-arm system. The unit's Vario Belt drive allows a ±6 per cent change in either of its two speeds (33⅓ and 45 rpm). Other features include a damped cueing lever and antiskating adjustment scales for elliptical and spherical stylus. Rated wow-and-flutter is 0.08 per cent (DIN); rms flutter is 0.05 per cent. Unweighted rumble is -40 dB ( -69 dB with DIN weighting). Dimensions, including the dust cover, are 17 1/2 x 5 1/8 x 14 1/2 inches. A version with a premounted cartridge is available. Price without cartridge: $129.95.

Circle 129 on reader service card

Klipsch Moving-Coil Phono Cartridges

Klipsch has introduced a line of moving-coil phono cartridges that are said to be "meticulously crafted by hand under the close personal supervision of [their] creator, Mr. Hiroaki Hibino." A special double-damping system is said to maintain proper cantilever damping regardless of changes in temperature or humidity. The damping system uses two separate laminated rubber elements, each compound reacting differently to atmospheric conditions. Silver-coated oxygen-free copper wire is used in the top two models in the line, and samarium-cobalt magnets are used throughout. The models differ primarily in their cantilever materials. The MCZ-2 has an aluminum-alloy cantilever, the MCZ-7 has one made of boron, and the MCZ-10 (shown) has one made of ruby.

Frequency response for all three models is 20 to 45,000 Hz ± 2 dB. Output at standard recording level is 0.2 millivolt; channel balance within 0.5 dB. Compliance is 9 x 10⁻⁶ cm/dyne for the MCZ-2, 11 x 10⁻⁶ cm/dyne for the MCZ-7, and 10 x 10⁻⁶ cm/dyne for the MCZ-10. All three cartridges have 0.3 x 0.7-mil line-contact elliptical stylus and track at 1.8 ± 0.3 grams. A step-up transformer as well as a diamond-cantilever cartridge will be introduced later. Prices: MCZ-2, $215; MCZ-7, $375; MCZ-10, $325.

Circle 128 on reader service card

Sony's Knobless Amp and Tuner

Two matched, computer-controlled components from Sony, the TA-AX44 integrated amplifier (top) and the ST-JX44 AM/FM tuner (bottom), feature push-button controls in a compact front-panel design. All preamplifier functions in the amplifier are governed by an audio-signal-processor integrated circuit that controls volume, balance, muting, bass and treble tone, high- and low-frequency filters, and signal-path switching. Only the power and speaker-selection switches are conventional mechanical devices. Sony says that since the audio signal is controlled by an IC, less wiring is required and there is consequently less chance of signal degradation. The IC is said to offer a dynamic range in excess of 100 dB while keeping harmonic distortion down to 0.002 per cent. The amp can be programmed to memorize two tone-control settings, and each of those can be assigned to a separate signal source. An IC memory retains the settings for up to ten years. Connections and switching for two tape decks are provided. The unit's power rating is 40 watts per channel into 8 ohms with no more than 0.008 per cent total harmonic distortion. Dimensions are 17 x 3 3/4 x 11 3/4 inches.

"Direct Comparator" circuitry in the ST-JX44 tuner provides the accuracy of quartz-locked frequency-synthesis tuning without the noise normally associated with that technique. Three tuning modes are provided: eight AM or FM presets with memory back-up, memory scanning, and manual scanning. The unit's usable sensitivity is given as 1.8 microvolts; the stereo signal-to-noise ratio is 77 dB with an 85-dBf (10,000-microvolt) input. Dimensions are 17 x 2 1/4 x 11 3/4 inches.

Both units can be controlled by the RM-44 infrared remote-control system (not shown). Its functions include power on/off, station selection, volume, cueing of certain Sony turntables, and control of all functions of certain Sony cassette decks. Prices: TA-AX44, $280; ST-JX44, $200; RM-44, $150.

Circle 130 on reader service card

Energy Loudspeaker's Two-Way System

The two-way Energy Loudspeaker Model 22 features a tweeter design with an on-axis frequency response said to extend to 45,000 Hz. The Dual Hyper Dome tweeter consists of two hyperbolically shaped sections, and the 7-inch polypropylene woofer uses a heavy, rubbery suspension to eliminate any cone resonances. The cabinet is internally braced to eliminate wall vibrations. The system's port, tuned to 34 Hz, is at the rear of the cabinet. The Model 22 is said to have uniform dispersion in all forward directions, and units are sold only in mirror-image stereo pairs.

On-axis frequency response is given as 35 to 45,000 Hz ± 2 dB. At 30 degrees off axis the response is 35 to 20,000 Hz ± 2 dB. Matching between stereo pairs is within 0.5 dB. System impedance is 8 ohms; sensitivity is 89 dB sound-pressure level for a 1-watt
If you're familiar with Maxell UD-XL tapes you probably find it hard to believe that any tape could give you higher performance.

But hearing is believing. And while we can't play our newest tape for you right here on this page, we can replay the comments of Audio Video Magazine.

"Those who thought it was impossible to improve on Maxell's UD-XL II were mistaken. The 1981 tape of the year award goes to Maxell XL II-S."

How does high bias XL II-S and our normal bias equivalent XL I-S give you such high performance? By engineering smaller and more uniformly shaped epitaxial oxide particles we were able to pack more into a given area of tape. Resulting in a higher maximum output level, improved signal-to-noise ratio and better frequency response.

To keep the particles from rubbing off on your recording heads Maxell XL-S also has an improved binder system. And to eliminate tape deformation, XL-S comes with our unique Quin-Lok Clamp/Hub Assembly to hold the leader firmly in place.

Of course, Maxell XL II-S and XL I-S carry a little higher price tag than lesser cassettes.

We think you'll find it a small price to pay for higher performance.
Stereo Review includes a stereo two-band parametric equalizer. The center frequencies for the two bands can be varied from 31.5 to 800 Hz and from 800 to 20,000 Hz, respectively. A boost or cut of up to 12 dB in each band is possible, and the effective bandwidth, or “Q,” of each band can be adjusted from 0.3 to 3. The C-70 also has both moving-magnet and moving-coil phono inputs and a “Disc Direct” switch on the front panel that removes all circuits from the signal path except the phono preamps and the volume control. The moving-magnet input resistance and capacitance can be switched to accommodate various cartridge requirements. Connections and switching for two auxiliary inputs as well as two tape recorders are provided. Also included are infrasonic and high-frequency filters and an audio-mute switch.

Specifications include an RIAA equalization error of no more than ±0.2 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz and an overall frequency response of 5 to 100,000 Hz +0, -0.5 dB. The moving-magnet phono input has a signal-to-noise ratio of 82 dB (IHF). Total harmonic distortion is 0.001% per cent through any input. The headphone output can supply a 4.5-volt signal to 100-ohm headphones. The infrasonic filter has a -3-dB point of 15 Hz and rolls off at 12 dB per octave below that frequency. Dimensions are 17⅛ x 3¼ x 14½ inches; weight is 15¾ pounds. Price: $780.

Circle 133 on reader service card

Nakamichi Phones

Nakamichi's SP-7 stereo headphones employ a driver system with a ferrite ring magnet, an oversized voice-coil structure, and a large-diameter, low-mass polyester diaphragm treated to eliminate breakup. A newly developed earpad reduces variations in subjective response caused by changes in earpad pressure. Eliminating diaphragm breakup at middle and high frequencies as well as nonlinear motion at low frequencies (with a special diaphragm suspension system) is said to make the SP-7 unusually free of harmonic and intermodulation distortion at all frequencies and listening levels. Damping and porting are designed to produce a subjectively "flat" frequency response.

Specifications include a diaphragm diameter of 40.5 millimeters, flux density of the magnetic structure of 5,500 gauss, sensitivity of 98 dB sound-pressure level with a 1-milliwatt input, impedance of 4 ohms, and cable length of 3 meters. Weight is 150 grams (excluding cable and plug). Two spare earpads are supplied. Price: $70.

Circle 135 on reader service card

NOTE: All product descriptions and specifications quoted in these columns are based on materials supplied by the manufacturers, who will respond directly to reader requests for further information. Domestic inflation and fluctuations in the value of the dollar overseas affect the price of merchandise imported into this country. Please be aware that prices quoted in this issue are therefore subject to change.
Sony is about to widen your ideas of audio tape.

Sony's revolutionary UCX-S has the widest dynamic range of any high-bias tape; it has expanded recording capacity.

We call it Wide Fidelity Sound™

With UCX-S, you can record at higher volume levels with less distortion than any other high-bias tape. UCX-S has unsurpassed frequency response in the low and middle ranges.

And at the very delicate high frequency ranges, its enhanced responsiveness gives exceptionally beautiful high notes.

The incredible specifications include Retentivity and Squareness higher by far than any other high-bias tape. Retentivity: 1800 Gauss. Squareness: 93%, an astounding figure.

But the real test comes when you lean back and listen. You'll hear everything with more clarity than you've ever heard before on a high-bias tape. On Sony UCX-S, with Wide Fidelity Sound.

SONY

INTRODUCING UCX-S WITH WIDE FIDELITY SOUND.

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CIRCLE NO. 43 ON READER SERVICE CARD
On the subject of receivers, we can perhaps be accused of a bit of priggishness. Having established certain standards in our components, we aren't about to put our name on a receiver if the receiver doesn't measure up.

Which brings us to a receiver in our 25/30 series, the R-25. It owes a great deal to developments incorporated in our separates.

The R-25 features Quartz Synthesized tuning for hair-splitting tuning accuracy. And if you have greater tuning accuracy you're going to have less distortion and noise, and maximum stereo separation.

Each station is illuminated on a fluorescent digital display. Tap the control bars and it proceeds to lock on to the first available station. Hold the bars down and it will scan up and down the band.

You can pre-select up to seven AM and seven FM stations for storage in memory.

To combat noise—the high-frequency variety that FM stereo falls prey to when stations are weak or far away—the R-25 has an Automatic Hi-Blend feature. It blends stereo signals into monaural in the noisy high-frequency ranges. But it leaves the undisturbed low-frequency signals in the stereo mode.

This removes almost all the perceived noise while preserving
the broadcast in stereo.

Having solved the noise problem, we moved on to that of signal strength.

Strong signals, by nature, will bully the weak ones, drowning them out, pushing them aside.

Our automatic IF (Intermediate Frequency) switching circuit solves this problem by narrowing the tuning window, thereby excluding interference.

However, since narrowing the window increases distortion, this switching function is introduced—with laudable discretion—only at that precise point where the increased distortion is a lesser evil than signal interference.

As a result, the best possible signal is delivered automatically.

The R-25 Pre-Amp section features a continuous loudness control of ten settings. Rather than the usual single on or off loudness mode. This lets you contour the low and high frequency ranges at low volumes for much richer tonal balance.

Built into the pre-amp section as well is a moving coil amplifier. A simple push of a switch and you're ready to use a high-grade moving coil cartridge without any other external unit.

Meanwhile, back in the amplifier, crossover and switching distortion is reduced to negligible levels by a linear switching circuit.

A rather ambitious array of features for a receiver.

And on the subject of distortion, High Fidelity (March, 1982) commented, "At low power... the distortion barely reaches 0.01%—the threshold below which we consider distortion altogether negligible."

They also had another nice thing to say about Mitsubishi: "The flimsy and the tacky are as inconceivable from its design studios as a pianissimo is from Ethel Merman."

Or, as we like to put it, if it says Mitsubishi, it's got to sound like a Mitsubishi.
Audio Q. and A.

By Larry Klein

Technical Director Klein checking the fiberglass wedges in an anechoic test chamber

Time Constants

Q. I know that a microsecond is a millionth of a second, but what does this have to do with the equalization of FM tuners and cassette decks?

John Jamison
Cambridge, Mass.

A. In discussing equalization, engineers use a "time constant," measured in microseconds, as a shorthand reference to the frequency at which a circuit’s response starts changing at a 6-dB-per-octave rate (either from flat to non-flat or vice versa). This terminology enables engineers to use a single number to describe the characteristics of a deliberately induced response change rather than having to specify the whole curve or the circuitry that will produce it. To convert a time constant to the frequency (in Hz) it refers to, divide 1 by the time constant (in seconds) multiplied by 2π. For instance, the 75-microsecond pre-de-emphasis time constant for FM broadcasts describes a change in response starting at the frequency equaling 

\[
1/(75 \times 10^{-6} \times 2\pi)
\]

which is 2,122 Hz.

A cassette deck uses 120- and 3,150-microsecond equalization for ferric tapes. This means that the playback equalization consists of a frequency response that starts falling at 50 Hz (3,150 microseconds) and levels off at 1,326 Hz (120 microseconds). Note that the time constant tells only the frequency at which the response starts to change, not whether the response is rising or falling. The 70-microsecond equalization used for metal and CrO₂-type tapes has the same bass “turnover” frequency (50 Hz) but a different treble one (2,274 Hz).

Q. I have a Sansui integrated amplifier with a switch on its front panel that electrically separates the preamp from the amplifier section. The manual states that an equalizer or other accessory can be connected between the preamp and amp, but my Soundcraftsmen equalizer is made to be hooked into a tape-monitor loop. If I connect my equalizer between the amp and preamp sections of my amplifier, can I then hook up a tape deck to the tape-monitor jacks of the equalizer?

M. Dascoli
Gaeta, Italy

A. An apparently simple question such as this one can completely disrupt the normal flow of work across my desk as I gaze blankly at the ceiling with visions of tape-switching block diagrams shuffling through my head. I believe you could connect a recorder to your equalizer's tape-monitor circuit (which would also provide the option of equalizing either the input signal to the tape recorder or the output signal from it). But setting the signal levels in your proposed hookup may be a bit tricky. The signal at the normal tape-output jack of an amplifier (which feeds the recorder) is unaffected by the amp’s volume-control setting, but the level at the preamp-section output jacks will vary with the volume-control setting. Unless your equalizer and recorder have conveniently placed level controls, adjusting their output levels may not be easy. As in so many other cases, there’s no harm in trying various hookups to see how well they work. I suspect, however, that Soundcraftsmen knew best when they suggested connecting their equalizer through the amplifier’s tape-monitor circuit.

Defunct Drivers

Q. My question is a short one: why is the tone arm of a record player called a "tone arm"?

Edward Evans
Arlington, Va.

A. Because it once was. If you have a chance to examine an old acoustic phonograph, you’ll find that the motion of the steel needle is mechanically coupled by a lever-and-fulcrum arrangement to a mica diaphragm. Although the vibrations of the driven diaphragm are audible without additional help, acoustical “amplification” is provided by the hollow tone arm, which couples the output of the pickup to an acoustic horn of some kind. In general, the larger the horn at the output end of the acoustic circuit the louder the volume and the better the “tone.”

Among the phonophiles of the day there was some controversy about the relative advantages of different horn, tone-arm, and playback-head materials, and there were also some wild and wonderful variations on the basic arm/horn configurations. Shown above is a 1915 French Decca portable whose tone arm is pivoted at the end of a short horn that terminates at a parabolic reflector housed in the unit’s cover. To close the case, the tone arm is folded into the reflector bowl.

Q. I need to find a source of replacement tweeters for my Ultralinear and Rectilinear speaker systems. I have written to both companies and found that they are out of business. Where do I go from here?

Ray Morse
San Bruno, Calif.

A. Your question prompted me to ask Speakerlab if they would be willing and able to supply replacement drivers for speaker systems that are both electrically and commercially defunct. I’m pleased to report that the answer is yes. Speakerlab will be glad to sell replacements for any driver whose characteristics they are able to identify.

You will need to supply all the information you can, including, of course, the system’s model number and date of manufacture (or purchase). A physical description of the defective drivers, including any stock numbers printed on the magnet structure or cone, will also be helpful. Do not send the drivers themselves unless you are requested to do so by Speakerlab. It will expedite a reply if you enclose a large, stamped, self-addressed envelope. Write to D. Graebener, Speakerlab, 735 North Northlake Way, Seattle, Wash. 98103.

Many older-design woofers, tweeters, and midrange units are no longer made, but the original vendor that supplied them to the company whose name is on the speaker cabinet is probably still in business, and they may have replacements whose characteristics are even better than the original’s. In any case, Speakerlab will be happy to advise you on what can and cannot be done to put new life into your old boxes.

Norman Dascoli
Italy

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BETTER LISTENING THROUGH CHEMISTRY.

Listen to the difference. The difference titanium carbide domes and pure spruce pulp woofers make in Yamaha's new NS-T speakers. Through a special chemical vacuum deposition process, Yamaha has succeeded in creating light, yet rigid titanium carbide speaker domes for unheard of transient response, extended frequency response, and ideal directional characteristics.

Pure spruce pulp was chosen for the woofers to provide a warmer, more natural response in the low frequency range. After all, spruce is the wood chosen for the fines: Yamaha piano soundboards.

All this advanced chemistry and acoustic science results in richly detailed, warm, natural-sounding speakers. At a price you don't have to be rich to afford. Compare other speakers costing the same or more than Yamaha’s NS-T's. Your ears will tell you the chemistry is right.

For more information, write Yamaha Electronics Corporation, USA, P.O. Box 6660, Buena Park, CA 90622.

For the music in you.

YAMAHA
Complete acceptance of digital audio will only come about with a redefinition in what we consider important in the making of a recording. Nothing has made this so clear to me as my recent adventures with Sony's PCM-F1 fourteen- or sixteen-bit digital-audio processor for videocassette recorders. I've been able to make live recordings of "demo-type material" (Mahler's Second Symphony, Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps, and Bartók's Dance Suite, among other works) with this extraordinary instrument, and my experience has convinced me that a complete shift of "mental set" is necessary to take full advantage of the capabilities of digital audio.

There have always been many things to worry about in making an analog recording. The list includes such potential problems as recorder-head alignment and cleanliness, bias and equalization settings, tape quality, tape speed, noise-reduction-system alignment, and overall recording levels. While the same list (except for the noise-reduction part) also applies to digital audio recording, there really is comparatively little to worry about. Most potential problems are a function of the VCR unit, over which the user has little control. Besides, slight misadjustments in the VCR's recording level, equalization, or head alignment will have no effect on digital sound quality.

There are really only two technical matters to be concerned about in a digital recording session: recording levels and dropouts. A digitally clipped signal sounds horrendous, but any signal recorded below the clipping level will be reproduced correctly. Usually I set the recording levels as high as possible without clipping during peaks. The common analog-recording problems resulting from levels that are either too high (tape saturation and its concomitant loss of high frequencies, high distortion, print-through) or too low (tape hiss) can be ignored. I also didn't have to worry about whether the recording level was proper for the signal's instantaneous high-frequency content or about the variation in analog-recorder frequency response with recording level.

I was (and am) quite concerned with dropouts (momentary signal losses on playback caused by dust or tape damage). Digital-audio processors work by recording on the videotape a series of binary numbers (actually, on-off pulses) representing the audio-signal voltage at closely spaced intervals. If any of the numbers are changed or missing, the audio voltage for the corresponding period is "undefined." To prevent what could be a hideous noise from issuing when an error in data occurs, digital-audio processors also record "error detection and correction" data. These data and the original digital audio-signal data are redundant in a rigorously specified way. In playback, the digital error-correction circuits use this extra information to correct errors in the audio data as they are detected. When so much information is missing or incorrect that the built-in redundancy cannot fill in the audio signal, "error-concealment" circuitry steps in. It replaces the "bad" data with a guess as to what the digits should be. Error correction completely and exactly compensates for errors in data transmission; error concealment only gives good estimates. Neither process should have audible effects if it is working correctly.

The objective in a digital recording session is to minimize the amount of error correction needed and to avoid ever having to use error concealment. This is ordinarily achieved simply by recording on brand-new, high-grade videotape at the VCR's fastest speed and by not using any special video features such as freeze frame, slow motion, or rapid search, all of which can physically damage the tape enough to cause dropouts. However, the PCM-F1, unlike similar devices now available, has a sixteen-bit recording mode affording a dynamic range of more than 90 dB (as opposed to the standard fourteen-bit unit's 86 dB). The extra bits are crammed into the recording space formerly reserved for some of the error-correction data, reducing the amount of information available for such correction.

Technically speaking, in the sixteen-bit mode the "Q" check word is given over to the two least-significant bits of seven sixteen-bit data words plus two parity bits. (See what I mean about shifting mental set?) That means that a sixteen-bit-encoded PCM-F1 tape is more vulnerable to decoding errors and error concealment from mishandling than an equivalent fourteen-bit-encoded tape would be. Sony chose to trade off data protection for improved signal-to-noise ratio. (Engineering always consists of such trade-offs.) I should hasten to say that, in my many hours of using a PCM-F1 unit, I never encountered an audible instance of miscorrection or a badly concealed error.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the PCM-F1 and other upcoming home digital systems is their cost. For less than $3,000, one can buy a digital-audio-processor/VCR combination with measurable and audible performance that is superior to any consumer-grade analog recording equipment and at least the equal of most professional analog tape systems costing perhaps five times as much. Two factors make this relatively low cost possible.

First, the PCM-F1 is so "inexpensive" (and the price should come down as competitive units are introduced) because so much of its very complex circuitry is contained in large-scale integrated circuits (LSI's). The predecessor of the PCM-F1, Sony's PCM-10, which used hundreds of small- and medium-scale IC's, had a decidedly inferior analog-to-digital conversion capability and a retail price of $5,000. Smaller and lighter, the PCM-F1 performs better and sells for less than half that amount.

The handful of chips in the PCM-F1 contain even the ultra-critical analog-to-digital and digital-to-analog converters (ADC's and DAC's, respectively). In fact, the sixteen-bit ADC's used in the PCM-F1 are the same IC's that will be used in Sony's new professional fixed-head multitrack open-reel digital-audio recorders. And the DAC used in the processor (there is only one, and its output is rapidly multiplexed between the two stereo output channels) is the same chip that will be used in Sony's Grimm Disc digital-disc player. The PCM-F1 thus gives us a sample of the "music of the future" (to use a Wagnerian phrase).

Why are LSI's so inexpensive? Because they are made in large batches (many thousands per day can be turned out), because each chip can do what would have taken racks full of circuitry twenty years ago, and because each IC is essentially a single part, which reduces manufacturing costs and improves reliability. The PCM-F1's integrated circuitry would not have been possible without standardization of the home digital-audio/video signal format, and it is a sample of the importance of standardization for digital audio.

The second major factor in the low cost of this digital-audio format is the incredibly low cost of today's home videocassette recorders (both VHS and Beta formats). The economies of large-scale automated manufacturing and VCR-dealer price wars are responsible for today's low VCR prices. (If as few home VCR's were sold as professional analog tape recorders, they would cost many thousands of dollars.) Even the list prices for the latest PCM-F1's are lower by an amount of engineering skill that has gone into the design and manufacture of a VCR is rarely appreciated by those not familiar with just how difficult a design problem such a complex electromechanical device poses.

A contributing factor to the low operating cost of digital-audio recording on videotape
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is the low price of that tape. It is cheaper to record digitally on high-grade videocassettes than to make analog recordings on open-reel tape at 15 ips (the only analog format that begins to be of comparable sound quality). Not only that, but two-hour uninterrupted recording times are available in the digital-audio/video format.

The only major problem with all the home digital-audio recording machines is that there is no low-cost digital editing system available. Sony makes a professional system that can edit fourteen-bit tapes, but it costs many thousands of dollars and requires yet another, different, digital-audio processor. Editing a sixteen-bit digital recording made on the PCM-F1 necessarily involves some sacrifice in sound quality, since the sixteen-bit tape must either be converted to a fourteen-bit one or copied onto an analog machine for conventional tape-cut editing. (Simple digital edits are possible with some of the multifeature VCR's now available, but these are best done during pauses in the signal.)

A minor problem with the Sony PCM-F1 is that it has no provision for protecting a tape against digital copying. Digital copies are identical to digital originals, which should gladden the heart of any prospective digital-audio pirate. The signal format the PCM-F1 employs does contain a "flag" that, if set to digital "one," will prevent its copying an encoded videocassette without first passing the audio signal through the analog "domain." (There is a way to get around this, however. It involves synchronizing with the video signal and manipulating the copy-prohibiting bit in the first horizontal scan lines after the vertical sync and equalizing pulses. Exactly how to do this I leave as an exercise for the piratically minded.) But the PCM-F1 has no provision for protecting one's own digital-audio recordings from digital copying.

I hope this excursion into the technical complexities of what is actually a rather simple product, the PCM-F1, has shown how very different the concepts involved in digital recording are even though the goal—the faithful reproduction of sound—is exactly the same as with analog audio systems. There is no doubt in my mind that digital audio is a definite improvement over previous recording processes despite the disadvantages of having to enter a new and sometimes baffling technological territory. (Incidentally, digital-disc technology is even more complex.)

You'll be able to judge some of what I've been saying—and doing—in this field for yourself since one of my PCM-F1 recordings will be distributed over the National Public Radio satellite system the week of October 3. Recorded in Pittsburgh's visually and acoustically beautiful Heinz Hall, the broadcast features works by Haydn and Stravinsky (including Le Sacre) with the admirable Pittsburgh Symphony under guest conductor David Atherton. The microphones were an MS pair supplemented with two woodwind "accent" microphones plus two rear-hall "ambiance" microphones. Microphone placement and levels were set for NPR by Charles Thompson. I just ran the digital recorder. Check with your local NPR station for the exact broadcast date and time.

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CIRCLE NO 40 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Technical Talk
By Julian D. Hirsch

- Amplifier Current Capability -

Regular readers of these test reports will have noted that among the tests we apply to amplifiers is one of their ability to drive 2-ohm loads, even if they are not rated for such operation. This is done specifically to determine the amplifier's maximum current-output capability. The power output of an amplifier is seldom measured directly; instead, its output voltage \( E \) is measured across a known load resistance \( R \), or a complex impedance such as the standard IHF reactive load, and the "power" is calculated from the normal Ohm's Law relationship, \( P = E^2/R \).

Almost all high-fidelity amplifiers are essentially constant-voltage sources whose output voltage is determined by the input-signal level and is virtually independent of the impedance of the load (speakers) over wide limits. Although in practice the voltage is affected slightly by the load (more accurately, by the current delivered to the load), the interaction is small, and it is reasonable to consider a modern solid-state amplifier as a constant-voltage source.

If speakers had a constant impedance over the audio range, it would be necessary only to connect a speaker of the rated impedance to the amplifier in order to be able to obtain the rated output power. However, a real speaker has an impedance that varies widely with frequency and may be much less than its rated value at some frequencies. It is easy to appreciate that an amplifier, the maximum available output current is then set by the power supply. It is usual for such a supply to have a much higher power-output capability for a brief period (in the order of tens of milliseconds) than on a continuous basis. The short-term output is established by the power-supply voltage with a light load (or no load) and the storage capacity of the filter capacitors. The maximum continuous output is determined initially by the level of the power-supply voltage under full load, ultimately either by the a.c.-line fuse rating or the amplifier's thermal protection system. The IHF dynamic-headroom rating is a measure of an amplifier's ability to deliver more than its rated power for short periods. This is a closer match to the actual power requirements of music reproduction, which calls for brief peaks far higher than the average level. The necessary protection for the loud-speakers is usually provided by the amplifier's output fuses or by fuses in its d.c. power-supply outputs.

With such an amplifier, a very low load impedance will not cause the type of distortion for which some protection circuits are noted. As the impedance is lowered, the output power will simply increase (though not linearly as the Ohm's Law equation would suggest, since the available d.c. voltage will drop under the higher load currents demanded by a lower load impedance). In extreme cases, such as shorted output leads, an amplifier fuse will blow out to protect the output transistors.

By my personal definition, an amplifier whose output power continues to increase (or, at least, does not decrease) as the load impedance is decreased can be considered to have a "high current capability." Its advantages are obvious, since it can drive even "difficult" speaker loads without undue overheating or audible distortion. It is not uncommon for the impedance of a speaker to drop below 3 ohms at some frequencies,

Tested This Month
Adcom GFA-2 Power Amplifier • Ortofon TM20H Phono Cartridge
Tandberg TD 20A-SE Open-reel Tape Deck • Sansui AU-D33 Integrated Amplifier
Bose Model 601 Series II Speaker System
and the ability of most amplifiers to accept connections to two pairs of speakers (as distinguished from being able to drive two pairs of speakers) makes it easy to present a load as low as 2 ohms to an amplifier.

For reasons that are not at all clear to me, almost all the amplifiers with high-current potential originate in the United States (such brands as Apt, Carver, Hafler, NAD, Phase Linear, SAE, and Threshold come to mind). We rarely see a Japanese amplifier designed in this way. There is nothing hidden about the Japanese amplifiers' current limitations. Although current capability is not emphasized in the manufacturers' literature, the specifications and installation instructions (when read carefully) leave no doubt that only "8-ohm" speaker systems should be used with many of these products. This is certainly not done in the interests of economy, since the amplifiers I refer to are expensive, deluxe products. It may be a philosophical matter; then again, perhaps Japanese home-market speakers (at least the better ones) almost all have 8-ohm or higher impedance ratings. Whatever the reason, it results in products that can have difficulty driving some of the better American and British speakers.

How important is it to have high current output capability? The answer to that depends on your own listening habits and system components. It seems likely that current-limiting problems will arise only when playing at high levels (approaching the amplifier's power limits) into certain speakers whose impedance becomes either very low or highly reactive at certain critical frequencies and thus presents a difficult load for the amplifier. Not having such speakers and preferring moderate listening levels and a high-power amplifier, I appear to be immune to the malady.

Nevertheless, I confess that I prefer an amplifier to behave like a voltage source, if for no other reason than its relative indifference to load conditions. Under some conditions this feature can give even an inexpensive low-power amplifier the "muscle" of a much more powerful one (the NAD 3020 was our first encounter with such an amplifier, and it could deliver more power to 2-ohm loads than many amplifiers with far higher conventional power ratings).

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**Equipment Test Reports**

By Julian D. Hirsch
Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

By Craig Stark
Starksonic Studio

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**Adcom GFA-2 Power Amplifier**

The Adcom GFA-2 stereo power amplifier features a stable, low-noise, low-distortion "front end" using differential FET amplifiers. The output stages of the GFA-2 use high-speed bipolar transistors, and entirely separate power supplies for the two channels enable each channel to deliver its maximum power regardless of the status of the other.

The output transistors of the GFA-2 are fully protected against damage from shorts, circuits or overheating. The protective system disconnects the speakers by means of a relay, simultaneously changing a front-panel indicator light from green to amber. The same system delays the speaker connection for about 4 seconds each time the amplifier is turned on to allow internal transients to die away.

The Adcom GFA-2 is rated to deliver 100 watts per channel to 8-ohm loads from 20 and 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.05 percent total harmonic distortion. Its rated signal-to-noise ratio is 95 dB, and the input sensitivity is 97 millivolts (both figures relative to a 1-watt output in accordance with EIA Standard RS-490).

