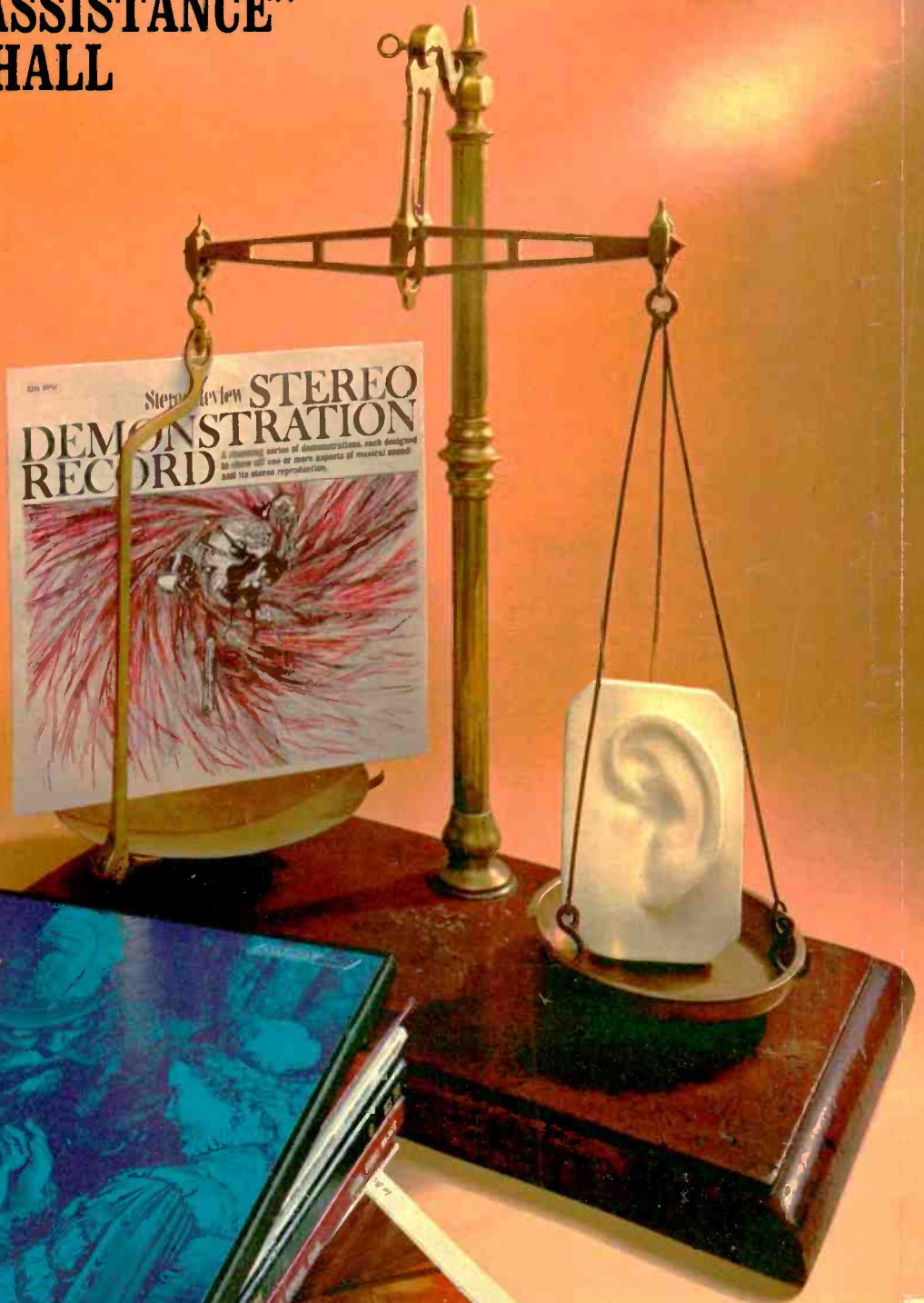


FORMERLY HI FI/STEREO REVIEW

Stereo Review

APRIL 1969 • 60 CENTS

**EXPERTS' CHOICE: STEREO DEMONSTRATION RECORDS
AMERICAN AVANT-GARDE COMPOSER MILTON BABBITT
ELECTRONIC "ASSISTANCE"
FOR CONCERT-HALL
ACOUSTICS**



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342C Control Features:

Dual Bass and Treble controls; Stereo balance control; Input selector; Tape monitor; Speakers #1 On/off; Speakers #2 On/off; Power On/off; Volume compensation; Muting; noise filter; Perfectune[®] automatic tuning indicator; Stereo indicator light; Precision signal strength meter; Front panel stereo headphone output; Volume control; Stereo/mono mode switch.

342C Specifications:

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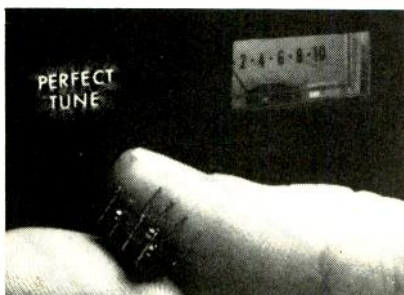
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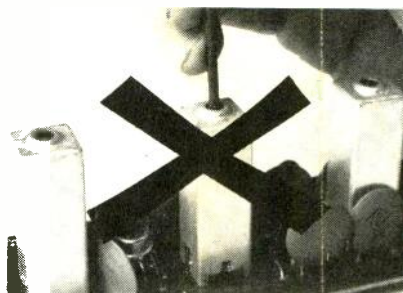
In the
rest of
this magazine,
you'll read about
yesterday's
receivers.....

six remarkable technical developments make the new 100 watt Scott 342C the world's most advanced receiver.

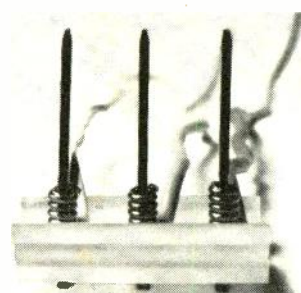
Scott once again demonstrates its famed leadership and innovation in high fidelity. Scott's new 342C incorporates a host of sophisticated solid-state devices and techniques, generated by the latest computer, aerospace, and communications theory. This is the next generation in electronics for the home . . . setting new performance standards for the high fidelity industry.



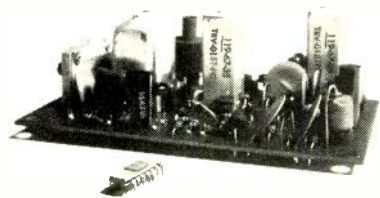
An automatic light that tells you when you're perfectly tuned: Perfectune™, Scott's new automatic tuning indicator, is actually a miniature computer . . . and is the world's most accurate and reliable tuning device. Perfectune is more accurate than a meter; it instantly senses the FM signal and tells you when you're tuned for lowest distortion and best reception. A signal strength meter is also included for orienting your antenna for best reception.



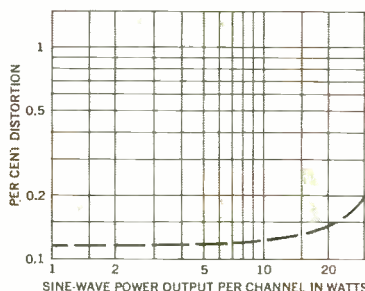
A quartz filter IF section that never needs realignment: Scott's quartz crystal lattice filter, a feature never before found in a receiver in this price range, ends IF realignment worries. Now, regardless of age or operating temperature, the tuner IF section of your receiver will never require realignment or adjustment. In addition, this costly feature gives you the extra dividends of very low distortion and incredible selectivity!



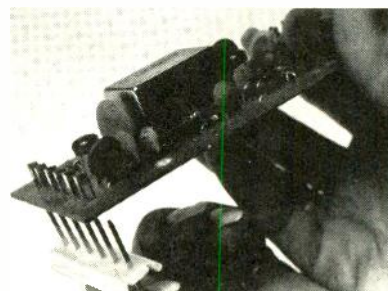
"Wire-Wrap" . . . a permanent connection technique that eliminates solder joints: For the first time in the high fidelity industry, here is a successor to the solder joint, for years the most failure-prone area of electronics assembly. The wire-wrap technique permanently bonds the electrical conductor to its terminal, and has been reliability-proven in the most stringent military and aerospace communications applications.



New IC multiplex section gives better reliability and performance in FM stereo: Scott introduces the world's first complete high fidelity multiplex section with an integrated circuit. No larger overall than a cigarette filter, this integrated circuit incorporates 40 transistors and 27 resistors. Scott's new IC multiplex is far more reliable and gives much better stereo separation than conventional printed circuit construction.

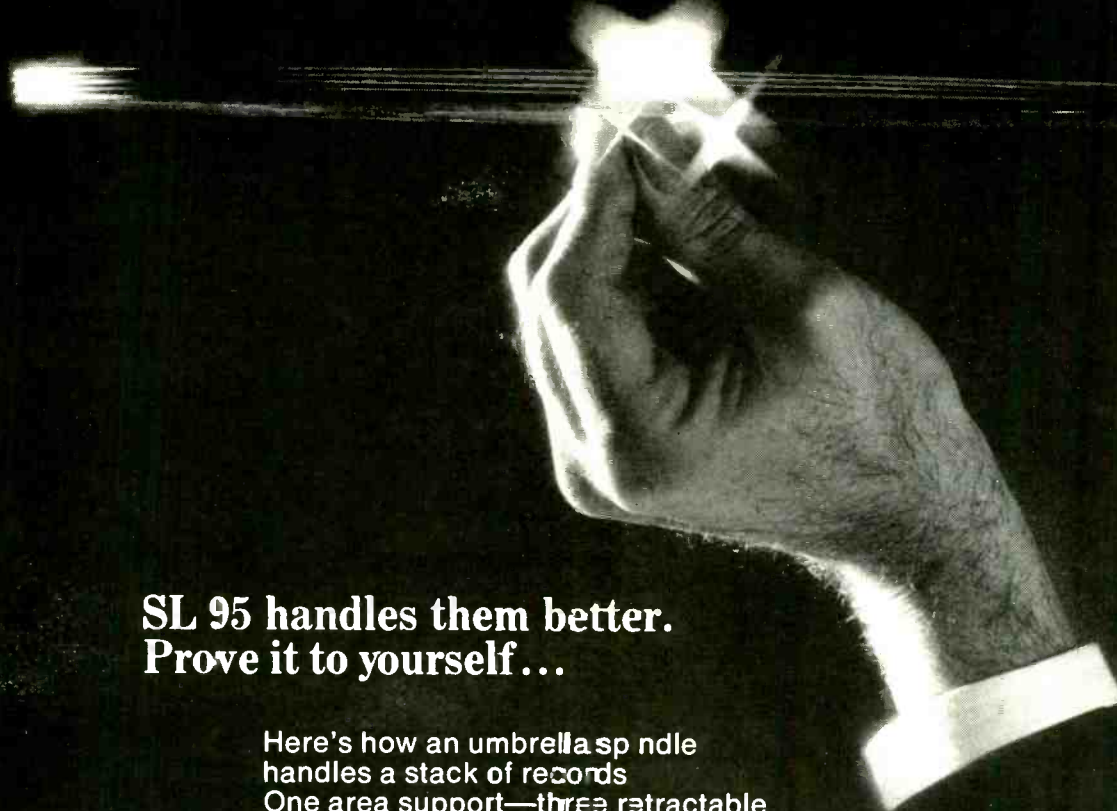


New F/C/O circuitry gives virtually distortion-free listening, even at low volume levels: Scott's new 342C incorporates Full Complementary Output, so no matter how low you adjust the volume, you still get perfect undistorted sound. And, Full Complementary Output means that maximum undistorted power is available at both 8 Ohms and 4 Ohms . . . vital when you want to connect extra speakers.



Printed circuit modules snap into main chassis: From the fast-paced world of computer electronics comes the concept of the plug-in complete circuit boards. Now, servicing, if ever necessary, can be accomplished quickly, reliably, and inexpensively. Troublesome solder connections between circuit boards are now eliminated.

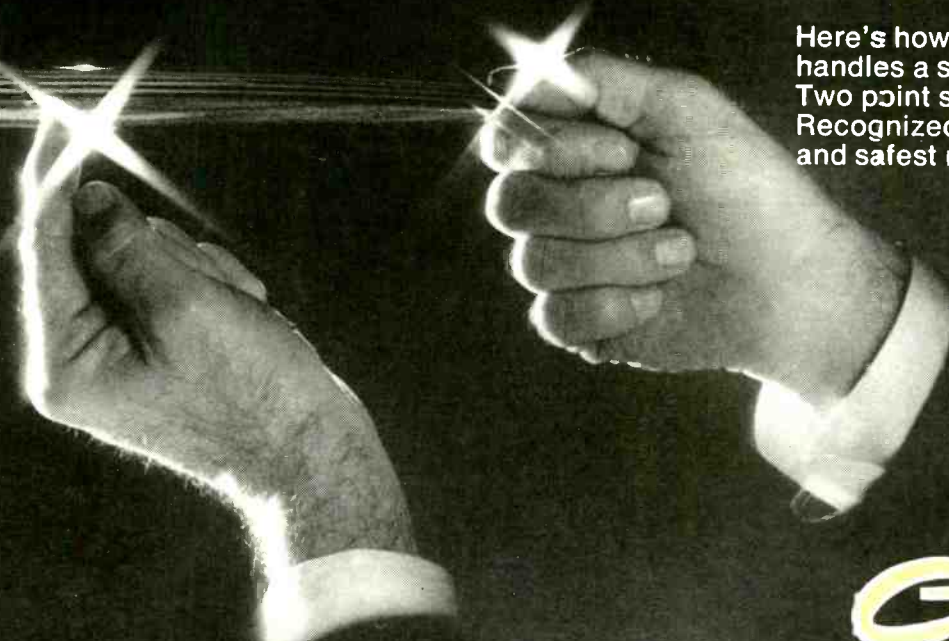
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Stereo Review

APRIL 1969 • VOLUME 22 • NUMBER 4

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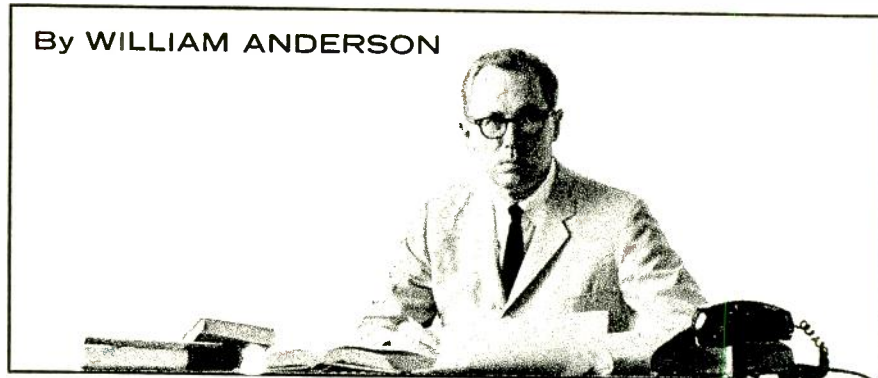
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By WILLIAM ANDERSON



EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

RECORD MARKETING

SANTA CLAUS doesn't read his mail; he gives it to the *New York Times* to print every Christmas. God doesn't read His either; He gives it to Art Linkletter to make books out of, or to Gene Kelly to read on TV. We read all of ours, however—we print some, answer a lot, and make waves with the rest. Last week's mail brought umpteen letters complaining about some aspect or other of the recording industry, a good part of them having ultimately to do with distribution, a problem that record companies are as aware of as any frustrated consumer.

