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Pal movie dramatized that no-longer-in-  
believable event, a rocket trip to the  
moon. And, of course, back. The mu-  
sic, played here by Heinz Sandauer and  
the Omega Orchestra, has a weird fasci-  
nation heightened by the aural captivity  
of stereo. Hair-raising sonics (a floor-  
shaking blast-off, to name but one of  
many) convey with genuine drama Stev-  
ens' impression of weightlessness, the void  
of space, the ruggedness of the moon, and  
near misses by meteors.

• • Strauss, Johann and Josef. Waltzes.  
London PS 118. \$4.98.

Apparently a remake of Mantovani's 1953  
best-selling LP, LL 685, which undoubt-  
edly will be even more of a hit with the  
mass public despite the touches of shrill-  
ness in the otherwise competent stereo  
recording, the brutal condensations, the  
whipped-cream decorations, and what  
well may be an all-time low in jerkily  
vehement misconception of Viennese  
rhythms.

• • Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6, in  
B minor, Op. 74, (*Pathétique*). RCA  
Victor LSC 1901. \$5.98.

This performance by Monteux and the  
Boston Symphony, already well known in  
both monophonic LP and stereo tape,  
comes very close indeed to matching the  
taping, one I still relish above any other  
available version, despite—or because of  
—Monteux's highly individual approach  
and the occasional preponderance of  
winds and percussion. We're forced to  
say, however, that our listening pleasure  
was considerably reduced by the scratchi-  
ness of the review copy.

## TAPES

• • BARBER: *Adagio for Strings, Op.  
11*  
†Elgar: *Introduction and Allegro for  
Strings, Op. 47*

Strings of the Boston Symphony Orches-  
tra, Charles Munch, cond.  
RCA Victor BCS 139. 22 min. \$8.95

If the suave songfulness of Barber's  
*Adagio* is beginning to pall, its music still  
will serve as fuel for endless disputes over  
the relative merits of Bostonian, Phila-  
delphian, and Stokowskian string choirs.  
To my ears Munch's performance—al-  
though somewhat less broad than Or-  
mandy's (Columbia), less intense than  
Stokowski's (Capitol), and occasionally a  
shade overlong—boasts the loveliest  
sonorities of them all; yet it would be  
difficult to argue the point on other  
than grounds of personal aural tastes.  
The strength and vivacity, as well as the  
richness, of the Boston strings are even  
more impressively displayed in Elgar's  
*Introduction and Allegro*, sonically so sat-  
isfactory here that only an experienced  
Elgarian is likely to realize (or object if  
he does) that the distinctive savor of the  
composer's personal and national idiom  
is missing. R.D.D.

• • BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano:  
No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2*  
(*"Moonlight"*); *No. 8, in C minor, Op.  
13 ("Pathétique")*

Raymond Lewenthal, piano.  
WESTMINSTER SWB 8002. 31 min.  
\$11.95.

Solo piano is not generally thought to  
gain a lot from stereo, but direct com-  
parison between the stereo edition and  
the monophonic recording played through  
dual speakers reveals the fullness and  
enhanced presence of the two-track ver-  
sion. This tape will probably sound best  
on systems where the two speakers are  
reasonably close together; where they are  
set several feet apart, there is a beefed  
up sound that suggests a piano and a  
half.

Lewenthal appears at times to think  
of technique rather than niceties of nu-  
ance and phrasing. But, if somewhat  
rough-hewn, the playing has a firm, di-  
rect quality in stereo, and moments of  
sensitivity. R.C.M.

• • BRAHMS: *Variations on a theme of  
Haydn, Op. 56a*

London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Do-  
rati, cond.  
MERCURY MVS 5-25. 18 min. \$7.95.

For those building up a tape library of  
basic symphonic works, this is an excel-  
lent buy. The stereo effects are impres-  
sive and devoid of tricks, the orchestral  
sound is very lifelike, and the perform-  
ance a good one, marked by a clean and  
shining ensemble and a firm, propulsive  
beat. R.C.M.

• • CHAUSSON: *Symphony in B flat,  
Op. 20*

Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray,  
cond.  
MERCURY MDS 5-26. 31 min. \$12.95.

Paul Paray, who is particularly well at-  
tuned to late romantic and modern  
French music, paints this glowing sym-  
phony with bold, vibrant tonal strokes,  
combining drama and nobility in a most  
praiseworthy interpretation; and two-  
channel tape is better able to accommo-  
date these big sounds than was the still  
admirable disc (Mercury MG 50108).  
Here the strings sing with new depth and  
resonance; brasses are somewhat less  
raspy, though not ideally mellow; and the  
big climaxes, of which there are several,  
are always clear without ever overload-  
ing the equipment. If Mercury could sup-  
press the tape hiss on this and many of its  
other releases, its considerable contribu-  
tion to the art and science of stereophony  
would be even more valuable. P.A.

• • ELGAR: *Introduction and Allegro  
for Strings, Op. 47*—See Barber: *Ada-  
gio for Strings, Op. 11*.

• • HERMANN SCHERCHEN: *Over-  
tures*

Auber: *Fra Diavolo*. Weber: *Der Frei-  
schütz*. Rossini: *Guillaume Tell*.