The GFA-2 is 19 inches wide, 14 inches deep, and 51/2 inches high, and its front panel is slotted for rack mounting and fitted with handles for easier moving or lifting. It is finished entirely in black, with several small LED front-panel indicators and a large square pushbutton power switch. In addition to the protection light, there is a red power pilot light and two yellow peak lights that flash when the output voltage approaches the amplifier's clipping level. On the rear of the amplifier there are insulated spring-loaded speaker connectors, phono-type input jacks, and two line-fuse holders (each power supply is separately fused). The GFA-2 weighs 29 pounds. Price: $360.

**Laboratory Measurements.** The exterior of the Adcom GFA-2 did not become excessively warm during its one hour of preconditioning and subsequent high-power testing. With both channels driving 8-ohm loads at 1,000 Hz, the outputs clipped at 120 watts.
How to improve the sound of every other component you own!

No matter how much you spend on your record playing system, it can’t be better than its first component: the phono cartridge. Because, unless the cartridge tracks the groove faultlessly, and precisely reproduces all the recorded sound, no amount of electronic wizardry can make up for its faults.

Which is why you’d do well to start your system with an Audio-Technica Vector-Aligned™ stereo phono cartridge. Constructed with the same unique geometry as the cutting head which engraves every stereo groove, A-T cartridges are outstanding for wide range, low distortion, excellent tracking, and superb stereo separation.

There is an Audio-Technica model to match every tone arm and every budget. And each meets our high standards of uniformity and quality... unsurpassed in the industry. Every great stereo system can use a little Audio-Technica at the start. Insist on nothing less. At leading high fidelity stores or write for our catalog today.

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Model AT155LC $225.
Other models from $40 to $275.

Clearly, the Audio-Technica AT155LC excels in just about every area of cartridge performance, and it came as no surprise to find that it was as silky smooth and "forgettable" when playing music as its measurements would suggest. We would have difficulty describing the "sound" of the cartridge, since it contributes so little of itself to the final sonic quality. Good records often sound superb when played with the Audio-Technica.

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Stereo Review Hirsch-Houck Test Report
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per channel for an IHF clipping-headroom rating of 0.79 dB. The GFA-2 is not specifically rated for 4- or 2-ohm operation, but the clipping outputs into those impedances were respectively 177 and 95 watts per channel.

The dynamic-headroom test showed a maximum output of 150 watts into 8 ohms for a dynamic-headroom rating of 1.76 dB, 200 watts into 4 ohms, and 118 watts into 2 ohms. The PEAK lights flashed at an output equivalent to 85 watts into 8 ohms. The 1,000-Hz distortion was extremely low under any load condition and at all power outputs up to the clipping point. Driving 8-ohm loads, the distortion was about 0.001 per cent at 1 watt or less and typically less than 0.002 per cent up to 100 watts. With 4-ohm loads it was between 0.0025 and 0.0035 per cent up to more than 100 watts, and even with 2-ohm loads the distortion was typically under 0.005 per cent below the clipping point.

The frequency response of the GFA-2 was flat from 5 to 20,000 Hz (within 0.2 dB) and rolled off to -3 dB at 240 kHz. Its rise time was 1.5 microseconds. The slew factor was 2, a relatively low figure but quite adequate. The high-frequency linearity was good, as shown by the intermodulation-distortion tests with equal-amplitude input signals at 18 and 19 kHz. With a peak output equal to that of a 100-watt sine-wave signal, the second-order distortion at 1,000 Hz was -82 dB, and we could find no trace of third-order products at 17 and 20 kHz. The input level required for a reference output of 1 watt was 96 millivolts, and the A-weighted noise was a barely measurable 90 dB below 1 watt. The amplifier was stable with simulated loudspeaker (reactive) loads and when driving an IHF reactive load.

- **Comment.** Not only did the Adcom GFA-2 easily surpass its key specifications, but it proved to be rugged enough to withstand our full test sequence without damage or even a blown fuse. The protection relay was tripped only when we shorted the outputs or drove the amplifier into overload at ultrasonic frequencies. We never succeeded in heating it enough to operate the thermal protection system.

Adcom cautions against inserting a phono cartridge (the low-mass tone arm is designed to accommodate a cartridge) into its inputs while the amplifier is turned on. Aside from the risk of damage to one's speakers, there is an additional hazard to the output transistors, which can be destroyed by excessive r.f. input. The manufacturer indicates that this may be one of the very few ways in which the amplifier can be damaged. We did not put it to the test deliberately, but on the bench we took no special precautions such as shutting off the power when changing input cables. The amplifier survived unscathed.

In a music system the Adcom GFA-2 performed just about as we would have expected. Given the extremely low levels of noise and distortion in its output, one would hardly expect the GFA-2 to add any sonic character to the program, and it did not. Perhaps the single most important factor that distinguishes this amplifier from all the others is its unusually attractive price. Most 100-watt amplifiers sell for a far higher price than this one. Therefore, in addition to being a top-quality product with state-of-the-art performance, fully protected against most common operating hazards, the Adcom GFA-2 is a genuine bargain in today's market.

—Julian D. Hirsch

Ortofon TM20H Phono Cartridge

**Ortofon** has announced a new series of cartridges designed specifically for the compact linear-tracking turntables first introduced by Technics last year and now expanded to include models in a number of price ranges. Although the first such turntables were supplied with a Technics cartridge (the low-mass tone arm is designed to...
When the band lets you down, the CP-1028R won't.

It's too bad that most albums today contain certain tunes that just don't measure up to the others. Fortunately though, there's the CP-1028R turntable.

Our special microcomputer lets you program up to nine cuts, in any order you want, where an optoelectronic sensor in the cartridge quickly and accurately locates the selected bands. You can even repeat a cut as many times as you like.

But, what makes the CP-1028R a truly remarkable turntable is what you get in addition to its programming. A straight Low Mass tonearm (a concept Onkyo developed first). Servo-controlled direct drive motor for outstanding rotational accuracy and stability. High Compliance Dual Magnet cartridge. All adding up to specs that rank this turntable among the best in the industry.

If you're tired of always getting up because the band lets you down, try the Onkyo CP-1028R. Perfect programming will make for perfect listening.

LIGHTS: 6 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report OEC, "B".
FILTERS: 15 mg. "tar", 1.1 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.
Where a man belongs.

Experience the Camel taste in Lights and Filters.
accept only a very small cartridge that plugs directly into its end), the growing popularity of this type of record player has led Ortofon (among others) to develop a line of compatible cartridges, which now consists of four models. Sherwood has recently introduced a turntable that uses these cartridges, and it appears that other Japanese manufacturers will soon follow suit. The cartridges have a distinctive configuration known as the “P-mount.”

The TM20H is one of Ortofon’s new P-mount cartridges. It weighs only 6 grams and does not require an additional headshell or the additional mass the headshell would contribute. The cartridge has a “Fine Line” extended-contact stylus and a total effective tip mass of 0.45 milligram. It is designed to track at a 1.25-gram force, with a recommended load of 47,000 ohms in parallel with 200 picofarads. Price: $115.

- **Laboratory Measurements.** Ortofon supplied us with a TM20H cartridge mounted in a Technics SL-10 turntable. Although this helped us to judge the effectiveness of the combination, it was impractical for making measurements of the cartridge performance alone because of the inaccessibility of the cartridge and test record while the turntable was operating. This problem was solved by using a Technics SH-90S headshell adaptor, which accepts any P-mount plug-in cartridge and has a standard four-pin plug that fits any of the curved (S- or J-shaped) arms widely used on Japanese (and many European) record players. The adaptor also has an overhang adjustment for minimum tracking error. We tested the Ortofon TM20H in a medium-mass (18-gram) tone arm.

The tracking force was set to the recommended 1.25 grams, and the cartridge response was measured with several values of load capacitance to determine the optimum value. With the recommended 200 picofarads (pF), the high-frequency resonance of the stylus at 18 kHz produced a peak of several decibels in the response. Increasing the capacitance to 390 pF gave the flattest overall response, which was within ±1.5 dB up to 20,000 Hz with the CBS STR 100 test record. Although this was quite close to the Ortofon test data for this cartridge (made with one of Ortofon’s own test records, not available to us), we repeated the measurement using a B&K 2009 record, which produced a more prominent peak in the output of one channel and a very flat response from the other. Cartridge response is very much dependent on the test record used, and we decided to accept the results with the CBS record, since they were very close to the Ortofon test data.

On both the CBS and the B&K records, the channel separation was considerably different in the two channels (we had taken pains to align the cartridge body parallel to the record, since errors in this adjustment can result in asymmetrical crosstalk responses). The average channel separation at 1,000 Hz was about 23 dB, close to the rated 25 dB at that frequency. The frequency response and crosstalk curves showed evidence of small resonances, at 160 Hz and 380 Hz, and at 3.8, 7.5, and 12 kHz. The first two may have been a property of the adaptor headshell or the arm, but the higher-frequency resonances were almost certainly within the cartridge structure. They produced very minor “glitches” in the frequency response and much more prominent effects in the crosstalk curves. None of these effects were audible during our listening tests (although most of these were carried out with the cartridge in the Technics SL-10, and it is possible that the resonance effects would be different in that player).

The output of the TM20H was a relatively high 5.5 millivolts, with the channels balanced to within 0.5 dB. The vertical stylus angle was measured as 24 degrees. The response to the 1,000-Hz square wave on the CBS STR 112 test record showed the expected ringing at the 18-kHz stylus-resonance frequency.

Tracking distortion was measured with two Shure test records, the TTR-102 and TTR-103. The former is an intermodulation test record with frequencies of 400 and 4,000 Hz recorded at various levels. At velocities up to 22.6 cm/sec the IM distortion was exceptionally low (0.4 to 1 per cent), but the cartridge could not track the highest level on the record (27.1 cm/sec). The high-frequency tracking was checked with the 10.8-kHz tone bursts on the TTR-103, and the distortion (the percentage of the 270-Hz repetition rate present in the cartridge output) was around 1 per cent in the 15- to 24-cm/sec range, increasing to 2.3 per cent at 30 cm/sec.

These measurements were consistent with our subjective observations using several of Shure’s “Audio Obstacle Course” records. Low and middle frequencies were tracked very well, but it was obvious that tracking very-high-level, high-frequency signals was not the forte of the TM20H. Of course, these tests are much more demanding of a cartridge than practically any music record one might name, since they are designed to stress a cartridge to or beyond its limits. The 300-Hz tones on the German HiFi Institute record could be tracked at the 70-micrometer level, but not at 80 micrometers (for which the cartridge is rated).

- **Comment.** The Ortofon TM20H proved to be a very good cartridge, with excellent tracking ability at low and middle frequencies and adequate tracking ability at high frequencies. Its distortion, low and middle frequencies was also appreciably lower than what we have measured on most cartridges. The frequency response of the cartridge is very good, especially when it is loaded by a higher value of capacitance than recommended by the manufacturer (roughly twice the recommended 200 pF seemed to give the best results).

The low mass of the TM20H could be beneficial in relatively massive curved tone arms, for it could raise the arm/cartridge-resonance frequency above the range where it would be excited excessively by record warps. Although some arms might not be able to balance such a light cartridge, most should present no difficulties (we were able (Continued on page 43)
What you hear will change your ideas about driving. About sound. And very possibly about music itself.
Introducing a totally new class of music systems. Each system is engineered for the acoustics of a specific car. And actually built as an integral part of the car.

Designed to bring you music with such clarity, impact, and realism that it literally will change how you feel about driving an automobile.

Sound by Delco-GM/Bose
Three years ago Delco Electronics and Bose Corporation began a joint research program to study all aspects of sound reproduction in automobiles. Their combined technologies encompassed everything from the growing of silicon crystals for special integrated circuits to the psychoacoustics of listeners in automobiles.

Out of this research came music systems in which each component is matched to the interior of the specific model car. The placement of the loudspeakers, the electronic balancing of the music signals, and the design of the amplifiers each take into account the precise acoustical environment and even the positions of the passengers.
Your enjoyment

We submit that the sound of music has been captured for the first time in an automobile with realism so striking that it will be immediately recognized and appreciated by young and old, by music lovers, and by those who never thought that music would play an important role in their lives.

The experience awaits you at your General Motors dealer.*

Delco GM Bose

A totally new class of music systems from Delco-GM

* Available as a factory-installed option on 1983 Cadillac Seville and Eldorado, Buick Riviera, and Oldsmobile Toronado.
to use it in our heavy arm without balance problems).

Obviously the intended application of the TM20H is in one of the new Technics linear-tracking turntables or in the Sherwood or others with compatible arms that will soon be available from other manufacturers. These are ideal turntables for people who simply want to enjoy listening to records without a large involvement in hardware. Using a cartridge like the TM20H (which sounds first-rate, and thoroughly neutral, by the way), one can reap the benefit of this new technology without compromise in the quality of the sound.

—Julian D. Hirsch

Circle 141 on reader service card

**Test Reports**

**T**he Tandberg TD 20A-SE is a two-speed open-reel tape deck designed for the advanced amateur or semi-professional recordist. It is available with quarter-track heads for 7\(\frac{1}{2}\)/33\(\frac{1}{2}\)-ips or 5\(\frac{1}{4}\)/7\(\frac{1}{2}\)-ips operation (I tested the former, which is the usual home-stereo format). There is also a 15\(\frac{1}{3}\)/7\(\frac{1}{2}\)-ips half-track version more suitable for professional applications. All three models accept either 7- or 10\(\frac{1}{2}\)-inch reel sizes.

The transport of the TD 20A-SE is virtually identical to that of the TD 20A (STEREO REVIEW, December 1979). A synchronous a.c. motor powers the belt-driven capstan, and there are separate motors for each of the reel hubs. A fourth motor replaces the usual solenoids for smooth, quiet operation of the tape gate, capstan pinch-roller, and brake mechanisms. Spring-loaded tension arms on either side of the head assembly compensate for any unevenness in tape winding, and a precision "scrape flutter" roller damps out the tendency of tape to vibrate along its length. Separate ferrite heads of Tandberg's own design and construction are used for erasing, recording, and playback. A shield on the playback head lowers hum pickup but also makes it somewhat awkward to mark editing splice points. A conventional mechanical four-digit counter indicates tape position, and an optical sensor stops the deck when the tape runs out.

Light-touch pushbuttons with LED indicators control all transport modes through a logic circuit that automatically prevents any possibly tape-damaging sequence of operations. Simultaneously pressing and releasing the STOP and WIND buttons places the deck in a "free" mode so that the reels can be manually rocked back and forth for editing or threading. If desired, the CUE switch will cause the tape to be held against the heads even during fast winding, though the playback level must be turned down to avoid the possibility of burning out a tweeter. After threading, pressing the STOP button momentarily energizes the reel motors in order to take up any slack in the tape.

The TD 20A-SE incorporates two highly original electronic features: the Dyneq Ac-tilinear recording system and the "special equalization" (SE) from which the deck gets its suffix. The Dyneq (dynamic-equalization) system is designed to overcome a problem frequently encountered in slow-speed recording. Normal treble losses at slow tape speeds require a considerable high-frequency boost during recording in order to achieve flat frequency response overall. This boost, or "record pre-emphasis," can lead to high-frequency tape saturation, however, if the treble content in the original signal is itself high in level. Saturation produces distortion and limits the tape's high-frequency response.

The Dyneq system varies the amount of treble pre-emphasis during recording to take account not only of the frequencies in the incoming signal, but of their amplitude as well. If a given treble frequency would be

(Continued on page 46)
Vantage ple

When

100's Menthol Inc. available in Colorado, Oklahoma, Michigan

9 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

New!
100s Menthol

asures
you want good taste and low tar, too.
The upper curves indicate overall record-playback response at the manufacturer's indicated 0-dB recording level using the tapes designated on the graph. In the center are the same measurements recorded at -20 dB relative to the upper curves, a level conventionally used for tape-deck frequency-response measurements. Bottom curves show playback response from calibrated test tapes and indicate performance with prerecorded tapes.

Driven into saturation with normal, fixed record equalization, the Dyneq circuit automatically lowers the amount of equalization supplied by just enough to enable the tape to hold as much high-frequency information as it can.

Tandberg's SE circuit addresses another fundamental open-reel problem. Decades ago, when playback-equalization curves (which are usually stated in terms of microseconds for engineering convenience) were standardized for the various tape speeds, the very best available tapes of the time had severe treble losses, well beyond what any reasonable amount of record pre-emphasis could supply. The only place to insert the additional amount of treble boost required was in the playback section, where a 6-dB-per-octave rising characteristic means that the output from the head doubles each time the frequency doubles. While using this boost certainly helps compensate for treble losses on the tape, it unfortunately also increases any tape hiss.

Today's improved tapes do not need nearly the amount of playback treble assistance that is built into the old standards, and now Tandberg has decided to run the commercial risk of providing an alternative set of playback-equalization settings. In brief, the "special equalization" of the TD 20A-SE uses time constants of 50 microseconds (treble boost beginning at 3,150 Hz) for the 3 1/2 ips speed; the current standard is 90 microseconds (boost beginning at 1,800 Hz). At 7 1/2 ips the SE is 25 microseconds (6,300 Hz) instead of the old 50-μsec (3,150-Hz) standard. And at 15 ips Tandberg proposes 10 microseconds (15,900 Hz) in place of the thoroughly obsolete 50-microsecond boost now mandated. A rather similar approach seems to underlie the "EE" ("extra efficiency") system recently promulgated by Teac, Akai, Maxell, and TDK, except that EE requires a special high-bias (and rather high-priced) tape, while Tandberg's SE is designed for high-quality regular open-reel tapes.

As is almost a hallmark with Tandberg, the record-level indicators of the TD 20A-SE are peak-reading equalized meters. They not only register signal peaks, but reflect the record treble pre-emphasis as well. This facilitates using the meters for their intended purpose, namely recording at as high a level as possible without encountering distortion.

Four separate record-level controls plus an overall MASTER control permit full mic/line or line-line stereo mixing, and an adjustable detented ring on the MASTER control permits easy resetting after a fade-out. As on professional decks, separate record-ready switches are used, and "flying start" recording is possible. Toggle switches also control the selection of standard or special equalization, source/tape monitoring, edit/DELETE functions, and a SYNC facility that enables a recording made on one channel to be synchronized with a second recording made on the other. Separate left- and right-channel playback controls are provided, and a switch permits routing either channel to both headphones or regular stereo listening. Pushbuttons are used to select either high or low speed and to set the proper tape tensions for large or small reels.

The rear panel of the TD 20A-SE contains the normal input and output jacks, which are recessed to permit either vertical or horizontal operation. Hub adaptors for NAB-type 10 1/2-inch reels are provided, and a remote-control accessory is available. The TD 20A-SE measures 17 1/4 inches wide, 17 1/2 inches high, and 6 inches deep, and it weighs 37 1/2 pounds. Price: $1,595.

- Laboratory Measurements. Tandberg indicated that our sample of the TD 20A-SE had been factory adjusted using Maxell UD-XL tape, so we used it for the tests. We also tried top-line tapes from TDK, Scotch, and Memorex with almost equivalent results. The TD 20A-SE has front-panel access to a pair of bias-trim controls that can flatten out the response of nearly any tape, but the user must supply his own test equipment to take advantage of this feature.

Playback response (using the "normal" equalization), as there are no calibrated tapes available for Tandberg's "special equalization" was checked using both Ampex and MRL test tapes. Overall record-playback frequency response at a level of -20 dB showed very close tracking between the normal and special equalizations, though at a 0-dB level high-frequency response fell off more sharply when using the SE, which subjects the tape to increased record equalization. At 0 dB the equalized peak-reading meters deflected far off scale on higher-frequency test tones. In practical use, this would warn a user to reduce the level. Incidentally, the tape overloaded before Tandberg's recording amplifier did.

Third-harmonic distortion of a 1,000-Hz tone recorded at an indicated 0-dB level measured between 1.1 and 1.2 per cent, and the 3 per cent distortion point was reached.

"Aha! Caught you, sir! You said the TX-3's sounded better than the Henley speakers, but I didn't switch to the TX-3's—I pretended to!"
Creating great music has never been simple.

Now recreating it is.

Audition the AD-3800 3-head cassette deck and you will witness a display of technical sophistication. In 16 seconds, the AD-3800 will automatically record test tones, check playback, then set bias, sensitivity and equalization. It's impressive! Mechanically, the AD-3800 is just as outstanding. AIWA's patented dual capstan tape transport has reduced wow and flutter to just 0.025% (WRMS)! Add to that Dolby C, auto-demagnetizing, 32 section tri-color bar meters, digital tape/time remaining display and the optional remote control. Now you know why it's the top-of-the-line. CIRCLE NO. 1 ON READER SERVICE CARD

The AIWA AD-3800's DATA microcomputer assures unsurpassed compatibility between tape and deck.
at a level of +3.5 dB, just above the highest calibration on the meter scale. While this does not appear to provide the usual “leeway,” it is again an intentional part of the Tandberg design for its meter operation. A large differential between an indicated 0-dB and the onset of serious distortion is required only when the meter does not really indicate the exact signal level. With reference to the 0.1 per cent distortion point we measured unweighted signal-to-noise ratios at 7½ ips of 59.8 and 60.8 dB with the normal and the special equalization, respectively, and IEC A-weighting increased the readings to 67.4 and 70.8 dB. At the 3½-ips speed the comparable unweighted figures were 56.4 and 58.8 dB, improving to 63.7 and 67.4 dB with A-weighting.

Wow-and-flutter, using the stringent DIN peak-weighted standard, measured 0.08 per cent at the higher speed and 0.12 per cent at the lower speed. High-speed winding time for a 3,600-foot (10½-inch reel) tape was 115 seconds in each direction. An 1,800-foot (7-inch reel) tape could be shuttled from one end to the other in 83 seconds. A 38-mV (0.038-volt) signal was required at the line-1 inputs for a 0-dB indication, with an output level of 1.4 volts. The microphone input required only 0.18 mV and began to show signs of overload with an input of 25 mV.

- **Comment.** As a top-grade, innovatively designed recorder the TD 20A-SE left little to be desired. Its tape handling was excellent, and it could make copies of a wide variety of listening material (including a first-generation dub from a live digital master) without any degradation.

The special equalization does produce a definitely quieter tape, with far less indication of treble overload than the 0-dB test curves would imply. At the same time, getting the rest of the industry to accept a proposed new standard will not be easy, so at least for now tapes made with the new process will be primarily for playback on one’s own machine rather than for exchange with others. Overall, we would rate the Tandberg TD 20A-SE as well worth its price, an excellent deck that should give its owner many years of trouble-free musical satisfaction and fine performance in semi-pro mastering work.

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Craig Stark

Circle 142 on reader service card

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**Sansui AU-D33 Integrated Amplifier**

The Sansui AU-D33 integrated amplifier features the “Super Feedforward” circuitry first introduced in the company’s higher-priced amplifiers a couple of years ago. “Super Feedforward” is a combination of a relatively small amount of negative feedback with “feedforward” circuits. Feedforward is also a distortion-reducing technique that has certain theoretical advantages over negative feedback (among them being its ability—in theory—to eliminate distortion completely instead of merely reducing it).

The AU-D33 is rated for very low distortion—less than 0.004 per cent for all power outputs up to its rated 50 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads between 20 and 20,000 Hz. It uses direct-coupled circuits from the high-level inputs to the speaker outputs. The program source is selected by pressing one of a group of vertical bars in the upper center of the panel (for TAPE 1, TAPE 2, AUX, TUNER, and PHONO); each bar has a light above it to show that it has been pressed. Volume is controlled by a large knob to the right of the input selectors, and there is a balance control immediately below it. Smaller knobs across the lower part of the panel operate the bass and treble tone controls, which can be inserted into the signal path by pressing a small button to their right (a light above the knobs shows that the tone controls are active). Below the input selectors is the REC SELECTOR, which selects the program going to the tape-recorder outputs (independently of what is being played through the speakers). It has positions for AUX, TUNER, PHONO, and OFF, in addition to two DUBBING positions for copying tapes from either of two tape decks to the other.

Small pushbuttons control the two sets of speaker outputs (lights on the panel show their status), the HIGH FILTER, LOUDNESS compensation, and MUTING (a 20-dB gain reduction). The phono-preamp gain and input impedance can be switched for either MM (moving-magnet) or MC (moving-coil) cartridges by a pair of buttons on the panel. Power is controlled by a larger button above which is a red PROTECTOR light that serves as a pilot light and blinks when the amplifier’s protection system has been activated (which happens for a few seconds each time the amplifier is turned on, until the operating voltages have stabilized and the speakers have been connected by the protection relay). There is a headphone jack below the power switch.

On the rear apron of the Sansui AU-D33 are the various input and output signal jacks, two a.c. outlets (one switched), and two pairs of speaker outputs. These resemble plastic insulated binding posts, with holes into which the stripped ends of the wires are inserted. When the post is rotated about 120 degrees clockwise, the electrical connection is firmly made. The Sansui AU-D33 is finished entirely in black. It is 17 inches wide, 13⅛ inches deep, and 4½ inches high, and it weighs 16 pounds. The suggested retail price is $350.

- **Laboratory Measurements.** The top of the Sansui AU-D33 (above the internal heat sinks) became quite hot during preconditioning, although it never became more than mildly warm in normal operation. With both channels driving 8-ohm loads at 1,000 Hz, the outputs clipped at 63 watts per channel, corresponding to an IHF clipping-headroom rating of about 1 dB. The amplifier is not rated for driving any impedance other than 8 ohms, and we found that...
Presenting High Bias II and the Ultimate Tape Guarantee.

Memorex presents High Bias II, a tape so extraordinary, we're going to guarantee it forever.

We'll guarantee life-like sound.
Extraordinarily flat frequency response at zero dB recording levels, combined with remarkably low noise levels, means music is captured live. Then Permapass, our unique oxide-bonding process, locks each oxide particle—each musical detail—onto the tape. So music stays live. Not just the 1st play. Or the 1000th. But forever.

We'll guarantee the cassette.
We've engineered every facet of our transport mechanism to protect the tape. Our waved-wafer improves tape-wind. Silicone-treated rollers insure precise alignment and smooth, safe tape movement. To protect the tape and mechanism, we've surrounded them with a remarkable cassette housing made rigid and strong by a mold design unique to Memorex.

We'll guarantee them forever.
If you ever become dissatisfied with Memorex High Bias II, for any reason, simply mail the tape back and we'll replace it free.

YOU'LL FOREVER WONDER.
IS IT LIVE, OR IS IT MEMOREX.
the clipping output into 4-ohm loads was 38 watts per channel, and into 2 ohms it was only 18 watts per channel. In dynamic-power measurements, the maximum output into impedances of 8, 4, and 2 ohms was 77.35, and 18 watts, respectively, so that the amplifier's IHF dynamic-headroom rating was 1.85 dB.

Harmonic distortion was very low, typically under 0.002 per cent at 1 kHz and rated power. With 8-ohm loads, the distortion at or below rated power did not increase the distortion. With 8-ohm loads, the distortion at or below rated power was between 0.002 and 0.003 per cent from 20 Hz to 2 or 3 kHz, rising to a maximum of 0.005 per cent at 1,000 Hz for all power outputs under the clipping point. The amplifier's IHF dynamic-headroom rating was 1.85 dB.

Even operation with lower load impedances did not increase the distortion. With 8-ohm loads, the distortion at or below rated power was between 0.002 and 0.003 per cent from 20 Hz to 2 or 3 kHz, rising to a maximum of 0.005 per cent at 1,000 Hz for all power outputs under the clipping point. The amplifier's IHF dynamic-headroom rating was 1.85 dB.

Comment. The most obvious benefits claimed for the Sansui "Super Feedforward" design are extremely low distortion and very wide bandwidth. The low distortion was very much in evidence in our tests, although the measured bandwidth was not unusual for an amplifier of this caliber.

The tendency for many Japanese amplifier designers to limit the output-current capabilities of their products is clearly shown in the performance of the Sansui AU-D33, which appears to behave like a "constant-current" source instead of the "constant-

"Why didn't you say so in the first place? Of course the Boston Symphony sounds lousy on this turntable! They are lousy!"
Taste the V.O. Spritzer.

Taste the crisp, clean taste of the V.O. Spritzer. All it takes is ice, 1 1/2 oz. of V.O., and Schweppes Club Soda. You'll discover what might be the most refreshing drink you've ever tasted. And remember, use good judgment whenever you drink. You'll always enjoy it more.
voltage" operation usually associated with transistor amplifiers. With a low load impedance, either from 4-ohm speakers or two pairs of 8-ohm speakers, its power-output capability falls appreciably. However, when driving 8-ohm loads, it is all one could wish for in a moderate-priced amplifier. It is a very handsome, high-performance, medium-powered product, with sound quality to match.

— Julian D. Hirsch

**Bose Model 601 Series II Speaker System**

The new Bose Model 601 Series II, like the other Bose speakers, is designed for "direct/reflecting" operation in which a large part of its total acoustic output is reflected from one or more room boundaries before reaching the listeners (part of the speaker's output is directed forward to the listening area in the conventional manner). Externally, the Model 601 Series II resembles a conventional floor-standing speaker. Its front and top are covered by an attractive dark-brown textured grille cloth. The top section is surrounded on the top and three sides by the grille and louvered plastic panels and is open to the rear. The top grille is hinged at the front and when lifted reveals an 8-inch woofer, tilted about 30 degrees forward of the vertical, and four unbaflled 3-inch cone tweeters angled to the sides and rear. Pulling off the front grille, which is integral with the top grille and is retained by sturdy plastic pins, reveals a second 8-inch forward-facing woofer on the front of the speaker cabinet.

The two woofers operate together up to 2.5 kHz. The four tweeters overlap the woofer range, operating down to 1.5 kHz. The two rear-facing tweeters are angled slightly upward, radiating across the front of the top woofer and outward toward the wall behind the speaker at a horizontal angle of about 30 degrees. The front tweeters are angled outward at about 45 degrees and are nearly horizontal. The woofers are in separate internal subenclosures, which are ported individually into the main volume of the cabinet and from there to the outside through a single opening on the top.

The overlap in frequency coverage between the tweeters and the woofers, allowing them to operate together over nearly an octave, is said to minimize phase-shift effects and audible coloration of the sound. Also, since several drivers are operating together in each part of the frequency range, their individual response irregularities tend to average out and give a smoother overall frequency response. There are no user-adjustable level or balance controls. In the rear of the enclosure are binding-post speaker terminals and a third (covered) terminal reserved for use with future (unannounced) Bose electronic components.

The Bose Model 610 Series II is nominally an 8-ohm system, suitable for use with amplifiers rated from 20 to more than 150 watts output. The tweeters are protected from burn-out by a small thermal device whose resistance increases during periods of high input level, limiting the power delivered to the tweeters without silencing or even audibly affecting the sound of the speaker system. When used with amplifiers rated at more than 100 watts per channel, Bose suggests connecting a 2-ampere fuse in series with the line to each speaker. The Bose Model 601 Series II is covered in walnut-grain vinyl veneer.

Laboratory Measurements. The unconventional radiation pattern of the Bose
Model 601 Series II makes it difficult to measure its performance in a conventional anechoic environment (or to describe its performance in terms of the quasi-anechoic measurements provided by our FFT signal-analysis system). This is because the angled or rear-facing drivers do not all contribute directly to the speaker's sound-pressure output along any arbitrary axis. In fact, in an anechoic measurement the rear radiation is totally absorbed and never reaches the measurement microphone.