Those of us on the shady side of forty run the risk of losing our younger audience whenever we try to tell it like it was, but I'll chance it: record buying a short quarter of a century ago *was* simpler, more pleasant, more efficient. It was the heyday of the Friendly Local Record Shop, usually run by a passionate music lover, staffed with helpful clerks who were walking and talking encyclopedias of record lore, and offering limitless browsing and listening facilities. This graceful Adagio came to an end, however, when the conductor of life's symphony launched into today's Presto Agitato. The recording industry opened the floodgates, and what was once akin to an art object became simply "product." Listening privileges were the first to go (uneconomic of time and space) and the helpful clerks followed. Discount houses and record supermarkets geared, like the industry itself, to mass production quickly ran the Friendly Locals into the ground; records by mail finally buried them.

Though these developments may have grown quite naturally out of economic forces, they seem not to have had a large component of planning in them; the result is that the industry has its mass market, but it also has a great deal of customer dissatisfaction and lost sales to go with it. What the consumer asks for is quite simple: he wants what he wants when he wants it—and in good condition. Even the largest of the record supermarkets cannot stock everything; I have gone to them many times with a list of six discs and come out with none, even when I could find a clerk to help me. The problem with records by mail is that you pay, in the end, for the postage; you do have to wait; and our harried postal system has no tender mercy to spare on delicate phonograph records.

What is needed is a step backward, back to the Friendly Local Record Shops, with a number of small satellites plugged into a nationwide network of large, well-stocked supply depots that can respond to special requests, however offbeat, in a day or so. The satellite shops should be standardized—chain stores or perhaps even franchises—with all necessary management expertise and merchandising know-how available from the central depot. Some such idea seems to be percolating behind the King Karol organization, which has just opened a pluperfect example of the record shop of the future on New York's upper East Side. It is not large, but it is smashingly attractive, elegantly laid out (obviously by someone who understands record buyers), incredibly well stocked (both discs and all forms of tape), well staffed, and a distinct pleasure to be in. It is also backed up by King Karol's own warehousing facilities (this is their second shop in New York) which can supply practically anything in twenty-four hours. Perhaps the record industry finally has its very own Howard Johnson.

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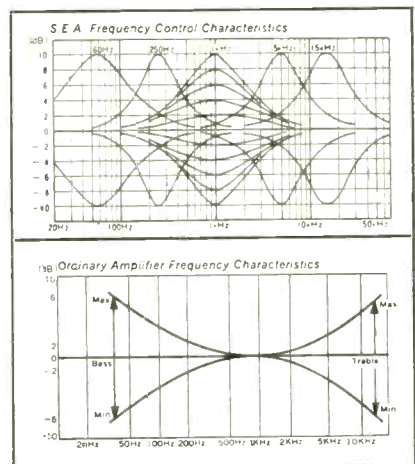
In introducing the striking all solid state 60 watt 5001 and 140 watt 5003 AM/FM Multiplex Stereo Tuner Amplifiers, JVC brings the stereo fan a new dimension in stereo enjoyment—the complete control of sound effects.

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How the SEA System Works

Glance at the two charts appearing on this page. In looking at the ordinary amplifier frequency characteristics where only bass and treble tone controls are provided, you can see how response in all frequency ranges at the low and high levels is clipped off. Compare this chart with the one showing the SEA frequency response characteristics, and the difference is obvious. No clipping occurs in the SEA system. It offers full control of sound in 60, 250, 1,000, 5,000 and 15,000Hz frequency ranges from -10 to +10db. For the first time ever, you have the power to determine the kind of sound you want to hear.



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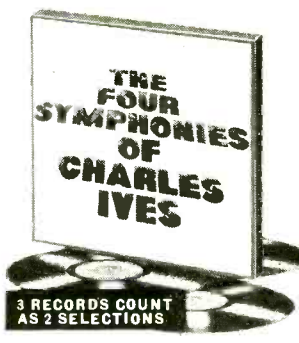
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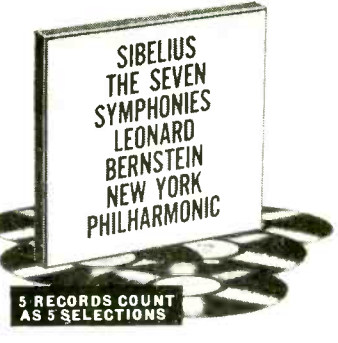
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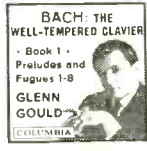
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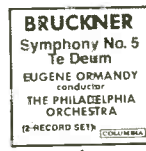
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Serly and Bartók

● Re William Flanagan's review (January) of my recording of Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 3 with Ditta Pásztory-Bartók: it is the reviewer's right to express his views on a composer's work as sees fit, but it is another matter when an individual's personal character is discredited—even though done through ignorance.

The true story of Bartók's Third Piano Concerto, in essence, is this. Shortly after Bartók's death, his son Peter brought me the manuscript of the concerto. The task of finishing the work looked to me so simple that I requested him not to proclaim publicly that the last measures were incomplete. However, Peter later revealed the truth to the trustee of the estate, who insisted that the adjustments made be clearly defined. Subsequently, the story leaked out. As dramatized by the press, it was made to appear as though the great master had dropped his pen trying to finish the last bars, whereupon his pupil and disciple grasped the pen and set down the remaining portion.

In the meantime, the concerto as I had completed it, including what little editing it needed, went into publication. For this task, I never asked for or received any compensation from either the estate or the publisher.

As to the recording, shortly after Bartók's death, his wife Ditta, a semi-invalid, returned to Hungary. There, for some twelve years, she remained in seclusion, never touching the piano. Then, through her brother's encouragement, she began to play again. A year or so later, in 1962, while I was visiting Hungary, musical friends of the Bartóks initiated the idea of our recording the concerto as a documentary tribute to Bartók's memory. After much difficulty the recording took place in Vienna. The final note of irony was that we had to pay \$250 for the orchestra's materials—to record the work with the composer's widow!

As for Mr. Flanagan's harping on the Serly work being featured on the disc, this happened to be the second album of a series of three (one still to be released) entitled "The Music of Tibor Serly." This designation could not be changed for the one work that was not by myself.

TIBOR SERLY
New York, N. Y.

Mr. Flanagan replies: "Above all else—writing now as a composer as well as a crit-

ic—I apologize for anything in my review of the record in question that might be taken as an attack on Mr. Serly's 'personal character.' There is no practice in the criticism of the arts that I find more repugnant. But in re-reading both the liner notes and my review, I must stand by my complaint that the annotative material—place the blame wherever it may belong—has the 'overtones of martyrdom' to which I referred in my notice. Mr. Serly's concession that his unquestionably selfless work on the Bartók scores 'leaked out' and was subsequently 'dramatized' by the press only strengthens my suggestion that his reputation owes much to his association with Bartók, and any public arousal that his own work was neglected as a result (no matter how true it may be) will inevitably appear to be at once fondling and biting the hand that in a sense fed him. Furthermore, the statement that Mr. Serly's own work 'lay fallow' due to complications in completing and realizing Bartók's unfinished scores (particularly in connection with a Bartók-Serly coupling) does a disservice to Mr. Serly's compositions, because such a comment immediately invites comparisons—unfair ones, perhaps—springing from the inevitable question: in which activity will history (or even the contemporary observer) judge Mr. Serly to have more valuably spent his time? For that matter, I now wonder in retrospect if the tone (not the essence) of my own published reaction to Mr. Serly's concerto would have been less harsh had the annotative material not raised such a question in my mind.

"In any case, I am grateful to Mr. Serly for his amplification of the facts. And though sarcasm might fairly be read into my comment on Mr. Serly's taking 'top billing' on the album cover, I intend none when I now submit that even a reasoned record reviewer cannot be expected to commit the Schwann catalog to memory: since no mention is made on the sleeve of a 'second album of a series', it seems to me that the error might have been made by others as easily as by me. I have nothing but apologies to offer all concerned (Mr. Serly and the editors of this magazine as well) for misspelling 'Modus Lascivus.'"

Aesthetic of the Recording Studio

● Doesn't Eric Salzman's excellent article on the medium of recording (January) bend
(Continued on page 12)

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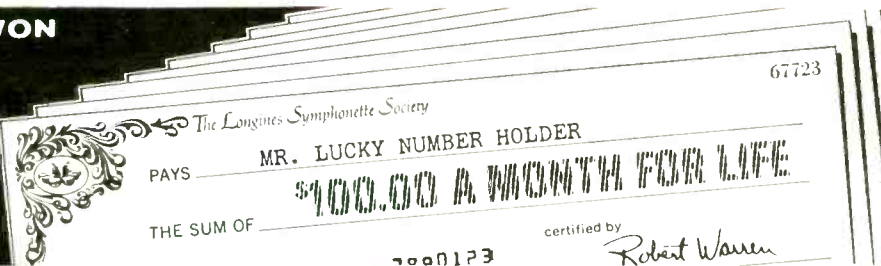
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over backward just a bit to make a case for a separate aesthetic of recorded music as opposed to live music? Certain performing faults characteristic of "live" music in this country and in Europe are not found in the same form or to the same extent in recordings. In the United States, except for the work of the best—the most sensitive—groups, "live" music is all too often played too loudly and with a restricted dynamic range. I have suffered through many performances in which nothing softer than *mezzoforte* was produced, and *fortissimo* was the rule. In recordings this distortion of the composer's intent occurs less frequently—perhaps because of the intervention of recording engineers who can read the score. In Europe the corresponding fault in all but the top ensembles is rhythmic slackness, and in this respect recordings are far better. My point is that musical taste, among both performers and public, still has far to go, and that emphasis on recording as a distinct medium would be unfortunate if it vitiated the broadly corrective and stimulating effect recordings can have on musical standards as a whole.

On a different point, Mr. Salzman refers to today's live performing style as "rhythmically inflexible," which is said to be in part a "response to the conditions of recording." But many great recordings are monuments of rhythmic flexibility in the service of appropriate musical interpretation. Might it not be that a tendency toward rhythmic rigidity in some public performances indicates an incompletely formed attitude toward the music—and that one hears such performances more often than one would like because many artists view a concert appearance as a rehearsal for the recording session, in which the money and prestige are to be gotten?

KENNETH I. ROTHMAN
Chicago, Ill.

Looking Backward

● I very much enjoyed Larry Klein's fine article "The Stereo Disc" in the January issue. It made me reflect on my own interest in recording, which goes back a good deal further than the introduction of stereo—to 1896, in fact. In that year, my mother's parents and my mother, just married, "went to the optician to speak some words into the gramophone." This priceless record, an Edison wax cylinder, was bequeathed to me by an uncle and came into my possession in 1927. In 1935 I had it transferred to a 78-rpm disc in Berlin. Some twenty-five years later, the disc was transferred to a tape from which two LPs were produced for relatives. The recording art has come a long way since 1896, but I think it is touching that the voices on my record are not only intelligible but also have the distinctive character, inflection, and timbre of the persons speaking.

LUDWIG F. ROEHMANN
Spokane, Wash.

The Home Conductor

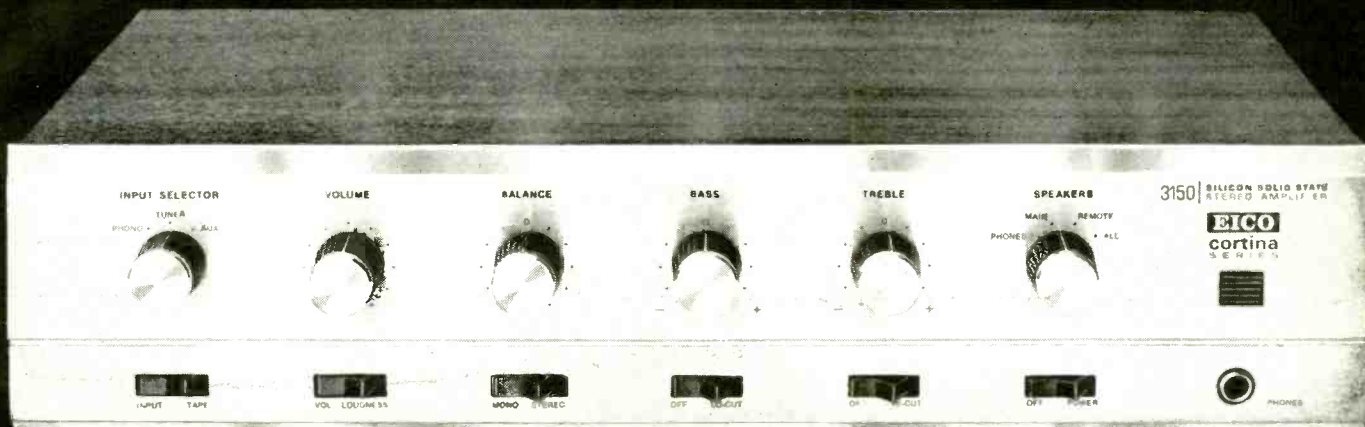
● Now that Arthur Matthews has exposed the hitherto private affairs of the home conductor (January) for the whole world to examine, I feel compelled to comment on his article. I was completely shattered, upon reading the article, to find that some of my more dramatic flourishes are just not musically correct. Here I was conducting some

(Continued on page 16)

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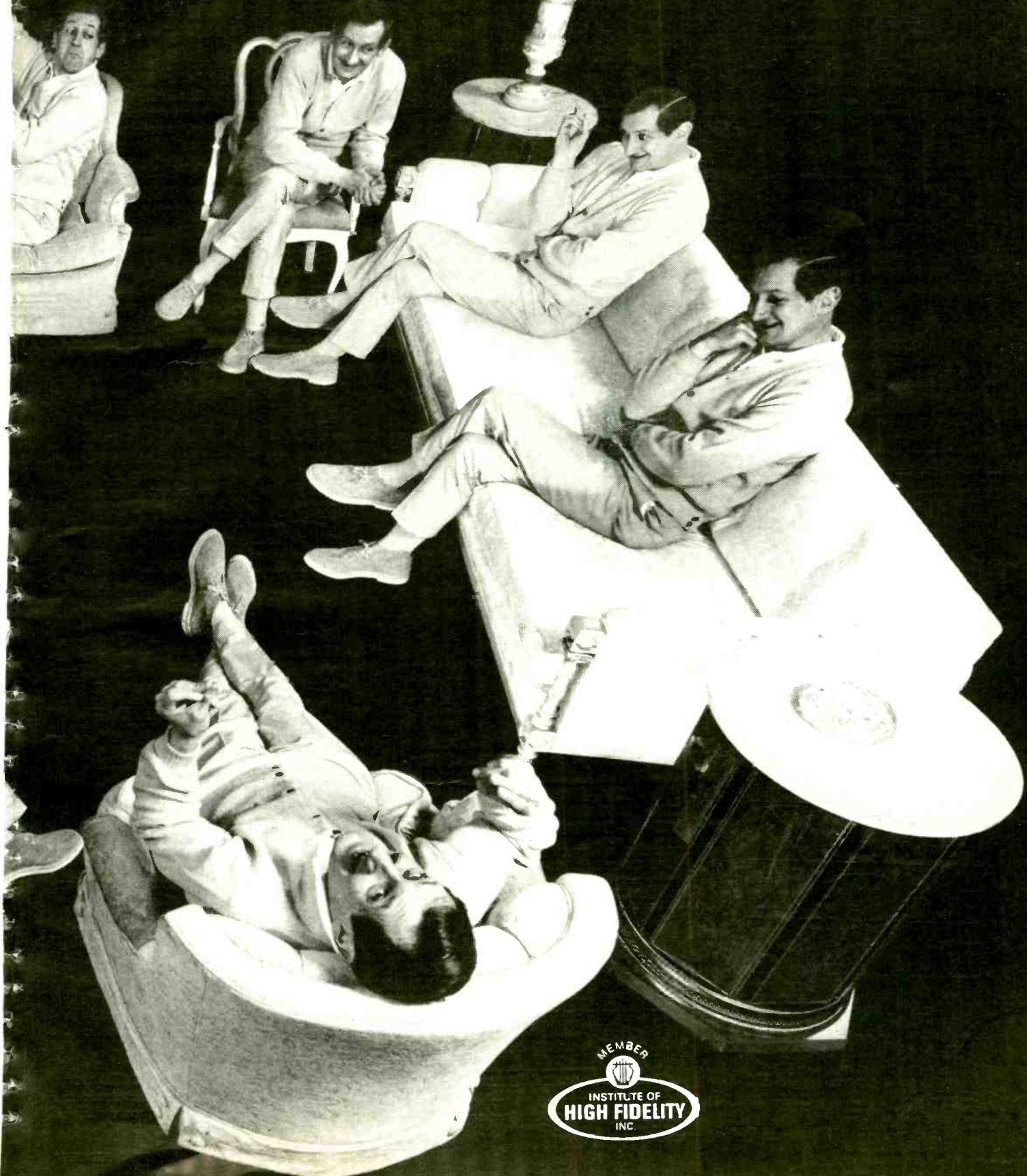
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STANLEY G. NEUFELD
Oklahoma City, Okla.

