

chestra: "Fiesta in Hi-Fi." Mercury MAS 5-28, 24 min., \$9.95.

A slightly abbreviated taping of the sensationally recorded American showpiece program by Howard Hanson, in which McBride's *Mexican Rhapsody* and the "Shivaree" only from Mitchell's *Kentucky Mountain Portraits* are little more, if certainly no less, impressive than in the LP versions (MG 50134), but where the Respighian climax of Ron Nelson's high-powered *Swanee River Holiday* does succeed in demonstrating the transcendent powers of stereo.

• • Fletcher Henderson All Stars: "The Big Reunion, Part 1." Concert Hall DX 71, 12 min., \$6.95.

The late great Fletcher's own big band arrangement is used in *King Porter Stomp*, with many of his sidemen led by Rex Stewart displaying their old youthful fire and drive in pronounced and dramatically effective stereoisim. The only other selection taped here from the longer program on the Jazztone LP, J 1285, is the *Cassey Stew* improvisation, sparked by guitarist Al Casey, and featuring an exuberant solo (among many others) by Coleman Hawkins.

• • "Inside Polka." Stereotape ST 12, 29 min., \$11.95.

The ensemble heard here is obviously small but no less obviously skillful—one which whizzes and clatters its way with immense gusto through a long twelve-item program topped by the particularly catchy *Petite Polka Parisienne*, *Paganini*, and *Bell* polkas. Lots of fun, mercifully not too much accordion, and very glittering dry recording.

• • "Jazz Erotica." HiFiTape R 604, 42 min., \$12.95.

Don't let the title and cover-pinup fool you: the long ten-item program led here by saxophonist Rielue Kamuca is much too cool and vivacious for smoochers. Except for a couple of slower pieces, the reel brims with nervous vitality, most zestfully of all in *Angel Eyes*, *Linger Awhile*, *Indiana*, and *Way Down Under*. At their best the imaginative arrangements capitalize deftly on the interplays possible between the two well-differentiated recording channels.

• • Elsa Lancheater: "Songs for a Smoke-Filled Room." HiFiTape R 405, 42 min., \$12.95.

As Charles Laughton concedes, in his amusing (and admirably pointed) commentary, his wife is a *chanteuse* rather than singer, but no devotee of the incomparable Elsa will want to miss the disarming *divertissements* and all-but-visible mugging here. Most of the materials are pretty thin stuff apart from their mildly risqué implications; but the tragic ballads, *The Ratcatcher's Daughter* and *Please Sell No More Drink to My Father*, are in themselves well worth the price of admission.

• • Liszt: *Les Préludes*. Westminster-Sonotape SWB 7037, 15 min., \$6.95.

Wearing the Vienna State Opera Orchestra colors and with Scherchen up, this war horse runs a typical Silky Sullivan race: deliberately curbed into slow motion at the start; and in the backstretch, masterfully spurred to a driving finish. A masterpiece of technical handling, but unhappily there's no payoff.

• • Jay Norman: "88 x 2." Concertapes 511, 5-in., 16 min., \$7.95.

Gleamingly recorded, briskly straightforward playing, genuine expressiveness without sentimentality (even in *Over the Rainbow* and *All the Things You Are*), and above all toe-tickling lilt in *Vienna*, *City of My Dreams*. Hardly true stereo, there are some effective channel-responsive passages here and enough blending to avoid excessive separation.

• • "Swing for Dancing in Stereo." Omegatape ST 53, 19 min., \$8.95.

Five standards by Hans Hagen's Hollywood Radio City Orchestra, brightly and boldly played in Warren Baker's rather mannered arrangements, but notable even in these days for the clarity, authenticity, and brilliance of the stereo recording.

• • Fred Waring. "All Through the Night." Capitol ZC 44, 34 min., \$11.95.

Stereo supplies the out-of-doors acoustics and the Pennsylvanians supply the old-time summer sentiment; the nostalgic listener need supply only his own horsehair sofa or hammock. The treatment of the old and new favorites (from *Greensleeves* and *Tennessee Waltz* to *Autumn Leaves*) is strictly glæ-ehh schmaltz, but of the purest grade, except for a lamentable attempt to "jazz up" *Comin' Through the Rye*; and the ingratiating recording is marred only by the excessively close miking of the soloists.

• • George Wettling: "Windy City Seven." Stere-o-Craft TN 107, 24 min., \$10.95.

Drummer Wettling is a well-known veteran, but I had never credited him before with such sensitive feeling and imaginative tonal coloring as he elicits here in performances of seven mostly jazz standards which at their best (as in *Four or Five Times*, *Moritat*, and *I Found a New Baby*) happily reconcile oldtime heat and rambunctiousness with modern resilience and grace. The recording too is an admirable compromise between the extremes of stereo-channel blending and differentiation.

• • Griff Williams: "We Could Have Danced All Night." Mercury MVS 2-24, 18 min., \$7.95.

If I could dance at all, I certainly would to Griff Williams' orchestra, which commands the rare secrets of achieving orthodoxy without corniness, romanticism without sentimentality, and lilt without rhythmic vehemence. This is all straight ballroom fare, but endowed with genuine distinction both by its tastefulness and the beautifully warm and spacious stereo recording. R.D.D.



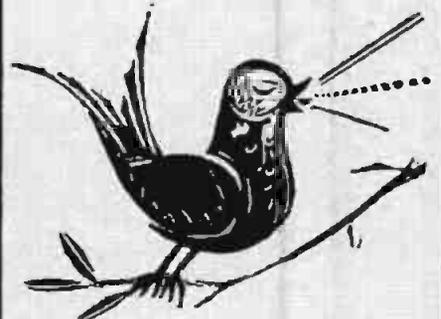
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