On the other hand, the averaged room response, a normal part of our measurement procedure, takes into account the total output of the speaker as modified by absorption by the room boundaries and furnishings. Since this corresponds closely to the usual operating mode of the Model 601 Series II, one would expect it to give a realistic picture of its true performance qualities.

Our initial reaction to hearing the Bose Model 601 Series II in our familiar surroundings was that it had a superbly balanced octave-to-octave response, with an effortless smoothness that ranked with some of the finest speakers we have used. The bass was very powerful, yet without boom or any undue emphasis in the upper bass or lower midrange, where so many dynamic speakers suffer from coloration. The highs were silky and free from brightness or harshness. The midrange smoothly connected the two ends of the spectrum.

It was not too surprising to find that our measurement microphone "heard" essentially the same characteristics as our ears. Even without averaging the measurements from the left and right speakers (which are identified by Bose for those specific positions, although they appear to be identical and symmetrical), the room response was exceptionally smooth, and the multiple tweeter array provided essentially perfect horizontal dispersion.

The averaged room response was impressively smooth and uniform down to about 200 Hz, although room effects became evident below that frequency. The two speakers were about 10 inches from the front wall and 10 feet apart, with the measurement microphone placed some 12 feet in front of them. The close-miked bass response was identical for both woofers. When the curve for one woofer (increased by 3 dB to account for the contribution of the other) was combined with the port response (corrected for the relative areas of the cones and the port), the total bass response was every bit as exceptional as it sounded. The output varied only ±2 dB from 27 to 900 Hz. Combining this curve with the middle- and high-frequency room curve resulted in a composite frequency response of ±3.5 dB from 20 to 16,000 Hz. A small peak at 13,000 Hz was the highest point we found in the combined curve.

While our composite frequency response curve cannot be compared directly with any manufacturer's response figures (and Bose does not publish frequency-response data for their speakers), it does, in our experience, correlate well with the sound of a speaker, especially in our fairly typical listening environment. In this case, the measurements coincided exactly with the way the speakers sounded to us.

The FFT response curve, as anticipated, 

(Continued on page 58)
The Country Music Foundation, Nashville, Tennessee, is proud to announce its Official Archive Collection

THE GREATEST COUNTRY MUSIC RECORDINGS OF ALL TIME

Unprecedented and unequaled in our time — the complete and definitive collection of America's country and western music.

- The best of 75,000 records from the Foundation archives and the vaults of every country music label.
- The first collection to include all the great country artists.
- Featuring all the great hits, the milestone performances, out-of-issue pressings and unreleased recordings.

For the first time in history, the greatest recorded performances of country music's greatest artists will be brought together in a single definitive collection. It will include the most important recordings by the leading country artists of today ... landmark performances by legendary greats ... and all the diverse and varied musical styles that have enriched America's country music.

This remarkable collection is the official issue of the Country Music Foundation — home of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, and the world's largest library of recorded country music. And it is the first complete collection that the Foundation has ever issued honoring The Greatest Country Music Recordings of All Time.

A unique collection that only the Country Music Foundation could assemble

To assemble this collection, the staff of the Country Music Foundation carefully reviewed the Foundation's own archives of 75,000 records. In addition, they enlisted the support of all the country music record companies — whose vaults hold many of the master recordings selected for this collection.

And they were able to obtain rare recordings from private collectors and country music artists themselves.

As a result, the Country Music Foundation Official Archive

"Country is the music of the people. Songs of the soil, forsaken and fulfilled love. Story songs whose music is both contemporary and timeless. I love it, and I am proud to be part of the first collection to tell the whole country music story."

— Johnny Cash
Collection is unique both in scope and importance. A collection that would be difficult—or impossible—for any individual to duplicate.

All the great performers
The collection will feature milestone recordings from the careers of country music’s most important artists. Such great contemporaries as Loretta Lynn, with ‘Blue Kentucky Girl’ and ‘Coal Miner’s Daughter,’ Kenny Rogers and The First Edition, with ‘Ruby, Don’t Take Your Love to Town.’ Johnny Cash with ‘I Walk The Line’ and ‘Sunday Morning Coming Down,’ Dolly Parton, with ‘Coat Of Many Colors’ and ‘My Tennessee Mountain Home.’ The “outlaw” music of Willie Nelson. The Nashville sound of Chet Atkins and Eddy Arnold. Country rock, with The Charlie Daniels Band. And country classics by popular music artists Linda Ronstadt, Glen Campbell and Anne Murray.

Also included will be the unforgettable recordings of such long-time favorites as Hank Snow, Ernest Tubb and Merle Travis. The legendary giants: Hank Williams, Patsy Cline, Jim Reeves, Flatt and Scruggs, and Jimmie Rodgers. And recordings that reflect regional influences and evolving musical styles—bluegrass, Cajun, country gospel, western swing, honky tonk and rockabilly.

The collection will include such rare recordings as Vernon Dalhart’s 1924 recording of ‘The Prisoner’s Song’—country music’s first million selling record, and Loretta Lynn’s early classic ‘Honky Tonk Girl’—now out of issue. And from the Foundation’s archives will come previously unreleased recordings—studio “takes” never before made generally available.

Records of superior quality
Every step has been taken to ensure the technical excellence of the collection. Thus, all of the early recordings will first undergo a painstaking restoration process in the Country Music Foundation's newly opened Audio Restoration Laboratory. Here, recordings of classic performances will be electronically "cleaned" groove-by-groove to eliminate extraneous surface noise and preserve the original sound.

To produce the records, the Foundation has appointed The Franklin Mint Record Society—judged by audio experts to be a leader in producing records of superior quality. The vinyl used will be of a special formula containing its own anti-static element. This material, together with the careful process by which the pressing is made, results in a record that is more rigid, durable and resistant to dust. A true proof-quality record—providing exceptional tonal fidelity and clear, clean sound when played through any of today’s audio systems.

Fascinating musical “program”
In each album Custom hardbound albums have been designed to house and protect all 100 proof-quality records in this collection. Each album will contain four long-playing records, presenting a program of artists and recordings carefully selected by the Foundation, and unique to this collection. And each album will be accompanied by specially prepared program notes, illustrated with photographs from the Foundation’s permanent collection.

Available by subscription only
If you have a long-standing interest in America’s country music...or are just discovering its rich and exciting sound...this Official Archive Collection is an Indispensable treasure. A complete, comprehensive and authoritative collection of the greatest recordings in country music—on records of exceptional fidelity.

The collection may be acquired only by direct subscription to The Franklin Mint Record Society, Franklin Center, Pennsylvania 19091. It will not be sold through record stores. To order your subscription, simply complete and return the accompanying application. Please note it should be mailed by October 31, 1982.
We have the cartridge you've been listening for.

Whatever your preference in cartridges, the name you'll want to hear is ADC. That's because, as a leader in the cartridge industry, ADC insists upon the highest standards of excellence in every cartridge they make. For those who prefer the distinct sound that a moving coil cartridge evokes, our ADC MC 1.5 turns the mystique into reality. Its renowned ADC low mass technology is reflected in flat response, freedom from phase distortion, fast transient response and excellent tracking at a stylus force of 1.5 grams.

And unlike other moving coil cartridges, the MC 1.5 can be used with or without a head amp. Our top-of-the-line induced magnet model, the ADC Astrion, is handcrafted and hand assembled by one single artisan. It is then individually tested to assure that its performance is flawless. With its low mass elliptical stylus, laser-etched solid sapphire cantilever and unique Omni-Pivot System, the Astrion is truly deserving of its acclaim.

The MC 1.5 Moving Coil, the Astrion. Two uncommonly superb cartridges. With one name you should listen for.

Bose 601 Series II
(Continued from page 53)

was slightly ragged (though much less so than we would have expected from the multi-driver configuration of the speakers). Even so, its ±6-dB variation over the 180- to 15,000-Hz measurement range would be considered quite creditable for most good conventional speakers in this type of quasi-anechoic measurement. The sensitivity of the Model 601 Series II is also not easy to measure or specify accurately because of its spatial characteristics. Measured at a 1-meter distance at the level of the forward-facing woofer, the sound-pressure level (SPL) was 85 dB for a 2.83-volt input of random noise in an octave bandwidth. At a more realistic "listening" position—the height of the tweeters—the SPL was a good 89 dB. The minimum system impedance was about 7 ohms at 35 Hz and 8 ohms between 130 and 300 Hz.

The bass distortion with 1 watt input was less than 1 per cent from 100 to 50 Hz, rising gradually to about 6 per cent at 20 Hz. At 10 watts input the distortion was substantially higher, between 2 and 4 per cent from 100 to 45 Hz and 12.5 per cent at 20 Hz. At the lower frequencies a high power input produced audible air noise from the system's port.

Comment. Although individual preferences vary widely with respect to the dispersion patterns of speakers (and we have found good and not-so-good examples of both forward-radiating directional speakers and wide-dispersion "omnidirectional" speakers), we prefer to judge a speaker by its sound, not its operating principles. The Bose Model 601 Series II is, in our judgment, an unequivocally fine-sounding, thoroughly natural and smooth speaker. It does not appear to require critical or aesthetically awkward room placement or to impose any other undesirable constraints on its use. Not only is it priced well below the Bose leader, the Model 901 Series IV, but it requires no external equalizer and is certainly more conventional looking.

The sound we heard from the Model 601 Series II, on a broad variety of program material, was the kind we simply enjoy listening to. This extended "listenability" is a property of almost any really good audio component, and especially of a speaker. The 601's spatial effect was one of its most striking and enjoyable features. The panorama of sound across the front wall of the room, behind the speakers, extended well beyond the speakers themselves, in a way audibly similar to that provided by electronic signal processing with ordinary speakers.

Those who may have found either the spatial properties or the physical appearance of the Bose 901 speakers to be too unconventional for their tastes should audition the Model 601 Series II. It is clearly a close relative of the 901 series, with considerable refinement in ease of installation and use, and (we suspect) a greater adaptability to different listening environments. It is one of the better speakers we have used, even at or well above its moderately high price.

—Julian D. Hirsch

Circle 144 on reader service card
NOW YOU CAN HAVE DIGITAL RECORDING WHERE YOU WANT IT MOST: AT HOME.

There are moments when a musician is so inspired he stops making music and starts making magic. And, as most artists agree, these peak periods of supreme inspiration don’t always occur in the clinical conditions of the recording studio. Which explains why Sony, the inventor of digital audio processing, has just created the world’s smallest, lightest and most compact digital audio processor — the PCM-F1.

Already touted by every major audio magazine, the PCM-F1 leaves one awestruck by its vital statistics. Its level of performance surpasses that of even the most sophisticated analog recording studio. Its unique 3-way power supply allows you to use it anytime, anywhere.

And because Sony consciously designed it without a built-in VCR, it can be used with any VCR — ½ or ¾ inch.

But perhaps its greatest feature is its price. Obviously, we can go on and on about the brilliance of this new machine, but by now we figure you’ve heard enough about it and you’re ready to go to your Sony dealer and hear it for yourself.

SONY The one and only.

*Features and Specifications: Read and F1 flutter — unmeasurable, dynamic range — greater than 90 dB, distortion — less than 0.005%, frequency response — 10-20,000 Hz, + 0.5 dB, Weight — 9 lbs., height — 3.4", depth — 12", width — 8.5", height — 14", and 16-bit quantization. ©1982 Sony Corp. of America. Sony is a registered trademark of the Sony Corp.

CIRCLE NO. 44 ON READER SERVICE CARD
There's a race of men that don't fit in,
A race that can't stay still,
So they break the hearts of kith and kin,
And they roam the world at will.

Robert Service
The Men That Don't Fit In

OCASSIONALLY, like the alignment of heavenly bodies, there is a coming together of the great colossi among performing-arts organizations and record makers that produces a monument in the history of recorded sound. One thinks immediately of the Bayreuth Festival recordings and those generated from time to time by Metropolitan Opera productions, to name only a few. It doesn’t happen often, but when it does, it’s good news indeed. And it happened twice in just the past six months.

First, there was the news from the West that the Los Angeles performances of Verdi’s Falstaff conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini were being taped for subsequent release by Deutsche Grammophon. Then came word from England that Erato would be recording the new Glyndebourne Festival production of Gluck’s Orfeo ed Euridice in which Dame Janet Baker was bidding what can only be considered a premature farewell to the opera stage.

The irony in this latter instance, for us on this side of the Atlantic, lies of course in the fact that Dame Janet has never performed in opera in America, although she has been to some extent represented here in opera recordings, notably Purcell’s Dido and Aeneas on London and Rameau’s Hippolyte et Aricie on L'Oiseau-Lyre (in which she sings the role of Phèdre, one of her most compelling). Now, it appears, she never will, for Dame Janet, as everyone who claims to know her seems to agree, is not one to change her mind about these things: she will continue in that role for many years to come.

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Be that as it may (and may she indeed continue in that role for many years to come), Dame Janet has spent a good part of the past year taking final bows in the three houses with which she has been most closely associated: last fall at Covent Garden, where she sang Gluck’s Alceste; in the spring with the English National Opera at the Coliseum in Donizetti’s Maria Stuarda; and finally this summer in Orfeo at Glyndebourne, where she started out as a member of the chorus back in the mid-Fifties.

It is a measure of Dame Janet’s devotion to her art that she was undertaking one of the two Gluck roles, Alcestis, for the first time on stage at the very point she had chosen to bring the operatic phase of her career to a close after almost twenty-five years. Her Orpheus, on the other hand, dates from somewhere near the beginning of that impressive span. I was lucky enough to hear her sing both roles last season and can only say that the preview I got from the Philips recording of Gluck arias she made a few years back, splendid as it is, hardly prepared me for the stunning impact of those fully realized characterizations in the opera house. The Erato recording, which will be available in England and perhaps here shortly before Christmas, will preserve that memory.

Similarly, the DG recording of what has come to be known as “the Giulini Falstaff” should, especially since it was recorded live, recall to this mind’s eye all the glinty elegance, searching interior drama, and brittle wit of the production itself (at least as seen at Covent Garden). I say “to this mind’s eye” because Giulini’s view of this late, great Verdian masterpiece has been greeted by some in England as being just too austere and Renato Bruson’s Falstaff as too rustic and introspective—such it was, to a degree, but also all the more complex, and at all times supremely articulate musically and impeccably sung. It also represented a return to staged opera by a man who had renounced any intention of conducting in the theater again, a decision Giulini made some fourteen years ago. So much for the hard, fast promises one makes to oneself—even, perhaps, Dames of the British Empire.

Going on Record

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Yukon Jack

The Black Sheep of Canadian Liquors,

Yukon Jack

100 Proof Imported Liqueur made with Blended Canadian Whisky.

Come to where the flavor is.

Marlboro Red or Longhorn 100's—
you get a lot to like.


Kings: 16 mg "tar," 1.0 mg nicotine—100's: 16 mg "tar,"
1.1 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Dec. 31
The subdued glow from the track lighting glints appealingly off the Lucite and polished chrome of a Win Labs turntable. As the heavy steel platter begins to revolve, reflections flicker across the intent faces of the listeners seated in the chairs arranged across the center of the room. At the faint click of the stylus touching the lead-in grooves, all conversation ceases. The ambiance of the room becomes charged, rife with anticipation. And as the music issues forth, sweet and sensual—the highs unsmeared, the midrange focused, the bass tight—from the massive flat panels at the corners of the room, there is an unspoken sense of unanimity among the listeners that, yes, this is one small but terribly significant step toward audio realism.

This is the High End: a heady atmosphere of fifty-four-driver, $25,000 speaker systems, of $1,000 moving-coil cartridges and low-powered mono class-A amplifiers that go for $3,000 a crack. There is a reverential air in this audio salon, typical of many, for it is a shrine where the worshipers of the esoteric gather to pursue their quest for the audio grail—sonic perfection. Within easy reach are the “bibles” of the esoteric—the Absolute Sound, the International Audio Review, Stereophile, and the Audio Critic—so-called “underground” audio magazines of diverse and outspoken opinion that serve to guide (and, in the view of many, misguide) the audiophile in his selection of high-end components.

Of course, this endless and single-minded pursuit of audio perfection hardly characterizes the majority of music listeners. In fact, for some record collectors, the choice of reproducing equipment is quite secondary; it doesn’t require a moving-coil cartridge or an electrostatic speaker to reveal the musical genius of such recording artists of the distant and more recent past as Arturo Toscanini, Jussi Björling, Bessie Smith, and Janis Joplin. For those collectors, musical art transcends not only the distortion, frequency-response limitations and noise of an archival recording but also an antiquated playback system.

However, most serious listeners do think an audio system of reasonably high quality is essential to the enjoyment of reproduced music. But once the components have been chosen (and the process can be spread over a considerable period of time), most people sit back and listen to records and tapes through the system, rather than to the system through the music. The systems are upgraded, of course, but in a slow and rational process similar to their selection.

Not so with the “esoteric” audio-
phile—for him the interest in equipment can become addictive. For a few, it can even take the form of an obsession, a condition that a British psychologist, J. Zelinger, has described, in a recent edition of England's Hi-Fi News and Record Review, as "hi-fi fetishism." The symptoms, says Zelinger, are several: "an inclination to attach enormous significance to audio equipment's capacity to induce sonic pleasure," coupled with "an inordinate emphasis on the sensuality of the reproduced sound, with a consequent tendency to relegate the music itself to a secondary position."

This is hardly the place to speculate on the quirks of an admittedly small percentage of audio fanatics, or "tweaks," but psychologically they are related to the "purists." These are music enthusiasts who take both their listening and the components they listen with very, very seriously, seriously enough to support an underground audio press that at any one time may include half a dozen periodicals. These magazines, in turn, support and are supported by a surprising variety of often little-known companies whose products are directed almost exclusively at the high-end market.

Aside from the vendors of an enormous array of specialized wires and cables (meant to be installed at any point in your system where there's access to wiring), turntable mats, weights, levelers, and liquids, there are the manufacturers of the components themselves. At the retail level, the product roster of any audio salon worthy of the designation "high-end" is hardly complete without such names as Mark Levinson, Bedini, Magnepan, Dahlquist, Snell, Acoustat, Oracle, Electrocompaniet, Linn, Pyramid, Goldmund, Koetsu, Rogers, Dynavector, Audio Research, Naim, Win Labs, Krell, Conrad-Johnson, Quad, DCM, Vandersteen, Stax, Perreaux, Mission, Grace, Threshold, Denon, and Coloney.

To what degree does high-end snob appeal figure in the success of these companies? "We have the purest of the purists... a group of people who refuse to listen to other amplifiers," says John Bedini, chief engineer of Bedini Electronics, a California-based company that supplies some twelve hundred amplifiers annually to the domestic and international high-end markets. D & K Imports, the American distributor of Koetsu and Accuphase (both Japanese esoteric lines), reports that they have never been able to meet the audiophile demand for the Koetsu, an expensive moving-coil cartridge that is a cult favorite and the critical darling of the underground audio magazines. The shortage of supply notwithstanding, D & K last year still managed to obtain four hundred Koetsus for distribution to a high-end market apparently hungry for more. In comparison with the sales of the large, established, Japanese or American "mainstream" manufacturers (the Pioneers, Sonys, Shures, and Stanton), twelve hundred amplifiers or four hundred cartridges is not a lot. Yet, when one notes that the Bedini amplifiers range in price from $1,299 to $4,000 and the two Koetsu models list at $660 and $1,100 each, the high-end market cannot be dismissed as totally without economic significance.

Of course, a personal endorsement by an editor of an underground journal can be instrumental in lifting a little-known product out of obscurity into the...
Rarity can also greatly enhance the desirability of a high-end component. If it's difficult to obtain—whether by reason of a legitimately small supply or a prohibitively high price—then, of course, it must be better. The Goldmund, a French-made turntable with a linear-tracking tone arm, meets both criteria. Imported in small numbers directly from France (only 275 have made it to the U.S. so far), it has acquired a remarkable mystique in the two years since its American debut. And of course the price, $5,400 for turntable and arm, ensures that the Goldmund will remain more talked about than owned by members of the esoteric set—an important ingredient in the recipe for mystique.

Audio eccentricity of this sort is not limited to American esoteric tastes; in Canada, another French radial-arm turntable has achieved almost legendary status through the simple fact that its absurd price has discouraged most sane audiophiles from buying one. Indeed, the mystique surrounding the Clément-Schlumberger turntable is so great that one audiophile is said to have been virtually propelled into the presidency of a local audio society as a result of the awe engendered in his colleagues by his ownership of one! The C-S legend can be expected to survive Untainted, for although the unit is still available on special order, even most fanatics would balk at having to put out $10,000 for it. Also in the near-legendary class is the Micro Seiki SX-8000 turntable shown on the cover of this issue. It has a stainless steel platter supported by an air cushion and is driven by a belt made of thin Aramid-fiber thread.

Japanese esoteric audiophiles have a curious predilection for large, old, horn-loaded American speakers—Altec's Voice of the Theater, the Electro-Voice Patrician, and the JBL Paragon—a preference that has not been overlooked by JBL. In a corner of JBL's California plant, they quietly continue to build the Paragon, a huge, horn-loaded, twenty-three-year-old design. By current standards it would hardly be considered even close to state of the art, but Japanese audiophiles like it well enough to pay $12,000 for it, and virtually all of the Paragons are built for export to Japan. Electro-Voice is also said to be exporting newly built Patricians to Japan.

Sometimes factors converge that practically guarantee favorable American reception of a new high-end device. Early reports on the $1,000 Koetsu cartridge in the Audio Critic indicated that the cartridge body was hand-carved out of wood... The poetic image of the old man and his hand-building this cartridge in minute quantities proved to be irresistible to high-end audiophiles. Reports continue to appear in the underground journals chronicling the advancing age and illness of the Koetsu's creator, a situation that ensures improvement in the cartridge's credentials as time passes.

A fair quotient of mystique can accrue to a product when the designer unwittingly or knowingly hints that the component can bring some elusive quality to the reproduction of sound ("musicality" and "focus" are two often cited, if obscure, characteristics). John Bedini, in explaining the high-end appeal of his successful line of class-A amplifiers, stated that... sonically, there are things that we do that the audio field does not know about. That
Mark Levinson, one of the big names in high-end hi-fi, produces the four-part ML-6A preamplifier (top), which includes separate amplification electronics and power supplies for each channel—at about $2,900 per channel. For only another $3,150 per channel you can buy his ML-2 mono class-A power amplifier (bottom), which is rated at 25 watts output.

is why people choose the Bedini over others. I don’t care how many amplifiers you’ve got in a room... there’ll be something about the Bedini that totally captures your imagination." Julian Vereker, the British designer of Naim amplifiers, reputedly told one importer that "...the Japanese will design for the spec sheet and not for musical reproduction; he [Vereker] wants Naim to be bought by the true audiophile, not by someone who just happens to like specifications." For some time Naim was loath to provide distortion or power-output figures for its amplifiers. However, there are now two basic specs available for the Naim NAP 160: a power of 50 watts per channel and a price of $1,350.

Technical complexity and exotic design frequently—but not always—hold a special fascination for high-end audiophiles. The Hill Plasmaticron gas-discharge speaker, which must be refueled every three hundred hours with tanks of compressed helium from the local welding-supply company, surely qualifies, as do triamped speaker systems—it has fifty-four drivers and costs $25,000—remained unchallenged until the recent appearance of the WAMM, the Wilson Audio Modular Monitor, a four-tower, 750-pound modular array designed by David A. Wilson, a writer for the Absolute Sound. The $32,000 price of the WAMM includes dual 6½-foot, bi-amped subwoofer towers, electrostatic high-frequency arrays, a pulse-alignment mechanism, an equalizer, and final adjustment of the system to the listening room by Wilson himself anywhere in the world.

Inaccessibility can often play a role in heightening the allure of such high-end speakers. The WAMM can be heard in only two audio stores in America—one in the East and one in the West—and to date only seven American audiophiles have the WAMM in their homes. And how many audiophiles have heard Mark Levinson’s HQD speaker or Sequerra’s ribbon tweeter? In the fantasies of a high-end enthusiast, a rare speaker can assume a level of accuracy and clarity that is beyond the capacity of any current speaker technology to achieve in reality.

Many audiophiles need to modify or tinker. For instance, old Dynakit tube equipment is in considerable demand. An audiophile who can announce that he has a Dyna "PAS tube preamp—modified, of course..." gains immediate status. Modifying, of course, is not limited to kits. The standard Dahlquist DQ-10 speaker system, while no longer considered a really esoteric unit, brings instant recognition to its owner if it has been modified by the addition of a ribbon tweeter. Indeed, adding Richard Sequerra’s Pyramid ribbon tweeter to any speaker system gains extra points for an audiophile bent on upward mobility in the esoteric hierarchy.

Over the years there have been numerous striking examples of exotica, but one in particular stands out—the Transcriptor turntable (late 1960’s vintage), which utilized an extraordinary method of variable speed regulation. As the user moved a lever, it lowered a metal paddle into a thick, viscous liquid contained in a circular moat that rotated with the platter beneath the turntable. Lowering the paddle into the moat created drag, thus slowing the platter! The position held by the Infinity Reference Standard as the most complicated and expensive high-end speaker system—it has fifty-four drivers and costs $25,000—remained unchallenged until the recent appearance of the WAMM, the Wilson Audio Modular Monitor, a four-tower, 750-pound modular array designed by David A. Wilson, a writer for the Absolute Sound. The $32,000 price of the WAMM includes dual 6½-foot, bi-amped subwoofer towers, electrostatic high-frequency arrays, a pulse-alignment mechanism, an equalizer, and final adjustment of the system to the listening room by Wilson himself anywhere in the world.

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The roots of a recent truly bizarre trend in esoteric audio in this country can be traced directly to the Japanese. It is the placing of special insulating mats or feet beneath amplifiers or preamps and of heavy weights on top of them to dampen vibration of the inter-
nal circuit components. Larry Poor, U.S. manager of Sony Esprit products, recalls first seeing the phenomenon during the course of a Japanese amplifier Grand Prix awards show. "The reviewer was placing bags of sand, pieces of lead, anything heavy, on top of all the components," says Poor. "I heard differences immediately, so I suggested to Mr. Nagami (the Japanese head of Sony Esprit), 'Let's work on this.' " Subsequently, Poor says, he "spent six months taking bricks around putting them on top of amplifiers—the differences were incredible." Out of this came the Sony Esprit Floating Magnet Sound Base, magnetic insulating feet said by Poor to be quite effective in preventing "transformer clatter" and "capacitor vibration." Additionally, the cabinets for Sony Esprit components incorporate marble slabs.

The world of ultra-high-end audio is seductive, and fun if you can afford it (these are expensive, beautifully crafted toys), but for the technically naïve or insecure audiophile, there are pitfalls. One owner of a high-end salon, who prefers anonymity, commented: "There is a side to esoteric audio where there's a bit of a game being played by owners of salons, manipulating the insecurities of audiophiles. They get neurotic about the performance of their systems. Often the improvements are marginal. It's a sad part of the high-end game."

There is the continual danger of confusing real with imaginary differences, a condition exacerbated by the wildly subjective and uncontrolled product assessments of the underground magazines. They are fickle in pronouncing which components are "best." With dizzying rapidity over a two-year period, the Audio Critic assessed five different amplifiers with such comments as "... sonically wipes out all other amplifiers known to us..." Now, amplifier "sound" simply cannot change that dramatically in a two-year period. For some audiophiles, this can only encourage an addictive, expensive, and never-ending cycle of "trading up" to what the underground press from issue to issue proclaims to be the "best."

Surely all audiophiles, audio writers, and engineers would agree that the goal of sound-reproducing equipment is sonic accuracy. If we are to determine how effective a component is in achieving this, we must have a standardized and understandable set of measurement techniques that correlate strongly with what we subjectively hear. The only way to achieve this is to bring as much objectivity as possible to listening tests, eliminating such extraneous variables as psychological bias related to price or brand name and preconceived notions about performance that might color our impressions of what we hear. The only technique that has been repeatedly demonstrated to be both reliable and accurate in isolating subtle differences in sonic performance is the controlled, double-blind listening test utilizing instantaneous A/B or A/B/X switching facilities.

If two amplifiers measure virtually the same in terms of flat frequency response and low distortion, they should sound the same. If they sound different, then the measurement techniques are ignoring some important parameters of amplifier performance. Fortunately (for measurement techniques), there is a growing body of evidence to support the thesis that when scientific experimental controls are brought to bear on listening tests, amplifiers that yield similar measurements do indeed sound identical. Two extended listening tests conducted by Dr. Floyd E. Toole, of the acoustics division of Canada's National Research Council, for Audio Video Canada magazine, comparing a total of eleven amplifiers driving widely different loads, showed conclusively that no audible differences in amplifier "sound" could be detected—at least with these two groups of amplifiers. Since those tests, Toole's findings have been supported by Quad in England and by several British audio writers, including Peter Baxandall in Wireless World and Martin Colloms in Hi-Fi News and Record Review.

What, then, is the explanation for the extraordinary differences that esoteric audiophiles and underground reviewers claim to hear between different high-end amplifiers? There is an ample body of evidence to support the hypothesis that our sonic memory for subtle, even

Remember vacuum tubes? Conrad-Johnson does and uses them in the Premier One power amplifier ($3,850): 200 watts per channel into 4, 8, or 16 ohms from 30 to 15,000 Hz.
THERE ARE NO BETTER TIMES THAN THESE.

The smooth, mellow taste of Early Times Kentucky Whisky has been a part of the good life since 1862. The taste and tradition continue. There are no better times than these.

Cumberland Lake, Kentucky
Today only one high bias tape is able to combine outstanding sensitivity in the critical high frequency range with the lowest background noise of any oxide tape in the world. That tape is BASF's Professional II.

Professional II is like no other tape because it's made like no other tape. While ordinary high bias tapes are made from modified particles of ferric oxide, Professional II is made of pure chromium dioxide. These perfectly shaped and uniformly sized particles provide a magnetic medium that not only delivers an absolute minimum of background noise, but outstanding high frequencies as well.

Like all BASF tapes, Professional II comes encased in the new ultra-precision cassette shell for perfect alignment, smooth, even movement and consistent high fidelity reproduction. With Professional II, you'll hear all of the music and none of the tape. And isn't that what you want in a tape?

The difference in noise level between PRO II and ordinary high bias tape is greatest where the human ear is most sensitive (20 kHz). BASF tape cassettes come with a lifetime guarantee. Should any BASF cassette ever fail — except for abuse or mishandling — simply return it to BASF for a free replacement.

Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab.

Professional II is so superior it was chosen by Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab for their Original Master Recording High Fidelity Cassettes. These state of the art pre-recorded cassettes are duplicated in real-time (1:1) from the original recording studio master tapes of some of the most prominent recording artists of our time.