● I can't remember any article I've ever read that had me in stitches, but Arthur Matthews' "Art of Conducting" hit a bulls-eye. For years, whenever my wife caught me conducting before my stereo speakers, she'd wag her head and say, "Oh boy, if the guys with the white jackets saw you now!" I showed the article to her to prove I'm not the only nut who likes to imagine he's Toscanini or Ormandy or Bernstein.

GEORGE GAUDIO
Palatine, Ill.

Dorothy Maynor

● Thank you for William Seward's timely article on Dorothy Maynor (January). She sang with a peculiar and personal kind of passion that communicated itself instantly to a sensitive listener. Her interpretation of *Were You There?* at a concert thirty-five years ago is something I shall never forget; it will always be a high point in my listening life.

Maynor's oneness with her audience has been equalled in my experience only by Galli-Curci and by Piaf; it has never been exceeded. I have treasured for many years my copies of her 78-rpm recordings of both "*Depuis le jour*" and "*Ach, ich fühl's*," as well as that of an air from *Semele*, and I am anxiously awaiting their reissue by RCA.

More power to her and her school!

RALPH NATHANSON
Oakland, Cal.

Mozart's Symphony No. 37

● For many months I have enjoyed immensely Martin Bookspan's "Basic Repertoire" articles in STEREO REVIEW. They are extremely interesting, and an excellent guide to the best performances available.

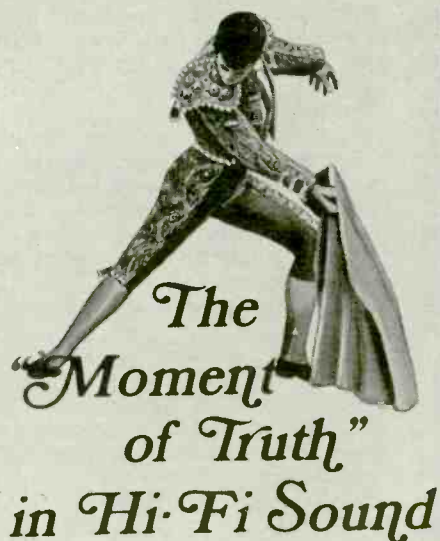
In casually looking through the Schwann catalog listings of Mozart's music, I discovered a most interesting thing. Apparently Mozart did not compose a Symphony No. 37. I wondered if, in his research for the "Basic Repertoire" articles, Mr. Bookspan has seen any evidence that there is a Symphony No. 37 by Mozart, perhaps an incomplete sketch for piano or orchestra?

WILLIAMS W. JONES
Elmhurst, N. Y.

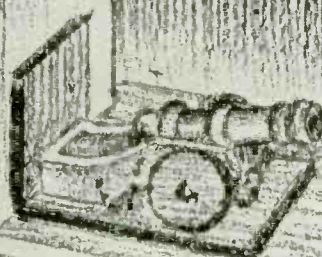
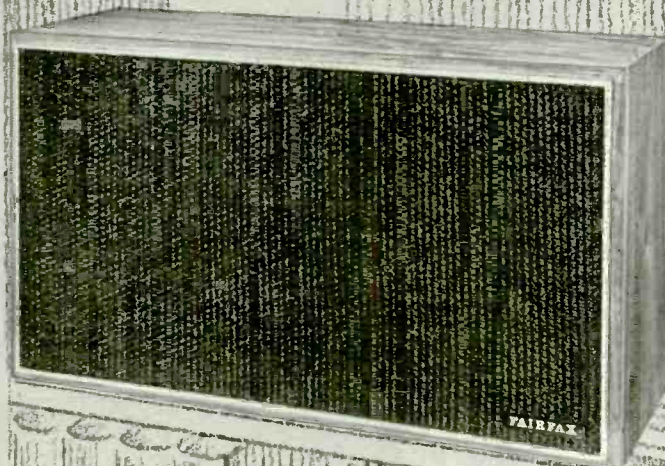
Mozart's "Symphony No. 37, K. 444" is, at least in part, real and existing. It consists of a slow introduction to a Symphony in G Major by Michael Haydn. A recording of the composite work is available on Westminster 18146 (mono only) by the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London under the direction of Erich Leinsdorf.

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(Continued on page 18)



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ROBERT HOLLADAY
Abilene, Tex.

Collectors such as Mr. Holladay now have available to them a listing of their kind—and many other kinds—in A Preliminary Directory of Sound Recordings Collections in the United States and Canada. Prepared in 1967 by a committee of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections, the publication is available for \$3.00 (check or money order must accompany the order) from the Library Sales Shop of the New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue and 42nd St., New York, N. Y. 10018.

Cutting Rachmaninoff

● Regarding David Hall's review (January) of the Weissenberg recording of Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto, he says that this recording uses the "revised version . . . played by the composer . . . with authorized cuts. . . ." Does Mr. Hall know of a more complete edition than the one I have, that contained in the Schirmer two-piano reduction of the score? I don't. But I do know that this recording does *not* make the cuts the composer made (ill-advisedly, I think) in his recording with Ormandy. Please, Mr. Hall, a clarification.

DONALD A. SHIPMAN
Los Angeles, Cal.

Mr. Hall replies: "I blew this one—a combination, I suppose, of too much mid-

night oil and having to write the review in question away from home, 'on the road' out West. A check of the 1910 Gutheil score shows that Weissenberg does indeed play the finale complete and uncut. The cuts used by Rachmaninoff himself in his own recording are detailed by John Culshaw in his biographical study (Dobson, London, 1944)."

Beating

● I strongly object to the way the Beatles' latest album, "The Beatles," was treated in your February issue. It was bad enough for Don Heckman to be so reserved in his praise for the record, but the height of insult was its listing under the designation "recording of special merit." That's like saying the Philadelphia Orchestra is a passably good orchestra.

I, at least, expected "The Beatles" to be included among the best recordings of the month. As a matter of fact, I think it should be immediately declared the Recording of the Year, as no recording could ever possibly be better this year or any year.

MARK M. URKOWITZ
Philadelphia, Pa.

● I would like to say that the review by Don Heckman of the Beatles' new album in your February issue hit the nail on the head as far as I was concerned. This was an excellent review of an excellent album, about the best the Beatles have turned out. Now, as was said after their previous album, where can they go from here?

PAUL VIFIRA
Billerica, Mass.

"Switched-On Bach"

● However Eric Salzman views the album "Switched-On Bach" (January)—i.e., campy—one fact remains: it was the only selection of a wide diversity of electronic music (rock to pure, original Moog music) that produced any request for more information from the audience at an electronic-music lecture given at the San Francisco Hi-Fi Show.

STEVEN D. ROGERS
Capitola, Cal.

De gustibus!

British Blues

● I was amused at the contradictions between two record reviews in the January issue, that of "An Anthology of British Blues," and of "In My Own Dream" by the Butterfield Blues Band. My amusement fled when I discovered that the same reviewer, Don Heckman, had authored both! He attacks the British artists as mere mimickers of "black American blues singers" and states that "the blues . . . is a form of expression created in a cultural milieu so restricted that whites can experience it only in the abstract." Concerning the Butterfield band, he describes Paul Butterfield as one of the few whites capable of performing the blues, a talent he attributes to Butterfield's experience with Chicago blues and "his ability to use the blues as a truly personal form of expression." But Heckman stated in the first review mentioned that the form "can be employed by white performers only in an imitative and superficial manner."

Should we choose to believe that Paul Butterfield is an adequate blues performer despite his white skin, is it not then conceivable

(Continued on page 22)

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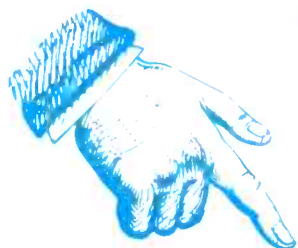
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able that some British musician may acquire a satisfactory background in the blues and be able also to express his personal feelings "in a style that he finds both comfortable and usable"? In comparison, I cite John Mayall, whose ensemble work closely parallels Butterfield's. And few blues fans would deny that Eric Clapton has contributed more to music than mimicry of some black method of playing the guitar.

DAVID L. BROWN
Meadville, Pa.

Improve Your Tape Library

● Hurrah for STEREO REVIEW! You have included with each month's issue a do-it-yourself improve-the-look-of-your-tape-library kit! All one needs to get started is a pair of scissors and some rubber cement. Simply cut out the cover portrait of each issue and glue it to a seven-inch-reel tape box of your choice. The February issue's "Young Woman with a Violin" cover doesn't much resemble Arthur Grumiaux or Isaac Stern, but it fits nicely and appropriately on recordings of their masterful performances. Corn? Not at all. In these days when advanced electronic technology has made it possible for the amateur recordist to buy almost everything he needs, ready-made, to support his hobby, STEREO REVIEW is still contributing to the imaginative and creative parts of readers' psyches.

CAPT. GEOFFREY W. TUPPER
Fort Bragg, N. C.

Sibelius

● We of the Sibelius Society of Northern New Jersey are rather taken aback by Eric Salzman's out-of-hand dismissal of the symphonic oeuvre of Jean Sibelius. It is impossible to agree with this critic's assertion in his review of Elgar's Second Symphony (January) that this work is superior to the symphonies of Sibelius.

It has become fashionable to downgrade Sibelius in critical circles. This unjustified attack on one of the most profound musical creators of our century is very distressing in view of the acclaim formerly accorded the Finnish composer. Your commitment to Sibelius was amply demonstrated in the September, 1965, issue, when your unusually perceptive writer David Hall contributed a superb article on Sibelius and Nielsen. We sincerely hope that this commitment has not been replaced by modish subservience to faddish composers like Ives and Stockhausen.

A. R. CARLSON
ROBERT RUBINSTEIN
Cresskill, N. J.

David Diamond

● Mr. Joe R. Feagin's letter in your November issue apropos the insufficient recordings of the music of Peter Mennin and others brought to mind a very serious indifference to the music of one of the top—and to my mind, the very top—contemporary symphonists who today has only one of his magnificent eight symphonies in the Schwann catalog. This composer is David Diamond, a true individualist in his music. Why hasn't Ormandy recorded the Seventh Symphony the Philadelphia Orchestra has played so brilliantly? Or Bernstein the moving and beautiful Fifth? And how about a Great American Composers profile on David Diamond?

