

ics, a wide-spread curtain of exceptionally brilliant and untarnished sound, and remarkably alert musicianship as well.

- • Mitch Miller: "Sing Along with Mitch." Columbia CS 8004. \$5.98.

Mitch and his gang vocalize twelve songs in sing-along fashion (*You Are My Sunshine*, *Don't Fence Me In*) with very little but harmonica accompaniment. This is wonderfully balanced stereo, spreading the choristers in even perspective across the speakers; but the sound in both channels shows too many traces of unnecessary high-frequency doctoring, which becomes painful after the initial glory has worn off.

- • Ken Moule: "Jazz at Toad Hall." London PS 108. \$4.98.

Only a Briton would have the quaint notion of basing a jazz suite on Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows*; and only one as hip as Moule would be capable of writing pieces as idiomatic as the four on the "A" side here, at least one of which, *Mouse Carol*, also demonstrates a lyric imagination by no means unworthy of its subject. The five British dance pieces on the other side are more conventional for all their verve, but the stereo recording is notably fine throughout.

- • Lloyd Munn: "Champagne Music." Omega OSL 1. \$6.95.

Omega here enters the disc field in style, but the de luxe boxed format is a good deal more attractive in itself than for the Starlight Roof Orchestra's pedestrian performances, featuring too much and too coarse accordion playing, and recorded with exaggerated channel differentiation and overclose miking.

- • "Music for Heavenly Bodies." Omega OSL 4. \$6.95.

Here is an out-of-this-world program of Warren Baker arrangements and André Montero Orchestra performances featuring the eerie, side-slipping tones and *vox humana* (or "musical saw") warbles of Paul Tanner's slide-operated Electro-Theremin. Most of the twelve pieces are ultrasentimental, but the lilting *Up to Jupiter* and atmospheric *Holiday on Saturn* must impress even Thereminphobes as piquantly effective. Markedly differentiated but well-blended stereoism.

- • Offenbach: *Gaité Parisienne*. RCA Victor LSC 1817. \$5.98.

The long-familiar Fiedler-Boston Pops Orchestra best-seller with all the sizzling brilliance and vehement dynamic impact, if hardly the warmth, of the stereo taping. Even if the stereoism is slightly diluted here, it is notably successful in expunging the unpleasant top-heaviness and excessive bite of the monophonic version.

- • Percussive Art Ensemble: "Re-Percussion." Concert-Disc CS 21. \$6.95.

Originally intended as stereo material, this disc falls by its monophonic form

only incidentally. Transparent though the single-channel recording of Richard Schory's group was, the stereo disc opens the aural curtain even wider, spreading this collection of more than a hundred different percussion instruments in a wide expanse of smashing cymbals, echoing drums, and vibrating wood blocks.

- • Nelson Riddle and his Orchestra: "Sea of Dreams." Capitol ST 915. \$3.95.

Nelson Riddle's velvety mood music is less dramatic in stereo than more grandiose arrangements of the same tunes, but stereo treatment does add an edge-polishing mellowness. Monophonically, this would be background music; stereophonically, it's not quite so easily subjugated. Riddle's full-stringed arrangement of *Dream* is other worldly, and *September Song* hypnotically soothing. The remaining ten, all designed for tranquil listening, are delightfully serene and relaxing.

- • Rimsky-Korsakov: *May Night*: Overture; *Easter Overture*; *Tsar Saltan*: Suite. London CS 6012. \$5.98.

These three popular short works played by the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra under Ansermet emerge vigorous and lively in superlative London stereo notable for glistening string tone and widely accented hall acoustics. Surface noise, though not altogether absent, is substantially lacking, and London's engineers have commendably done away with much of the inner-band distortion so maddening to sound purists.

- • Rossini-Respighi: *La Boutique fantasque* (with Dukas: *L'Apprenti sorcier*). London CS 6005. \$5.98.

This is a sparkling and exuberant performance (originally on London LL 1715), which the new FFSS techniques further enhance with the vibrantly lovely stereoism. The familiar Dukas scherzo is done equally well, but that is sheer lagniappe in a disc otherwise cherishable for its musical buoyancy, executant virtuosity, and superb engineering—and not least remarkable for its freedom from distortion even in the innermost grooves of the exceptionally long sides of some 25 minutes each.

- • Jimmy Rushing: "If This Ain't the Blues." Vanguard VSD 2008. \$5.95.

Jimmy's blues shouting may be less unrestrained here than in his great Basie performances and Marlowe Morris' discreet playing can't persuade us that an electronic organ belongs among the otherwise rowdy accompanists; but the Rushing voice and style still are inimitable in these skillful disc editions of *I Can't Understand, Oh, Love*, and six other pieces previously issued on tape as VRT 3005 and 3008. Why, though, are the channels now reversed? There's no loss in effectiveness, but once having "placed" the soloist well left, it seems very odd to hear him shifted over well to the right.

- • Stevens: "Destination Moon." Omega OSL 3. \$6.95.

Leith Stevens' score from the 1950 George



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