For the best recordings you'll ever make.
large, differences in sound quality is both fallible and very short—a matter of seconds. Lacking instantaneous switching facilities and proper experimental controls, the claimed differences are a product of the reviewer’s imagination, psychological bias, or preconceived notion that sonic differences should exist. Given this mental set, individuals will hear differences where none exist.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of esoteric audio is its distrust of controlled technical measurements and its reliance on vague, metaphorical terms that serve only to confuse the reader and obscure differences that do, in fact, exist. Sometimes there is an equivalent and obscure differences that do, in fact, exist. Sometimes there is an equivalent existence. Sometimes there is an equivalent existence.

For only $4,000.

Accuphase, one of the few Japanese electronics companies to gain favor with the U.S. esoteric market, sells its multifeatured C-240 preamplifier for $2,200.

The Sequerra FM tuner has a built-in oscilloscope that can be used to analyze the incoming signal, the output, and various system functions. Price: $6,000.

ON OUR COVER

S o far only two U.S. audiophiles own Micro Seiki SX-9000 turntables identical to the one shown on this month’s cover. The 52-pound stainless-steel platter is supported on an air cushion (separate air pump not shown), and the spindle has an oil-bath lubrication system so that there is no metal-to-metal contact between the base and platter. The speed controls, motor, and capstan are contained in a separate unit (rear of photo), and they drive the platter with a thin Aramid-fiber-thread “belt.” The Micro Seiki tone arm is included. Price: $10,000 (with extra Aramid thread). Micro Seiki also has an “economy” version (the SX 5000) without the air cushion and with a lighter copper platter for only $4,000.

Dr. Toole explains the love of subjective prose by esoteric audiophiles: “There are people who, because of a lack of technical expertise—or inclination—are incapable of describing what they hear in terms of potential or real technical faults. Since they can’t go from the perception directly to the problem, they go from the perception through an intermediate step of describing it in abstract terms. ‘Grain’ and ‘grit’ can describe distortion in a phono cartridge, but to talk of an amplifier having a ‘chocolatey midrange’ or ‘thorns on the cymbals’ is simply poetic claptrap. I think it’s delightful that people have vivid imaginations; but ultimately these terms are just not constructive, not useful.”

This is not to detract from the entertainment value of the underground audio press. These journals often provide witty, outspoken, and amusing critiques, good record reviews, and interesting behind-the-scenes looks at the audio and record industries. They do draw attention to legitimately good and often little-known products—though sometimes to the detriment of equally fine “mainstream” products that don’t have high-end cachet or the approval of the underground editors. If a product is too readily available and sells for a reasonable price, it automatically loses its cachet for the devoted followers of audio esoterica.

By definition, the “high end” is concerned with the current state of the art. If there is to be any progress in advancing the state of the art, there must be a focus on real problems and flaws in stereophonic and musical reproduction (still far from perfect) and on sonic differences that can be repeatedly demonstrated, isolated, labeled, and quantified. Without this element of practicality or common sense, for most of us the World of the High End will continue to be Tweaksville, a sort of Lotus Land populated by a dreamy lunatic fringe out of touch with reality. And anyone who attempts to chart that world will find that its principal geographic features are the impenetrable Mountains of Metaphor, the treacherous Floating Islands of Fantasy, and the bottomless Sea of Subjectivity.

Alan Lofft is a contributing editor and technical reviewer for Audio Video Canada magazine, a frequent participant in National Research Council listening tests, and an audiophile of long standing.
The new Technics cassette decks with dbx. They don't just reduce tape noise. They eliminate it.

There is a new line of Technics cassette decks so technologically advanced they are capable of reproducing music with virtually no audible tape noise. None.

They not only feature Dolby® noise reduction, but also the dbx noise elimination system. With dbx, a Technics cassette deck compresses the signal so the dynamic range is halved. When a tape is played back, the process is reversed. The original dynamic range is then restored and noise is pushed below audibility. Loud passages can be recorded without distortion, and soft ones without tape noise. There is even dbx disc decoding available for playing dbx encoded records.

The Technics RS-M255X goes even further. Wide range (−40 to +18 db), three-color FL meters handle the dynamic range dbx gives you. An electronic tape counter doubles as a remaining time indicator to show how much time is left on your cassette. Bias and EO levels are automatically selected for any tape formulation. Microprocessor feather-touch controls give you fast, easy, mode switching. And Technics RS-M255X gives you the stability and accuracy of a two-motor drive system.

Audition all of the sophisticated Technics cassette decks with dbx. Including the very affordable RS-M228X.

Why settle for tape noise reduction when you can have tape noise elimination? From Technics.

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A Guide to

HI-FI FURNITURE

What you need to know before you buy

By Carl W. Spencer

Anyone who has bought a component audio or video system must sooner or later find a place to install it. Occasionally an existing piece of furniture fills the bill, but more often than not a temporary arrangement is established on a bookshelf or a buffet. These makeshift solutions tend to become semi-permanent, and a more carefully considered approach to equipment storage is relegated to some indefinite point in the future.

But the day of reckoning must surely come. Maybe it's the dog chewing up the patch cords or a visiting toddler discovering the joys of tone-arm movement. Perhaps you are overcome by the visual discord of a tangle of connecting wires or simply wish to make your dearly bought system less tempting to potential burglars. Marital politics can also amplify the need for stereo furniture: one spouse would like the equipment out in the open while the other prefers that it were hidden in a closet. A nearly perfect compromise can be struck by buying a handsome cabinet. A nearly perfect compromise can be struck by buying a handsome cabinet.

Before selecting furniture for your audio system, give some thought to how you actually use the equipment. People listen to music in different ways: some sit facing the speakers and concentrate on the music, others listen while reading, resting, entertaining, or doing something else around the house. Choose furniture that will fit in with your own listening style(s).

You will probably find it handiest to place the components requiring the closest eye-hand coordination—tuners or receivers—approximately at eye level. A cassette deck should be placed lower to make it easier to load. Components that are primarily adjusted by ear, such as preamplifiers and various signal processors, can be placed anywhere it's convenient to reach them. A turntable is easiest to use if it is placed within the area between the user's waist and shoulders. Too high and it becomes awkward to load a record on the spindle, too low and you have to stoop or squat to place the stylus in the band you want. A light over the turntable is a nice convenience; it greatly facilitates reading record labels, placing the stylus, and spotting dust or fingerprints. Some cabinets come with a turntable light as standard equipment, or you can install one yourself—but use only small incandescent bulbs since fluorescent or high-intensity lights sometimes cause interference.

All these convenience factors tend to dictate a tall cabinet—unless you want to be able to operate your system from a sitting position. In that case, you will probably have to mount the components much lower.

Installation Requirements

Audio equipment has its own special installation requirements that should not be overlooked. Adequate ventilation is a prime consideration. Most amplifiers and receivers use convection currents (hot air rises) around the power-transistor cooling fins to remove heat and keep the unit within its thermal operating limits. Components enclosed in a small cabinet can eventually heat up to damaging levels. Just how fast this occurs is a function of the efficiency and power rating of each component, the net speaker load, the volume level, and the internal cabinet volume. The best way to determine whether your high-powered equipment is getting satisfactory ventilation is to place a thermometer in the cabinet beside the amplifier and check it from time to time. If it runs much over 85 degrees (F.) or 10 degrees above room temperature, then you need to improve the ventilation.

While it's risky to generalize with so many variables, most solid-state power units delivering less than 50 watts per channel (rms) to one pair of speakers will rarely overheat even in a totally enclosed cabinet. The air volume of the cabinet itself acts as a heat sink and takes quite a while to heat up. Higher-powered units (50 to 100 watts per channel) can usually be adequately ventilated with a simple convection arrangement using vent holes (see below).

Units with more than 100 watts of solid-state power, or any tube component, contained within a cabinet should be ventilated using a "whisper" fan. A 55-cfm (cubic-feet-per-minute) fan will completely change the air of most equipment cabinets six to eight times a minute. Use a good, quiet induction-type fan designed for cooling electronics. Cheap fans can cause acoustical and electrical noise.

A cabinet's doors, shelving, and back panel can all affect the ventilation flow. Opening the doors or removing part of the back is a great improvement in this respect over a fully enclosed cabinet, but you may not wish to leave the doors open (they can get in the way and will let dust in), and the back panel is the key structural member of any cabinet, providing shear bracing. A better solution is to drill a row of 1-inch intake holes in the back panel at the bottom of the equipment section and another row at the top to let the heat out. This maintains the integrity of the back shear brace while allowing considerable air flow. Cutting an inch or so off the backs
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of the shelves improves the flow of convection currents within the cabinet. Both of these design features (or modifications) also simplify the job of running connection wires.

Dust will still be able to infiltrate through vent holes, but less than through open doors. Dust not only looks bad, but it can act as an abrasive on moving parts (tape transports, tape heads, styli, and record grooves), wearing them down much faster. To a lesser extent, dust can also coat and slightly insulate electronic components, raising their operating temperatures and perhaps reducing their life expectancy.

The best resolution of the dilemma of dust protection vs. ventilation is found in better commercial cabinets and involves several interrelated features:

- a full back for sufficient cabinet shear bracing;
- intake holes located below the level of the lowest piece of equipment to keep dust away by gravity;
- a baffled exhaust vent to allow dust entering the exhaust holes to settle out by gravity;
- equipment mounted in a closely fitted front panel to keep out dust;
- minimal equipment supports within the cabinet to allow free internal air circulation;
- closely fitted doors with overlapping dust lips.

Credenza-style cabinets such as the O'Sullivan unit shown above hold a lot of equipment without dominating a room. Vertical cabinets such as the Gusdorf Vistarik at right store components at heights convenient for use while taking up relatively little floor space.

A fan in the top section of this Presidential Industries F-7 cabinet draws air up past the electronic components from intake holes in the middle of the back panel. Dust is minimized by isolating the turntable compartment and by flush-mounting front panels.
Other problems besides dust or overheating can be created by an improper setup. Components should be situated fairly close together to avoid the need for unduly long shielded cables. The turntable should be mounted on a solid, level base and be isolated acoustically from sound waves transmitted both through the air and through the wood. Turntables should never be placed on top of speakers or even put in the same cabinet with them. Manufacturers go to great lengths to avoid acoustic feedback by making turntable feet that act as dampers to resist transmissions through a shelf. If the turntable is mounted in a solid cabinet behind closed doors, extraneous vibration is further damped. Also avoid mounting turntables or tape decks immediately above power amps or receivers since phono cartridges and tape heads are very susceptible to hum pickup from large power transformers.

**Style and Material**

Furniture for electronics comes in several different formats. Higher-quality and more expensive pieces usually come fully assembled and ready to use. Most of the rest come “knocked down” (KD) into parts to be put together by the customer. This rarely requires much more than a screwdriver and the ability to read simple step-by-step directions. Modular wall systems and more complicated pieces may be partly KD and partly assembled at the factory. Some companies put out kits for fancier cabinets that can require extensive cabinetmaking tools and skills to assemble and finish.

Appearance will probably be the foremost factor after cost in your purchasing decision. You will be happier in the long run if you choose carefully among the available styles. Keep in mind that while a tall vertical cabinet allows for more convenient equipment operation more awkward. If a stereo cabinet is one of the first pieces of furniture you intend to buy, be sure to choose one that will match other furniture you may purchase in the future. If your home is already fully furnished, buy a cabinet that blends in with the rest of your furniture, not necessarily with your speakers.

One of the chief distinguishing features among brands of audio furniture is the type of material used. While claims and counterclaims abound in the marketplace, the consumer is actually somewhat protected by the fact that there are really very few secrets in furniture manufacturing. It is a very competitive business, and you pretty much get what you pay for. Each basic material has distinct advantages and disadvantages depending on your personal tastes.

The materials most frequently used in making audio furniture today include solid lumber, lumber-core plywood panels with hardwood veneer, particle-board-core plywood panels with hardwood veneer, particle-board-core panels with hardwood veneer, and vinyl-clad particle-board panels. Solid lumber, lumber-core plywood, and veneer-core plywood are the most expensive. Particle-board-core/hardwood-veneer construction is slightly less costly, and vinyl-clad particle-board cabinets are the least expensive by quite a bit. In general, solid wood and wood-veneer cabinets cost nearly twice as much as equivalent units clad in vinyl.

To some degree the cabinet material can affect acoustic transmission to the turntable. Particle board is relatively inert (which helps to explain its almost universal use in speaker enclosures). Solid wood is the most “live,” followed closely by the various plywood cores. The ability to repair minor damage will ultimately determine the life of the piece. Particle board is the most difficult (or even impossible) to repair should it be dropped and a corner crushed. Vinyl covering does a good job of not showing small scratches, but scuff marks and major nicks cannot be easily fixed. Wood veneers and solid lumber are not only easy to repair, but can even be refinished if necessary.

Actually, most good commercially available audio furniture of any material will probably last through your next few systems (given normal indoor living conditions and no extraordinary abuse). But people often get tired of a cabinet’s styling and discard it long before it actually “wears out.” This suggests a few key purchasing considerations:

1. Buy something you can live with for a very long time. Since the world’s supply of top-quality hardwood is declining at the same time demand for it is increasing, it won’t be too many years before the cost of good-quality furniture will be beyond most consumers’ reach. It is good strategy to buy the best you can afford and keep it forever.

2. Buy something that can be adapted for use with equipment you may buy in the future. Lack of adaptability was the downfall of the console approach to sound systems. There are thousands of...
old wood consoles out there in excellent condition but with obsolete or unrepairable equipment. Since these units were not designed with future equipment updating in mind, putting in modern equipment can be a labor-intensive process, and thus quite expensive, if it is even possible. Consider also that one day you may wish to add, say, an open-reel deck or signal-processing accessories. Therefore, buy or build a cabinet with some spare space to accommodate system expansion.

3. Because the expected useful lifespan of good audio furniture is often greater than that of your stereo equipment, in terms of dollars vs. years even an expensive cabinet may be the least costly part of your system.

Rack, Wall, or Custom?

Audio furniture can be loosely categorized under three main heads: racks, modular wall furniture, and "high-end" or custom pieces. There is a lot of overlap among these categories, but most commercial designs fit into one of them.

The most common type of audio cabinet on the market today is the "rack." This genre of furniture is a direct descendant of the 19-inch-panel metal racks formerly used to organize industrial electronic and ham-radio equipment. Today the term refers to any minimal-structure wood or vinyl-clad vertical stand for housing stereo or other electronic components. A typical rack is 3 1/2 feet tall and slightly less than 2 feet wide, able to house from two to four components inside, plus perhaps some records or tapes, while the turntable sits on top. The front is a smoked tempered-glass showcase door mounted with "no-bore" hinges and closed with a magnetic touchlatch. The whole cabinet is usually on casters.

Such cabinets are generally fairly inexpensive and do a good job of organizing typical components into a visually cohesive unit. The casters allow you to move the entire system away from the wall for connecting wires or across the room to another location for live taping. The catch is that you have to like the typically rather modern style, which may or may not fit in with the rest of your furnishings. In actual practice, very few people actually do roll their equipment around the house, the space between the floor and the top of the casters serves only to collect dust, and the convenience of the wheels also tends to compromise the security of your system. If burglars should break into your house, they could easily spot your equipment and roll it out to a waiting van in a few seconds!

Modular wall furniture is often adapted for housing electronic equipment. This type of all-wood furniture is the current evolutionary end product of all-purpose shelving. Generally these pieces have more of a furniture "look" than a standard rack and can be set up either to show off or to conceal equipment, depending on what sort of doors the modules have. Wall furniture has the added advantage of relatively easy expansion. When you add components or your record collection gets out of hand, you merely buy a few more matching modules and attach them to your existing setup. There is a price for these benefits. As a rule, wall furniture costs quite a bit more for the same storage offered by a vinyl-clad rack. And sometimes the rather generalized styling of the wall systems (the secret of their marvelous flexibility) doesn't quite fit with the rest of your living room.

There is a less definable segment of the electronics-furniture market that includes the more expensive, compli-
"The perfectionist in me demands Smirnoff for its quality. My business side appreciates its value."

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There's vodka, and then there's Smirnoff."
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cated, and ornate cabinets. These "high-end" cabinets differ widely in features, making it very difficult to generalize about them, but their main stock in trade is a combination of good looks, convenience, and equipment protection along with a healthy dose of prestige. As you would expect, the major disadvantages are higher prices and limited availability.

These cabinets are nearly always constructed of solid hardwood and hardwood veneers, and they can be had in both very contemporary and more traditional casework styles. They display the equipment to its best advantage, but still allow a measure of concealment (when you desire it) for security purposes. Such features as panel mounting make your system look "professional" while keeping out dust and discouraging potential burglars. Wires are fully concealed, and the cabinet is nearly dustproof. Provisions for adequate ventilation are usually included.

Finding a Supplier

The major shift in audio-furniture design over the last two decades has been toward vertical formats and away from long, low consoles. Materials have changed too. Twenty years ago all stereo cabinets were made of wood. Then fashion shifted to various combinations of metal and vinyl veneers. Now the trend is coming full circle to wood again. Even the larger companies, which two years ago made only vinyl-clad cabinets, are either shifting some of their production back to real wood veneers or are thinking about it.

Cabinet designs are becoming more flexible in terms of their ability to accommodate different types of equipment, which bodes well for their long-term usefulness. Manufacturers are now tying various combinations of stereo, video, and computer components together in cabinet systems.

Ideally, before buying audio furniture you would want to be able to look at all the possibilities in one store. Multiline electronics-furniture specialty stores do exist, but they are very few and far between. Most likely you will also have to check out stereo dealers, discount chain stores, general furniture stores, and wall-systems stores, each with its own vested interest.

Besides looking in the expected places, write to the manufacturers of cabinets in which you might be interested and request the names of dealers in your community. Some companies may sell by mail order if they don't have a local dealer. (For a list of the names and addresses of the major manufacturers, send a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to Stereo Review, Dept. FRN, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.) If you want a fancier cabinet, also try looking up "cabinetmakers" or "furniture, custom made" in the Yellow Pages. Be sure to look at plenty of actual cabinets and photos of cabinets made by these suppliers before you place an order.

One of the principal advantages of component hi-fi systems is the flexibility they offer for future upgrading. The hi-fi furniture you buy should also be chosen with this kind of flexibility in mind as well as with the goal of proper protection for your equipment. But it is not impractical, frivolous, or self-indulgent to give serious attention to the appearance of the housing you choose for your components. You will be spending a lot of time with your record- and tape-playing equipment, and there's no reason why you should not want it to look as good as it sounds.

Carl W. Spencer is the author of Designing and Building Your Own Stereo Furniture (Tab Books #1284) and the owner of Presidential Industries, a manufacturer and retailer of production and custom audio furniture in Riverside, California.
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BEST OF THE MONTH

A Joyous New Album by One of the Great Old Blues Singers

ROYAL families are rare in jazz, but the Thomases of Houston can make a good claim to being the Barrymores of classic "hot" jazz. First was George Thomas, a successful pianist, songwriter, and music publisher early in the century who worked with the ubiquitous entrepreneur Clarence Williams as well as Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet. The "Lionel Barrymore" of the Thomas clan was Hersal Thomas, a piano prodigy who by the time of his death in 1926 at the age of eighteen had developed a sophisticated boogie-woogie style that was seldom equaled thereafter (it was far superior to the monotonous riffing the form degenerated into later). The "Ethel Barrymore" role was filled by the middle sibling, Beulah Thomas. Better known as Sippie Wallace, she was one of the most popular and creative blues singers and songwriters of the Twenties.

What makes this history lesson pertinent is...
During the early Twenties, and only to Chicago's South Siders lined up at record sent for her to join him in New Orleans, a seasoned veteran.

Of eleven, in 1910, and by 1916 she was so on-Sippie Wallace not only sang Berlin's Say It Isn't So. Been a Good Old Wagon by the Empress of the Blues, Bessie Smith, and Irving Berlin's Say It Isn't So.

Like other great women blues singers-Smith, Ma Rainey, Ethel Waters, Victoria Spivey, Alberta Hunter, and so on—Sippie Wallace not only sang "pure" blues but gave a blues inflection to show tunes and comedy numbers on the vaudeville and tent circuits. Sippie began starring in tent shows at the age of eleven, in 1910, and by 1916 she was a seasoned veteran. Brother George sent for her to join him in New Orleans, where she met Armstrong and other leading lights of jazz whom she would use years later on her recordings. When the center of jazz moved to Chicago in the early Twenties, the Thomas family gathered there, with Hersal accompanying Sippie both on records and tours.

Stories are often told about how Chicago's South Siders lined up at record shops to buy the latest Bessie Smith release. It's true, they did, but they also lined up to buy Sippie's. Smith ran through her repertoire of country blues during the early Twenties, and only to ward the end of it did she begin to sing more cosmopolitan and erotic material. Sippie's songs—such as Women Be Wise, Mighty Tight Woman, and You Got to Know How—were citified and sexy right from the start, but her sense of humor and decorum saved them from vulgarity.

Sippie's first glory days came to an end with the Great Depression. Hersal's early death had devastated her, and when both her older brother and her husband died within a year of each other in the mid-Thirties, she sought comfort and employment in the church. For the next three decades she worked as a choir director in Detroit and toured and performed at several folk festivals and then toured Europe, where she was recorded by Storyville with piano accompaniment by Roosevelt Sykes and Little Brother Montgomery (SLP-4017). Her voice was still rich and vibrant, but in 1970 illness struck and she became confined to a wheelchair. Like Ethel Barrymore, she scorned fear or despair. Spurred on by Bonnie Raitt, she took up her career once again, and she hasn't stopped since.

The backing for the new album by Jim Dapogny's Chicago Jazz Band is, in a word, perfect. The band never intrudes, playing sprightly fills to complement Sippie's vocals and to re-create the mood and style of a grand era. Peter Ferran's luminous clarinet deserves special attention, and so does Dapogny's solo on You Got to Know How, played on a 1905 Baldwin concert grand in homage to Jelly Roll Morton. When Sippie calls out "Play, boys!" they do just that. The "boys" are joined by Raitt on slide guitar on one selection, Suitcase Blues, which Sippie wrote when her adored baby brother left home (Hersal recorded it just before his death).

It is rare today for a major label to release good—no, make that great—old-fashioned jazz lovingly performed in high style and recorded with excellent sound. But Sippie Wallace is a rare lady who sings with compassion, exuberance, and uncommon sense. There's nothing out of date about her art or charm or her worldly, good-natured advice, delivered in a down-home Houston accent, about the ups and downs of love between men and women. Buying this album is the cheapest way I can think of to enrich your life with the wisdom of your elders, and I advise you to do so posthaste.

—Joel Vance

Sippie Wallace: Sippie. Sippie Wallace (vocals); Bonnie Raitt (vocals, slide guitar); Jim Dapogny's Chicago Jazz Band (instrumentals). Women Be Wise: Up the Country Blues, Mighty Tight Woman, Won't You Come Over to My House, Suitcase Blues, Say It Isn't So, Everybody Loves My Baby, Mama's Gone, Goodbye. Atlantic SD 19350 $8.98, © CS 19350 $8.98, © TP 19350 $8.98.

Fresh Young Singers and A Seasoned Conductor Create a Remarkable New Madama Butterfly

The new Hungaroton recording of Puccini's Madama Butterfly under the direction of Giuseppe Patané may lack "bankable" names, but be assured that this is no provincial production. It is, in fact, quite a remarkable performance that can compete with many more highly touted versions. The
singing by the Hungarian cast is uniformly good and idiomatic, thanks to expert guidance by a conductor born to the task.

"Masterly" is the word that sums up Patané's leadership. Shrewdly exploiting the strengths and guarding the limitations of his singers, he sustains an intimate, lyrical atmosphere throughout, with transparent orchestral textures and a sure hand with the vocal ensembles. This is a touching and poignant rather than overly passionate view of the opera. Patané is not a conductor to linger over details and milk climactic phrases for all they're worth. He allows Puccini's melodies to speak for themselves, and they do so naturally and to marvelous effect.

The singing may not be spectacular, but the principals reveal fresh voices and insightful characterizations. As Butterfly, soprano Veronika Kincses (who has disclosed her attractive qualities in previous Hungaroton releases) sounds a bit veiled in her entrance scene but blossoms out nicely for the big moments of the second act. The final scene strains her vocal resources somewhat, and there are passing moments of imprecision in the middle range. I won't venture to speculate how much of this latter effect is a result of the technical production, but this is the first recording I have heard of Horowitz displaying his full dynamic range, tonal gradations, and variety of rhythmic attacks with which I felt entirely comfortable. Somehow, everything seems to have worked flawlessly at the November 1, 1981, concert at the Metropolitan Opera House when this recording was made, from perfect microphone placement to an audience miraculously free of coughs to a beautifully voiced and regulated piano with no stridency in the middle range.

The concert's programming is canny, beginning with a half-dozen Scarlatti sonatas—perfect vehicles for the Horowitzian nimbleness and elegance. Especially noteworthy are the marvelous tonal gradations in L. 118 and the scintillating passagework in L. 494. Side one closes with the Chopin F Minor Ballade, and Horowitz works his way into it with some of his most exquisite legato phrasing. There are many special quiet touches in this reading, such as his handling of the remarkable canon in the middle of the piece, and the final climaxes made the hairs on my arms stand up.

Side two opens with the Liszt B Minor Ballade, a no-holds-barred performance on the level of the Vallée d'Obermann that Columbia recorded at Horowitz's Carnegie Hall recitals in 1966. The maestro's whole armory of effects is on display from start to finish. Following is the Chopin Waltz in A-flat Major, which is somewhat mannered, to be sure, but ravishing nonetheless. The concert concludes with the second most-popular Rachmaninoff prelude, the G Minor, with an astonishing lyrical middle section in which Horowitz's fingers bring into play wholly independent voicings.

"Horowitz at the Met":
For the First Time, the Pianist's Full Range Is Captured on a Record

"H orowitz at the Met" is the first new recording by Vladimir Horowitz that I have had a chance to review since he switched to the RCA label some half-dozen years ago. For me this disc was a double treat, since it not only shows the pianist to be in better musical form than ever, but also, for the first time in a Horowitz recording, the blockbusters do not seem to be straining the recording equipment past its limits. I won't venture to speculate how much of this latter effect is a result of the digital recording process and how much is owing to other aspects of the technical production, but this is the first recording I have heard of Horowitz displaying his full dynamic range, tonal gradations, and variety of rhythmic attacks with which I felt entirely comfortable. Somehow, everything seems to have worked flawlessly at the November 1, 1981, concert at the Metropolitan Opera House when this recording was made, from perfect microphone placement to an audience miraculously free of coughs to a beautifully voiced and regulated piano with no stridency in the middle range.

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Mercifully, the entire album is free of applause until after the final note on side two, and by that point, even with only loudspeakers in view, I was impelled to join in. Need I say more?
—David Hall

VLADIMIR HOROWITZ: At the Met.

Scarlatti: Sonatas in A-flat Major (L. 186), F Minor (L. 118), F Minor (L. 199), A Major (L. 494), B Minor (L. 33), and E Major (L. 224).


Merrily We Roll Along: The Broadway-Cast Album Of Sondheim's Latest Music-Theater Experiment

The RCA production staff must really have blown the budget on the new original-cast album of Stephen Sondheim's most recent Broadway show, Merrily We Roll Along—half-speed mastering, two covers, Hirschfeld caricatures, and a complete libretto. Well, if Sondheim doesn't deserve the full treatment, who does? In the last twenty years he has proved himself to be the most important and prolific creator in the American musical theater. As with all of the greats, he has occasionally failed to please the public; Merrily We Roll Along was a box-office flop last season, closing after only a few nights. It is entirely to the credit of RCA and everyone else involved in the project that as much care and attention was lavished on recording the show as if it were another Sweeney Todd or A Little Night Music and still playing to SRO houses. (The recording was made the day after the show closed.)

The story of Merrily We Roll Along reaches backward in time to retrace the lives of several people attending a class reunion, and Sondheim's score is typically inventive and complex. Perhaps the clearest explanation is Sondheim's own, as he presents it in the album booklet: "Since Merrily We Roll Along is about friendship, the score concentrates on the friendship of Mary, Frank, and Charlie by having all their songs interconnected through chunks of melody, rhythm, and accompaniment. And since the story moves backwards in time, it presented an opportunity to invent verbal and musical motifs which could be modified over the course of the years, extended and developed, re-prised, fragmented, and then presented to the audience in reverse... For example, a release in one song would turn up later—in later in the show but earlier in time—as a refrain in another, a melody would become an accompaniment, a chorus would be reprised as an interlude, and so on. In fact, if the score is listened to in reverse order—although it wasn't written that way—it develops traditionally."

Aside from all this technical experimentation, Sondheim's music and lyrics again demonstrate his cool detachment from his characters, his generally dark and sorrowful view of the unsatisfying messes people can make of their lives. But, as in other Sondheim shows, the detachment is broken and the darkness is lit up by sudden shafts of sentiment like that of the lovely Not a Day Goes By, as fine a song as he has written.

It's pointless to speculate about why Merrily wasn't a success with theater-goers. What's important to say now is that this beautifully produced and engineered album is a must for anyone interested in the finest of American musical creativity.
—Peter Reilly

MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG (Stephen Sondheim). Original Broadway-cast recording: Jim Walton, Ann Morrison, Lonny Price, Sally Klein, others (vocals); orchestra, Paul Gemignani cond. RCA CBL-14197 $12.98, CBK1-4197 $12.98.

OCTOBER 1982
Now that RCA has introduced SelectaVision videodisc players with stereo capability, the company is beginning to build up a catalog of musical videodiscs with stereo soundtracks. A recent release is the movie version of the Who's rock opera *Tommy*. (When *Tommy* was first shown as a theatrical film in 1975, *Stereo Review*’s rock critic Steve Simels pronounced it “interesting but flawed.”)

RCA is also beginning somewhat cautiously to produce original music shows for the video medium. The first of these is “Bob Welch and Friends,” which was released at the end of the summer. Starring Bob Welch (formerly with Fleetwood Mac) and Mick Fleetwood (currently with Fleetwood Mac), the show is a rock concert shot live at the Roxy Theatre in Los Angeles.

The company has also produced a full-length original country-music show for video. The performers are (understandably) regular RCA recording artists, including Razzie Bailey, Earl Thomas Conley, Charley Pride, and Sylvia. Recorded at the Eleventh Annual Country Music Fan Fair in Nashville, the show is planned for release on videodisc later this year.

In Hollywood in March 1962, Marilyn Monroe accepted a Golden Globe award as the world’s most popular star. In August of that year she died, and her death was pronounced by the coroner a “probable suicide.” Twenty years later the public seems as obsessed with her as ever.

FANS of the seminal New York punk band the Dictators (now dispersed) will be pleased to hear that the group’s lead guitar player, Ross the Boss (Funicello), is back with a new band, Manowar, and an album soon to be released by EMI/Liberty. Ross claims that with ten stacks of speakers and amps he’s “the loudest guitar player in the world,” but this has yet to be verified by the folks at the Guinness Book of World Records. Still, he must be making a lot of noise. His band actually managed to get Orson Welles (pictured above with Ross at his left) to record the narration for a tune entitled *Dark Avenger*. I will not speculate whether Welles’s much-publicized girth is the reason this music is called heavy-metal.

S.S.