B. ROBERT HURVEY
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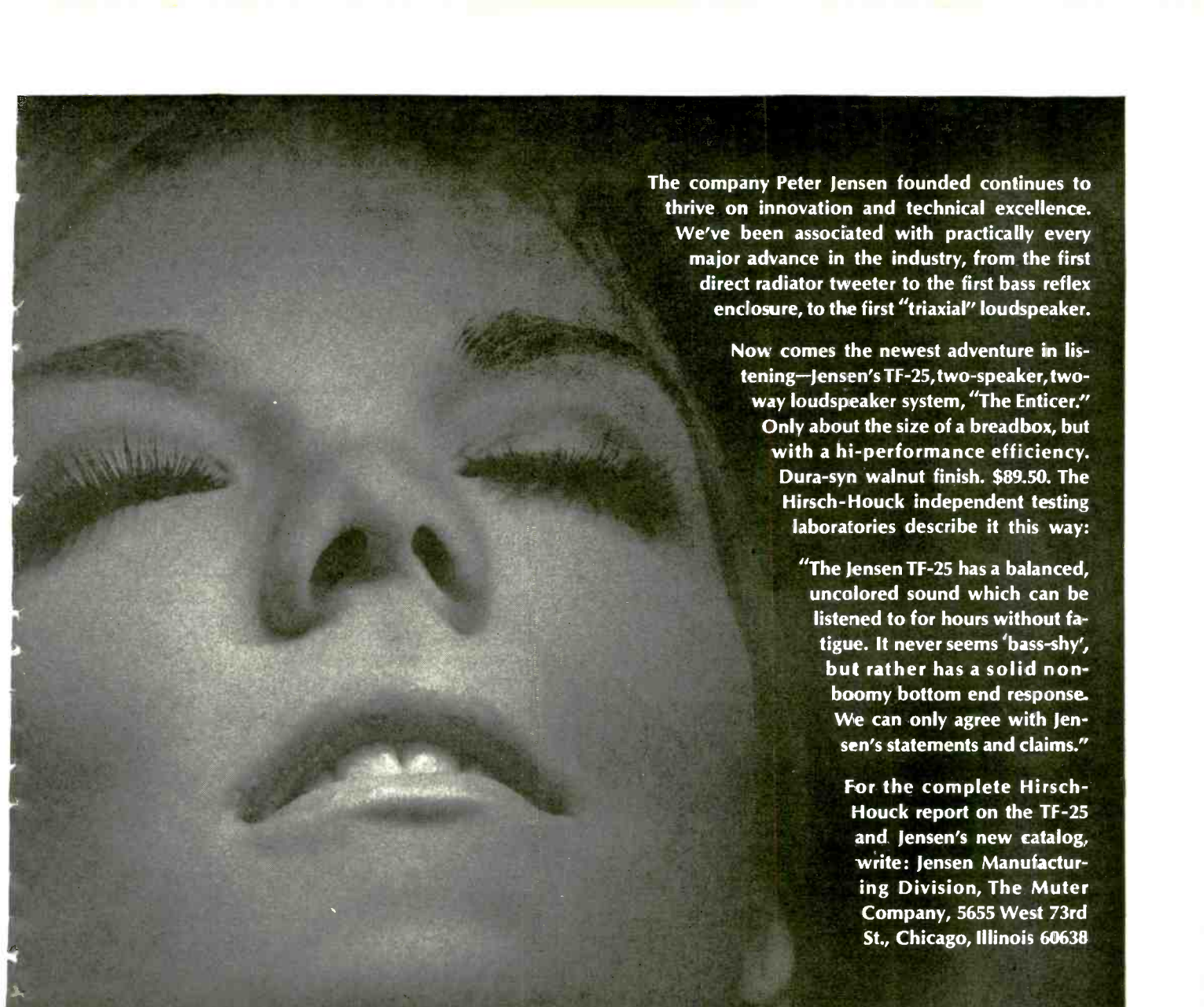


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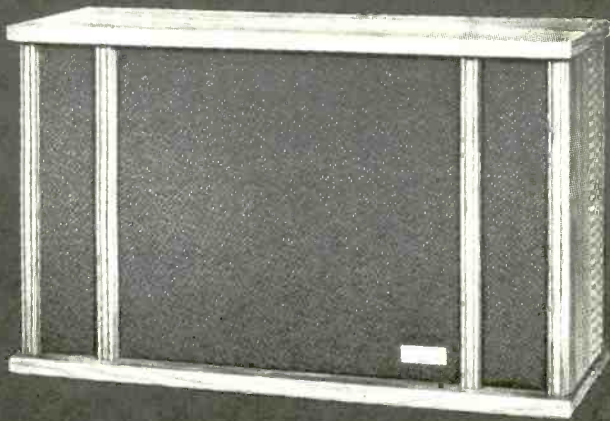
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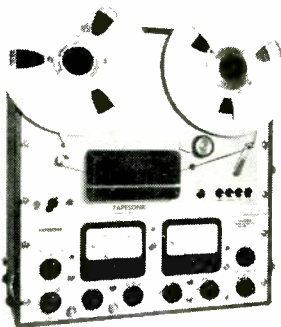
● **Scott's** new Model 312C stereo FM receiver uses field-effect transistors (FET's), integrated circuits (IC's), and a quartz-crystal lattice filter in the i.f. section. The output power is rated at 30 continuous watts per channel, one channel driven, into 8 ohms at 0.8 per cent harmonic distortion. The amplifier section has a frequency response of 20 to 20,000 Hz ± 1 dB, and a signal-to-noise ratio of 55 dB at the low-level phono inputs. The FM-tuner section



has a sensitivity of 1.9 microvolts (IHF), a capture ratio of 2.5 dB, and a signal-to-noise ratio of 60 dB.

The controls include a four-position input-selector switch, volume, balance, and separate bass and treble for each channel. A row of pushbuttons controls main and remote speakers on/off, high-frequency filter, loudness compensation, tape monitor, mono or stereo mode, and interstation-noise muting. In addition to a signal-strength tuning meter and a stereo-broadcast indicator, there is a "perfect-tune" light that goes on when the receiver is tuned to the exact center of a broadcast channel. Overall dimensions of the unit are 5 x 11½ x 15¾ inches. An optional walnut enclosure is available. Price: \$259.95.

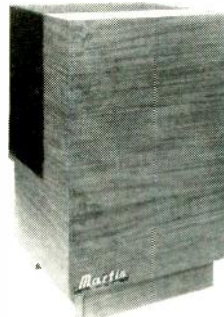
Circle 147 on reader service card



● **Tapesonic** has introduced its new Model 70-TRS stereo tape deck. The all-solid-state, three-speed (15, 7½, and 3¾ ips) machine has a 10½-inch reel capacity. Its specifications include a frequency response of 35 to 26,000 Hz ± 2 dB at 15 ips, 30 to 20,000 Hz ± 2 dB at 7½ ips, and 30 to 10,000 Hz ± 3 dB at 3¾ ips. The signal-to-noise ratios at the three speeds are, respectively, 56 dB, 53 dB, and 50 dB. The pushbutton-operated transport is solenoid controlled and is adaptable to remote control. Each channel has mixable microphone and auxiliary inputs. The 4½-inch VU meters that are used to set record levels can be switched to check bias levels. The deck is available with either half- or quarter-track stereo heads

and comes without a case for rack mounting or custom installation. Price: \$615. The portable carrying case (shown) costs \$34.50.

Circle 148 on reader service card



● **Eastman Sound** has introduced the Martin "Prismatic Reflector" speaker system. The three-way system uses internal divergent reflective lenses and mixing chambers to control dispersion of its various elements. The system is designed so that sound is also reflected from the floor and wall. A total of five drivers are used: a 9-inch woofer, a 6-inch mid-range, two 3½-inch tweeters, and a 2-inch tweeter. The crossover frequencies are 170 and 4,500 Hz, and controls are provided for the mid- and high-frequency response. Overall frequency response of the 4-ohm system is 30 to 18,000 Hz. Minimum recommended amplifier power is 15 watts. Overall dimensions of the system are 16¼ x 16¼ x 25 inches. The enclosure is finished in Formica and is available in either wood grains or solid colors. Price: \$300.

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● **Sylvania's** SC120 "Stereo Cube" comprises an AM/stereo FM receiver, a Garrard record changer, and two air-suspension speaker systems. Receiver and changer are installed in a wood-finish cabinet mounted on casters. The speakers can be stored, when not in use, atop the central equipment cabinet. The receiver's amplifier section has an output power of 20 watts IHF music power, a frequency response of 45 to 40,000 Hz, and harmonic distortion of



less than 2 per cent at 5 watts per channel. The FM tuner has a sensitivity of 4 microvolts and a capture ratio of 3.5 dB. The controls include loudness, bass, treble, and balance. Jacks are provided for a tape-recorder input and for the remote speakers. The cabinet measures 18⅞ x 23⅞ x 23⅞ inches. Each speaker system has a 6-inch woofer and a 3-inch tweeter. The enclosure dimensions are 8 x 11 x 7 inches. The entire system is available in either walnut or rosewood finish. Price: \$229.95.

Circle 150 on reader service card

● **Olson Electronics** is importing the new Model RA-999 AM/stereo FM receiver, rated at 150 watts total music power output (IHF). Other amplifier-section specifications include a frequency response of 30 to 20,000 Hz ± 3 dB and a signal-to-noise ratio of 55 dB at the low-level phono inputs. The FM-tuner section has field-effect transistors and integrated circuits. Tuner specifications include a

(Continued on page 28)

press comment *on the*

AR-3a

THE AMERICAN **record guide**

(Larry Zide)

"In choral works and other music of relatively 'heavy' content, the AR-3a simply eliminates any mid-range lack of clarity . . . I find myself repeating what I said in 1959 [about the AR-3]. The AR-3a . . . easily succeeds its prototype as a speaker that I consider 'as close to musical realism in the home . . . as the present state of the art permits.' In a word, it's superb."

HIGH FIDELITY

(Norman Eisenberg)

"Our reaction on first hearing the AR-3a was [an] . . . enthusiastic one which has not diminished after weeks of listening . . . in normal use, predominantly fundamental bass is evident to about 30 Hz . . . Tones in the 13 to 14 kHz region can be heard clearly at least 60 degrees off axis . . . at [high] levels, the speakers sounded magnificent . . . On any material we fed to them, our pair of AR-3a's responded neutrally, lending no coloration of their own to the sound."

HiFi/Stereo Review

(Hirsch-Houck Laboratories)

" . . . the best speaker frequency response curve we have ever measured using our present test set-up . . . virtually perfect dispersion at all frequencies — perhaps the most non-directional forward-facing speaker we have ever tested . . . AR speakers set new standards for low-distortion, low-frequency reproduction, and in our view have never been surpassed in this respect."

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS

(Bernard Jacobson)

" . . . I have heard many stereo setups, both professional and non-professional, in my time, but this is the most unobtrusive . . . the most faithful, record reproduction I've ever heard."

The AR-3a is priced from \$225 to \$250, depending on cabinet finish. Literature is available for the asking.

ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC., 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02141.

Overseas Inquiries: Write to **AR International** at above address
CIRCLE NO. 1 ON READER SERVICE CARD

NEW PRODUCTS

A ROUNDUP OF THE LATEST HIGH-FIDELITY EQUIPMENT

sensitivity of 1.5 microvolts (IHF) and stereo separation of 30 dB.

In addition to volume, balance, bass, and treble, the controls include a four-position speaker-selector switch, tuning, and a five-position input selector. Six flip switches control stereo or mono mode, tape monitor, loudness compensation, interstation noise, muting, and high- and low-



frequency filters. A hinged plastic door on the front panel conceals an extra set of tape input and output jacks. There is also a front-panel headphone jack. Overall dimensions of the receiver are 18½ x 14½ x 5¾ inches. The removable top panel of the receiver's oiled-walnut cabinet can be cut out to accept a turntable. Price, including the cabinet: \$250.

Circle 151 on reader service card



● **Craig** has added the Model 3116 to its line of automobile tape-cartridge players. The 3116 plays both four- and eight-track tapes. Track switching is

automatic for all eight-track cartridges and for those four-track cartridges that have a sensing-foil strip. A front-panel pushbutton permits manual program changing. A jack on the rear of the unit is provided for connecting a remote-control switch. Specifications of the unit include a frequency response of 70 to 10,000 Hz, a signal-to-noise ratio of better than -40 dB, wow and flutter of less than 0.25 per cent, and adjacent-channel crosstalk of better than -40 dB. The built-in stereo amplifier is rated at 22 watts total "peak" power output.

The controls include volume, balance, tone, and a cartridge-eject pushbutton. Program-indicator lights show which pair of stereo tracks is playing. Overall dimensions of the unit are 10½ x 7¾ x 2⅞ inches. List price: \$109.95.

Circle 152 on reader service card



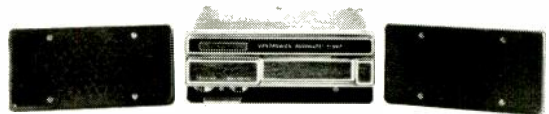
● **Sony** has introduced the PS-1800 turntable/tone-arm system. The two-speed turntable (33⅓ and 45 rpm) is driven by a servo-controlled motor, the speed of which is independent of both line frequency and voltage. Wow and flutter are less than 0.08 per

cent rms and the signal-to-noise ratio is better than 60 dB (NAB Standard). A pitch control permits varying the turntable speed by ±4 per cent. The tone arm is of static-balance design and has a skating-force adjustment. Tracking force can be adjusted from 0 to 3 grams. The arm has a plug-in cartridge shell and accepts cartridges weighing up to 11 grams. At the end of the record, a special magnetic-diode sensing device activates the tone-arm lift, returns the arm to its rest position, and shuts off the turn-

table. The arm can be lifted from the record during play by pressing a pushbutton on the front of the turntable base. Overall dimensions of the turntable are 7¼ x 19⅝ x 16¼ inches. Price, including base and dust cover: \$199.50.

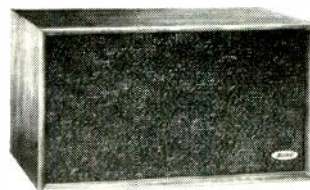
Circle 153 on reader service card

● **Orrtronics** has introduced the Automate 8 eight-track stereo tape-cartridge player. The unit comes with a gimbal mounting bracket for installation either under the dash board or on top of the transmission hump. A switch on the rear of the player permits it to be used with either 12-volt negative- or positive-ground electrical systems. Specifications of the unit include a frequency response of



50 to 10,000 Hz, flutter and wow of 0.25 per cent, and a signal-to-noise ratio of -40 dB. The built-in stereo amplifier has an output power of 3 watts rms per channel. The controls include volume, balance, a pushbutton manual program selector, and a three-position tone-control switch. An indicator light shows which pair of tracks is being played. Overall dimensions of the unit are 7 x 8⅛ x 3⅛ inches. Price, including two 3 x 5-inch speakers in plastic enclosures: \$89.95.

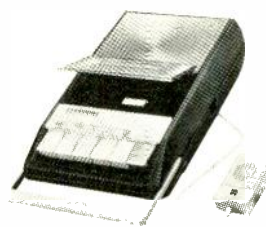
Circle 154 on reader service card



● **Allied's** Model 2370 is a three-way speaker system available either assembled or in kit form. The drivers include a 12-inch acoustic-suspension woofer with response down to 20 Hz,

and compression-type mid-range and tweeter, both using diffraction horns. The crossover frequencies are 1,000 and 5,000 Hz. System power-handling capacity is 35 watts and impedance is 8 ohms. Tweeter and mid-range level controls are mounted on the rear of the enclosure. The kit version of the speaker includes oil for finishing the walnut-veneered panels. Overall dimensions of the enclosure are 14 x 25 x 13 inches. Price: \$99.95 in kit form, \$119.95 assembled.

Circle 155 on reader service card



● **Panasonic** has announced the Model RQ-209S "Allendale" portable cassette recorder. Powered either from four "C" cells or the a.c. line, the unit has a built-in 1½-watt amplifier and a 3½-inch speaker. The recorder is controlled by six piano keys. There is no manual record-level control; levels are set by an auto-

matic record-level circuit. Fast forward and rewind time for a C-60 cassette is about 90 seconds. Overall dimensions of the recorder are 5½ x 2¾ x 10¼ inches. The weight is 3 pounds. Price, including an earphone and a remote-control microphone: \$49.95.

Circle 156 on reader service card



The only way to stop it is to turn it off.

The Craig 2402 can be programmed to continuously repeat the forward/reverse cycle. Automatically. Until you turn it off.

It can also be programmed to go forward and reverse automatically and return to the starting position. And stop.

Or, just go forward and stop.

The Craig 2402 Auto Reverse Stereo Tape Recorder is all you'll ever need. It has everything. It does everything. All automatically. Besides a more sophisticated and flexible reversing system, it features built-in sound-on-sound and sound-with-sound, three speeds, detachable hi-compliance speakers and streamlined styling for operational convenience. The Craig 2402 is unequalled performance at just \$349.95*. The beautiful deck version (model 2405 shown at left) fits into any component stereo system. Just \$289.95*. Visit your Craig dealer now for a full demonstration.

