

Till on the simultaneously released LP, LM 2077) fares better in the present romantic, if somewhat lethargic, approach, and here too the limpity of the stereo recording itself is far more impressive. Yet, returning to the earlier, coarser Concert Hall stereo tape by Neumark, I found that despite the obvious inferiority of the Utrecht Orchestra it still sounds more persuasively dramatic. Accordingly, the present Reiner-Viennese tape is recommended only to those who have no objections to a relaxed reading and who do insist on more aurally appealing tonal qualities.

## REEL MUSIC NOTES

OMEGATAPE apparently has profited by criticism of annoying features in samplers, for its latest, *Stereo Holiday*, forestalls all the usual objections: there are no vocal announcements or blurbs; the selections are complete pieces or movements (several of them, like the opening sections of Kálmán's *Gypsy Princess*, fairly lengthy) and no less than twelve of them are included in a brimful, twenty-five-minute, large-hub reel. Best of all, there are no violent style incompatibilities, although plenty of variety, in this all light-music program representing some nine current releases (• • STD 10, 7-in., \$5.95). In a big box of other new Omegetapes just received, the first I pounced on were two of the long-anticipated stereo reels by that zitherist extraor-

dinary. "Third Man" Anton Karas, who must come close to exhausting even his enormous repertory of Viennese tunes in two full volumes of *Operetta Favorites*. His deft playing may be somewhat over-amplified here and the accordion-and-bass accompaniments a bit plodding, but for anyone who longs for a ringside seat at a whole evening of Prater café entertainment these tapes serve as magic carpets to the irresistible stereo illusion of that reality. (• • ST 2004 and 2008, 7-in., \$12.95 each)

PHONOTAPES-SONORE: Not all the some ten leading tunes from the Lerner-Loewe "classic" are equally well suited to instrumental-only dress—or even to George Feyer's arrangements, but his *Echoes of My Fair Lady* has some of this inimitable pianist's purest enchantments and even in its less distinctive moments it is an addition to the "Echoes" series that no Feyerman (and I'm running for president of the fan club) would dream of missing. (PM 5015, 5-in., \$6.95)

SONOTAPE: Despite its clean, assured performances and immaculately pure, natural recording, I hesitate to commend *The Piano of Badura Skoda in Stereo* (presumably the same program as that of the recent *Encores LP*, Westminster 18281) to a wider audience than that of the young pianist's inner-circle devotees. That is, anyway, as far as the war-horse materials

(Rachmaninoff's C sharp minor Prelude, Ravel's *Jeux d'eau*, and three Chopin favorites) are concerned, since these demand more drama and éclat than they receive here. I can recommend warmly, however, his final *Invitation to the Dance* (done for once without trimmings, just as Weber wrote it) and the novel—to me—Schulhof arrangement of the *Fledermaus* polka, for here his lightweight treatment is ideally suitable and for all its restraint reveals—thanks in part to stereo's transparency—much more of the player's own engaging personality. (• • SWB 8017, 7-in., \$11.95)

WFB: Happily, stereo recorders have been prompter than either 78-rpm or LP producers were to realize the wealth of parochial musical organizations in the United States and to capitalize on the often more than local appeal of the on-the-spot recordings. The Allentown (Pennsylvania) Band, for example, scarcely is to be ranked among the world's greatest, but it's a good one—as well as America's oldest, dating from 1828—and under the direction of Albertus Meyers it plays with obvious enthusiasm in a vigorously recorded *Quick-Step* program including such novelties (to a nonbandspecialist's ears) as Morris' *The Kilties*, Sousa's seldom heard *Occidental March*, Marchetto's *333rd Engineers' March*, and Brooke's arrangement of Gilmore's once-famous *Triumphal March*. (• • 1205 S2, 7-in., \$9.98; originally included in the *March Potpourri LP*, L 1205)

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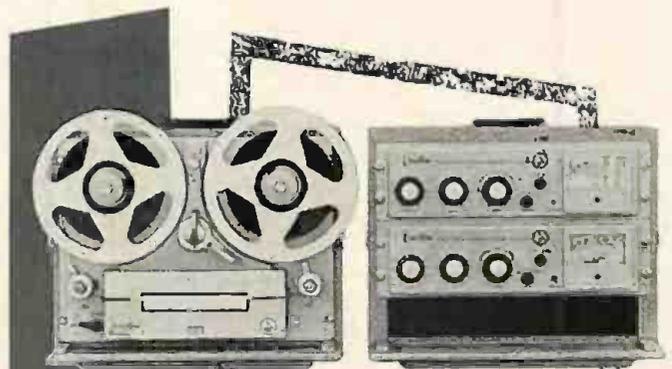
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