Lately there has been keen competition among recording stars for the distinction of signing the most lucrative contract. The contenders for top dollar have included Paul McCartney, Diana Ross, Paul Simon, and Stevie Wonder. The title holder at the moment seems to be Kenny Rogers, who is leaving the EMI/Liberty label for RCA. The details of his contract have not been made public, but industry observers speculate that he has been guaranteed $20 million to $30 million by RCA for six albums over the next five years.

Estimates of Rogers’s sales worldwide over the last five years range from thirty million discs and tapes to $500 million worth of records. He owns recording studios, and his business interests include a men’s clothing line, the Kenny Rogers Western Collection, which reported retail sales over $30 million in the first year. After two TV movies, he has just made an acting debut in his first theatrical film, *Six Pack*. And his creation of a million-dollar endowment for the World Hunger Awards is his latest project directed toward elimination of hunger.

Through all this Rogers has become so well-known that articles about his life are featured in the supermarket newspapers along with plans for instant weight loss, proof of life after death, and accounts of the health problems of the rich and famous. A recent story in the National Enquirer was headed “Kenny Rogers and Wife Live with Her Ex-Hubby.”

For Noel Coppage’s review of Rogers’s latest album, “Love Will Turn You Around,” see page 95 in this issue. When Alanna Nash interviewed Rogers for *Stereo Review*, she asked him about his long string of hits. “I’m on a hot spell right now, and I figure I’ve got two and a half years left on it,” he said. That was in 1980, and there are no signs of his cooling off yet. RCA is betting heavily that Rogers’s winning streak will last at least another five years.

Fans of the seminal New York punk band the Dictators (now dispersed) will be pleased to hear that the group’s lead guitar player, Ross the Boss (Funicello), is back with a new band, Manowar, and an album soon to be released by EMI/Liberty. Ross claims that with ten stacks of speakers and amps he’s “the loudest guitar player in the world,” but this has yet to be verified by the folks at the Guinness Book of World Records. Still, he must be making a lot of noise. His band actually managed to get Orson Welles (pictured above with Ross at his left) to record the narration for a tune entitled *Dark Avenger*. I will not speculate whether Welles’s much-publicized girth is the reason this music is called heavy-metal.

S.S.
In August of this year Doubleday published Monroe, Her Life in Pictures (224 pages; $24.95 hardcover, $14.95 paperback) by James Spada with George Zeno. And on August 5, the anniversary of her death, the New York Post carried the headline MARILYN DEATH PROBE REOPENED, referring to rumors that she may have been murdered. "There is nothing new in these allegations," James Spada says. "I heard them all nearly twenty years ago."

The new biography documents Monroe's life with 230 well-chosen photographs. In the text Spada tells her story with the same combination of admiration, respect, and affection he lavished on Barbra Streisand in his Streisand, the Woman and the Legend (Doubleday, 1981). Besides narrative skill, he brings to this book a meticulous attention to detail and accuracy that is rare in superstar biographies. Although Monroe appeared in a number of movie musicals, she is not remembered primarily as a singer. "Many people don't want to believe it," Spada told me, "but in her films she did all her own singing." A souvenir of Monroe's singing is available on record, a division of DRG. It is "Marilyn Monroe, Never Before and Never Again" (DS 15005). The album contains her performance of Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend and other songs from the soundtrack of Gentlemen Prefer Blondes plus half a dozen selections never before released. A fragment of social history, the last of these is her rendition of Happy Birthday as she sang it in Madison Square Garden in a 1962 birthday tribute to President John F. Kennedy.

The album was released in 1978, and DRG reports that it is still selling briskly. Mr. Spada reports that his next book will be a dual biography of Judy Garland and Liza Minnelli.

W.L.

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**Disc and Tape Reviews**

**By CHRIS ALBERTSON • NOEL COPPAGGE • PHYL GARLAND • PAUL KRESH • MARK PEEL • PETER REILLY • STEVE SIMELS • JOEL VANCE**

**AIR SUPPLY: Now and Forever.** Air Supply (vocals and instrumentals). Now and Forever; Even the Nights Are Better; Young Love; Taking the Chance; and six others. ARISTA AL 9587 $8.98, © ACT 9587 $8.98, © A&T 9587 $8.98.

*Performance: Amissible*  
*Recording: Very good*  

Air Supply's fame has spread far beyond its native Australia. This latest album was recorded in Sydney; the Aussie accents are unmistakable in the vocals, and the music conveys a certain Outback innocence, even in its more urbane moments, that is rather appealing. The lyrics are largely the usual palaver about the joys and hurts of young love, but there is a fresh wholesomeness to the music, as in One Step Closer and the current hit Even the Nights Are Better, and there is some real originality in the arrangements. The style is a curious blend of rock and reaction— at one point there is even the sighing of sweet strings, enough to shock the wits out of any orthodox rock-lover—but these seven musicians manage to make it all work pretty persuasively.

*P.K.*

**ASHFORD & SIMPSON: Street Opera.** Nickolas Ashford (vocals); Valerie Simpson (vocals, piano); instrumental accompaniment Street Opera (four parts). Love It Away, Mighty Mighty Love; and two others. CAPITOL ST-12207 $8.98, © 4XT-12207 $8.98, © 8XT-12207 $8.98.

*Performance: Wanting*  
*Recording: Good*  

Okay, so Nickolas Ashford and Valerie Simpson still look as if the Salvation Army dressed them, and their video presentations are as tasteless as they are unimaginative, but this charming couple brims with talent nonetheless, talent that cries out for someone who knows how to present it properly. It must be mismanagement that keeps them from soaring to the very top as performers, a place they reached many years ago as writers and producers. There has always been some question about Ashford's ability to match his wife's vocal talent, but he has vastly improved over the past five years, and the two have created a terrific, dynamic live act. Yet their performing career moves in circles so small that their following is virtually of the cult variety. Someone must be steering them down the wrong path, for the discrepancy between what Ashford and Simpson could do and what they are doing is too great.

"Street Opera" is their second Capitol release. Side two consists of the banned but continuous four-part title composition. Ashford and Simpson have for a long time wanted to write a Broadway musical, and Street Opera may well be a hint of something in that genre to come, but the four linked songs—including the single, Street Corner—smack uncomfortably of Dreamgirls, with lyrics that border on the trite or lean toward the pretentious. The four unrelated selections that make up the first side are more interesting and characteristic of Ashford and Simpson's better days. Overall, on a scale of one to ten, I give "Street Opera" a two.

*C.A.*

**BLONDIE: The Hunter.** Blondie (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. ORCHID CLUB; ISLAND OF LOST SOULS; DRAGONFLY; FOR YOUR EYES ONLY; THE BEAST; War Child; Little Caesar; and four others. CHRYSALIS CHR 1384 $8.98, © CCH 1384 $8.98, © 8CH 1384 $8.98.

*Performance: Interesting*  
*Recording: Good*  

I like Blondie's sense of adventure and Debbie Harry's voice, but their execution isn't
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often as good as I keep hoping it will be. When they actually get down to doing a song, they more often sound like dilettantes than gadflies, though they do try things. The first side of "The Hunter" moves from a joust with African rhythms (Orchid Club) to some fairly well done pseudo-Caribbean (Island of Lost Souls) to a mess. Science fiction caper (Dragonfly) to a spy-genre piece (For Your Eyes Only) that just hints of the back-up Johnny Rivers was given in the Secret Agent theme. The side ends, unfortunately, with Harry trotting out the rap stick one time too many in The Beast.

The album's most potent song (Island of Lost Souls is the most fun) is side two's War Child, which suggests a montage of shot-to-rubble places where one could grow up these days. It's a chilling little piece of rock journalism amidst all the worry now about nukes. After that, though, the tunes on side two are stretched a little thin or become boringly predictable, and the subjects become increasingly ordinary. Even so, there are touches of a different kind of songwriting from what one expects of a highly commercial group. It's not always good, but at least it isn't conservative. Although I can't recommend this as having a high percentage of Good Music, it's the kind of thing you ought to check out. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

GARY U.S. BONDS: On the Line. Gary U.S. Bonds (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Hold On (to What You Got); Out of Work; Club Soul City; Soul Deep; Rendezvous; Angelene; and five others. EMI AMERICA SO-17068 $8.98, © 4XO-17068 $8.98, © 8XO-17068 $8.98.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Very good

I'm not a big Bruce Springsteen fan, but I have to tip my hat to him for the way he's revived the recording career of Gary U.S. Bonds. This second Bonds/Springsteen album contains the new single, I Need a Job, plus six other Springsteen originals. The songs he's written for Bonds and the production, which he shares with Miami Steve Van Zandt, are no-nonsense rock-and-roll. The instrumental accompaniment is just right, supporting Bonds but not crowding him. There are also some lovely extra touches, such as the accordion that conveys a sense of gentile sleaze on Angelene, a tune about two adorable nerds. Chuck Jackson, who, like Bonds, had a few hits in the Sixties and then disappeared, provides a harmony vocal with righteous brava on Club Soul City. Miami Steve contributes Last Time, an effective ballad, and Bonds's own Turn The Music Down is a funny Chuck Berryish catalog of minor misfortunes with home stereos, car radios, and boom boxes on the street.

The success of the Bonds/Springsteen association is based on their common experience as entertainers with years of boozedocks one-nighters behind them. Both have learned nearly all there is to know about selling a song to a rowdy crowd. It's a pleasure to hear two pros at work. J.V.

ROSANNE CASH: Somewhere in the Stars. Rosanne Cash (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Ain't No Money; Down on Love; I Wonder; Oh Yes I Can; Looking for a Corner; It Hasn't Happened Yet; and four others. COLUMBIA FC 37570, © FCT 37570, no list price. Performance: Very good
Recording: Good

This rocks a little harder than the last two Rosanne Cash albums, but I found it a little less engaging since it doesn't have any real killer songs. What it has is a lot of good little ones. The most satisfying are the title song and Looking for a Corner, both slow-take, low-profile, non-catchy numbers—but good ones. Down on Love is probably the best bet on a juke box, while I Look for Love will take the most getting used to (it does a weird little modulating turn in the melody). And one could hardly ask that they be sung any better. The Amazing Rhythm Aces' Third Rate Romance, on the other hand, is good but doesn't particularly suit Cash and has been a trifle Overdone besides.

The back-up is less lyrical than formerly but still recognizable as that Rodney Crowell blend of L.A., Austin, and Nashville, with no fat in it. There aren't many veterans of three albums (actually four, although few have heard the first one) who have committed to vinyl as few clutterers as Rosanne Cash has.

N.C.

CHER: I Paralyze. Cher (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Rudy; Games; I Paralyze; Walk with Me; The Book of Love, and four others. COLUMBIA FC 38096, © FCT 38096, no list price. Performance: Commercial
Recording: Excellent

Cher is almost too much—as almost every great cabaret star has been. But what makes her amusing and attractive and enjoyable is that, like the great stars of the past—Josephine Baker and Marlene Dietrich and so many others—one can sense a solid, hard-working performer underneath all the glitz, the kind of performer who would walk barefoot over ground glass with her hair on fire if she thought it would please or shock her audience. Also like her great predecessors, Cher is not the best singer technically, but she sure can sell the hell out of material that's right for her. She modestly allows in her notes for "I Paralyze" that John Farrar wrote the title song for her, "like a little present from John to me," Little present? It's the best piece of material Cher's gotten her hands on since

Susannah McCorkle's first two Inner City albums were devoted to the songs of Johnny Mercer and Yip Harburg, respectively, but these singer/songwriter love affairs of hers actually began in 1976 when McCorkle recorded the music of Harry Warren for a British label. Now Inner City has finally released McCorkle's "The Music of Harry Warren" here. The release sadly coincides with the bankruptcy of Inner City's parent company, the MMO Music Group, but the album's distribution will be unaffected and you should lose no time in acquiring it.

As with the Mercer and Harburg sets, McCorkle delivers the Warren material with tender loving care and respect. You will undoubtedly be familiar with most of the songs, but there are some obscure delights too, and all are a joy to the ears. The accompaniments are by pianist Keithingham with his trio and quartet, the latter featuring former Humphrey Lyttleton sideman Bruce Turner on alto saxophone and clarinet. Turner, like Ingham, knows how to dress a tune without covering over its distinctive features.

Because of Inner City's financial difficulties, this release may not get the promotion it deserves, so spread the word.
—Chris Albertson

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**ROBERTA FLACK: I'm the One.** Roberta Flack (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Never Loved Before; Love Ship; Love Love Love; Making Love; Happiness; and four others. ATLAN-

cic SD 19354 $8.98, © CS 19354 $8.98, © TP 19354 $8.98.

**Performance:** Good

Sometime during the mid-to-late-Seventies, most pop musicians decided they couldn't beat the status quo and elected to join it. Now here's a young troubadour, not a particular nihilist, who barks back to the old days of protest. That might be one of the reasons Jackson Browne produced this album. Another reason might be Greg Copeland's interest in words, another trend he goes against, he wields the King's English with some authority, but dashes off tunes "melody" is too complicated a word for this stuff) that show a lot of old-time rock-and-roll and folk borrowings. Yes, it's all faintly reminiscent of the tunes Browne recorded, not as engaging musically. But I take this release as a good sign, believing as I do that politics is everybody's business, especially when the status quo is as screwed up as it is today.

Copeland delivers some needed zingers at the breadbasket of what Gore Vidal calls the Owners of America: "Tell me what it's all about/Get rich, boy./Get leisureed out/Money, money right from the start..." and so forth. He is also a better than adequate singer, and Browne has given him a sound something like that of—guess what?—Ian Wallace, General Lee, Revenge Will Come.

Robert Flack's once soaring popularity leveled off some time after Jesse, but the...
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Kid Creole and the Coconuts

August Darnell

You expect something slightly off the beaten track from August Darnell, and on "Wise Guy," the latest album by Kid Creole and the Coconuts, he delivers. This is urbanized island music full of sophisticated, thoroughly musical subtleties.

Darnell (a/k/a Kid Creole) first came front and center in 1976 with Dr. Buzzard's Original Savannah Band, and a lot of the spice of that now-defunct group flavors his newer band. But Darnell is not solely responsible for the group's unique sound; he has the perfect sidekick in fellow Savannah Band survivor Andy "Sugar-coated" Hernandez, and the talents of both are complemented by the horn and string arrangements, for which Carlos Franzetti shares the credit with Darnell. A narcissistic hound has also reached back for the original siren of the Savannah Band, Cory Daye, who is heard here most prominently on Loving You Made a Fool Out of Me. As for the Coconuts—well, if you have ever seen the highly theatrical Kid Creole stage show, you know that the Coconuts are a bunch of campy ladies whose function is largely ornamental. But ornament has its place, even on a record.

August Darnell is a creative force to be reckoned with. Part of his considerable talent is his ability to weave the offbeat with the traditional to produce a distinctive musical tapestry that can be as pleasing to the Venturesome ear as it is to more conservative ones.

—Chris Albertson

FLEETWOOD MAC: Mirage. Fleetwood Mac (vocals and instrumentals). Love in Store; Can't Go Back; That's Alright; Book of Love; Gypsy; Empire State; and six others. WARNER BROS. 23607-4 $8.98, © 23607-4 $8.98, © 23607-8 $8.98.

Performance: Unique Recording: Gorgeous

This is an interesting, mostly intelligent, but ultimately unsatisfying album. Stylistically, it's an attempt to blend the creamy pop appeal of "Fleetwood Mac" and "Rumours" with the harder edge of "Tusk" and Lindsey Buckingham's solo album. Yet it works as irresistible as anything the Mac has ever done.

You know the single Hold Me already, and a few other things here—Buckingham's slightly loopy Book of Love and his Eyes of the World, which concludes with a baroque duel between acoustic and electric guitars that is absolutely riveting and beautiful—are just as good. Much of it, though, seems less than fully baked, a little too quirky and obsessed with sound effects, and Stevie Nicks's contributions are uniformly ridiculous and overlong.

I hasten to add, however, that this album's lapses are not cases of the usual superstar indulgence. Fleetwood Mac remains one of the few ensembles currently selling records in large quantities that doesn't insult your intelligence—quite the opposite, in fact. And I wouldn't be terribly surprised if some of the lesser cuts here grow on me. Heck, it's happened before. S.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

GAP BAND: IV. Gap Band (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. Early in the Morning: Season's No Reason to Change; Lonely Like Me; Stay with Me; I Can't Get Over You; and three others. TOTAL EXPERIENCE/POLYGRAM TP 1-3001 $8.98, © CT-1-3001 $8.98.

Performance: Eclectic Recording: Very good

Here's one band that is attempting to extend the very limited boundaries of funk by borrowing a bit from other genres. Season's No Reason to Change has the sentimental, folksy flavor we've come to associate with Lionel Richie, though it was written by the Gap Band's three Wilson brothers—Charlie, Ronnie, and Robert. You Dropped a Bomb on Me has rasping sounds and rhythm patterns that might be called rock-disco. Talkin' Back is a funnest full of words that sound as if they might be naughtier than they are, and I Can't Get Over You has a mellow jazz flavor and features a tastefully effective flugelhorn solo by Ronnie Wilson. Other songs, such as Stay with Me and Lonely Like Me, simply ride the ear well and make an immediate home for themselves. Though the opening track and hit single, Early in the Morning, is too tidily repetitious in the familiar funk style to suit me, everything else is choice and exciting in its variety. The Gap Band promises to become the best vocal-instrumental group in Souldom since the Commodores were at their peak.

P.G.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

GENESIS: Three Sides Live. Genesis (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. Turn It On Again; Dodo; Abacab; Behind the Lines; Duchess; Me & Sarah Jane; Follow You; Follow Me; and eight others. ATLANTIC SD 2-2000 $10.98, © CS 2-2000 $10.98, © TP 2-2000 $10.98.

Performance: Excellent Recording: Excellent

Few rock bands have bucked the odds as successfully as Genesis, which has survived for close to fifteen years despite losing both its founder (Peter Gabriel) and original lead guitarist (Steve Hackett). Somehow it has actually managed to improve with age. In just the last two years the band—now a trio—has made the unlikely transition from art-rock to stripped-down, solid rock without sacrificing its musicianship. Its last two studio albums, "Duke" and "Abacab," have included such minor classics as Follow You, Follow Me, Misunderstanding, Turn It On Again, Behind the Lines, and No Reply at All.

All but the last of these are on "Three Sides Live," three quarters of which was recorded during the band's 1981 tour. The last side consists of out-takes from the "Duke" and "Abacab" sessions, and it's pretty clear why most of them didn't make it onto those albums. But the live sides show some of the reasons for Genesis's surprising
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You're free from phone cords. Here's a new cordless decorator phone that uses your own phone number and requires no installation.

There's no antenna. And, that's really remarkable. Now, while you're talking on the phone, you can wash dishes in the kitchen, walk into the den, or even take a bath.

You can work in the garden, lay by the pool or get the mail, all with the new decorator styled cordless phone called the Talkabout.

The Talkabout is a real breakthrough in sophisticated telephone technology. It takes a giant step forward, but read on and we'll tell you about its step backward too.

A GIANT STEP FORWARD
Cordless phones are great. Our customers have bought thousands of them. But, there has been one problem.

When you're using a cordless phone inside the house, walking from room to room with the antenna extended can be a bit cumbersome. Plus, they haven't been built for style.

This new decorator styled cordless phone in pure white is an elegant addition to any room. All you need to do to start using it, is plug in its modular phone plug and plug in its AC line cord. Then start talking. It works anywhere.

The Talkabout is the first cordless phone to act just like a wired-in phone. To answer the phone all you do is lift the handset, and to hang up, just put the handset down. You can put the handset down anywhere. It doesn't need to be hung up in the base.

When you do put the handset down in the base, it will have its self-contained nicad batteries recharged automatically. You can of course switch the handset to standby or switch it off if you desire.

The base contains a standard push button keyboard with all the new convenience features. You'll have last number redial so you can redial busy numbers automatically, and the handset has a mute switch for privacy.

A GIANT STEP BACKWARD
The new Talkabout incorporates the latest in solid state circuitry. This new circuitry enables it to work without an external antenna. It does of course have an antenna. It's hidden in the handset.

Even with the new circuitry, the range according to the manufacturer is 100 ft. Since you will probably be using this phone mostly inside your home, we would think that 50 to 75 feet would be more accurate because of the many walls it has to transmit through.

So, we thought who would want a phone with only a 75 foot range. Well, the truth of the matter is that a 75 foot range in all directions allows the Talkabout to work just about anywhere, in even a large home.

That is, unless you own a full sized castle. In short, if your home is over 17,000 square feet on one floor, you may need a long range cordless phone. The Talkabout even moves freely and works perfectly from floor to floor.

GREAT SOUND
If you've never used a cordless phone, you'll experience an incredible feeling of freedom and luxury as you walk around your home talking on the phone.

You can get a drink, get the mail, look out a window, and even go to the bathroom. You'll never have to 'run for the phone' again.

And, remember, you can answer or hang up the phone wherever you are. It's all easy with this new decorator cordless phone. You'll be talking in full duplex with no push to talk buttons. In short, it's just like talking on a regular phone, except there's no cord to hold you down.

The Talkabout is made by Universal Security Instruments, a company that manufactures professional wired and wireless burglar alarms. So, they really know their electronics. They back the Talkabout with a standard manufacturer's limited warranty.

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endurance. Though known in the past for ostentatious stage shows, Genesis played it pretty straight for these cuts. Instead of trying new ways to attack a familiar song, they chose to sharpen the original attacks by shifting the balance of an arrangement with a more prominently positioned guitar fill or keyboard break. Basically, they did what any good band does in front of a good crowd—play it hot. Lead vocalist and drummer Phil Collins especially gives agile, power-packed performances on some pretty challenging material. As a result, most of the songs are even more convincing here than in their original versions.

The album's programming is generally intelligent. The aptly named "Dodo," a flightless thing if ever there was one, could have been dispensed with, and the older material—"In the Cage" and "Afterglow"—seems rambling and ill-focused next to the band's recent work. But even the side of out-takes includes one bright spot, "Paperplate," with its Earth, Wind & Fire horn arrangement. Despite some weaknesses, this release should appeal to more than just hard-core Genesis fans. M.P.

HEART: Private Audition. Heart (vocals and instruments). Bright Light Girl: The Situation; One Word; Fast Times; Private Audition; This Man Is Mine; and five others. Epic FE 38049, © FET 38049, no list price.

Performance: Sexy but shrill
Recording: Okay

Ann and Nancy Wilson are the sexy lead singers of Heart and the group's principal assets. Both are instrumentalists as well (Ann plays flute, piano, and guitar, and Nancy plays guitar), and both write and produce the group's material. The principal defect of this new album is their vocal stridency on the hard rockers; they sound like they're having a tantrum. The other defect is the pedestrian production by them and drummer Howard Leese, who's also too busy playing too much.

The title track is meant to be funny and almost is. Some care has gone into the melody and lyrics, the vocals are amusing, and even Leese is unobtrusive. But the punch line turns on the old melodrama of the innocent girl dreaming of showbiz glory who's plumped on the casting couch by a (yes) cigar-smoking agent. Is anybody still that corny or that naïve? As is usual with Heart albums, the Wilsons are a lot calmer and more effective on the ballads. "Angels, This Man Is Mine, and One Word" all work their wiles. J.V.

KANSAS: Vinyl Confessions. Kansas (vocals and instrumental). Other musicians. Play the Game Tonight; Right Away; Fair Exchange; Chasing Shadows; Diamonds and Pearls; Face It; and four others. Kirshner FZ 38003, © FZT 38003, no list price.

Performance: Derivative hodgepodge
Recording: Good

Kansas still sounds like it was bolted together from spare rock parts: a touch of Crosby, Stills and Nash, a dash of Bad Company, a jumble of Eagles, generous portions of high-pitched, whining, rock-boy vocals. And the group's songs still seem well written only once in a blue moon and then as if by accident. The single "Play the Game Tonight" is decent by radio standards, but among the rest here only "Chasing Shadows," by new member John Elefante and his brother Dino, is really engaging. (A couple of other John-and-Dino efforts suggest that they're just as flakey as the rest of the boys in the scribe's role.) Most of this album is tuneless, inarticulate, repetitive, and boring. "..." N.C.

MEN AT WORK: Business As Usual. Men at Work (vocals and instruments). Who Can It Be Now?; I Can See It in Your Eyes; Down Under; Underground; Helpless Automation; and five others. Columbia ARC 37978, © ACT 37978, no list price.

Performance: Hard-working
Recording: Very good

A depressed economy may make record companies hesitant to take risks on brilliant experimenters, but it also seems to raise their minimum standards. Judging from Men at Work, the bottom line today is in fairly good shape. There are several things this band does pretty well. Colin Hay, Ron Strykert, and Greg Ham have penned some tight, tuneful numbers marked by an insistent—if no particularly distinctive—rhythmic energy. Drummer Jerry Speiser gives his kit a good workout, tying down the 4/4 pop and diluted reggae with a very businesslike dance beat. Strykert lends a workmanlike guitar, and Ham disguises his limited command of saxophone, flute, and keyboards with a smooth voice and a smart sense of timing. But lead singer Hay tries too hard to give his voice an edge—and occasionally a Caribbean inflection—that he just can't manage. The result seems affected and mildly absurd, like Merv Griffin singing "Roxanne." The lyrics work up a good sweat too, with metaphors whose reach exceeds their grasp. Men at Work would do well to take a vacation from the burden of "art" and relax a bit. Even the hardest-working rock should be fun. M.P.

THE STEVE MILLER BAND: Abracadabra. The Steve Miller Band (vocals and instruments). Keeps Me Wondering Why: Abracadabra; Something Special; Things I Never Say No; and five others. Capitol ST-12216 $8.98, © 4XT-12216 $8.98, © 8XT-12216 $8.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Steve Miller's music is better overheard than listened to attentively. Close inspection emphasizes the numbingly tripe lyrics, and using both ears subjects them to the band's sophomoric instrumental pranks (guitars made to sound like wolf whistles, for instance). But paying less than full attention to Miller's stuff can be rewarding. There's no substance to it, but it is cleverly crafted pop, and this album has a compulsive forward motion. The vocal harmonies are well arranged, and the rhythm section's tightness would be the envy of many another band. If you're in the mood for light entertainment, the Steve Miller Band is the group to overhear. J.V.

LIZA MINNELLI: Live at Carnegie Hall. Liza Minnelli (vocals); orchestra. Some
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It's really neat. If you call a number and it's busy, this phone will automatically redial the number for you each time you touch 'redial'. There's no need to keep dialing over and over again.

When you need to speak privately to someone with you, you don't have to cover the mouth piece. Just press the mute button and the person on the line will be cut off for privacy.

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The quality is great. A high quality condenser microphone lets the person you talk to hear you loud and clear. And you hear them through a high frequency speaker instead of the old diaphragm 'thing' that's been in phones for 20 years. Even the electronic ringer is new.

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People: Come in from the Rain; City Lights; Cabaret; New York Medley; Someone to Watch Over Me; and nine others. Capitol two discs $15.98 (plus $2.75 shipping and handling charge from Colony Records, 1619 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019). Performance: Energetic. Recording: Good.

This album was recorded in September 1979 when Liza Minnelli brought her onewoman show to Carnegie Hall for a record-breaking eleven-night run. By the end of the opening number, the audience is obviously so deep in the throes of rapturous adoration that one feels there's nowhere left to go. But Minnelli presses on, energetically pulling her admirers along for song after medley after song, using every performing trick in the show-biz book to keep them involved and attentive. Probably you had to be there to get the full effect. Listening to it on records becomes wearying. Minnelli comes on strong, stays strong, and closes strong. By the finale, with the endless bows, applause, and screams, I had had enough of this good singer, great technician, and tirelessly manipulative performer.

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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JUICE NEWTON: Quiet Lies. Juice Newton (vocals); instrumental accompaniment.


Although Odyssey has been known to come up with some very imaginative variations on standard dance fare, here they get off to a rather lackluster start. The first side is devoted mostly to tunes with predictable rhythmic patterns, and the group seems to be doing more hand-clapping than actual singing. Things pick up a bit on side two with When You Love Somebody, which provides a sweet change of pace, and by the time we get to Love's Alright everything is smoking. Too bad, for it's only one song from the closer, the rousing Magic Touch. This set is far from being a dud, but it takes too long to move into high gear.

ODYSSEY: Happy Together. Odyssey (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Together; Inside Out; Happy Together; When You Love Somebody, and three others. RCA AFL-1-4240 $8.98, © AFK1-12210 $8.98.

Performance: A slow starter. Recording: Good.

THE ALAN PARSONS PROJECT: Eye in the Sky. The Alan Parsons Project (vocals and instrumentals). Eye in the Sky; Children of the Moon; Gemini; Silence and I; Psychobabble; and five others. ARISTA AL 9599 $8.98.

Performance: Pretentious. Recording: Good.

Ever since Eleanor Rigby we've had rock groups (the economy seems to support
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about two of them at a time) with one eye on classical music, or one foot in Berklee rather than Berkeley. I've liked the idea of such groups more than I've liked their work, going all the way back to the New York Rock and Roll Ensemble, and this new album leaves me still solidly in that position. The Alan Parsons Project here seems more than ever a poor man's Pink Floyd. The style is grandiose, but the more you listen, the less you hear; the lyrics are woefully mundane considering how important the instrumentation suggests the subject is going to be (the title song turns out to be one side of a petty spat with a female earthling), and much of the "music" turns out to be overdressed repetition. I know today's kids aren't supposed to be into words, but then why bother to print the lyrics on the sleeve? Like most records in this genre, "Eye in the Sky" promises us the moon (in this case, Children of the Moon) and delivers only idle, prosaic, neighborhood chitchat. N.C.

QUEEN: Hot Space. Queen (vocals and instrumentals). Staying Power; Dancer; Back Chat; Body Language; Action This Day; and six others. ELEKTRA E1-60128 $8.98, © E4-60128 $8.98, © E8-60128 $8.98.

Performance: Unreal
Recording: Okay
The word "poseur" could have been coined to describe Queen. Nothing this band does—not a word Freddie Mercury sings nor a single hackneyed note of the music—just leaps out of the grooves. It's called You Can Always Count on Me, and the rendition of "Time Won't Wait" is unbelievable. Indeed, I'm beginning to wonder if there's anybody there behind the recording at all. Surely the sextuple-tracked vocals are merely the product of switches and dials and sine waves, the ear-punishing instrumentals merely the whine of overstressed electronics. "Hot Space" is apparently supposed to be Queen's "funk" album, but I don't think that's an adequate excuse for this whack over the head.

M.P.

THE REDDINGS: Steamin' Hot. The Reddings (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. I Know You Got Another; Sittin' on the Dock of the Bay; Follow Me; Time Won't Wait; and four others. BELIEVE IN A DREAM FZ 37974, © FZT 37974, no list price.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good
This third album by the Reddings— Otis III and Dexter are the sons of Otis Redding, and Mark Lockett is their cousin—shows them to be acquiring more and more skills as musicians in the black/pop format. Each of their albums sounds more assured and professional than the last. To their credit, the Reddings have used the family name as a challenge and a legacy rather than trading on it for publicity. They are conscientious workers in the contemporary style. This is their first album to include an Otis Redding tune, which they were bound to do sooner or later to show how they would handle it. Their version of Sittin' on the Dock of the Bay is not a facsimile of their father's original; it has none of his stark, spare loneliness and detached commentary. Instead, it's a loving and longing prayer to a lost father whom they were too young really to know.