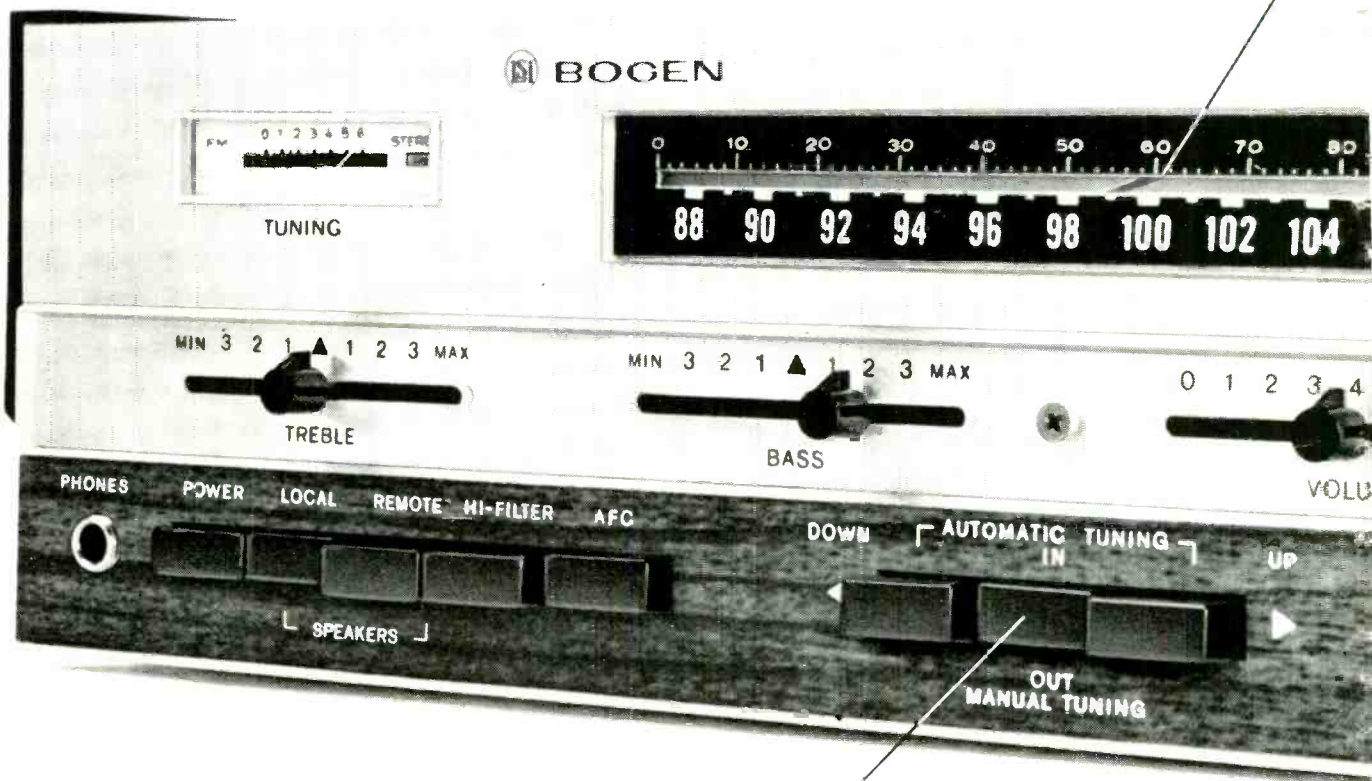


*Suggested retail price.

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BOGEN ANNOUNCES THE END OF DIAL-TWISTING.



This is the receiver that tunes itself. Touch one button to tune stations to the left; touch the other to tune to the right. Raise your finger, and the DB240 stops at the next station on the dial and locks it in perfectly—better than you can tune by hand. No knob-twiddling or meter-watching needed. Another “first” from Bogen in a receiver that anyone can afford.

Now—an all-electronic tuning system, including the dial. No dial cord to slip or tear, no gears to wear. A state-of-the-art breakthrough offers you this extra measure of precision in this price range—exclusive with Bogen.

Get stations you never got before: Strong stations. Weak stations. Stations crowded together on the dial. Because the new DB240 has an FET front end, for wide sensitivity range... an Integrated Circuit IF section for exceptional interference rejection and capture ratio... *revolutionary solid-state resonant ceramic IF filters* that give the DB240 its whopping 60 db selectivity—without realignment, ever.

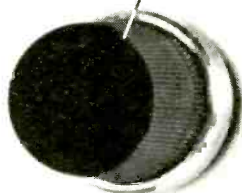
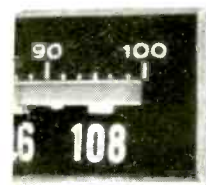
Manual tuning, too—with a difference: the tuning knob controls an electronic tuning circuit, not a tangle of mechanical parts. And if you leave the manual knob pre-tuned to your favorite station, that station will pop right in as soon as you switch from automatic back to manual tuning.

Electronic remote control unit provides volume controls for each channel and perfect control of balance, push-button tuning right and left, even a synchronous station-selector dial. WR-1 optional, extra.



DB240

MANUAL TUNING



5 6 7 MAX

LEFT 3 2 1 1 2 3 RIGHT



BALANCE

STEREO LOUDNESS AUX PHONO FM

MONO OUT

55 watts of power (IHF) Music Power ± 1 db into 8 ohm speaker load. RMS: 18 watts per channel at 0.7% harmonic distortion. Electronic protection circuit provides full protection without need for bothersome replacement of speaker fuses.

Professionally precise control: Professional recording consoles use linear controls that slide instead of turn. So does the DB240. You can adjust them more precisely—and their positions indicate their settings graphically, even from across the room.

No accessory cabinets to buy: The Bogen DB240 FM Stereo Receiver comes complete in cabinet with walnut side panels for only \$279.95.

BOGEN

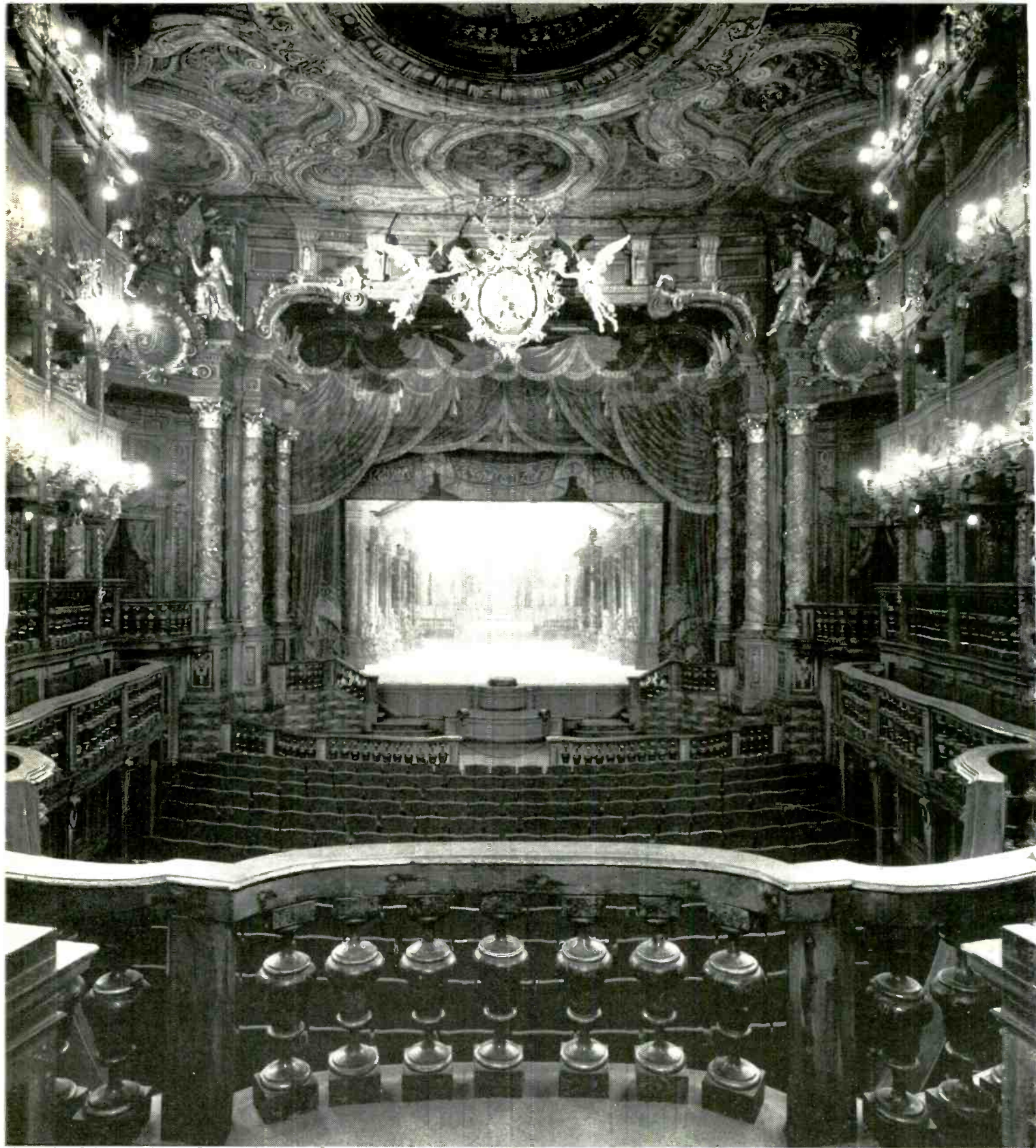
First name in high fidelity... dedicated to dependability

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The team: LSI stands for Lear Siegler, Inc.—and the latest in electronic research. Bogen stands for 36 years in pioneering sound experience. The DB240 is the result.



The Markgräfliches Opernhaus in Bayreuth, built 1745-48, Germany's only large Baroque theater preserved in its original condition.

You can tell it's the Markgräfliches Opernhaus

The ultimate test of a stereo cartridge isn't the sound of the music.

It's the sound of the hall.

Many of today's smoother, better-tracking cartridges can reproduce instrumental and vocal timbres with considerable naturalism. But something is often missing. That nice, undistorted sound seems to be coming from the speakers, or from nowhere in particular, rather than from the concert hall or opera stage.

It's easy to blame the recording, but often it's the cartridge.

The acoustical characteristics that distinguish one hall from another, or any hall from your listening room, represent the subtlest frequency and phase components of the recorded waveform. They end up as extremely fine undulations of the record groove, even finer than the higher harmonics of most instruments.

When a cartridge reproduces these undulations with the utmost precision, you can hear the specific acoustics of the Markgräfliches Opernhaus in Bayreuth, or of any other hall. If it doesn't, you can't.

The Stanton does.

"The tracking was excellent and distinctly better in this respect than any other cartridge we have tested... The frequency response of the Stanton 681EE was the flattest of the cartridges tested, within ± 1 dB over most of the audio range."

Hirsch-Houck Laboratories,
HiFi/Stereo Review, July, 1968.



The specifications.*
Frequency response, from 10 Hz to 10kHz, $\pm 1/2$ dB.
From 10kHz to 20kHz, individually calibrated.
Nominal output, 0.7mV/cm/sec.
Nominal channel separation, 35dB.
Load resistance, 47K ohms.
Cable capacitance, 275 pF.
DC resistance, 1K ohms.
Inductance, 500mH.
Stylus tip, .0002" x .0009" elliptical.
Tracking force, $3/4$ to $1 1/2$ gm.
Cartridge weight, 5.5 gm.
Brush weight (self-supporting), 1 gm.

*Each Stanton 681 is tested and measured against the laboratory standard for frequency response, channel separation, output, etc. The results are written by hand on the specifications enclosed with every cartridge.

The 681EE, with elliptical stylus and the "Longhair" brush that cleans record grooves before they reach the stylus, costs \$60. The 681T, identical but with interchangeable elliptical and conical styli both included, costs \$75.

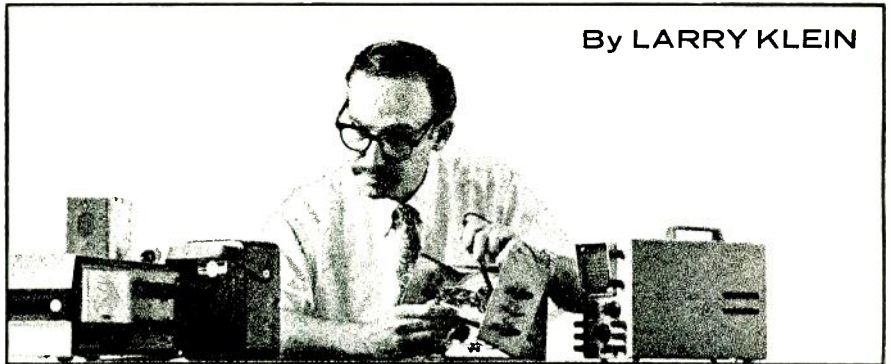
For free literature, write to Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Plainview, L.I., N.Y. 11803.

when you
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CIRCLE NO. 57 ON READER SERVICE CARD
APRIL 1969

By LARRY KLEIN



HIFI QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Subjective Speaker Terminology

Q. I have been following the speaker-system test reports in the various high-fidelity magazines for about six months, and I am puzzled by the terms that keep reappearing in the reports. What do expressions such as "smooth," "peaky," "balanced," "warm," "presence," and so forth really mean? And how do they relate to a speaker's measured characteristics?

WALTER BRILL
San Francisco, Calif.

A. We are running into the same problem here that science has always faced: how to relate objectively measured phenomena with subjective human response. Some of the terms used to describe speaker sound, such as "smooth," have reference to the shape of the frequency-response curve as well as describing the effect on our ears. The opposite of smooth would be "peaky," meaning that there are jagged peaks (or dips) in the response curve that have audible effects. Peakiness in the bass is usually heard as a boomy, hollow quality; peakiness in the mid-range is heard as a nasal, "honky" coloration; and peakiness in the treble is usually heard as shrillness.

When a speaker is referred to as "balanced" or producing balanced sound, this means that a listener has the subjective impression of relative evenness of the high, middle, and low frequencies. In other words, no part of the frequency spectrum receives undue emphasis. A "warm" quality would usually indicate an emphasis of the lower frequencies, a quality of "presence" would indicate an emphasis of the mid-range, and a "bright" sound would indicate emphasis of the higher frequencies. The terms "transparent" or "open" usually refer to the lack of certain types of distortion and a smoothness in the transient response. Any blurring of the sounds produced by triangles, cymbals, or the initial attack of stringed or percussion instruments tends to create a sonic "veil," which would cause the opposite of transparency.

Almost all of the various distortions that prevent absolute fidelity in a speaker

system are reflected in the speaker's frequency-response curves, if the curves are taken by a microphone located in front of and at various off-axis angles at the sides of the speaker.

Loudness Controls

Q. Over the years I have read in your magazine what seems to be a variety of snide comments in relation to loudness-compensation controls. Exactly what is your stand on such controls?

CHESTER GUINAN
Detroit, Michigan

A. I don't think they are necessary—and the manufacturers of two of the most expensive preamplifiers on the market seem to agree with me. The story is this: The pioneering studies of the acousticians Fletcher and Munson showed that at lower volume levels the ear's response to frequency extremes—especially to low frequencies—is greatly diminished. This means that, at low listening levels, in order to hear the same relative balance of bass and treble heard at normal listening levels, the treble should be boosted slightly and the bass substantially. The loudness-compensation control is intended to do this automatically as volume is reduced. Unfortunately, since the Fletcher-Munson curves (whose accuracy has been put in question by more recent experiments, though their principles still hold true) are based on the averaged hearing characteristics of many people—and the odds are that they will not exactly match the volume-vs.-frequency-response curve of any one individual's ear.

Moreover, the usual loudness control has no way of "knowing" how loud the original material was; it responds only to the setting of the amplifier's volume-control knob. For example, an orchestral disc recorded at a low level may have to be played at a volume setting too high for the loudness compensation to take effect, yet it may still need it. On the other hand, a high-level recording of a string quartet (to which we normally listen at a lower level) may re-

(Continued on next page)

Another new stereo? No!



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- Please send me Schober Organ Catalog and free 7-inch "sample" record.
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You couldn't touch an organ like this in a store for less than \$3500—and there hasn't been a musical instrument with this vast variety of **genuine** Theatre Organ voices since the days of the silent movies! Haunting tibias, biting strings, blaring reeds—the whole A to Z gamut of real pipe sounds that make the simplest playing a thrilling experience and give the professional organist everything he needs. If you've dreamed of the grandeur of authentic big-organ sound in your own home, you won't find a more satisfying instrument anywhere—kit or no kit.

