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Paul Ulanowsky is probably the finest of the accompanists heard regularly with singers in New York's Town Hall during the season, and for fourteen years he toured with Lotte Lehmann. His accompaniments here should prove of inestimable value to students of singing, since his own superlative phrasing and timing can force them when they sing with this record into some musicianly phrasing on *their* part. The budding accompanist should profit from hearing the unencumbered piano parts and — from trying to sing the songs with Mr. Ulanowsky — should learn where and how singers are dependent on what the accompanist does. The songs are played in the original keys — which is almost always in the soprano register. Fair sound, with the piano tone not the roundest. It will do under the circumstances. R. E.

## MUSIC ON TAPE

by C. G. Burke

### BEETHOVEN

*Sonatas for Piano: No. 8, in C Minor, "Pabétique," Op. 13; No. 14, in C-sharp minor, "Moonlight," Op. 27, No. 2*

Bernard Vitebsky.

OMEGATAPE 6010. 5-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks. \$6.45.

It is not possible for a critic to feel enthusiasm for new manifestations of this music, of which there is already an aggregate of thirty recordings. These are standard performances, and the piano issues a sound of good realism a little light in the bass, probably a faithful reflection of the performing left hand.

### BEETHOVEN

*Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67*

Tonhalle Orchestra, Zurich, Otto Ackermann, cond.

MUSIKON 604. 7-in. 7½ ips. 1 track. \$10.

The confidence which promoted an issuance of the Fifth Symphony on tape, braving comparison with nineteen discal editions including one binaural and several orchestraly imposing, a confidence not without an upstart's effrontery, proclaims its justification in the opening minutes of reproduction. In downright sonic effectiveness this tape is excelled only by the Cook binaural record of a performance less convincing than most. Fundamentally what impresses on the tape is its strong, pervasive, clean and natural bass, which carries life with it. The rest is good but not remarkable. There is a little too much length of reverberation, and the interpretation, although not to be despised, is on the stocky side and not illuminating. A brave and successful demonstration of 7.5-ips effectiveness in standard music.

### GRIEG

*Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16*

Grant Johannesen; Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond. MUSIKON 601. 7-in. 7½ ips. 1 track. \$10.

An estimable product from all points of view, especially vivid in the playing and sound of the piano. The pianist transmits a spirit of good-humored entertainment in his display passages, which are brilliant enough but not serious. Since this is an imaginative and valuable concerto although it needs a rest, novelty of a tasteful sort is welcome. The long lyricism of the *adagio* is treated with respect, and the coordination of piano and orchestra is notable in both shape and balance. Registration of the piano treble has been accomplished with a clean clarity still very rare in recordings.

### HAYDN

*Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in C; Poco Adagio Cantabile from the "Emperor" Quartet, Op. 76, No. 3*

†Bach: *Suite No. 3, in D*

†Corelli: *Suite for Strings*

Hamburg Philharmonia Orchestra, Hans Juergen-Walther, cond. (with Sandra Bianca in the Concerto).

AV 1029-E. 7-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks. \$10.95.

The very early Haydn, winsome but frail, is a first recording, and we shall all regret that it was not entrusted to hands less dutifully devoted to tidiness. This virtue seems to take exclusive precedence in the work of the conductor here, and the pianist has been infected by his promotion of it. The other extensive work, the lively suite by Bach, is equally deficient in variety, élan and a sense of sport. The Corelli, best



Otto Ackermann: best Beethoven on tape?

played of the music on this crowded tape, is a synthetic collection occasionally heard in public concert, and a pleasant amalgam of dignity and spoofing. Facile reproduction and agreeable, although not notable in articulation.

### KODALY

*Summer Evening*

†Prokofiev: *A Summer Day, Op. 65b*

Concert Artist Orchestra of London, Mervyn Vicars, cond.

OMEGATAPE 7005. 5-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks. \$6.95.

The placement of the orchestra and a slighted reverberation give a chamber music quality to these timely evocations of mood in season. Both pieces — which comprise an unusually appropriate coupling, for tape or disk — are played with unforced sympathy contained by a restraint in accordance with the benignity of a holiday summer. With interpretations so conceived, the sound, allowing crispness and scope to the woodwinds and keeping the smooth strings in subordination, cannot be faulted. — The Prokofiev Suite, composed for piano, has its first orchestral recording here.

### MENDELSSOHN

*A Midsummer Night's Dream: 4 excerpts*  
†Tchaikovsky: *Nutcracker Suite No. 1; Sleeping Beauty: Waltz*

Hamburg Philharmonia Orchestra, Hans Juergen-Walther, cond.

AV 1032-E. 7-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks. \$10.95.

AV 1032-F. 5-in. 3¾ ips. 2 tracks. \$8.95.

The Overture, Scherzo, Nocturne, and Wedding March from the MSND, gentlemanly to surfeit. The favorite composer of Victoria R1 needs a conductor to dishevel him. The Tchaikovsky too is content in a tranquillity which may not content us. The regularity of balanced play, commendable in itself, could be welcomed in other music. — The sound is excellent in the cool way which is really the way of the conductor, with the brass precise but subdued, the strings smooth and the wood lively, all in balance.

With some diminution of treble brightness and bass articulation, the 3¾ version is nevertheless surprisingly good. It is above all easy and euphonious, the faster tape heard at a greater distance, and the difference not to be exposed except by first-class apparatus.

### SCHUBERT

*Quartet No. 10, in E-flat, Op. 125, No. 1*

†Haydn: *Quartet No. 18, in F, Op. 3, No. 5*

†Mendelssohn: *Octet in E-flat, Op. 20; Quintet in B-flat, Op. 87 — Andante Scherzando only*

Fine Arts Quartet (augmented for the Octet and Quintet).

WEBCOR 2923-5. 7-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks.

String quartets on tape are easier in reproduction than on disks. The violins are orderly, and there is no sense of strain. The acoustics of the place used for recording generally determine the quality of registration on tape, when small groups of players are used. The environment here is sonically close to neutrality and the results are excellent. So is the playing of the Schubert, to which the musicians have devoted delineative care not apparent in their bare treatment of the Haydn. The Octet, not deficient in energy or skill, nevertheless disappoints vaguely in a delivery that never seems pointed to a culmination. (Here it is admitted that the Toscanini performance, still vivid in mind, has been prejudicial to this new tape or any other performance.)