Besides that tribute, the album is a competent example of current r-&-b, full of endless riffs for dancing and a sugary ballad for ballast. It is not the Reddings' fault that the form is parched and cautious today. At this point, all they are required to do is demonstrate that they can follow the rules. Whether they have the artistry to break the rules as their father did remains to be seen.

J.V.

RITCHIE FAMILY: I'll Do My Best. Ritchie Family (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. I'll Do My Best (For You Baby); This Love's on Me, One and Only; You Can Always Count on Me; Walk With Me, and three others. RCA AFLI-4323 $8.98, © AFK1-4323 $8.98.

Performance: Disco beat
Recording: Good
Just when I think I've recovered from the long reign of disco and wouldn't mind hearing a bit of it, a record comes along to remind me why I do mind. That's what happened with this set. Actually, I love to hear the Ritchie Family sing, punching out the lyrics and generating a whole roomful of steam with their sassy style. It's just that I don't always like what they're singing. If you do like the disco beat, you should get a kick out of this album, but for my part, I'll pass—except for one wonderful song that just leaps out of the grooves. It's called You Can Always Count on Me, and the rendi-

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Forget Me Not, Patrice Rushen (vocals, keyboards, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Forget Me Not, Patrice Rushen (vocals, keyboards, guitar); vocal and instrumen...
After some missteps on their last album, LiPuma has managed on "Windsong" to strike the perfect balance to showcase Crawford's talents to best advantage. The instrumentalists fit her voice and style like carefully tailored clothes, enhancing the varied moods of the selections, and they feature fine but unobtrusive solo work, particularly by Buzz Feiten on guitar and David Sanborn on saxophone.

The songs here are not stereotypical "soul" music; most of them should appeal equally to a middle-of-the-road audience. Crawford ranges freely around the pop terrain, from Marvin Hamlisch and Carole Bayer Sager's One Hello (used in the Neil Simon film I Ought To Be In Pictures) to Leon Russell's Windsong to Don Covay's Letter Full of Tears to her own exhilarating Don't Come Knockin'. The outstanding track here is Russell Stone's lyric. He Reminds Me, for which Crawford pulls out all the emotional stops. The results are breathtaking.

For those who are not yet fans of Randy Crawford, "Windsong" should be a marvelous introduction. For those who have been fortunate to follow her progress through the years, it should bring the warm glow of a promise fulfilled.

—Phyl Garland

Randy Crawford: Windsong. Randy Crawford (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Look Who's Lonely Now; I Have Everything but You; He Reminds Me; Letter Full of Tears; This Night Won't Last Forever; One Hello; Windsong; When I'm Gone; Don't Come Knockin'; I Don't Want to Lose Him; We Had a Love So Strong. Warner Bros. 23687-1 $8.98, © 23687-4 $8.98.

Performance: Solid
Recording: Very good

Like Tom Hall's bluegrass album of a few years back, this one is unremarkable but more impressive than it should be. I mean, Hall singing mostly other people's songs with Earl Scruggs plucking along in the thick of the instrumentation (the way he has in recent years in the Earl Scruggs Revue) doesn't figure to be the highest and best use of either performer. But the songs are good, if a trifle overexposed in a couple of cases, the acoustic in-

ors, Rushen—a gifted multi-instrumentalist—accompanied herself on guitar. It is a haunting, percussion-punctuated song with excellent lyrics by Fay Hauser and just enough of a Brazilian touch to suggest what Rushen might do if she concentrated on expanding her musical horizons rather than simply her audience. "Straight from the Heart," makes it clear that Patrice Rushen's real range is much greater than she has yet displayed.

P.G.

LEO SAYER: World Radio. Leo Sayer (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Heart Stop Beating in Time; Paris Died in the Morning; Have You Ever Been in Love; Rumours; Heroes; and five others. Warner Bros. 23569-1 $8.98, © 23569-4 $8.98.

Performance: Overproduced
Recording: Bombastic

Oscar Wilde said it takes a heart of stone to read about the death of Little Nell and not burst out laughing, which precisely describes my reaction to Leo Sayer trying to be serious. Talk about little voices going "peep, peep, peep"—this album made me feel like I'd been unwittingly subjected to a cautionary tale about male singers and tight underwear. Turning Sayer's kind of "vocal instrument" loose on Bruce Cockburn's 'Wandering Where the Lions Are' and augmenting it with Arif Mardin's bloated, antiseptic production has got to be one of the higher crimes and misdemeanors of recent months. Production, as opposed to music, is what "World Radio" is all about. The songs aren't too bad, most of them, but Sayer sounds as if he's desperately trying to avoid sounding like someone reading cue cards and screaming to be heard above the hubbub. Well, it's got "radio" in the title, which ought to be fair enough warning for almost anyone.

N.C.

EARL SCRUGGS AND TOM T. HALL: The Storyteller and the Banjo Man. Earl Scruggs (banjo, guitar); Tom T. Hall, the Oak Ridge Boys (vocals); Randy Scruggs (guitar); Byron Berline (fiddle); other musicians. Song of the South; Shackles and Chains; The Engineers Don't Wave from the Trains Anymore; Don't This Road Look Rough and Rocky; Lonesome Valley; Rain, from Marvin Hamlisch and Carole Bayer Sager's One Hello (used in the Neil Simon film I Ought to Be in Pictures) to Leon Russell's Windsong to Don Covay's Letter Full of Tears to her own exhilarating Don't Come Knockin'. The outstanding track here is Russell Stone's lyric. He Reminds Me, for which Crawford pulls out all the emotional stops. The results are breathtaking.

For those who are not yet fans of Randy Crawford, "Windsong" should be a marvelous introduction. For those who have been fortunate to follow her progress through the years, it should bring the warm glow of a promise fulfilled.

—Phyl Garland

Randy Crawford: Windsong. Randy Crawford (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Look Who's Lonely Now; I Have Everything but You; He Reminds Me; Letter Full of Tears; This Night Won't Last Forever; One Hello; Windsong; When I'm Gone; Don't Come Knockin'; I Don't Want to Lose Him; We Had a Love So Strong. Warner Bros. 23687-1 $8.98, © 23687-4 $8.98.

Performance: Solid
Recording: Very good

Like Tom Hall's bluegrass album of a few years back, this one is unremarkable but more impressive than it should be. I mean, Hall singing mostly other people's songs with Earl Scruggs plucking along in the thick of the instrumentation (the way he has in recent years in the Earl Scruggs Revue) doesn't figure to be the highest and best use of either performer. But the songs are good, if a trifle overexposed in a couple of cases, the acoustic in-

Tommy LiPuma (he also did "Secret Combination," Warner Bros. 3421). Whereas Crawford's other producers have been oriented either to jazz or to progressive rhythm-and-blues, LiPuma's aim is apparently to move her closer to the center of the pop mainstream by a more eclectic choice of songs. After some missteps on their last album, LiPuma has managed on "Windsong" to strike the perfect balance to showcase Crawford's talents to best advantage. The instrumentalists fit her voice and style like carefully tailored clothes, enhancing the varied moods of the selections, and they feature fine but unobtrusive solo work, particularly by Buzz Feiten on guitar and David Sanborn on saxophone.

The songs here are not stereotypical "soul" music; most of them should appeal equally to a middle-of-the-road audience. Crawford ranges freely around the pop terrain, from Marvin Hamlisch and Carole Bayer Sager's One Hello (used in the Neil Simon film I Ought To Be In Pictures) to Leon Russell's Windsong to Don Covay's Letter Full of Tears to her own exhilarating Don't Come Knockin'. The outstanding track here is Russell Stone's lyric. He Reminds Me, for which Crawford pulls out all the emotional stops. The results are breathtaking.

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Shopping for a new tape deck, car stereo cassette player, turntable or video cassette recorder can be confusing. With hundreds of brands, models, features, technical specs and prices to choose from, it’s hard to know where to start, harder still to come to a final decision.

Stereo Review's new TAPE RECORDING & BUYING GUIDE helps you cut through the confusion to a clear understanding of what's available and what’s for you. It explains tape equipment and how it works. It also details important advances in tape technology and what they mean to you, compares hi-tech cassette tapes, and looks at the relative merits of various brands of bargain tapes.

The Guide also gives you a thorough, up-to-date overview of the state of the art in open reel and cassette recorders, an in-depth article on Dolby B, and tips on using microphones for tape recording. Plus a great deal more that can make your shopping a lot easier—and a lot less costly.

Comparison shopping becomes a simple matter when you use the TAPE RECORDING & BUYING GUIDE's product listings. Nearly every brand and model on the market is listed and you'll find specifications, features and prices for:

- Cassette tape decks
- Open-reel tape decks
- Video cassette recorders
- Car stereo equipment
- Headphones
- Microphones
- Mixers
- Signal processors
- Blank tape
- Accessories

A special section looks at several cassette and open-reel tape decks in detailed test reports. Laboratory tests by Hirsch-Houck Labs provide technical measurements and unbiased recommendations for decks from Nakamichi, Teac, JVC, Pioneer, Akai, Technics, and other manufacturers. Plus a complete report on Sony's Dolby C noise processor.

You'll also find information on video cassette recorders, and a special article on taping and the law about the legality of home video taping.

Make your tape equipment shopping easier. Get your copy of Stereo Review's TAPE RECORDING & BUYING GUIDE today. Just return the coupon below!
The crossover network. A great place to hide.

You don't usually see crossovers in loudspeaker ads. Because the crossover is the most embarrassing part of most loudspeaker systems; an electronic 'kludge' buried deep in the cabinet. Designed to cover up the deficiencies of mediocre drivers. Or, just to save money so that the speaker can be sold at a particular price.

The ADS crossover, above, is a different breed altogether. All its components are computer grade, and mounted on a 'military spec' epoxy printed circuit board. Chokes are wound with wire imported from one country on ferrite cores imported from another.

It's one of the reasons an ADS speaker sounds better, and tighter in every way. We bring it to your attention but the truth is that most of the songs simmer. Gary Stewart and Dean Dillon tend to dwell upon effect more than cause, or, if you prefer, upon decadence more than Angst. They do an interesting job of it, although the songs rank just behind her classics—positively sets afire with his saxophone so-68 nstrumentation loaded with nice sonic tricks. Best of all is Bruce Springsteen's Protection, a double-time rocker that Summer dances through with skill and that Ernie Watts accompanies with skill and that Ernie Watts.

The better news is that on the rest of the record Summer delivers at least some of the stuff her fans have been waiting for. Three of the songs rank just behind her classics—a small percentage, perhaps, compared with the workout scene. It was written by the writer Peterik reminds me of Randy Bachman, and wrote their dandy hit, Vehicle. As a writer Peterik wrote Vehicle. Both of them later

DONNA SUMMER. Donna Summer (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Love Is in Control, Livin' in America; Protection. Love Is Just a Breath Away; Lush Life; and four others. GEFEN GHS 2005 $8.98, © M$ 2005 $8.98.

Performance: Good enough
Recording: Superb

If producer Quincy Jones and the folks at Geffen Records were trying for a new sound for Donna Summer's first album in two years, their choice of a lead-off song (and first single release) is right on. Love Is in Control sounds like several sets of Jackson Fives let loose in the studio. Everyone is walzin' and having fun, but midway through this funk-inspired item Summer herself disappears and she's back for any more of it. Frankly, I don't get it.

The better news is that on the rest of the record Summer delivers at least some of the stuff her fans have been waiting for. Three of the songs rank just behind her classics—a small percentage, perhaps, compared with the workout scene. It was written by the writer Peterik reminds me of Randy Bachman, and wrote their dandy hit, Vehicle. As a writer Peterik wrote Vehicle. Both of them later

GARY STEWART AND DEAN DILLON: Brotherly Love, Gary Stewart, Dean Dillon (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Brotherly Love, Cold Turkey; You to Come Home to; Honky Tonk Crazy; Body Shop; Suburban Life; and four others. RCA APL1-4310 $8.98, © AHK1-4310 $8.98, © AHS1-4310 $8.98.

Performance: Rowdy
Recording: Good

The two aspects of honky-tonk music are cause—why one goes to the honky tonk, the soap-opera songs—and effect—what one does once one is there, the hell-raising songs. Gary Stewart and Dean Dillon tend to dwell upon effect more than cause, or, if you prefer, upon decadence more than Angst. They do an interesting job of it, although it can get wearing after a while. They sound good singing together—on some notes. At other times the gap between the lead and harmony lines widens or narrow s erratically. We hear so many slick records that we may tend to overcongratulate one like this for sounding rough and ready. It does have a certain jauntness about it, but the truth is that most of the songs simply won't stand up to a lot of exposure, and some of the performances are so cartoon-like that they're welcome in my head only for the duration of one take. There's just so much I care to hear about someone getting drunk and picking up snuff queens.

SURVIVOR: Eye of the Tiger. Survivor (vocals and instrumentals). Children of the Night; I'm Not That Man Anymore; American Heartbeat; Silver Girl; Feels Like Love; and four others. SCOTTI BROTHERS FZ 38062, © FZ/T 38062, no list price.

Performance: Cruising speed
Recording: Good

If you've seen the movie Rocky III you've heard Survivor singing Eye of the Tiger in the workout scene. It was written by the learned elders of the group, Jim Peterik and Frankie Sullivan, who also provided material for 38 Special. On his own, Peterik wrote the theme for the 1981 movie Heavy Metal, and in 1970 he formed the Ides of March, and he did a small percentage, perhaps, compared with the workout scene. It was written by the writer Peterik reminds me of Randy Bachman, and wrote their dandy hit, Vehicle. As a writer Peterik reminds me of Randy Bachman, who, in his days with the Guess Who, wrote a terrific item called Wednesday in Your Garden at about the same time that Peterik wrote Vehicle. Both of them later sank into the monotonity of big -beat rock, writing and playing beneath their abilities.

There's nothing wrong with Survivor except that you've heard all their stuff before—the songs about Saturday night de-
PETERIK AND SULLIVAN: In the Name of Love. Peterik and Sullivan (vocals and instruments); other musicians. In the Name of Love; Living in Europe; Bouncing; The Rowe; Make Believe; Runaway; and four others. ARISTA AL 6601 $8.98.

Performance: Adequate
Recording: Stale

The Peterik and Sullivan performances are adequate but the ideas are stale. I get the impression that Peterik and Sullivan, who take pride in being battered veterans, are using that as an excuse to coast and settle for less than their best.

J.V.

THOMPSON TWINS: In the Name of Love. Thompson Twins (vocals and instruments); other musicians. In the Name of Love; Living in Europe; Bouncing; The Rowe; Make Believe; Runaway; and four others. ARISTA AL 6601 $8.98.

Performance: Electro-pop schlock
Recording: Sul generic

The Thompson Twins is a seven-piece band none of whose members are twins but all of whom appear to be fashionably thin, and the music they make is exactly (and I mean exactly) what you'd expect: a gimmicky, soul-less, uninvolving pastiche of elements that echo David Bowie's funk period, Giorgio Moroder's film scores, and various bits of Eurodisco fluff from the late Seventies.

To say that the songs here, some of which have been dance-floor hits, do full justice to their sources is to understate how flip, vacuous, and annoying they are. Nowhere on this album is there a detectable trace of emotion, sweat, or any human quality whatsoever. It might be the perfect soundtrack for a disco movie version of Isaac Asimov's I Robot, but I can't see any other use for it.

S.S.

NARADA MICHAEL WALDEN: Confidence. Narada Michael Walden (vocals, drums, keyboards, percussion); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. You're #1; Summer Lady; I'm Ready; Safe in My Arms; Confidence; and three others. ATLANTIC SD 19351 $8.98.

Performance: Fresh
Recording: Satisfactory

With all the quotations from guru Sri Chinmoy decorating the cover and sleeve of this album, I was expecting it to yield murky, mystical sounds comparable to Alice Coltrane in her more remote moments. But, lo and behold, here is a plain old-fashioned funk with lyrics about, well, less than celestial subjects. Though the topics are familiar, Narada Michael Walden has a fresh and energetic way with a song, handling ballads and uptempo dance numbers with equal facility. He composed all the material, does most of the singing, and plays keyboards and percussion. While "Confidence" doesn't break any new ground, Walden covers this familiar turf so surefootedly you feel that the title is only apt.

P.G.

WENDY WALDMAN: Which Way to Main Street. Wendy Waldman (vocals, piano, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. Heartbeat; We'll See the End; X-Ray Eyes; You Said It Wasn't Me; Gotta Get Over You; Does Anyone Want to Marry Me; and four others. EPIC ARE 37913, © AET 37913, no list price.

Performance: Salon punk
Recording: Good

Sounds from this as if Wendy Waldman has decided that the Pat Benatars of this world
Clooney Sings Porter

To hear “Rosemary Clooney Sings the Music of Cole Porter,” just out on Concord Jazz, is to learn why the lady is a champ. Her performances here are far away from her Come On-a My House days of plastic stardom as Cole Porter’s gawdabout years as the Puck of the International Set were from his roots in Peru (which he always insisted on pronouncing as “Pee-ru”). Cole Porter, after all, is not the easiest composer to sing or perform. His music and words are extraordinarily sophisticated, wittily impish, rueful, and, often, achingly and grandly romantic. And his work demands style.

Rosemary Clooney, who has been demonstrating just how good a pop-jazz singer she is in a remarkable succession of quietly excellent Concord Jazz albums over the last few years, now proves herself to be an elegant, easy stylist as well. At last she seems comfortable enough in her own artistic skin to take a few risks. For instance, part of the Porter performing canon is that in the lines “I know that if I took even one sniff That would bore me terribly too” from I Get a Kick Out of You, the singer must phrase it “ter if i-ically too,” with a lingering pause on the “i.” It’s been done that way since Ethel Merman introduced the song almost fifty years ago, and I’ve heard it done that way by everyone from Sinatra to Crosby to Ella Fitzgerald (a singer who usually treats Porter’s lyrics like a not particularly interesting laundry list). But Clooney simply glides over the line, airily deciding that she will accent the final “too” instead. And it works—beautifully.

This album is breezy, sparkling Clooney all the way. In song after song she creates the kind of character, lively and carefree, that Porter himself would have cast as Bianca in Kiss Me Kate or as Reno Sweeney in Anything Goes. Clooney’s recent comment, “Thank God the kids are all grown and I can go back out there and just sing again!”, seems to take on an air of prophecy when you hear the high spirits and untrammoned flirtatiousness of some of her performances here. She zips through My Heart Belongs to Daddy, It’s De-Lovely, and Just One of Those Things as if she were twenty-three, footloose, and fancy free. But none of these interpretations have the slightest hint of coyness or over-seriousness; they’re just plain, good-humored fun.

In the more complex Porter songs, such as In the Still of the Night, I’ve Got You Under My Skin, I Concentrate on You, and Get Out of Town, Clooney shifts gears and projects a worldly-wise, knowing, but still vulnerable persona that fits the songs perfectly. And in several of these songs she displays an unexpectedly luscious middle voice that one often misses in the up-tempo numbers. Clooney is supported on this album by some of the finest musicians around, including the late Cal Tjader on vibes. Among them Scott Hamilton on tenor saxophone and Warren Vaché on cornet and flugelhorn seem closest to Clooney’s own newfound performing brilliance.

Rosemary Clooney’s greatest accomplishment here has been to take her voice, which for the last few decades has been one of the most distinctive and recognizable sounds in American popular music, and put it to the service of a hard-won new musical sensibility and style. It’s one of those signs of growth that appear all too rarely in any kind of music, particularly pop. That she’s carried it off with the same laid-back good humor and easy warmth that helped make her a star in the first place is just another indication of the depth of her talent. This is a “de-lovely” album. —Peter Reilly

ROSEMARY CLOONEY: Sings the Music of Cole Porter. Rosemary Clooney (vocals); Cal Collins (guitar); Scott Hamilton (tenor saxophone); Jake Hanna (drums); David Ladd (flute); Bob Maize (bass); Nat Pierce (piano); Cal Tjader (vibes); Warren Vaché (cornet, flugelhorn). In the Still of the Night; My Heart Belongs to Daddy; I Get a Kick Out of You; Get Out of Town; I Concentrate on You; Just One of Those Things; I’ve Got You Under My Skin; It’s De-Lovely; You’re the Top; Anything Goes. CONCORD JAZZ CJ-185 $8.98.

Nothing like touching all the bases when you are hawking something. If you want to hear the Dionne Warwick/Johnny Mathis duet on Friends in Love and Get You Where I Want You, then you can buy either Mathis’ new album or this one by Warwick. They contain identical tracks. I guess it says something about the state of the record business today when good things—and these songs and performances—are spread so thinly in hope of attracting buyers.

The rest of the album is a satisfying enough Warwick recital, but even in the better performances, such as Never Gonna Let You Go, her sameness of attack and delivery gets tedious and eventually begins to detract from the material. Warwick has reached the point in her career where everything about her work is so familiar that unless you are a die-hard fan you’re likely to find your attention wandering after one or two songs.

DIONNE WARWICK: Friends in Love. Dionne Warwick, Johnny Mathis (vocals); orchestra: A Love So Right; For You; With a Touch; Can’t Hide Love; More Than Fascination; and five others. ARISTA AL 9585 $8.98, © ACT 9585 $8.98, © A8T 9585 $8.98. Performance: Good Recording: Good.

DIONNE WARWICK: Friends in Love. Dionne Warwick, Johnny Mathis (vocals); orchestra: A Love So Right; For You; With a Touch; Can’t Hide Love; More Than Fascination; and five others. ARISTA AL 9585 $8.98, © ACT 9585 $8.98, © A8T 9585 $8.98. Performance: Good Recording: Good.

X: Under the Big Black Sun. X (vocals and instruments). The Hungry Wolf; Motel Room in My Bed; Riding with Mary; Come Back to Me; Under the Big Black Sun; Because I Do, Blue Spark; and four others. ELECTRA 60150-4 $8.98, © 60150-4 $8.98. Performance: Believable Recording: Good.

I have belatedly decided that, at least in small doses, I really like these guys. In fact, most of the raves you may have read about X's two earlier, independent-label albums are not off the mark. These are remarkably good musicians (guitarist Billy Zoom especially) who are working a genre—in this case, hard-core punk—that just happens to be the right vehicle for their tales of urban
Have you ever heard a cassette sound like real music?

TO MAKE A CASSETTE SOUND LIKE MUSIC, YOU’VE GOT TO KNOW WHAT MUSIC SOUNDS LIKE.

Other than making tape, most cassette manufacturers have nothing to do with music. Denon, on the other hand, has been in the music business for well over seventy years. Denon professional equipment can be found in almost every single Japanese radio station and recording studio. Denon is the company credited with the development of the PCM recording process, a development which has already revolutionized the entire recording industry. And, when it comes to tape, Denon has been making it for over twenty-five years.

CASSETTE TAPES CAN MEASURE ALIKE AND STILL SOUND DIFFERENT.

Serious audiophiles know that components with identical specifications can sound noticeably different. Conventional measurement techniques do not explain this phenomenon, so words such as “musical” are often used to describe sound that possesses the “life-like” characteristics of real music.

THE FIRST TRUE MEASUREMENT OF TAPE SOUND QUALITY

The reason conventional tape testing measurements do not tell the whole performance story is that they are based on simple test tones rather than complex musical signals. Denon adopted a unique means for measuring Dynamic Distortion, the distortion created on the tape by actual musical signals. By specifically developing formulations to reduce Dynamic Distortion, Denon was able to significantly improve DX Tape’s ability to accurately recreate the sound of real music. It is no wonder that Denon DX-Tape is rapidly becoming the first true “audiophile’s” cassette.

You’ve had your hair blown,

your glasses shattered...

now listen to real music.

P.R.

COLLECTIONS

HOOKED ON SWING, Manhattan Swing Orchestra, Larry Elgart cond. In the Mood; Cherokee; American Patrol; Sing, Sing, Sing; I’ve Got My Love to Keep Me Warm; Johnson Rag; Don’t Be That Way; Little Brown Jug; Opus Number One; Zing Went the Strings of My Heart; Take the “A” Train; String of Pearls; and sixty-four others. RCA AFL1-4343 $8.98. © AFK1-4343 $8.98. © AFS1-4343 $8.98.

Performance Pitiless parade Recording Excellent

TURNED-ON BROADWAY, Broadway Symphony Orchestra, Luther Henderson cond. There’s No Business Like Show Business; That’s Entertainment; The Lullaby of Broadway; Everything’s Coming Up Roses; Some People; I Could Have Danced All Night; Hey, Look Me Over; Cabaret; and seventy-eight others. RCA AFL1-4327 $8.98, © AFK1-4327 $8.98, © AFS1-4327 $8.98.

Performance Deadly drone Recording Very good

Having made who knows how many millions from the perfectly appalling “Hooked on Classics,” a compilation of every cliché in the classical repertoire run together in mindless medleys, RCA is apparently hoping to clean up again by exploiting the tunes of the big bands and of Broadway. “Hooked on Swing,” for which Dick Hyman, Mike Abene, and Bobby Scott must have sat up many a night until dawn grinding out the arrangements, offers sixty-two (count ‘em) thirty-second samplings of famous Swing Era melodies held together by a relentless, clacking disco backbeat that sounds like an old shellac disc with a bad crack in it.

The last medley on the swing disc, called Hooked on Broadway, offers fourteen favorites from musicals and serves as a grim foreshadowing of “Turned-on Broadway.” On this album an orchestra conducted by Luther Henderson plays his arrangements of seventy-five bits of tunes made famous on Broadway, plus twelve more from the Gilbert and Sullivan canon and even the Habanera from Bizet’s Carmen. The kindest thing I can say about these records is that eventually they end.

P.K.

(Continued overleaf)
This album represents the start of something very big in jazz: the enduring team-work of pianist Dave Brubeck and alto saxophonist Paul Desmond. In the second half of the '50s they rose to international prominence as the most noticeable members of the Dave Brubeck Quartet, a wildly successful Columbia Records group, but it all started with these 1951-1954 Fantasy sides.

"Dave Brubeck/Paul Desmond" is a specially priced "twofer" consisting of two earlier Fantasy album releases ("Jazz at the Blackhawk," Fantasy 3-210, and "Jazz at Storyville," Fantasy 3-240), but some of this material was originally issued on 78-rpm and EP discs. In terms of jazz history, thirty years is a very long time, but the cool Brubeck/Desmond sound hasn't aged a bit. Imagine yourself listening to thirty-year-old jazz at the time when these sides were made, and you will see that the music has undergone relatively little change in the last half of its history. Brubeck and Desmond were a perfect team, and the long-playing record could not have come at a better time. For both men were also imaginative players whose creativity was far too great to be contained within the three-minute limit of the 78. That creativity blossomed on Columbia, but it sprouted magnificently on Fantasy, and no serious lover of modern jazz should be without these historic sides. C.A.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

DAVE BRUBECK/PAUL DESMOND: Dave Brubeck (piano); Paul Desmond (alto saxophone); the Dave Brubeck Trio and Quartet (instrumentals). *Jeepers Creepers; Over the Rainbow; Blue Moon; On a Little Street in Singapore; Tea for Two; Crazy Chris; You Go to My Head; Oh, Lady Be Good;* and seven others. FANTASY & F 24727 two discs $.98.

Performance: **Timless**
Recording: **Excellent mono**

This album represents the start of something very big in jazz: the enduring team-work of pianist Dave Brubeck and alto saxophonist Paul Desmond. In the second half of the '50s they rose to international prominence as the most noticeable members of the Dave Brubeck Quartet, a wildly successful Columbia Records group, but it all started with these 1951-1954 Fantasy sides.

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"Dave Brubeck/Paul Desmond" is a specially priced "twofer" consisting of two earlier Fantasy album releases ("Jazz at the Blackhawk," Fantasy 3-210, and "Jazz at Storyville," Fantasy 3-240), but some of this material was originally issued on 78-rpm and EP discs. In terms of jazz history, thirty years is a very long time, but the cool Brubeck/Desmond sound hasn't aged a bit. Imagine yourself listening to thirty-year-old jazz at the time when these sides were made, and you will see that the music has undergone relatively little change in the last half of its history. Brubeck and Desmond were a perfect team, and the long-playing record could not have come at a better time. For both men were also imaginative players whose creativity was far too great to be contained within the three-minute limit of the 78. That creativity blossomed on Columbia, but it sprouted magnificently on Fantasy, and no serious lover of modern jazz should be without these historic sides. C.A.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

DAVE BRUBECK/PAUL DESMOND: Dave Brubeck (piano); Paul Desmond (alto saxophone); the Dave Brubeck Trio and Quartet (instrumentals). *Jeepers Creepers; Over the Rainbow; Blue Moon; On a Little Street in Singapore; Tea for Two; Crazy Chris; You Go to My Head; Oh, Lady Be Good;* and seven others. FANTASY & F 24727 two discs $.98.

Performance: **Timless**
Recording: **Excellent mono**

This album represents the start of something very big in jazz: the enduring team-work of pianist Dave Brubeck and alto saxophonist Paul Desmond. In the second half of the '50s they rose to international prominence as the most noticeable members of the Dave Brubeck Quartet, a wildly successful Columbia Records group, but it all started with these 1951-1954 Fantasy sides.

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pianist in the history of jazz, bar none. His ideas, attack, phrasing, and harmonic conceptions were revolutionary at the time of his first recordings in 1928, and they remain startlingly, almost violently, creative today.

Oddly enough, Hines has made few solo albums since the advent of the LP, most of his career having been spent as a bandleader or captain of small touring combos. "Paris Session," recorded in 1965, was a result of his "rediscovery" the year before, when he returned to New York after a long stay on the West Coast to astonish and bedazzle the critics in a series of solo concerts. But Hines has said that he does not think of himself as a soloist. This is not modesty. He comes from Pittsburgh, and his natural ambition from the start was to join a band. Yet when he has recorded solo albums he has put the full, glorious fury of his awesome gifts into the session.

Seven of the selections on this date are tried-and-true standards that Hines approaches as if they were brand new. Irving Berlin's "A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody," which has become a kitsch standby for hacks, is restored by Hines to the gentle, wistful song the composer intended. "Sweet Sue" has a more limited scope; its construction is so box-square that there are few opportunities for improvisation. Hines' solution is to give a pyrotechnic demonstration of just how box-square it is, a good-natured satire that is more effort than the tune is really worth. There are three Hines originals—"Blue Because of You," "Sixty Five Foubourg," and his well-known "Second Balcony Jump," often used as a signature tune for his club appearances. And an unexpected delight is his vocal on "I Can't Give You Anything But Love," delivered with an easy grace and all the masterly phrasing Hines invariably displays on the keyboard.

CHUCK MANGIONE: Love Notes. Chuck Mangione (flugelhorn, electric piano); Chris Vadala (woodwinds); Peter Harris (guitars); Gordon Johnson (electric bass); Everett Silver (drums). Steppin' Out; No Problem; Memories of Scirocco; and two others. COLUMBIA FC 38101, © FCT 38101, no list price.