You can learn to play it. And you can build it, from Schober Kits, world famous for ease of assembly without the slightest knowledge of electronics or music, for design and parts quality from the ground up, and—above all—for the highest praise from musicians everywhere.

Send right now for your copy of the full-color Schober catalog, containing specifications of the five Schober Organ models, beginning at \$599.50. No charge, no obligation—but lots of food for a healthy musical appetite!

CIRCLE NO. 48 ON READER SERVICE CARD

ceive too much compensation. Most critical listeners have found that a judicious amount of tone-control bass boost provides all the compensation that is needed, with none of the muddiness associated with many loudness controls.

Impedance Mismatch

Q. I'm interested in exactly what happens electrically with an impedance mismatch in cases of: mismatch of high-impedance phone jack with low-impedance headphones, preamplifier and power-amplifier mismatch, phono cartridge and preamplifier-input mismatch.

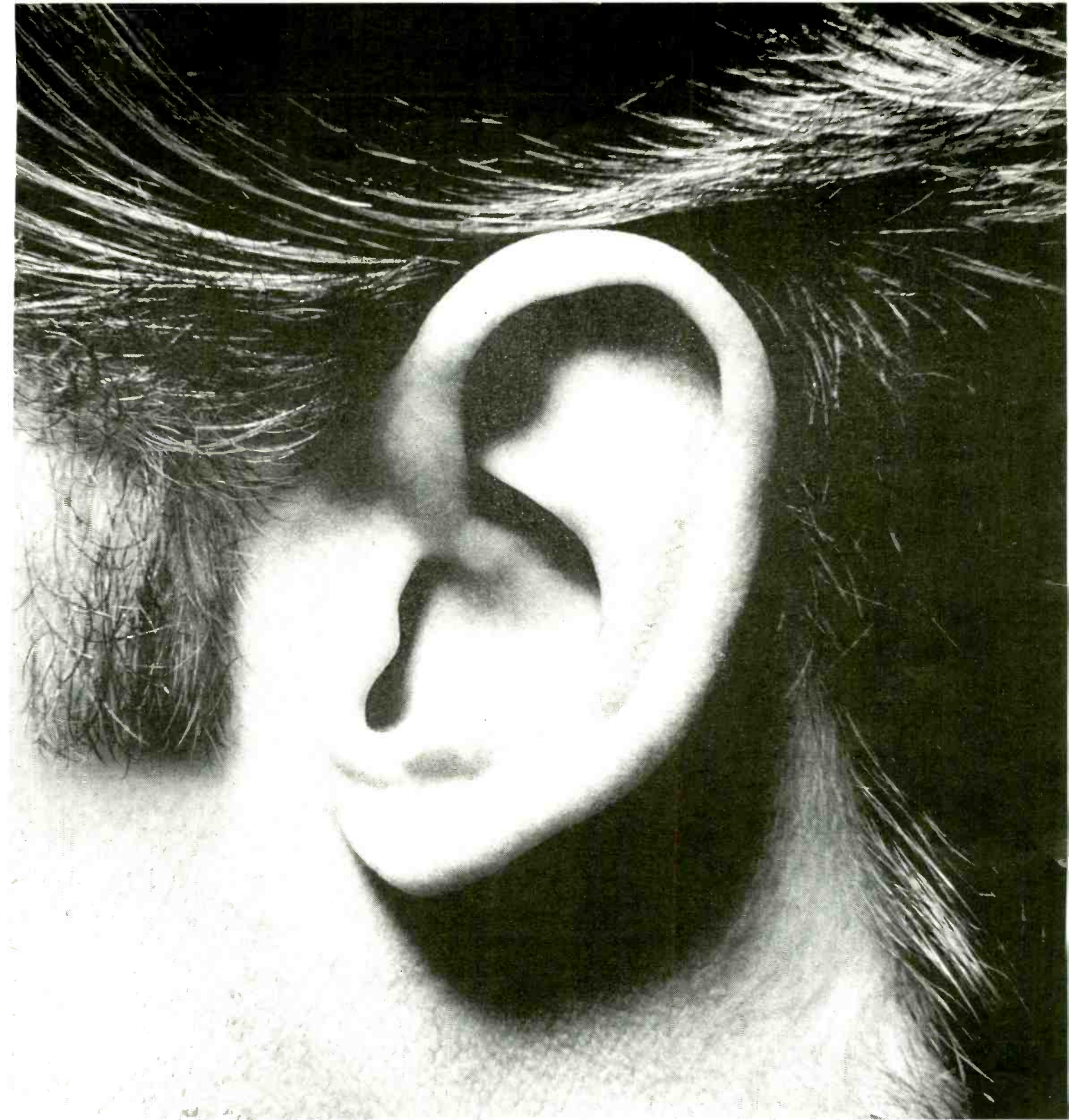
I would imagine that on a theoretical basis the lower the impedance the greater the electron flow, but that doesn't give me any information on how it will affect sound quality.

FRANK JOHNSON
Far Hills, N.J.

A. Your confusion is understandable, because many beginners who are aware of power-transfer theory cannot understand, for example, why a magnetic-phono cartridge with a 300-ohm output impedance is designed to work properly into a 47,000-ohm input impedance on a preamplifier. In audio we are not concerned primarily with the maximum transfer of power, but must concentrate on maintaining wide frequency response, minimum distortion, and (running a weak last) keeping the signal level as high as possible. Impedance differences between various components in a stereo system will affect any or all of these factors for reasons that differ from component to component. As an example of what might take place, if the impedance at the tuner-input jacks of a preamplifier is too low, it will frequently interact with the coupling capacitors at the outputs of the tuner, causing a roll-off in the low bass response. Or if the impedance at a phono input on a preamplifier is too high or too low for a magnetic cartridge, it will cause, respectively, a peak or a dip in the high-frequency response. On the other hand, too low a load impedance for a ceramic cartridge plugged into a high-level input will cause a loss in bass response.

The effects that occur always depend on the specific characteristics of the two components and are therefore difficult to predict. If in doubt as to the compatibility of any particular components—and in the vast majority of cases there will be no difficulty—your best bet is to query the manufacturers involved.

Because the number of questions we receive each month is greater than we can reply to individually, only those questions selected for this column can be answered. Sorry!



Contrary to popular opinion, this is all you need to recognize a great stereo.

Most people think buying a stereo requires at the very least a degree in electronics. It doesn't.

If a stereo sounds clear, if you can hear all the instruments and if the singer sounds like she's singing to you, you're listening to a great stereo. That's all there is to it.

Now that you know how to look for a great stereo, we'd like to tell you about one. The Sony® HP-480 Compact Stereo System.

The HP-480 has an all-silicon transistor

amplifier. An FM stereo/FM/AM tuner. (The HP-480 also comes without a tuner, but we call that the HP-460.) A Dual Automatic Changer. A Pickering Dustomatic magnetic cartridge with a diamond stylus. Sealed speakers with 6" woofers and 3" tweeters. And an OTL circuit for better sound quality and less distortion.

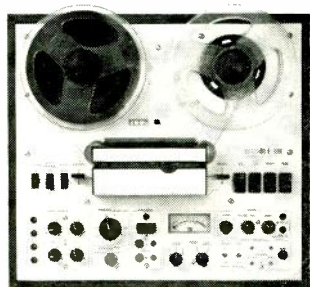
However, if you don't understand what any of that means, don't worry.

Your ears will.



The Sony® HP-480 Compact Stereo System

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you're not
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By HANS H. FANTEL



AUDIO BASICS

LOUDSPEAKER PLACEMENT

AN IMPORTANT asset of component stereo, in contrast to all-in-one consoles, is that it permits you to locate the speakers at that place in the room where they sound best. It is surprising how many component owners don't take full advantage of this fact. Since "optimum" placement in a given situation depends on the size, shape, and furnishings of your listening room and the sonic characteristics of your speakers, there can be no hard and fast rules to fit all cases. The major consideration, of course, is getting the most natural and balanced sound possible from your speakers.

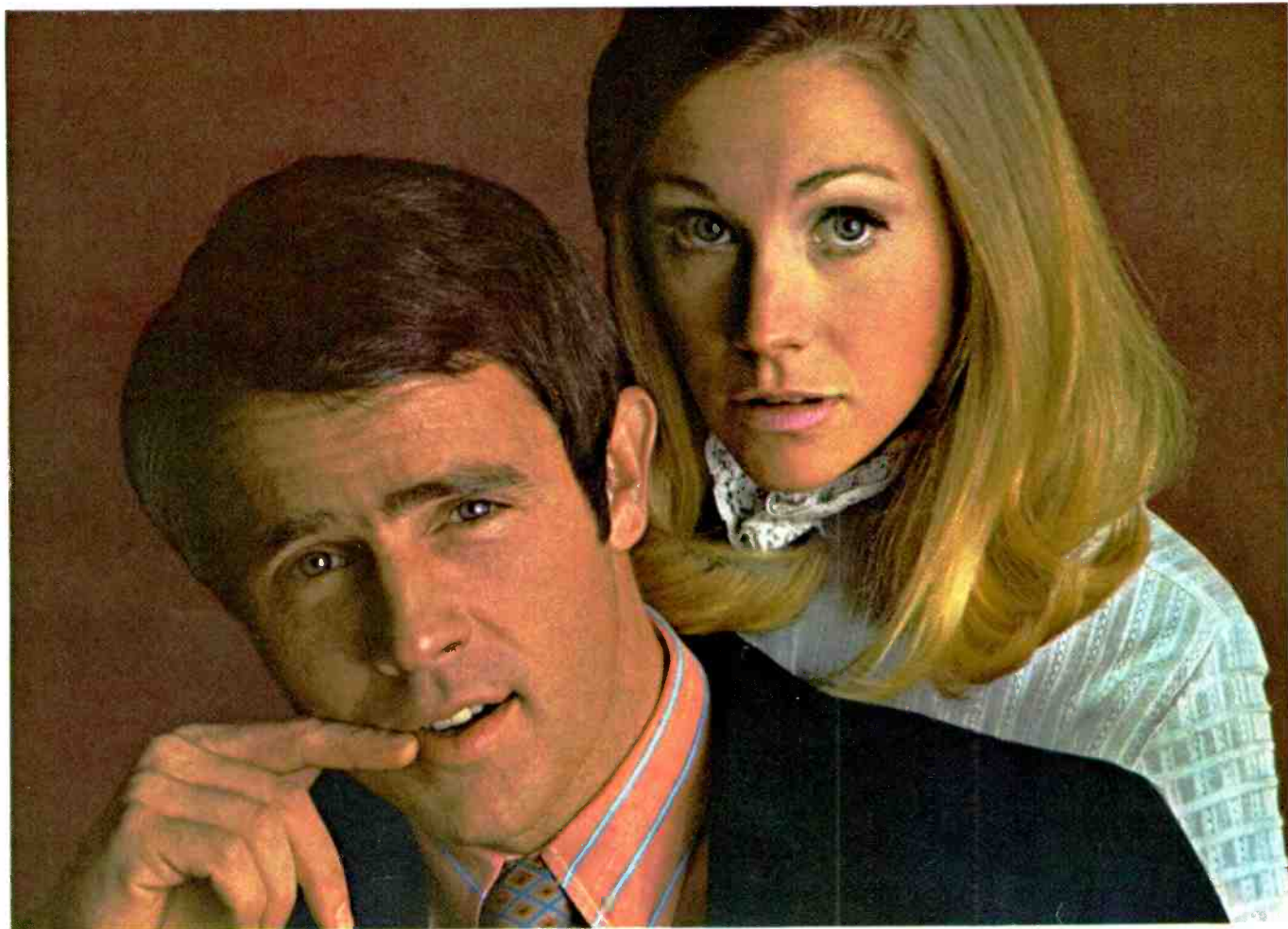
You can get relatively more—but not lower—bass, for example, just by moving the speakers into corners. Putting the speakers right down on the floor, if they are bookshelf models (the woofer end of the cabinet should be in the lower position), also reinforces bass. The reason is that the adjacent wall and floor surfaces help project or "couple" the lower frequencies more efficiently into the room. You can achieve the same bass-boosting effect by mounting your speakers in ceiling corners—a handy arrangement in small rooms with a shortage of floor space. Wall brackets serve nicely for this purpose.

Bass-reinforcing placement may be a boon to inexpensive systems whose smaller woofers tend to be bass-shy. However, with amply powered full-size speakers, such placement may result in an overly heavy unbalanced bass. In that case, it is best to keep the speakers out of corners and perhaps off the floor, putting them up on center-wall shelves if they are physically small enough.

Since the better speaker systems available today have good high-frequency dispersion—they radiate the treble frequencies over a broad angle—placement is not super-critical as far as the higher treble frequencies are concerned. However, if your speaker system seems to lose highs as soon as you sit down, you had best set up the speakers so that the tweeters are at ear level.

There is a second factor to be considered when placing speakers: room resonances. In addition to their effects on the overall balance of highs and lows, these resonances color to a greater or lesser degree all the sound produced by your speakers. Every room has resonant peaks and dips at certain frequencies and locations, depending on the room's dimensions. So, to achieve the most natural sound, try to place your speakers where they will be least likely to provoke undesired resonances and/or arrange your preferred listening chair so that it is not in a resonant area. This may mean shifting the speakers and the chair along the long walls of a room (or moving them away from the walls) until you find the location at which there are the fewest problems.

The last factor to consider is stereo separation. The speakers should be at least six feet—or more—apart in very large rooms. You'll get the best stereo spread if your listening chair is about equidistant from both speakers. But you can still get a fine stereo effect even if you're sitting off-center. In fact, with good speakers you'll notice the stereo spaciousness almost anywhere in the room, and therefore you don't have to be hidebound about this kind of musical geometry. Besides, the amplifier's balance control permits adjustment of the relative speaker outputs if the layout of your room makes radically off-center listening more convenient.



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Amazing thing about Seagram's 7 Crown:
People who know all about whiskey like it.
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OUR NEWEST STEREO TUNER

The stereo FM-3 was introduced in 1963 and we are still barely able to keep up with the demand. After six years, it remains the most popular of all stereo tuners.

Our newest stereo tuner doesn't replace the original mono FM-1, which after nine years still outsells all other mono tuners combined.

This unprecedented longevity is explained by Dynaco's unswerving devotion to performance, reliability and unmatched low cost. The stereo FM-3 is only \$99.95 as a kit and

\$154.95 factory assembled. The \$79.95 mono FM-1 can be converted to stereo at any time by adding the \$29.95 FMX-3 multiplex module.

Dynaco introduces new products only when they fill a real need. They never render previous models obsolete. And at less than half the cost of other tuners, such consummate value just naturally gets around.

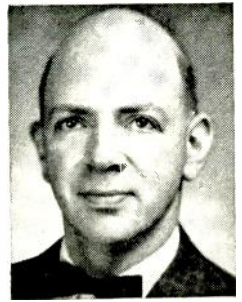
We can't promise that the FM-3 will still be our newest tuner in 1979.

But we do know it won't be out of date.