Performance: Deft but droning
Recording: Excellent

Chuck Mangione plays jazz with a vaguely Sicilian accent and the skill of an Eastman School of Music graduate. He calls himself a "basic B-flat kind of person," and therein lie both his virtues and his faults. He and his group, on this first album for Columbia (after a couple of dozen for Mercury and A&M), play five Mangione originals in the conscientious, solid style that brought him fame. Unfortunately, it is practically impossible to distinguish one number from another. The sturdy, good-humored playing, full of repetition, is sometimes more numbing than entertaining. Monotony is a pitfall for jazz players, and Mangione falls into it here for long stretches.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THELONIOUS MONK: The Thelonious Monk Memorial Album. Thelonious Monk (piano); Gerry Mulligan, John Coltrane,
A bout five years ago, while preparing a "Basic Library of Rhythm & Blues" for this magazine, I discovered that most of the albums I would have recommended were out of print. That was understandable, for many classics in this field had been recorded back in the Fifties and Sixties. But these albums were part of the aural history of mid-twentieth-century American urban life, and without them, or some reasonable sampling from them, how could the curious, particularly younger listeners, ever grasp the roots of contemporary music? Lost were the sounds of such male groups as the Clovers, the Drifters, and the Coasters, which combined a bit of old-time barber-shop harmonizing with the ardor of gospel and the bittersweet irony of the blues. Lost, too, were the sassy pronouncements of Ruth Brown and LaVern Baker. Even Ray Charles, a titan of popular music by any accounting, was not represented in the catalog by his earlier—and most passionately won—songs. A titan of soul, is not one of their best, lacking the Mississippi-born gospel spirit that first ignited their lives.}

But when I heard about Epic's new three-record series called "Lost Soul," then, I thought that some of the r & b classics be in order? What "Lost Soul" offers is not the classics of any period but a collection of some enjoyable but largely inconsequential recordings from the Seventies. I find it quite disconcerting to be expected to regard such recent efforts as memorabilia. How can anyone consider a recording from 1978, 1970, or even 1968 a long-lost treasure from the past?

Taken for what they are, however, these six sides do contain music that sounds considerably different from today's chart-toppers. The songs seem more muscular, lean, and direct, closer to the r & b roots, relying primarily on a lead singer and back-up group, with instruments that still carry a trace of the blues. The bass is not overdriven, and there is none of the multitracking that imparts a cluttered artificiality to today's hit tunes. And the artists are talented, if less celebrated than others. There are variations in quality among the twenty-four recordings from the Seventies. I find it quite disconcerting to be expected to regard such recordings from the Seventies.

Lost, too, were the sassy pronouncements of Ruth Brown and LaVern Baker. Even Ray Charles, a titan of popular music by any accounting, was not represented in the catalog by his earlier—and most passionately won—songs. A titan of soul, is not one of their best, lacking the Mississippi-born gospel spirit that first ignited their lives.}

Volume 1 is the weakest. Amiable mediocrity prevails. The single offering by the excellent Staple Singers, Crying in the Chapel, is not one of their best, lacking the Mississippi-born gospel spirit that first ignited the interest of long-time fans. It did not beg for a second chance to be heard, especially when some of the group's finer performances remain unavailable. But the Soul Children summon up shadows of Memphis funk as they romp through Finders Keepers, the highlight of the set.

Volume 2 ranges from middlin' interesting to right-on, with the better selections being Howard Tate's Ain't Got Nobody to Give It To, Gwen McCrae's Ain't Nothing You Can Do, and See About Me by Don Covay and the Goodtimers. This last, dat-
Sonny Rollins, Coleman Hawkins (saxophones); Miles Davis (trumpet); Milt Jackson (vibraphone); Max Roach (drums); other musicians. 'Round Midnight; Ruby, My Dear, Little Rootie Tootie (two versions); Black and Tan Fantasy; Epistrophy; Bemsha Swing; Brilliant Corners; and six others. MILESTONE M-47064 two discs $9.98.

Performance: Vital Monk
Recording: Good

When pianist/composer Thelonious Monk died earlier this year, it came as a shock even though Monk had withdrawn from the jazz scene several years ago. He had found himself on a treadmill; his performances had become routine, and his repertoire was but a loop of past successes. That was particularly sad, because Monk had always been a master of the unexpected, a musical prankster who threw his listeners wonderful curves even when performing a tune for the umpteenth time. Monk was often misunderstood, especially in the early years of bop, when his unique avant-garde approach to jazz was written off by many as the keyboard amblings of an eccentric. To be sure, Monk was a true eccentric, but there was nothing accidental about his music.

"The Thelonious Monk Memorial Album" is a wonderful two-record collection of sides made by Monk for the Prestige and Riverside labels between 1952 and 1960 (the cover erroneously lists 1952-1961). With input from such established and budding stars as Milt Jackson, Oscar Pettiford, Max Roach, John Coltrane, Coleman Hawkins, Sonny Rollins, Gerry Mulligan, and Miles Davis, it is as much a parade of brilliant sidemen as it is a distillation of Monk's own creativity during an important period in his career. The music speaks eloquently for itself, and producer Orrin Keepnews' notes provide an informative glimpse of the enigmatic man he—as co-owner of Riverside Records—so often recorded. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE NEW YORK-MONTREUX CONNECTION. Paquito D'Rivera, Phil Woods, Arthur Blythe (saxophones); John Hicks (piano); Art Davis (bass); Steve McCall (drums). Ballad Medley—Lover Man/You Leave Me Breathless/Lush Life; Ornithology—Alto Summit. Slide Hampton (trombone); Jimmy Heath (tenor saxophone); Stanley Cowell (piano); Tony Purrone (electric guitar); Percy Heath (bass); Akira Tana (drums). Hot House. McCoy Tyner (piano); Chico Freeman, Arthur Blythe, Paquito D'Rivera, Joe Ford (saxophones); Avery Sharpe (bass); Ronnie Burrage (drums); John Blake (violin). Rotunda. COLUMBIA FC 37652, © FCT 37652, no list price.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Good

"The New York—Montreux Connection" offers lots of big names playing fine, even exciting jazz at the 1981 Montreux and Kool New York jazz festivals. The three groupings of performers are compatible ensembles, and things start off very prettily with altoists Paquito D'Rivera, Phil Woods, and Arthur Blythe taking turns on a medley, each with a decided personal ap-
proach. And when this same group—with John Hicks, Art Davis, and Steve McCall providing a rhythmic base—plunges headlong into the old '50s classics "ornithology," the creative sparks really fly.

Hot House, also from the standard bop repertoire, opens side two. It is played superbly by Slide Hampton and the Heath Brothers' quintet, but they are outshone by the McCoy Tyner Quintet with Chico Freeman, Blythe, and D'Rivera on the last cut, "Ritunda," a Tyner composition with a spirit that is all too rare in jazz today. Violinist John Blake is wonderful, Blythe is excellent, Freeman and D'Rivera are stunning, and tenor saxophonist Joe Ford's obvious enthusiasm makes up for his lack of inventiveness. Tyner's solo, which comes last, is electrifying, not the boring tinkle he so often resorts to nowadays. As connections go, this is a great one.

C. A.

SACKVILLE ALL STARS: Saturday Night Function. Sackville All Stars (instruments). John Hardy's Wife; Live at Five; Rosaline; Arkansas Blues; and four others. SACKVILLE 3028 $8.98. (from Sackville Recordings, Dept. B, Box 87, Station J, Toronto, Ont., Canada 4X3). Performance: Delicate swing Recording: Very good

The Sackville All Stars are a quintet whose best-known stars, saxophonist Buddy Tate and pianist Jay McShann, are assisted by Jim Galloway on reeds, Don Thompson on bass, and Terry Clarke on drums. It is a congenial group and it travels smoothly down the straight and narrow of the mainstream. Sackville is a Canadian label, an arm of CoDA magazine dedicated to the disbursement of quality jazz, and so it should come as no surprise that "Saturday Night Function" is a fine example of the genre it represents. This is not jazz of the wild, stomping kind, but rather of the padded, gently nudging sort that closes eyelids and produces subtle movements of the body. If you are moved to acquire this set, many hours of good listening await you.

C. A.

ARTIE SHAW, VOL. 2. Mel Torme and His Mel-Tones (vocals); Artie Shaw and His Orchestra with Strings (instruments). What Is This Thing Called Love?; For You and Me Forevermore; Changing My Tune; I Believe; Connecticut; They Can't Convince Me; Love for Sale; and eight others. MUSICRAFT ® OVS 507 $8.98. Performance: Mellow and masterly Recording: Good

The vaults of recordings made by the big bands in their prime are apparently inexhaustible. Practically every month brings a "new" album by Benny Goodman or Glenn Miller or somebody else whose complete works you would have thought had all been reissued by this time. Sometimes the record is padded with an inordinate amount of filler, but this second Artie Shaw disc on Musicraft is a real winner. Shaw's orchestra—augmented by strings and featuring Shaw on clarinet—turns s.o.w.'s ears into silk purses several times, and the "Velvet Fog" voice of Mel Torme blends with those of his Mel-Tones in the pleasantest way imaginable. Recorded in Hollywood in 1946, the album boasts surprisingly good sound.

Torme is on more often than not, and it's a delight to hear him at the top of his form bringing distinction to such standards as "Is This Thing Called Love?; I've Got You Under My Skin, and Get Out of Town. Less delightful are Ralph Blane blandly singing the praises of New England living in Connecticut and the band playing Love for Sale with all the sensuality of a dead toad. Most of the time, though, this disinterested oldie shows remarkable signs of life. P.K.

GEORGE SHEARING AND JIM HALL: First Edition. George Shearing (piano); Jim Hall (guitar). Street of Dreams; To Antonio Carlos Jobim; Careful; I See Nothing to Laugh About; and four others. CONCORD JAZZ CJ-177 $8.98. CJ-177 $8.98. Performance: Dainty duets Recording: Very good

George Shearing is a known quantity, a highly skilled, consistent jazz pianist with a distinctive style that is fragile, understated, and just a little dull. Jim Hall is a skilled, consistent jazz guitarist. The two balance each other elegantly here in a program that amounts to a kind of jazz chamber concert. Still, whether they're nodding about with variations on old standards or setting forth Shearing's original tributes to musicians Antonio Carlos Jobim and Tommy Flanagan, the sound is continuously bland and low-key. Somewhere all the skill of two fine musicians never quite succeeds in waking this album up.

P.R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MUGGSY SPANIER: At Club Hangover, Volume 2. Muggsy Spanier (cornet); Ralph Hutchinson (trombone); Darnell Howard (clarinet); Mel Grant (piano); Charles "Truck" Parham (bass); Barrett Deems (drums). Relaxing at the Touro; Royal Garden Blues; Basin Street Blues; Dippemouth Blues; Squeeze Me; Rose Room; St. Louis Blues; and four others. STORYVILLE ® SLP 4056 $7.98. Performance: Excellent Recording: Fine restoration

Cornettist Muggsy Spanier took Louis Armstrong and King Oliver as his models, and he continued to be faithful to the New Orleans small-band format until the end of his life. What Spanier played was called "Dixieland," but critics casually recognized him as one of the "Austin High Gang" or "Chicago School" of white jazz from the Twenties. Although he had a recording career of forty-five years, Spanier spent much of his time during the Thirties and Forties with the Ted Lewis novelty band simply because it was steady work. He briefly fronted a big band of his own but missed the Swing Era. He spent most of the rest of his professional life in small clubs like the Hangover. By the early Sixties he had begun to play prestigious jazz festivals, but ill health caught up with him; he retired in 1964 and died three years later. Muggsy was an iconoclast, and a proud one. This second Storyville issue of radio broadcasts from the Hangover Club finds him at the top of his form. His group included drummer Barrett Deems, who later toured with Armstrong, and the excellent clarinetist Darnell Howard, who had played
with King Oliver’s Dixie Syncopators in 1926-1928. The program consists of Dixieland warhorses, but Spanier takes them all on with affectionate fury. His specialty was muted choruses done in fast legato runs with perfect choices of where to apply syncopation and a sense of melody that always let the listener know what his improvisations were based on.

The dignity and beauty of New Orleans blues are what moved Spanier most deeply, as can be heard here on King Oliver’s Riverside Blues, probably unrecorded since the King’s original 1923 waxing. Muggsy was also a hellfire stomper, as the uptempo numbers demonstrate. In terms of jazz history he was unlucky; critics and jazz aficionados are quick to cheer the latest ’genius,” but they tend to ignore many players of consistent and reliable brilliance. Spanier was no genius, but he was surely special, gifted, and true to his own muse.

STEVE TIBBETTS: Northern Song. Steve Tibbetts (guitars, kalimbas, tape loops); Marc Anderson (congas, bongos, percussion). The Big Wind; Form, Walking; and two others. ECM ECM-1-1218 $9.98, ® M5E-1218 $9.98.

Performance: Meditative
Recording: Excellent

“Northern Song” is not so much a collection of compositions as one of meditations. There aren’t more than a couple of true themes on the entire album, and they are deliberately, painstakingly deployed and developed. Steve Tibbetts clings to a musical idea as if it were the last he’ll ever have. No chord, no note, no harmony is thrown away; each is repeated over and over.

I don’t think I’ve ever heard an album so given over to silence. It stretches out for many seconds at a time, and Tibbetts and percussionist Marc Anderson invade it cautiously. Sometimes the silence is broken only by the murmur of wind chimes or the clawing of a fingernail along a string. In a sense, this album is an acknowledgment of the ultimate power of silence over music. Listeners wedded to form and structure and momentum will probably find “Northern Song” unsettling, even exasperating. Those who can allow themselves to be transported in the few moments a struck chord endures against the power of silence should find it captivating.

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*"There is a little Mozart in the circuit."

Excerpted from the review of the NAD 3020 in Hi Fi Stereo, France.
trio’s accompaniment; after a chorus or two, they are joined by the orchestra, sounding depressingly like the old Mantovani Singing Strings. Other selections have as back-up only Thomas playing primly correct piano. In every case it is Vaughan at her Cuisinart worst, mashing, chopping, and blending both musical and lyrical phrases into a sort of purée. Thomas says in his liner notes that he and Vaughan have had such success with this program that they have repeated it around the country with other orchestras. He neglects to mention if they were ever asked back.

P.R.

DICKY WELLS: Lonesome Road. Dicky Wells (trombone, vocals); Buddy Tate (clarinet, tenor saxophone); Dick Katz (piano); George Duvivier, Michael Moore (bass); Oliver Jackson (drums). Honeysuckle Rose; Lonesome Road; I Surrender Dear; Black and Blue; She’s Funny That Way; and four others. UPTOWN UP 27.07 $7.98 (from Uptown Records, 276 Kingston Street, Kingston, N.Y. 12401).

Performance: Mellow Recording: Good

After a long career starting in the late Twenties, during which he played with the orchestras of Count Basie, Fletcher Henderson, and Ray Charles as well as freelance dates with Earl Hines, Django Reinhardt, and Jimmy Rushing, trombonist Dicky Wells went into semi-retirement in 1970. A savage mugging five years later asked back. The result is this album about three months later. The “Almost” arrangement—remains intact.

“Lonesome Road,” recorded in 1981, is bolstered by the presence of Buddy Tate on sax and Dick Katz on piano, both of them close friends of Wells. George Duvivier and Michael Moore on bass and drummer Oliver Jackson also lend solid support. All have a lot of room to work in, and Wells gives 100 per cent. His reactions are occasionally hesitant, but he still has good ideas and executes them well. His vocals are delivered with enormous experience and the graceful, generous wisdom of age. Wells may have slowed down some, but he has all his emotional chops. J.V.

ERNIE WILKINS AND THE ALMOST BIG BAND. Ernie Wilkins (tenor saxophone); the Almost Big Band (instrumentals). No More Rat Race; Sebastian; High Fly; Lollipops and Roses; Ballad for Paul; and three others. STORYVILLE SLP-4051 $7.98.

Performance: Fine Recording: Very good

Former Basie arranger Ernie Wilkins put together his Almost Big Band two years ago in Copenhagen, where he resides, and made this album about three months later. The “Almost” was added because, with thirteen members, the band falls a little short of being what is normally considered a big band, yet it obviously cannot be considered small. Call it what you will, the sound produced by this cogent blend of native Danish musicians and American expatriates is big, and the individual instrumental voices are often glorious. Wilkins’ arrangements here are of the same skillful, thoroughly melodic kind he contributed to the Basie band, so there are no surprises, but neither are there any disappointments.

C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

PHIL WOODS: Birds of a Feather. Phil Woods Quartet (instrumentals). Goodbye Mr. Evans; Nica’s Dream; My Old Flame; and three others. ANTILLES AN 1006 $8.98, © ZCA 1006 $8.98.

Performance: Superb Recording: Good

Phil Woods is a perennial swinger—in the musical sense, at least. On Star Eyes, the opening track of this new quartet album, he revs up his alto saxophone and takes off at maximum speed, but not a note is spilled in the process. There’s a considerable change of pace on the next track, Goodbye Mr. Evans, Woods’s tender tribute to the late Bill Evans, and the other four selections maintain the high standard set by those two. I have learned to expect fine things from the horn and imagination of Phil Woods, and—with support from pianist Hal Galper, drummer Steve Gilmore, and bassist Bill Goodwin—fine things are just what this album offers.

C.A.

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Performance: Mixed blessing
Recording: Very good

Any show by Michael Bennett—whose A Chorus Line is in its eighth year on Broadway—is bound to stir up advance interest, but even before Dreamgirls hit Broadway one of its unknown cast members, Jennifer Holliday, had screamed her way into the spotlight. The way everybody raved about her show-stopping performance when world of Dreamgirls started filtering down to New York from the Boston out-of-town run, we expected nothing less than the close scrutiny of a recorded audio—only to find that Jennifer Holliday cannot stand the record. Her voice is as if a woman's affecting a child's

On the positive side, “Dreamgirls” offers Sheryl Lee Ralph and Ben Harney, who are particularly effective on their duet, When I First Saw You, and Cleavant Derricks, whose pleasantly raspy voice weaves in and out of the score before singning out in earnest on I Mean You No Harm. Incidentally, Harney and Derricks also received Tony awards for their performances. Arson's arrangements are an asset too. I don't want to leave you thinking that I did not enjoy this original-cast album; it's just that Jennifer Holliday cannot stand the close scrutiny of a recorded audio-only performance. I am reminded of the time I saw Gypsy years ago; I thought (and still do) how wonderful it would have been without the grating presence of Ethel Merman. C.A.

MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG (see Best of the Month, page 81)


Performance: Lively
Recording: Good

Not content with baring Julie Andrews' breasts in the recent S.O.B., director Blake Edwards cast his wife as a male impersonator in Victor/Victoria. Luckily, the movie turns out to be a slapstick delight and Andrews gives one of her best performances of her career. The score for this boulevard romp about mistaken identity, with lyrics by Leslie Bricusse and music by Henry Mancini, is as light as a swansdown powder puff and as buoyant as an old route's step as he walks into the Folies Bergère. Andrews does her customary highly professional singing in such production numbers as The Shady Dame from Seville and the wistful Who Wore It Better? But the surprise of the album is Lesley Ann Warren. Warren, you may remember, was the original Cinderella in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical of that name. Edwards has cast her as a featherheaded moll out on a spree, a cross between Lorelei Lee and Texas Guinan. She sings and dances and has her own once-around in Illinois, with all the brazen gusto of a Vegas hooker. She's plain—and fancy—wonderful. I understand Edwards' newest project involves Helen Hayes, Brooke Shields, and Pat Boone; I'm on tenterhooks.

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CIRCLE NO 3 ON READER SERVICE CARD
In June, WFMT in Chicago became the first radio station in the United States (and perhaps in the world) to broadcast music from the new digital audio disc—the Compact Disc—developed by Sony and Philips. It was fitting that most of the music on that broadcast consisted of performances led by Herbert von Karajan because he is probably the world's most prolifically recorded conductor.

Above, Karajan (left) is presented with the first Compact Disc from the industrial production run of his Deutsche Grammophon recording of Richard Strauss's Alpine Symphony by Jan D. Timmer, executive vice-president of PolyGram International in Hamburg. Just over 4½ inches in diameter, the disc contains up to an hour of music on one side (the other side carries the label). The Compact Disc will be introduced in Europe later this year. The introduction of the digital disc in the United States was originally scheduled for this month, but it has been delayed until some unspecified time in 1983. There has been a great deal of speculation concerning the reason for the postponement. According to a PolyGram spokesperson, the reason is that in introducing a new product it is easier to achieve adequate initial penetration in the European market. "Our production facilities are functioning very well, but their capacity is simply insufficient at present to meet the enormous demand we anticipate when the Compact Disc is introduced in the United States."

In the meantime, those hungering for Karajan on record will find him well represented on Angel, Deutsche Grammophon, and London. And for the first time since 1976 he will return to the United States with the Berlin Philharmonic to conduct performances at Carnegie Hall in New York. Four concerts are scheduled for this month.

Classical music lovers who watch concerts, opera, and dance programs on television will be busy this season. Those who make videotapes of such TV shows had better lay in an extra supply of tape for the offerings of the Public Broadcasting Service alone.

Celebrating its tenth season on PBS, Exxon's Great Performances series continues with a Lincoln Center Special on October 4. It presents part of the New York City Ballet's Stravinsky centennial celebration. Peter Martins will dance two of George Balanchine's ballets with scores by Stravinsky. He will perform the titles in Apollo (with Suzanne Farrell) and Orpheus (with Karin von Aroldingen).

On October 7, Texaco's Live from the Met series begins its 1982-1983 season with a performance of Richard Strauss's Der Rosenkavalier with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Tatiana Troyanos, and Judith Blegen among the soloists and James Levine conducting. The cameo role of Italian Singer will be performed by Luciano Pavarotti. Stereo simulcast will be available in some cities.

On October 20, Puccini's Madama Butterfly performed by the New York City Opera Company will be telecast in Exxon's Live from Lincoln Center series. The cast is made up of young, relatively unknown singers. Christopher Keene will conduct, and Beverly Sills will be the intermission host.

On October 25, PBS will broadcast the first of a six-part Magic of Dance series, in which Dame Margot Fonteyn discusses and shows some of the great events and personalities of her forty-year-long career. Excerpts from such ballets as Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, and Romeo and Juliet will be danced.

The Baldwin Piano and Organ Company has brought out a box called "The Essential Piano Library," which contains eight records and a couple of soft-bound books. The records are made up of piano music performed by six artists who endorse and play the Baldwin piano: David Bar-Ilan, Jorge Bolet, Gilbert Kalish, Ruth Laredo, Santiago Rodriguez, and Earl Wild. Two of the records are an anthology of pieces serious piano students might expect to learn, such as Beethoven's Für Elise, Liszt's Liebestraum No. 3, and Debussy's Clair de Lune. Here each piece is played by one of the six famous pianists. Then each of these masters of the keyboard has a whole record to himself on which he plays music with which he is particularly associated. Bolet, for example, plays Liszt; Ruth Laredo plays Scriabin, Prokofiev, and Barber; and Wild plays Chopin. The music for the student pieces is printed in one of the books; the other contains interpretive advice from the artists. "The Essential Piano Library" costs $48 and is available from local Baldwin representatives. To locate your nearest one write Baldwin Piano and Organ Co., Department SR, P.O. Box 2525, Cincinnati, Ohio 45201.

Baldwin has joined the Van Cliburn Foundation in sponsoring the first recording by Panayis Lyras, silver medal winner in the 1981 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Produced by Varése Sarabande, the album was slated for September release to precede Lyras's Cliburn Foundation recital at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center on October 11. The record contains works by Liszt, Schumann, Scriabin, Medtner, and Balakirev.

Panayis Lyras
SINCE the middle of this century France has produced only a few opera singers who excelled in any repertoire other than that of their own country. One of these few is the soprano Régine Crespin, who recently celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of her début. In her three decades on the stages of the world’s greatest opera houses, Mme Crespin has competed successfully with singers from other countries in both the Italian and German repertoires. She has been particularly renowned as an interpreter of the works of Wagner, and EMI/Angel has released on the Seraphim label a Wagner recital in which she sings the Wesendonck Songs and a selection of arias.

Some of Crespin’s greatest triumphs, of course, have been in her native French repertoire, and her services in disseminating French culture have been recognized with a number of awards and decorations from the government of France. A promotion in the Legion of Honor was presented to her in a ceremony in Paris this summer by the former French ambassador to the United States, Maurice Couve de Murville (photo at right).

Among the French composers whose music Crespin has sung and recorded is Francis Poulenc. She has been particularly successful in his Dialogues of the Carmelites and appears in the only commercial recording of it, which is still available (mono only) on Angel. This month and next Crespin will perform in this work at the San Francisco Opera. The cast also includes Virginia Zeani, who was in the world première of Dialogues at La Scala in 1957, and Leontyne Price, who sang in the American première in San Francisco the same year. The performance of Friday, October 29, will be broadcast live by National Public Radio and will be repeated on tape the afternoon of the following day. Check local NPR stations for exact time.

Disc and Tape Reviews


Performance: Tidy
Recording: Good


Performance: Very Romantic
Recording: Superb

A pianist’s interpretation of Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier begins, in many ways, where a harpsichordist’s leaves off. Both interpreters face equally difficult technical problems, and both must select workable tempos and articulations. But once the harpsichordist has done this and made his choice of registers, his work is pretty much finished. The pianist, on the other hand, must further select a dynamic scheme and choose which voices to bring out. It is mainly these last two factors that result in the vast differences among pianistic interpretations of this series of forty-eight preludes and fugues. The new recordings by Angelica Morales von Sauer (Books I and II) and João Carlos Martins (Book I) exemplify two extremes of interpretation.

Considering Morales von Sauer’s background (pupil and widow of the late Emil von Sauer, who himself was a pupil of Liszt), one would expect her to explore the full possibilities of the piano and to indulge in dynamics and tempos of the Romantic period. Not at all. Her playing here is neat and tidy, her tempos moderate, and her dynamic range limited. Her reading of the ornaments is precise and accurate, with the fugue subject always emphasized. Her rhythms are metronomic; even cadential ritards are avoided. She offers controlled pianism without excitement.

Martins, continuing his ongoing project of recording Bach’s complete keyboard music, plays here in the full-blown Romantic tradition of Liszt and Busoni. Taking advantage of the full dynamic range of the modern concert grand, he subjects the music to long crescendos and diminuendos with sudden accents and changes. Nor does he think twice about bass-octave doublings. The étude-like preludes are played for speed and brilliance; the somber music is slowed down and stretched out like a Mahler adagio. His final ritards are grandiose, and he loves to throw in a subito piano on final chords. While much of Martins’ interpretation does violence to the music and returns us to the aesthetic world of the Stokowski orchestral transcriptions, there are moments here of great beauty in terms of piano sound. A master of tonal variety and shading, Martins can both overpower us with strength and delight us with delicate webs and gossamer threads. Few pianists can mold a fugue into a single inexorable crescendo like this. But this album is for listeners to Martins, not Bach. Perhaps Bach is an ill-chosen vehicle for Martins’ pianism, but he certainly takes us for a wild ride in it.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Outstanding
Recording: Superb

The Beethoven trios have quite understandably formed the backbone of the Beaux Arts Trio’s repertoire. This distinguished group may well have given more performances of the cycle over the last twenty-seven years than any other trio, past or present, and yet, far from playing these works mechanically, the team seems to find more and more in them with each encounter. The integral recording of the cycle made in 1965, when the late Daniel Guilet was the Beaux Arts’ violinist, is still available, and at a special bargain price (Philips 6747 142, four discs). Isidore Cohen replaced Guilet as partner to pianist Menahem Pressler and...
Yours Egorov's first recording, an incomparably compelling account of the Kreisleriana and two of the Novelletten (Peters International PLE-113), made it clear that he was born to play Schumann. Musically and emotionally, the performances are electrifying, yielding up more of the visionary feeling Schuman put into the music than any other presentations I could recall at the time (1979), and they are no less exciting now. A subsequent record of the Fantasy in C and the Arabeske on the same label (PLE-122) was hardly less striking, and, now, as the initial release under his new contract with EMI, Angel has brought out a digitally recorded Schumann program that offers what may well be the most inspiring and profoundly satisfying account of the much-recorded Carnaval since the Rachmaninoff recording of 1929.

Egorov goes at the music, as always, with a flashing intensity that suggests what one imagines Schumann must have felt in composing it, and yet there is nowhere in the half-hour performance any suggestion of exaggeration or excess. Everything seems to be felt spontaneously and instinctively, and the contrasts between the respective sections (and between Florestan and Eusebius as they appear generally throughout the sequence, as well as particularly in Nos. 5 and 6) are brought off with great effect and great subtlety. The playing itself is enthusiastically unselfconsciously brilliant, as it is in the somewhat different vision required for Papillons on the other side of the disc, another superbly vivifying realization filled with freshness and charm and again controlled by the most subtle and judicious regard for taste and proportion. Side two concludes with a noble, rather than showy, performance of the Toccata, Op. 7. It is not a matter of understatement (that is not Egorov's way), but simply one of giving the musical values their due along with the written-in virtuosity. The recorded sound is gratifyingly realistic, and there is an exceptionally good set of notes by Joan Chissell, always an especially illuminating writer on Schumann's piano music. In every respect, this is an outstanding issue, about as "basic" as could be, I would think, to any collection of music by Schumann, music for the piano, or simply of worthwhile music.

Emanuel Ax, at thirty-three, is only five years older than Egorov, but in the last half-dozen years he has established himself as one of the most elegant and communicative performers of the Romantic literature, adopting from the first a probing and poetic approach rather than allowing youthful exuberance or mere surface excitement to carry the day. But it is only now that RCA has gotten around to giving us Ax's Schumann, on another digitally recorded disc, coupling the familiar Fantasiestücke, Op. 12, with the less frequently heard Humoreske, Op. 20. Both works, needless to say, are beautifully played; Ax characterizes each of the eight Op. 12 pieces as fully and poetically as he does his Chopin and at the same time succeeds notably in clarifying the interrelationships that make them a true cycle.