DYNACO, INC., 3060 JEFFERSON ST., PHILA., PA. 19121

TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH



● **SPEAKER TESTING:** The following interchange between Roy Allison, Vice President of Acoustic Research, and myself reflects two different views on speaker testing. Time will resolve the dispute, but meanwhile I'm happy to share the discussion with readers of this column. By way of somewhat equalizing the advantage regular columnists have over one-time complainants, I have arranged for Mr. Allison to have the last word—at least for this month. Mr. Allison's letter follows.

Dear Mr. Hirsch: It is a matter of history that AR components have always received very favorable reviews in all publications, including *STEREO REVIEW*, so much so that we quote from them in our advertising. We consider the Hirsch-Houck report on the AR-5 speaker system in the December 1968 issue of *STEREO REVIEW* to be another favorable one indeed. Unfortunately, a favorable review is not always a flawless review.

In the AR-5 review you took exception to the indicated "normal" level control setting, saying that under these conditions there is a depression in the area around 2,000 Hz. It was stated that with the mid-range control at maximum setting instead of at "normal" this condition is eliminated. If such a depression did in fact exist, it would not be corrected by turning the mid-range control to maximum. The AR-5's mid-range speaker covers the frequency range from 650 Hz to 5,000 Hz—a range of three full octaves—and the mid-range control affects the output of the system at all frequencies within this band as well as at 2,000 Hz. The dip would still be there.

As a direct result of this comment in the AR-5 report, AR's good faith has been questioned in letters, some indignant, asking us to explain why our published response curves do not show a 2,000-Hz dip. We have to reply that we are, of course, not responsible for the test methods or evaluations made by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories. Acoustic Research is the only speaker manufacturer that publishes valid measurements of significant performance characteristics, made on a rigorous basis in accordance with the standards set forth by the EIA and American Standards Association. They can be repeated by anyone who wishes to exercise the same care and rigor. Furthermore, Acoustic Research guarantees not only the workmanship of its speakers but also that they will perform in accordance with published specifications for a period of five years from the date of purchase. We know of no others in the industry who provide this guarantee.

Consequently, it is necessary that we know with great precision the performance of each individual AR speaker system, and we know that no AR-5 has a depression at 2,000 Hz. The conclusion by Hirsch-Houck is in error, probably due to conditions in the listening environment where the tests were made.

The mid-range and tweeter units of the AR-3a and AR-5 are identical in performance, and the level-control "normal" positions on both systems are set so as to give the same balance with respect to woofer output. Yet, when Hirsch-Houck Laboratories reported on the AR-3a in the June, 1968 issue of *STEREO REVIEW*, you found that the AR-3a measurements gave "the best frequency response curves we have ever made with our present test setup." No 2,000-Hz dip was found. However, Hirsch-Houck did find ". . . a single sharp dip of about 5 dB at 10,000 Hz," which, you went on to say, "almost surely was caused by room or microphone phasing effects . . ." We can only suggest that a similar set of circumstances was perhaps responsible for the 2,000-Hz dip reported for the AR-5.

ROY ALLISON
Acoustic Research, Inc.

Mr. Hirsch replies: Mr. Allison's letter prompts me to repeat a statement I have made on several occasions in this column. Specifically: our speaker test results *cannot*

be compared directly to those of any manufacturer or any other testing agency. They are made under nonstandard conditions (which we nevertheless believe to be valid and meaningful for our purposes), and can *only* be used for making rough comparisons with other speakers we've tested in the same manner.

Naturally, AR cannot be bound by any of our test findings—nor can we be bound by theirs. I am quite familiar with their instruments and facilities, and have the highest regard for their integrity and technical competence. I am certain that the individual drivers of an AR-5, measured in an anechoic chamber, have a response as flat as they appear to be on the curves that AR supplied to me. The curves are indeed impressive, and I'm sure that they could be validated by anyone using the same test setup.

Part of the problem is that I do not believe that an anechoic environment is an adequate basis for judging how a speaker will sound in the home. Our "chamber" is simply a normal "live" room in which one can listen to

REVIEWED THIS MONTH



Jensen TF-25 Speaker System
Garrard SL 95 Automatic Turntable
Allied TR-1080 Tape Recorder

music without distress. This, of course, cannot be said for either an anechoic or reverberant chamber. Our ten microphones sample the sound at different angles from the speaker front and at distances from 2 to 12 feet. Most important is the fact that all speakers are tested in the same manner, and in the case of "bookshelf" speakers are all mounted in the same position.

If the AR-5 has a "flat" upper-middle range, we are forced to conclude that practically every other speaker we have tested has a substantial rise in that region. This is not impossible, but it seems highly unlikely. How do we account for the fact that the AR-3a, with identical high-frequency drivers, when tested under identical conditions, does not exhibit this characteristic? Quite frankly, we cannot explain this, but when the response curves for both speakers are plotted together it is plain that the response of the AR-5 in the region from 1 kHz to 5 kHz is depressed appreciably with respect to that of the AR-3a.

When we encounter an anomalous situation such as this, our tendency is to question our test setup. In this case, as it happens, I heard this characteristic of the AR-5 clearly (with the mid-range control set at the dot) while listening to another sample in a totally different environment, before we had made any measurements. Could our *microphones* have been prejudiced by my listening impressions?

Another possibly pertinent fact is that the measurements were made by my partner Gladden Houck, without any previous consultation with me; we can therefore rule out the possibility that any subconscious reaction on his part to my feelings influenced his conduct of the test. —J. H.

Mr. Allison rebuts: It is self-evident that speakers are meant for use in living rooms and not anechoic chambers or reverberant chambers. But it is sophistry to conclude from this that response tests made in a living room are meaningful, and that tests made under more controlled, standard conditions are not. Exactly the opposite is true.

Airfoil designs are generated by computers and tested in wind tunnels. Are these tests invalid because airplanes aren't intended to fly in wind tunnels? No one would make

such a claim. The ultimate test of an airplane is how well it flies in service, and it has been demonstrated that tests made under controlled conditions in wind tunnels predict accurately how the airplane will fly.

Living-room resonances and reflections affect the microphone measurement of speaker response so violently that separation of the actual output of the speaker from these extraneous elements is almost impossible. Small differences in microphone and speaker placement produce radical differences in the measurement results from one test to the next, and the differences are even more pronounced if you go from one "normal" living room to another.

Compared with these gross variations, the differences in acoustic output between a \$50 violin and a Stradivarius, or of the voices of two of your friends, are minor ones. You can hear and recognize these differences easily no matter what living room you're in, but you will almost certainly not be able to *measure* the differences with microphones in that room. In order to make measurements with sufficient sensitivity to detect audible differences, and with sufficient repeatability to justify confidence in the results, you must do what the human ear and brain combination can do: eliminate nearly all room-response variables. In other words, you *must* make the measurements anechoically. The same is true of loudspeakers if you want to know whether or not they will be able to reproduce such differences accurately.

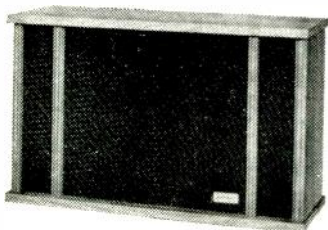
There isn't anything unique or mysterious about AR's test procedures; they are done in accordance with internationally accepted standards, and they produce results that have excellent correlation with what people can hear in a "normal" room *when they have the original sound for direct, side-by-side comparison*. As with an airplane, the ultimate test of a loudspeaker is how closely it approaches the design goal in actual service. Our design goal is accurate reproduction of the original sound. We have proved the validity of our measurement procedures over and over again by means of public live-*vs.*-recorded music programs.

Since our tests are valid, then logic dictates the conclusion that measurements made by other means, with differing test results, are not valid. Our most careful tests show the response of the AR-5 to be virtually identical with that of the AR-3a down to very low frequencies. They sound identical when placed side-by-side and played alternately, except for the AR-3a's occasional extra contribution at the bass extremity. There is no difference in these systems either at 2,000 Hz or at 10,000 Hz, and neither system has a dip at either frequency. —R. A.

≈ EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS ≈

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

JENSEN TF-25 SPEAKER SYSTEM



● AS ONE of the largest manufacturers of "raw" speakers and speaker systems, Jensen produces systems from the lowest priced (under \$15) to the highest (almost \$900). However, a model in the \$85 to \$90 bracket has until now been absent from the Jensen line, and the new Model TF-25 is designed to fill that gap.

Unlike most so-called "bookshelf" systems, the Jensen TF-25, by virtue of its depth of only 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches and weight of about 22 pounds, can actually be placed on an ordinary bookshelf. Its attractive walnut cabinet is 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and 14 inches high. A box of these proportions is difficult to make particularly attractive aesthetically, but Jensen has made a valiant effort, using fluted side trim and a couple of vertical strips to break up the expanse of grille cloth.

The woofer of this two-way system is a 10-inch Flexair model with a free-air resonance of 25 Hz. Crossover to a horn tweeter takes place at 3,000 Hz. A level control at the rear of the cabinet is capable of adjusting the tweeter output from off to very bright. Jensen recommends set-

(Continued on page 42)

match your auto-turnstile to the quality of a Sherwood 6000

The No-Compromise "Sound Center" for Limited Space.

Now get maximum performance in a mini-space! Sherwood's new 6000 is the full-feature, 120-watt music power AM/FM "STEREO SOUND CENTER" that provides unlimited choice of matching components. Choose any automatic turntable*—any magnetic cartridge. Mount perfectly on the pre-cut oiled walnut cabinet. Choose any speaker. Big or little, low or high efficiency. Your Sherwood 6000 has the power to spare for clean, pure, wall-to-wall sound. Compare features. FET FM tuner for ultra-sensitivity. Front-panel tape dubbing and headphone jacks. Stereo and mono extension speakers. As the high-performance heart of the finest component system, the Sherwood 6000 takes no more space than "compromise compacts." It's the modern solution to big sound in small space. Features: 120 watts music power, 1.8 μ v IHF sensitivity, -95 db crossmodulation rejection, automatic FM stereo switching, zero-center tuning meter, front and rear panel tape inputs/outputs, mono speaker output. Perfect match for your 6000—Sherwood's new Berkshire II speaker system: slim 9" deep cabinet with 12" woofer, 5" mid range, 160° "omni-polar" tweeter, 28-22,000 Hz response.

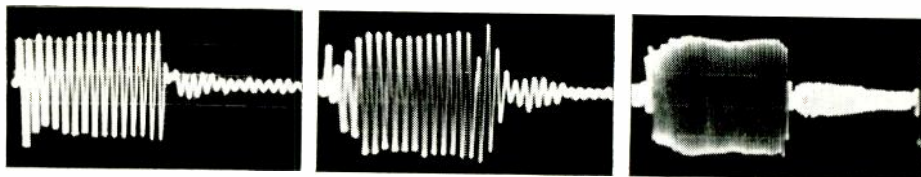


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Oscilloscope photos of the tone-burst response of the Jensen TF-25 loud-speaker system. Tone bursts are shown for frequencies of (left to right) 370, 3,500, and 9,000 Hz.



ting this control by ear, and we found that it produced the best aural balance between highs and lows at about three-quarters maximum.

With the TF-25 mounted on a mid-wall shelf in the normal manner, we measured its frequency response at ten points in the room and averaged the results to obtain a composite curve. The response was ± 5.5 dB from 60 to 15,000 Hz and was relatively smooth throughout that range. We could have made the curve a bit flatter at the high end by further advancing the tweeter-level control, but this caused the system to sound too bright for our taste.

An interesting aspect of the TF-25 was its low-frequency response curve. There was a rapid drop in response below about 70 Hz, with the output below 50 Hz being insignificant from a listening standpoint. On the other hand, the response was exceptionally flat down to somewhere between 60 and 70 Hz, whereas most speakers show a gradual loss of low-frequency output beginning at a higher frequency.

The low-frequency harmonic distortion of the TF-25 was extremely low, amounting to only 2 per cent at 50 Hz and 6 per cent at 20 Hz. This might seem to be an academic consideration in view of its reduced output at those frequencies, but in practical terms it means that this speaker does not produce any significant distortion or false bass

at the lowest frequencies, and that it can be driven quite hard (or can be equalized with tone controls of the proper characteristics) without breaking up. Unfortunately, few tone controls are able to apply appreciable boost below 100 Hz without affecting higher frequencies, so most users will probably have to settle for the intrinsic response of the system. The tone-burst transient response was good, though not exceptional. Few speakers in the price class of the TF-25 can do any better, however.

In listening tests, the Jensen TF-25 had a very smooth, balanced, and uncolored sound which could be enjoyed for hours without listening fatigue. Surprisingly, in view of the measured bass response, the system's low end was full and very solid. There was also a complete absence of boom, but this follows logically from the flat bass-response curve. From its reproduction of most program material, one would think that this system went down another octave below its actual cut-off. The reason, apparently, is that most music has little content below 60 Hz (try listening to a pure 60-Hz tone as reproduced by a good speaker, and you will be surprised how low it sounds). The flat response and lack of distortion combine to make this a thoroughly satisfactory bass reproducer, as well as a good all-around loudspeaker system in the under-\$100 category. The TF-25 is priced at \$89.50.

For more information, circle 157 on reader service card

GARRARD SL 95 AUTOMATIC TURNTABLE



● THE term "automatic turntable" was coined by Garrard for their "Type A" several years ago, and has since been applied by manufacturers to record changers whose performance was claimed to be comparable to that of a good turntable with a separate manual arm. The SL 95 is the latest and most advanced automatic turntable in the Garrard line.

The SL 95 has a unique motor, which combines the high starting torque and low rumble of a good induction motor with the constant operating speed of a synchronous motor. The latter characteristic assures correct and constant speed of the turntable over a very wide range of line-voltage variations. Garrard claims that the motor speed will not change with an a.c. line-voltage variation over a range of 25 to 250 volts. We checked and verified this over a range of 30 to 135 volts, a span that should satisfy any practical requirement in this country.

The rotating platter of the SL 95 is a balanced 3-pound nonferrous casting, 11½ inches in diameter, driven through an idler wheel at 33½, 45, or 78 rpm. The speed-selector knob also indexes the arm set-down for 7-inch discs when set to 45 rpm and for 12-inch discs at 78 rpm; it has three

positions for 33½ rpm record sizes of 7, 10, and 12 inches.

The tone arm is of extruded aluminum, with an afrormosia wood insert that provides mechanical damping as well as decoration. The arm is balanced by an adjustable counterweight, isolated in rubber, and the tracking force is applied by a spring through a small wheel with click stops at ¼-gram intervals. Anti-skating correction is applied through a sliding weight on a small lever at the base of the arm pivot. The cartridge mounts in a slide that is easily removed from and reinstalled in the arm. Since the slide is fully exposed on all sides, cartridge installation is simplified. Spacers and balance weights are supplied to accommodate virtually any cartridge.

The automatic record-changer spindle supports the records at their centers and contains the drop-release mechanism. Unlike other changers whose spindles control the record drop, the Garrard SL 95 also supports the record stack at its edge. The rear record-support platform retracts to the level of the motor board when manual operation is used, and springs to its operating height at the touch of a button. For single-disc manual play, the changer spindle is removed and a short spindle that rotates with the turntable platter is inserted.