The overside Humoreske is less immediately fetching: it is more reserved and so extremely unhurried that momentum may be felt to sag here and there. It is an extremely "inward," ruminative performance, as if Ax were reminding himself, lingeringly, of music he had come to love deeply, rather than offering it to the public. This sort of approach is not always successful, and after several hearings I was left with the feeling that Claudio Arrau (Philips 839 709LY) and Vladimir Ashkenazy (London CS 6859) are still as far as one need go in the alphabetical list for the most satisfying accounts of the Humoreske. Listeners understandably beguiled by Ax's Fantasiestücke, however, may feel that side alone is worth the cost of the disc. RCA more than matches Angel's fine digital recording and offers similarly distinguished annotation by Harry Goldsmith. [Richard Freed]


**Digital Schumann**

This is an exceptional performance with one curious characteristic: the dynamics never rise above a mezzo-forte from one end to the other. No Beethovenian Sturm und Drang here. Curiously, at the start Diabelli's little waltz (as Michael Steinberg suggests in his notes, it sounds as if it were the accompaniment to something else) is played with an animation that suggests even livelier things to come. But that isn't at all the way it works out. The thirty-three variances are clean, classical, thoughtful, turned rather inward in a structured rather than a passionate way. The playing is never less than ultra-sensitive and, within the relatively small scale of the interpretation, full of nuance and carry-through. The piano sound, though not overwhelmingly beautiful, is nevertheless honest, even, and very pleasant. There were one or two bugs in the pressing.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**BELLINI:** La Sonnambula. Joan Sutherland (soprano), Amina; Luciano Pavarotti (tenor), Elvino; Nicolai Ghiaurov (bass), Conte Rodolfo; Della Jones (mezzo-soprano), Teresa; František Frýdl, Lisa; John Tomlinson (baritone), Alessio; Piero de Palma (tenor), Notary. National Opera Chorus; National Philharmonic Orchestra, Richard Bonynge cond. LONDON © LDR 73004 three discs $38.94, © LDRS 73004 $38.94.

**Performance:** Long on voice, short on charm

**Recording:** Excellent

La Sonnambula is an idyllic opera in a bucolic setting. The plot, with its single complication, barely gets in the way of Bellini's tender melodies and Felice Romani's elegantly wrought libretto. There was a time, in the Victorian era—when Jenny Lind, Adelina Patti, Etelka Gerster, and Marcela Sembrich also reigned—when this opera was extremely popular. And despite its old-fashioned aura it has managed to regain new admirers whenever fascinating new sopranos—Pons, Carosio, Callas, Sutherland—have emerged to cast their somnambulistic spells.

It is the elusive quality of charm that I have difficulty finding in this technically
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resplendent new production. The three star protagonists seem to overpower Bellini’s gentle score. In this, her second recording of La Sonnambula, Joan Sutherland sings with the confidence and security of old, triumphing over tessitura, ornamenting her lines with her former mastery, only occasional “false notes” in sustained notes betray the passing of time. But her words are still not projected with clarity, her tones are round and rich but lack involvement and spontaneity, and I hope no one will find it ungalant of me to say that I miss a certain “virginal” quality in her portrayal of this truly ingenuous role.

Luciano Pavarotti is also unconvincing as the simple village youth he should be projecting. He is very much the Gran Tenore, singing with firmness on a barely modulated forte all the way through. (His “Adieu” in the conclusion of the Son nelos” duet is positively fierce.) Similarly, Nicolai Ghiaurov is sonorous and authoritative in his regal King Philip manner when he should be impersonating a middle-aged bel canto charmer with a roving eye.

London has surrounded these superstars with an excellent supporting cast, and Richard Bonynge paces the opera with more precision than he displayed in his first recording of it nearly twenty years ago. The digital sound is spacious and imposing. If you really like this opera, seek out the tonally faded recordings of Galli Curci and Tito Schipa to understand what its authors must have had in mind. What we have here is a slick, modern, and wrongfully regarded Sonnambula—and yet, in all things considered, it has no real rival in the current catalog.

S.L.
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Magical Ravel from Previn

WHEN London Records decided about a year and a half ago to retire its marvelous Ernest Ansermet recording of Ravel’s L’Enfant et les Sorcelles, a lot of collectors must have scurried for copies. Although the original mono release was in 1955, the sound of the later stereo version belied its age, and Ansermet, at his most elegant and communicative, was aided nobly by such singers as Flore Wend, Suzanne Dance, Hugues Cuénot, and Pierre Molié. The deletion left in the catalog only Lorin Maazel’s Deutsche Grammophon disc (138 675), which was itself recorded some twenty years ago and is very appealing in its own right, but not quite in the same class as the Ansermet.

Andre Previn’s new Angel recording of this little “children’s” opera thus fills a real need, and it would have to be my first choice even if the Ansermet were still available. Previn’s feeling for this side of Ravel, so brilliantly evident in his recent Pittsburgh recording of the complete Mother Goose ballet score (Philips 9500 973, September “Best of the Month”), is perhaps instinctive, perhaps a matter of faultless judgment, but in any event keeps him from any sort of condescension on the one hand or gratuitous slipstack on the other. He has the wisdom to recognize that in this music, as in everything Ravel wrote, all the necessary “effects” are so shrewdly calculated that the performer needn’t concern himself all that much with “interpretation”; simply respect the score and the effects will take care of themselves. The result here is not merely charming but eloquent, touching, and, I feel sure, extremely durable.

The singers, sometimes a little covered by the orchestra in the Ansermet recording, are more forward here, but never at the expense of the orchestral coloring. The blend is ideal, and the digital recording makes it all magically clear without ever calling attention to itself. The pressing is as quiet as any domestic product I have heard. Jane Berbié, who can also be heard in the Maazel recording (but in different roles from those she sings under Previn), provides a nice sort of continuity with the past, while Jules Bastin is, as always, a model of wit and style as well as impeccable musicianship. The various English and American singers compare well with their illustrious predecessors. The chorus and orchestra both respond superbly. Overall, Previn succeeds perhaps more fully than any other conductor who has recorded this enchanting work both in realizing its full music-dramatic character and in relating it to the Ravel of Daphnis et Chloe, La Valse, and the piano concertos. The documentation too is exceptional: Felix Aprahamian has provided annotation that is a model of conciseness, affection, and comprehensiveness as well as an excellent new translation of Colette’s text. All in all, a quite outstanding and endearing issue.

—Richard Freed
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Performance: Ideal
Recording: Splendid


Performance: Committed
Recording: Fine

The French ensemble called Les Musiciens appears to be, like the Vienna Octet, one whose number expands or contracts according to the needs of the work at hand. Three of its members have given us outstanding recordings of the Schubert and Brahms piano trios, and now six of them (including two members of the Pasquier family) are heard in a remarkably persuasive performance of the first of Brahms’s two string sextets. I simply do not know how this performance could be bettered. Everything about it seems unarguably right: the opening movement expansively warmedhearted, the darkish variation movement suitably dramatic, the scherzo fleet and hearty, the tricky final rondo ideally paced. It would be hard to find more than a phrase or two in the forty-minute sequence that might seem as effective if changed even slightly. The playing is not only communicative but extremely beautiful, and the extraordinary balance between the instruments makes for textures both crystalline and rich. The recorded sound too is airy and warm at the same time, and the utter silence that follows on the listener of awareness of anything but the music.

The Cleveland Quartet began its discography with the three Brahms string quartets (RCA VCS-7102) and not too long afterward added a handsome account of the Clarinet Quintet with Richard Stoltzman (RCA ARL1-1993). The new set of the two sextets again illustrates how well this composer’s distinctive colors seem to suit these players, and in Pinchas Zukerman and Bernard Greenhouse they have collaborators who are not only celebrated but as committed as themselves; the integration is at no point less than complete. Like Les Musiciens, the RCA team takes the exposition repeat in the first movement of Op. 18 (and in Op. 36 as well), and both performances exhibit only a slightly lesser degree of persuasiveness. The scherzo in Op. 18 is possibly even lighter and clearer on RCA, though the trio is a tiny bit rushed. The dramatic moments in the slow movements tend to be intensified to a point approaching exaggeration, and some passages in the outer movements of both works seem a shade underdramatized. A direct comparison with Les Musiciens in the final movement of Op. 18 can only reconfirm the unfailing instincts of the French team: the marking is Poco allegretto, but the Clevelanders and friends set for something more like an andantino. While the Marlboro players led by Pina Carmirelli on CBS (MS 7445) actually take a minute or so longer than the RCA team in each movement but the last of Op. 36, their performance has an air of greater vitality. I don’t want to exaggerate these differences, for the RCA album is a distinguished offering in its own right, and its rich sonics are almost on a par with Harmonia Mundi’s. But if I were choosing a single recording of each of the sextets, I would not hesitate to pick the Harmonia Mundi Op. 18 and the CBS Op. 36. R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Rich and strange
Recording: Excellent

Shakespeare’s last and most beguiling play, The Tempest, has inspired all sorts of music, including a number of ballet scores. The latest ballet based on it is a luxurious two-act affair choreographed by Michael Smuin and first performed by the San Francisco Ballet in 1980. Paul Chihara’s score is based on themes from the seventeenth-century music for the play attributed to Purcell as well as other works of opera. The Fairy Queen. And a gorgeous musical tapestry it is, with few boring moments in this new complete recording.

The lovely Purcellian airs are set out in lush orchestral garb; the storm music is exciting and the “drunk trio” for Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban is fun. There are two fine pas de deux for Miranda and her new-found lover Ferdinand, aptly ethereal passages for Ariel (including one number for a whole ensemble of Ariels), and a mock coronation march. The music for the masque in the second act is replete with pleasantly surprising pleasures: a “rye rag,” “a blues pas de deux” for Ceres and Bacchus, a dazzling tarantella for a climax. These moments take us a long way from Purcell and even farther from Elizabethan times, but they are delightful nonetheless. The music is all brilliantly performed by the Performing Arts Orchestra, the official orchestra of the San Francisco Ballet, under Jean-Louis LeRoux. They are obviously familiar with every facet of Chihara’s magical music, and they make the most of it. The beautifully recorded album comes with many pages of notes lavishly illustrated by full-color photographs from the ballet production.


Performance: Intense, personal
Recording: Hollow


Performance: Offhand
Recording: Grainy

In case you think modern performances of the Romantic classics are relatively standardized, let me report that Arthur Lima performs Chopin’s A Minor Prelude—the weird atonal one—in two minutes and nineteen seconds while Vlado Perlemuter gets through it in only one minute and thirty-nine seconds, a rather extraordinary difference (forty seconds) in such a brief piece. In fact, Perlemuter polishes off the entire twenty-four preludes of Op. 28 in only a little
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Performance: Fluent Recording: Excellent

Dvořák’s Op. 100, composed during his three-year American stay, was scaled for the performing abilities of his daughter Ottilie and son Antonin Jr. on violin and piano, respectively. The slow movement has achieved an independent popularity as arranged by Fritz Kreisler under the title In dian Lament. The music is both simple and artful, and in this flute transcription Rampal and Ritter preserve those qualities, but the work loses something of its underlying intensity without the violin sonority.

Jindřich Feld (b. 1925) is among the most successful of the post-Martinů generation of Czech composers. His 1957 Flute Sonata, composed for Rampal, partakes of some of the same French influences that tinge Martinů’s work. It makes for lively and pleasant listening, with the virtuoso element particularly strong throughout the finale. The Martinů piece is a bit of Frenchified jazz extracted from his five-movement 1929 sextet for piano, flute, oboe, clarinet, and two bassoons (the original scoring of the third movement was for flute and piano only).

This entire program—labeled “From Prague with Love” on the album cover—is carried off by Rampal and his keyboard partner with effortless fluency and aplomb. The recording is just fine.

FIBICH: Sárka. Václav Zítek (baritone), Prince Přemysł; Vilem Plýbíl (tenor), Cti...
rad; Eva Dépolová (soprano), Šárka; Eva Randoval (mezzo-soprano), Vlasta; Josef Klan (bass), Vítora; others. Brno JanRek Opera Chorus; Brno State Philharmonic Orchestra, Jan Stych cond. SUPRAPHON 1416 2781/3 three discs $29.94 (from Qualiton Records, Ltd., 39-28 Crescent Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101).

Performance: Vital
Recording: Good

With a few exceptions by Mussorgsky, Janáček, and Tchaikovsky, the national operas of Eastern Europe do not travel particularly well. Nonetheless, the riches of Russian, Polish, Czech, and Hungarian operatic literature are worth exploring, and the discovery of such works as The Tsar's Bride, Halka, Dalibor, and Bánk bán must have enriched the lives of many opera lovers. Šárka falls somewhat short of the level of those four, but it is still a worthy addition to the recorded-opera shelf.

Zdeněk Fibich (1850-1900) was a major figure in Czech symphonic and operatic music. Šárka, generally regarded as his best opera, was introduced in 1897, between Smetana's Libuše (1881) and Dvořák's Rusalka (1900), two other works dealing with legendary subjects. The opera's plot is both simple and absurd: mortal enmity reigns between the pagan male and female warriors of antiquity. One of the Amazon leaders falls in love with a male warrior and, in her infatuation, betrays her women comrades. When the women are destroyed as a result of her treachery, Šárka kills herself. (Šárka, incidentally, is also the title of one of the six tone poems that make up Smetana's magnificent cycle My Country, though Smetana set his music to a different—if hardly less bloody—version of the legend.)

If you are suspecting a love-hate relationship as in Tristan und Isolde between Fibich's protagonists, you are not far off the Mark. Nor is Wagner's influence limited to this similarity. Šárka and her fellow Amazons gallop about in fierce Walküre style, and Fibich's orchestral sound has a strong Wagnerian coloration, though he is not really as addicted to leitmotives or "endless melody." Furthermore, the Bohemian folkloristic elements are unmistakable, and the very accentuation of the Czech text endows the music with a national identity. Richly scored, effectively written for the voices, Šárka is a good example of late nineteenth-century operatic Romanticism. It has some beautiful lyric episodes in Act II, though the love music fails to convey the anticipated Wagnerian sensuality.

Some of the best contemporary Czech singers are in the cast of this recording, and they perform with total commitment and unspiring intensity. The overall level of singing is higher than we are accustomed to from Bohemian sources. Subtlety is not the word for the orchestral performance, but it does have unflagging vitality. Technically, the production is respectable without being in any way outstanding.

G.J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Vital
Recording: Good

With a few exceptions by Mussorgsky, Janáček, and Tchaikovsky, the national operas of Eastern Europe do not travel particularly well. Nonetheless, the riches of Russian, Polish, Czech, and Hungarian operatic literature are worth exploring, and the discovery of such works as The Tsar's Bride, Halka, Dalibor, and Bánk bán must have enriched the lives of many opera lovers. Šárka falls somewhat short of the level of those four, but it is still a worthy addition to the recorded-opera shelf.

Zdeněk Fibich (1850-1900) was a major figure in Czech symphonic and operatic music. Šárka, generally regarded as his best opera, was introduced in 1897, between Smetana's Libuše (1881) and Dvořák's Rusalka (1900), two other works dealing with legendary subjects. The opera's plot is both simple and absurd: mortal enmity reigns between the pagan male and female warriors of antiquity. One of the Amazon leaders falls in love with a male warrior and, in her infatuation, betrays her women comrades. When the women are destroyed as a result of her treachery, Šárka kills herself. (Šárka, incidentally, is also the title of one of the six tone poems that make up Smetana's magnificent cycle My Country, though Smetana set his music to a different—if hardly less bloody—version of the legend.)

If you are suspecting a love-hate relationship as in Tristan und Isolde between Fibich's protagonists, you are not far off the Mark. Nor is Wagner's influence limited to this similarity. Šárka and her fellow Amazons gallop about in fierce Walküre style, and Fibich's orchestral sound has a strong Wagnerian coloration, though he is not really as addicted to leitmotives or "endless melody." Furthermore, the Bohemian folkloristic elements are unmistakable, and the very accentuation of the Czech text endows the music with a national identity. Richly scored, effectively written for the voices, Šárka is a good example of late nineteenth-century operatic Romanticism. It has some beautiful lyric episodes in Act II, though the love music fails to convey the anticipated Wagnerian sensuality.

Some of the best contemporary Czech singers are in the cast of this recording, and they perform with total commitment and unspiring intensity. The overall level of singing is higher than we are accustomed to from Bohemian sources. Subtlety is not the word for the orchestral performance, but it does have unflagging vitality. Technically, the production is respectable without being in any way outstanding.

G.J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


 corrections in the score of the Concerto No. 22 incorporated in the latest critical edition (the 1961. Neue Mozart Ausgabe), non-musicians will simply revel in the elegance, precision, and flexibility of his pianism. One must also admire the responsiveness Ashkenazy elicits from the Philharmonia players in this most beautifully scored of the Mozart piano concertos. His sense of musical architecture is unerrig in the first movement. His singing tone in the slow movement is a joy to hear, and his pacing of the sweetly jaunty finale is just right. The D Major Rondo makes a pleasing filler.

There are at least three other highly competitive recordings of the Concerto No. 22, by Murray Perahia, Alfred Brendel, and Emanuel Ax, but this new disc offers recorded sound of superior richness and presence. A winner all around. D.H.

RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

MOZART: Sonatas for Violin and Piano in C Major (K. 296), E Minor (K. 304), and D Major (K. 306). Denes Zsigmondy (violin); Anneliese Nissen (piano). BOSTON 7207 $8.98.

MOZART: Sonatas for Violin and Piano in A Major (K. 306). Denes Zsigmondy (violin); Anneliese Nissen (piano). DESTO DC 7208 $8.98.

MOZART: Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major (K. 306), and E-flat Major (K. 380). Denes Zsigmondy (violin); Anneliese Nissen (piano). DESTO DC 7212 $8.98.

Performances: Special

Recordings: Okay

Time was, not so very long ago, that American musical life was dominated by Central European émigrés. Not any more, but there are still a few individuals surviving from another generation who seem to continue those links with another time and place, links that have been so important in the growth of our musical life. Some of these survivors are well-known—Rudolf Serkin comes to mind. Others seem to have spent their years laboring in distant vineyards, but are recognized by the musical establishment—for instance, Denes Zsigmondy and his wife Anneliese Nissen. Zsigmondy is professor of music at the University of Washington in Seattle; he is, I presume, better known on the West Coast than on the East.

Zsigmondy does not have an exceptionally beautiful tone on these Desto recordings—the sound is rather on the grainy side—and Nissen's piano playing is less than perfect, though still of high quality. Neither musician could qualify as an expert on eighteenth-century performance practice. But so what? These are wonderful performances, and I mean wonderful. There are also extraordinarily Mozartian—Classical in the best and deepest sense, not Romantic classicism, but not white-washed-statue classicism either. The glowing colors of the
music have been restored with consummate taste and artistry. There are not many violinists around who could tackle these Mozart sonatas with as much obvious love and comprehension (most dislike the works because of the modest scale of the violin parts, written not as solo vehicles but in equal partnership with the piano).

Zsigmondy is an absolute master of the articulated phrase. Even a single held accompaniment note (the violin parts are full of such things) is here invested with the life of a whole phrase—not to steal attention but to give everything a vitality, a movement, and a blend that are truly extraordinary. The artistic unity of the violin and piano—always achieved even by the great and famous—is integral to these performances. The grainy violin sound is a plus, not a minus, adding more than a dash of bite and in music that is sometimes most difficult to make fly.

I'm not recommending these records for academic or study reasons but for their revelation to make fly. And in music that is sometimes most difficult to make fly.

Sheer listening pleasure and for their revelation of such things) is here invested with the life of a whole phrase—not to steal attention but to give everything a vitality, a movement, and a blend that are truly extraordinary. The artistic unity of the violin and piano—always achieved even by the great and famous—is integral to these performances. The grainy violin sound is a plus, not a minus, adding more than a dash of bite and in music that is sometimes most difficult to make fly.

The performance here by the English Bach Festival is exquisite in every respect. All the voices are fresh and clear sounding. The rather fuzzy recitative is kept moving by a light vocal production, and the coloratura is tossed off with ease as part of the verbal expression rather than for mere brilliance. Lynda Russell and Ian Caley are particular delights, but then so are most of the other singers in this stylish cast.

The orchestra, which plays Baroque instruments, deserves special praise. The decay of sound inherent in Baroque stringed instruments—and so often applied as a formula mannerism—is here used effectively to bring out Rameau's characteristic feminine endings. The wind playing is superb. Rameau revels in depicting birds, zephyrs, waves, and the like with a plethora of delicately wrought figurations for the winds (bassoons included). Not one winged creature is lost or even maimed in this technically perfect, beautifully balanced performance. And the musical fabric is held together by Nicolas McGegan's fine sense of tempo and pacing.

Of all the records of Rameau operas available today, those by the English Bach Festival are certainly the finest. They combine the fruits of painstaking musicalological research with true musically. What with Rameau's three-hundredth birthday coming up next year, we can expect many more recordings of his music, but they will have to be very special to rival this one. S.L.
**The Competition**

Six young piano prize winners on disc

Ewa Poblocka is a twenty-five-year-old Polish pianist from Danzig and a prize winner (the DG liners never say what prize unless it is the first) in the 1980 Chopin Competition in Warsaw. Naturally, she plays Chopin, and she plays it with instinctive understanding, power, and the kind of freedom that lets her hands get out of synchronization rather too much. More unexpectedly, she also plays Bach, and with delicacy, great finesse, and an extremely good idea of how ornaments were used and played in eighteenth-century music. Debussy finds her either stylistically at sea or else very subject to those exaggerations mentioned previously, for her attack is ferocious in places, dynamics tend toward the loud, rubatos and other Romantic devices abound, and there seems to be little understanding of sonority and color as structural elements. Still, she is a naturally musical pianist. She lacks mostly stylistic awareness.

The first-prize winner of the Chopin Competition was the twenty-four-year-old Vietnamese Dang Thai Son, and I am surprised at the judges' choice. Even discounting his early background (lessons in bunkers while Hanoi was bombers), he is an impressive pianist with a big style, a deadly accurate technique, and plenty of power, very much an extroverted performer who can whip up excitement in big, dramatic pieces. But there seems to be nothing of the poet in him. Lyrical lines find him sounding prosaic, almost pedantic, a mood broken off only by occasional point of expression, frequently in the wrong place. He is completely outside such pieces as the A Minor Waltz and the G Minor Mazurka. It's not that he is a bad pianist; he is a very good and promising one. But he is, at this point in his career, parochial, and hardly my idea of a prize-winning Chopinist. His record, by the way, is a welcome one, for Ivo Pogorelich, is on DG's regular label rather than on Concorps.

Pogorelich, though, is quite probably the most I hear of him, to be among the least interesting of the newcomers. He has a nice tone, fine technique, and unbounded confidence. His biggest drawback is that he runs out of interpretive ideas very quickly, apparently being oblivious to the musical problems as opposed to the technical ones—in the solving of which real interpretations are developed. He does not even get the accentuation right in the Schumann Toccata, so it hardly seems worthwhile to go into what he misses in the Symphonic Etudes or the Beethoven Op. 111.

Mikhail Faerman is a twenty-seven-year-old pianist of Romanian background who studied with Jacob Flier (Richter and Gilels also studied with Flier) and won the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels in 1973. You can't tell everything about a pianist from the Brahms *Paganini* Variations and the Prokofiev Sixth, but you can tell a lot. Faerman strikes me as a major artist. He has lots of power and technique, but he can play lyrically and delicately too, and he really knows how to bring out the individual character of a passage. He gets manifold opportunities to do just that in the Variations, and he doesn't miss a trick. His performance is at least the equal of any other in the current catalog. The Prokofiev does not get the typically young-Russian steel-fingered treatment but something considerably more varied and musically satisfying.

And Faerman does not seem to have suffered from DG's concert-recording method. His performances are alive but as clean and controlled as any studio recording. Alexander Lonquich is another very impressive pianist, and he is barely twenty-two. He was first prize winner in the Concours series, an estimable company of young artists, most often prize winners in various competitions. The music world owes DG a debt of gratitude, for I know of no other company with such a commitment to new performing talent. Some recent Concours releases, though, have caused me a few misgivings. Not about the artists—there's plenty of talent and plenty of interest—but about the way the recordings are made and presented.

They all seem to derive from recitals in Munich before an incredibly coughless audience, and the final notes of each composition were, apparently, re-recorded after the concert, for there is no applause on the records. This gives the illusion of a finished studio recording, which may be unfair to the artists. There are, for instance, all those little slips that pass and are forgotten in a recital, that are only mildly distracting in an obvious live recording, but that become real annoyances in a studio recording or a seeming studio recording. But beyond that is the far more important question of whether some of these artists would really have indulged in the conscious exaggerations that can be so effective in a concert if they had realized that their performances were going to be listened to over and over in places, dynamics tend toward the loud, rubatos and other Romantic devices abound, and there seems to be little understanding of sonority and color as structural elements. Still, she is a naturally musical pianist. She lacks mostly stylistic awareness.

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isn't all that much). But she is an exciting pianist to hear, and she plays with a great sensuousness, almost voluptuosity, that reminds me of Martha Argerich at times. It will be interesting to hear her in other repertoires—if we ever get the chance to.

Cartier-Bresson (she is the twenty-four-year-old niece of the famed photographer) gives a highly interesting performance of the Liszt B Minor Sonata, interesting enough to need and deserve more than one hearing to grasp. She is apparently not a virtuosic player, and she lets more than a few notes fall under the piano, but she finds a poetic—Byronic, really—interpretation of the piece that makes it much more of a story-telling kind of music than we usually hear and relates it closely to the Pelerinage. It is really quite fascinating and shows an individual musical mind at work.

To sum up, then: on a scale of ten, let's say nine for Faerman, eight for Longuich, seven and a half for Rubinstein, and Cartier-Bresson (for very different reasons), six for Poblocka, five for Dang Thai Son, and two for Pogorelich. That ranking may turn out to have no relation to their individual worldly successes, but politics, glamour, and atmosphere don't count in this particular competition.

—James Goodfriend


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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
Performance: Sane and satisfying
Recording: Exceptional
Kristin Merscher was only nineteen when she made this recording in November 1980, but no allowance need be made for her youth. According to the liner notes, she has been winning major competitions since she was eleven, she made her orchestral debut with conductor Christoph von Dohnányi at fifteen, and she has been a pupil of György Sebök in both Europe and Indiana. In any case, her Schumann is simply marvelous. It is not "sensational!"; what is most impressive about this performance is its solidity. These are sane, extremely well-balanced readings in which Florestan and Eusebius are given their respective due—impetuosity and poetry both allotted with sure Schumannesque instinct—and the listener's pleasure can only deepen with repeated exposures. Of Merscher's technical security there can be no question at all, and the reproduction of the instrument is extremely lifelike. My only complaint is about the layout: Carnival, whose thirty minutes could have fit comfortably on a single side, is interrupted for turnover. But this is too enjoyable a release to be passed by.
K.F.

VERDI: Arias (see Collections—Bernd Weikl)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
VIVALDI: Il Pastor Fido. Hansjörg Schel- lenger (oboe); Edgar Krapp (harpsichord); David Geringas (cello); Klaus Stoll (double bass). EURODISC 0 203 388-425 $11.98.
Performance: Delightful
Recording: Good
In a perfect blending of court and country, the six oboe sonatas that make up Vivaldi's Il Pastor Fido offer graceful melodies and contagious dance rhythms. Hansjörg Schellenger has caught the elegance of this music through supple playing and a charming sense of ornamentation. The continuo support is strong, and the judicious use of double-bass suggests a concerto-like texture that enhances the sonorities. This Vivaldi is quite different from the familiar Vivaldi of the concertos. Prepare for sheer delight as you put the stylus on this record.
S.L.

WAGNER: Arias (see Collections—Bernd Weikl)

COLLECTIONS

Performance: Moving
Recording: Excellent
You might want to buy this record solely on account of its repertoire, some of which you probably won't find on any other disc. But you'll get a far greater deal out of it if you see that it has a point to make and provides the sound to do it. The point is, in the words of Michael Dittrich—who wrote the notes, made some of the transcriptions (for flute, string quartet, and guitar), leads the ensemble, and plays first violin: "This music which is, in many ways, so positive and life-affirming, nevertheless contains an element of morbidity with which the generally ailing condition of the times had infected it. It swings between melancholy and self-forgetfulness, charm and the knowledge of bitterness. Its poetry is always close to tears." No doubt about it. Ali Wieg was in many ways a police state in which people danced because dancing was almost the only safe thing to do. The music was an escape from the harshness of life but incorporated in itself something of what it was escaping from.
This "element of morbidity" is somehow very clear in these performances by a small ensemble (in which the strings go light on the vibrato), far more so than in performances of symphonic proportions, fine though

(Continued on page 129)
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Art Songs by Black Americans

William Grant Still

Art Songs by Black American Composers. Adams: For You There Is No Song. Work: Dancing in the Sun; Soliloquy. Baker: A Good Assassination Should Be Quiet; Early in the Mornin'; Status Symbol. Price: Night. Hailstork: A Charm of David Baker, born in Indianapolis, 1931. The youngest composer represented is Charles Lloyd, born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1948, while the most famous are Hughes, Dunbar, Mari Evans, Countee Cullen, and Claude McKay are well represented. Many of them were inspired by the successes of England's black composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor but gained little recognition for their own songs. A new two-disc set from the University of Michigan, "Art Songs by Black American Composers," is an ambitious attempt to bring some of this music to public attention.

The styles of the songs range from the conservative settings of Florence B. Price, born in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1888, to the jazzy and sassy rhythm-and-blues approach of David Baker, born in Indianapolis in 1931. The youngest composer represented is Charles Lloyd, born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1948, while the most famous are William Grant Still—whose Grief, with words by Leroy V. Brant, is indeed distinguished—and Howard Swanson, whose settings of Langston Hughes' The Negro Speaks of Rivers, Paul Laurence Dunbar's A Death Song, and May Swenson's I Will Lie Down in Autumn are especially moving. Not all the texts are by black poets. Hughes, Dunbar, Mari Evans, Countee Cullen, and Claude McKay are well represented, of course, but there are also, besides the Swenson, fine settings of verses by Edna St. Vincent Millay, Elinor Wylie, John Fletcher, Robert Herrick, Robert Burns, and even Sappho, whose Love, Let the Winds Cry How I Adore Thee has been arrestingly set by Undine Smith Moore.

Most of the accompaniments are on the piano, but Olly Wilson's Wry Fragments, with words by James Cunningham, gets backing by a lively percussion ensemble as well. Some professional singers are involved in this set, but the students from the university's voice department perform admirably, as do the pianists. No texts are provided—a shocking omission—but the Anthology of Art Songs by Black Composers (published by E. B. Marks Music, 1790 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019) contains practically every song performed here. The recorded sound is quite satisfactory. I hope this conscientious program will help build a wider audience for the contributions by black composers to the development of the art song in America.

—Paul Kreeth

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ART SONGS BY BLACK AMERICAN COMPOSERS. Adams: For You There Is No Song. Work: Dancing in the Sun; Soliloquy. Baker: A Good Assassination Should Be Quiet; Early in the Mornin'; Status Symbol. Price: Night. Hailstork: A Charm of David Baker, born in Indianapolis, 1931. The youngest composer represented is Charles Lloyd, born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1948, while the most famous are William Grant Still—whose Grief, with words by Leroy V. Brant, is indeed distinguished—and Howard Swanson, whose settings of Langston Hughes' The Negro Speaks of Rivers, Paul Laurence Dunbar's A Death Song, and May Swenson's I Will Lie Down in Autumn are especially moving. Not all the texts are by black poets. Hughes, Dunbar, Mari Evans, Countee Cullen, and Claude McKay are well represented, of course, but there are also, besides the Swenson, fine settings of verses by Edna St. Vincent Millay, Elinor Wylie, John Fletcher, Robert Herrick, Robert Burns, and even Sappho, whose Love, Let the Winds Cry How I Adore Thee has been arrestingly set by Undine Smith Moore.

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