In addition to the speed/arm-index selector, the SL 95 has two other operating controls. The AUTO lever institutes the automatic playing cycle, and it is used to stop play at any time or to reject or repeat a record. When the MANUAL lever is set to PLAY, the turntable starts and the arm must be positioned manually. At the end of the record, the arm returns to the rest by itself, and the motor shuts off. A further rotation of the MANUAL lever to the LIFT position raises the pickup gently from the record; returning

(Continued on page 44)

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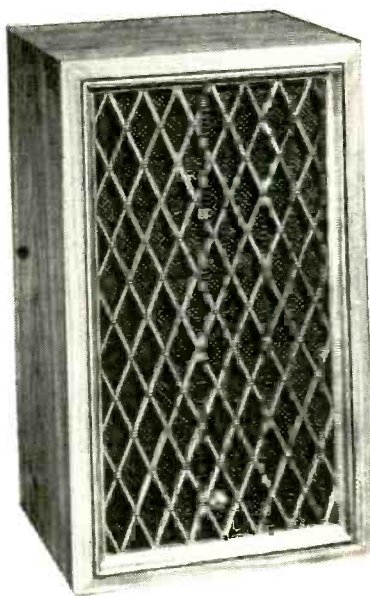
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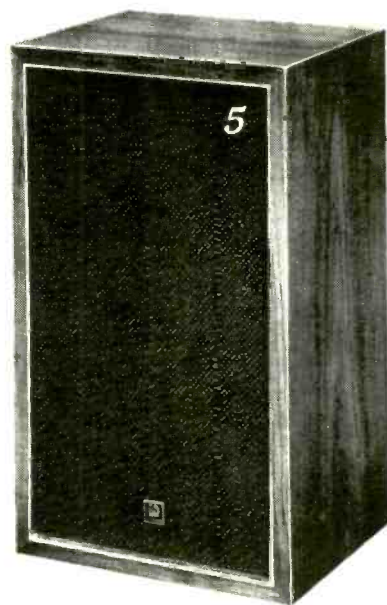
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the lever to the center PLAY position lowers the pickup slowly back into the groove. This function is also usable during automatic play. The arm lift and lowering action was very smooth, although the lever must be handled gently to avoid jarring the turntable.

The Garrard SL 95 can be mounted on an optional molded black plastic base of unusual design. The base contains concealed compartments for storing spindles and other accessories. The optional smoky plastic dust cover slides off or hinges upward for access to the turntable.

In our laboratory tests, the rumble of the SL 95 was -32 dB by NAB standards. Excluding vertical rumble components, it was -35 dB. Wow was 0.08 per cent at 33 1/3 rpm, 0.04 per cent at 45 rpm, and 0.03 per cent at 78 rpm. Flutter was an excellent 0.025 per cent (the residual of our test equipment) at all three speeds. The arm-tracking error was exceptionally low: zero near the center of the record and less than 0.6 degree per inch of radius at the outside. It should be the same for all cartridges of standard mounting dimensions. However, no adjustment

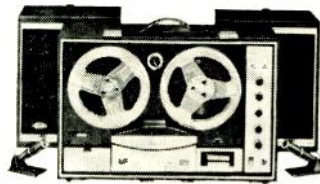
is provided for the few cartridges that have nonstandard mounting dimensions.

The tracking-force dial calibration was quite accurate, being exact at 1 and 2 grams and about 0.2 gram in error at higher settings. This required balancing the arm at slightly above the horizontal; if balanced on the horizontal as the instructions recommend, the error would be an additional one or two tenths of a gram. The anti-skating correction worked well, although we found that best results were obtained using a marked setting one or two grams higher than the tracking-force setting.

In use tests, the Garrard SL 95 performed flawlessly. From both mechanical operation and listening quality standpoints it left nothing to be desired. The Garrard SL 95 sells for \$129.50. The optional base is \$5.95, as is the plastic dust cover. For an additional \$10, the base can be obtained with the "Power-Matic" switch which can be set to shut off the amplifier or receiver when the record player shuts off at the end of a play cycle.

For more information, circle 158 on reader service card

ALLIED TR-1080 AUTOMATIC-REVERSE TAPE RECORDER



● REGARDLESS of the degree to which tape loading and threading has been simplified, most reel-to-reel stereo recorders require that the reels be removed, interchanged, and rethreaded midway in the program. Automatic tape reversal is an obvious answer to this problem. Most auto-reversal systems require either recording a subsonic tone or placing a piece of pressure-sensitive conducting foil on the tape at the point where reversal is desired. At the reversal point, the capstan-drive direction is reversed and a playback head, aligned with tracks two and four, is switched into the playback-amplifier inputs. Usually the reversal takes no more than a second or so, and since it occurs at a pause in the program, it is hardly noticeable.

Most auto-reverse recorders perform this function only during playback. When making a recording, one must still

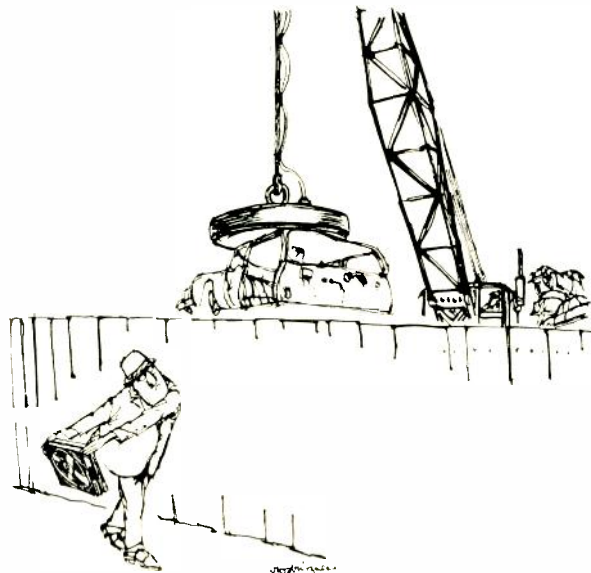
manually interchange reels at the half-way point, with the attendant risk of missing some of the program material. The new Allied TR-1080 Automatic-Reverse recorder handles this situation very neatly by having a pair of record/playback heads with the single erase head centered between them. Thus the tape direction can be reversed during recording at the touch of a lever without any loss of program material. A piece of foil placed on the tape at the desired reversal point then takes care of reversal automatically during play.

The TR-1080 has a twin rocker-switch transport control. The two switch levers (one for playback and recording, one for wind or rewind) are clearly marked with arrows indicating the direction of tape movement. While playing, recording, winding, or rewinding, the tape direction can be changed at will. The tape must be stopped, however, before engaging either fast-speed mode. The TR-1080 transport is solenoid controlled, making for smooth and positive operation.

This is a three-speed recorder (1 7/8, 3 3/4, and 7 1/2 ips), and the speed-change knob simultaneously switches in the appropriate playback equalization. The PAUSE button has a quick-release feature that puts the tape in motion in a split second, with very little of the start-up "wow" that one finds with some recorders. The recording controls are concealed by a hinged door on the panel, behind which are the two safety-interlock buttons and the microphone jacks. The twin recording-level meters are illuminated when their respective channels are energized.

The Allied TR-1080 is a portable machine whose two detachable speakers form a cover for the deck. Its built-in solid-state amplifiers have bass and treble tone controls and separate volume controls. The latter adjusts recording levels as well as speaker-playback volume. The line outputs that provide for connection to an external audio system are not affected by the volume or tone controls, and the speakers can be switched off when the recorder is so used. In addition to the front-panel microphone jacks, there are a pair of high-level AUX inputs in the rear. The TR-1080, being basically a two-head machine, cannot monitor off the tape while recording, although the signal being recorded can be monitored with stereo headphones through a front-panel jack. The mode-selector switch offers a choice of stereo, mono, or sound-on-sound recording. In the latter mode, either channel can be copied onto the

(Continued on page 46)



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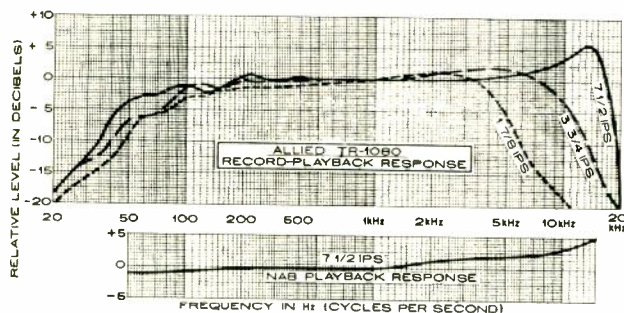


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CIRCLE NO. 5 ON READER SERVICE CARD

other, together with new material. The automatic-reverse operation has three modes, selected by a slide switch. In AUTO-REVERSE, the tape plays completely in both directions and the machine then shuts itself off. In REPEAT, it continuously reverses itself at each end. In AUTO STOP, the tape stops rather than reverses when the conducting foil is contacted.

In our laboratory tests, the Allied TR-1080 proved to be a fine performer. At 7½ ips, its record-playback frequency



response was ± 5 dB from 45 to 18,000 Hz. At 3¾ ips, it was ± 4 dB from 60 to 11,800 Hz, and at 1⅞ ips it was ± 4 dB from 55 to 5,200 Hz. The 7½-ips NAB playback response with the Ampex 31321-04 test tape was +5, -1.3 dB from 50 to 15,000 Hz. The tests were conducted with Scotch 111 tape, and the response was virtually identical on both channels and in both directions of tape travel.

Wow was 0.04 per cent at 7½ ips, and 0.085 per cent at 3¾ ips. Flutter measured 0.065 per cent and 0.09 per cent at the two speeds. Because a standard 1⅞-ips test tape is not available, wow and flutter were not measured at that speed, but no significant amounts were audible. The signal-

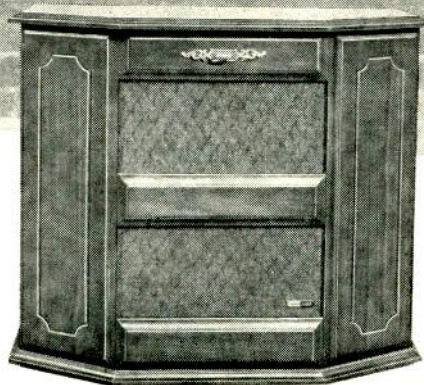
to-noise ratio, referred to the "0-dB" recording level on the machine's meters, was -16.5 dB at 7½ ips. It was about 7 dB better when referred to the usual 3 per cent distortion level, which drove the recording-level meters to about +10 dB. To achieve a 0-dB record level, 7.4 millivolts was required at the AUX inputs and 0.4 millivolt at the microphone inputs. The corresponding line-output signal was 0.65 volt. We found that the fast-forward and rewind speeds were rather slow, requiring 2 minutes and 36 seconds to handle 1,200 feet of tape. Even so, it was appreciably better than the specified 3 minutes and 30 seconds. Tape-playing and recording speeds were exact.

The sound quality of the Allied TR-1080 played through an external stereo system was excellent. At 7½ ips there was a negligible change in the recorded sound of FM broadcasts. At 3¾ ips, it was possible, though difficult, to detect a slight loss of extreme highs. Even at 1⅞ ips, the sound was better than AM-broadcast quality, and was certainly adequate for voice and non-critical music recording.

The TR-1080 comes with two dynamic microphones, about as good as any we have seen supplied with comparable tape recorders. The speakers, though small, are quite listenable when the recorder's bass control is set for full boost. The microphones, their stands, and all cables store in a covered compartment in the rear of the case when not in use. The Allied TR-1080 is one of the more versatile and easy-to-use tape recorders in its price class. One would have to spend hundreds of dollars more to get better performance, and this could be detected only by a very critical comparison. It is a fine value at \$349.95, complete with microphones, cables, and speakers. The same deck, less microphones, power amplifiers, and speakers, is available as the TD-1070 for \$299.95.

For more information, circle 159 on reader service card

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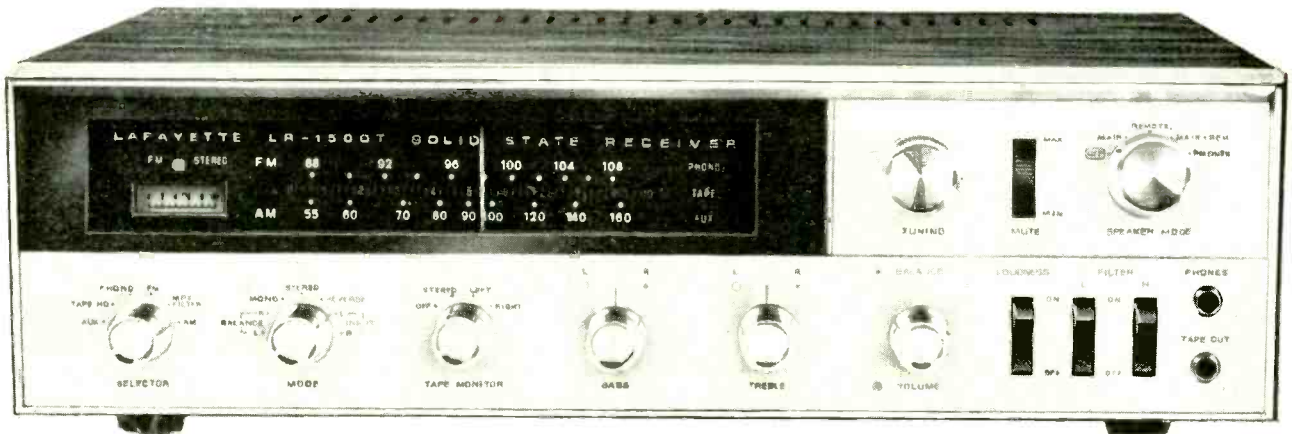
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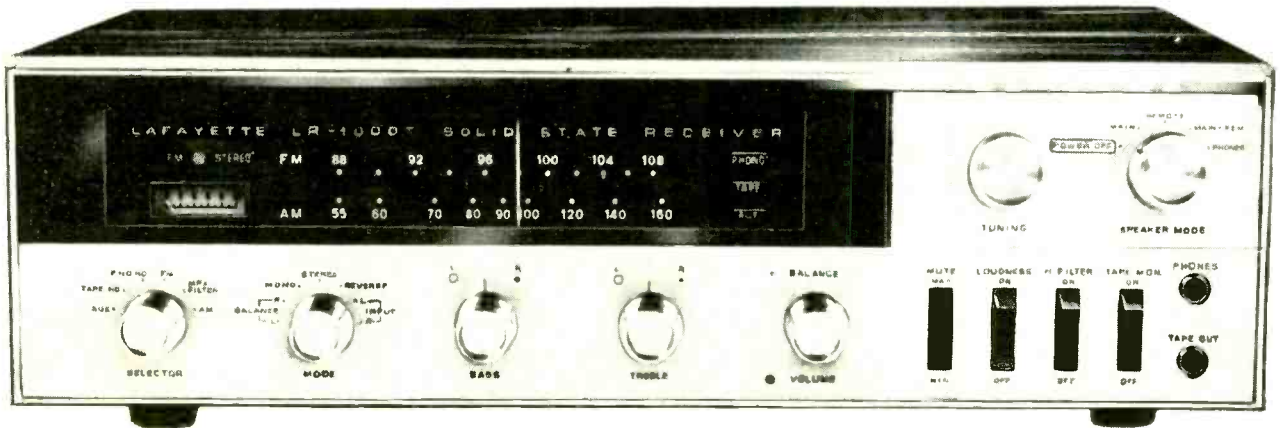
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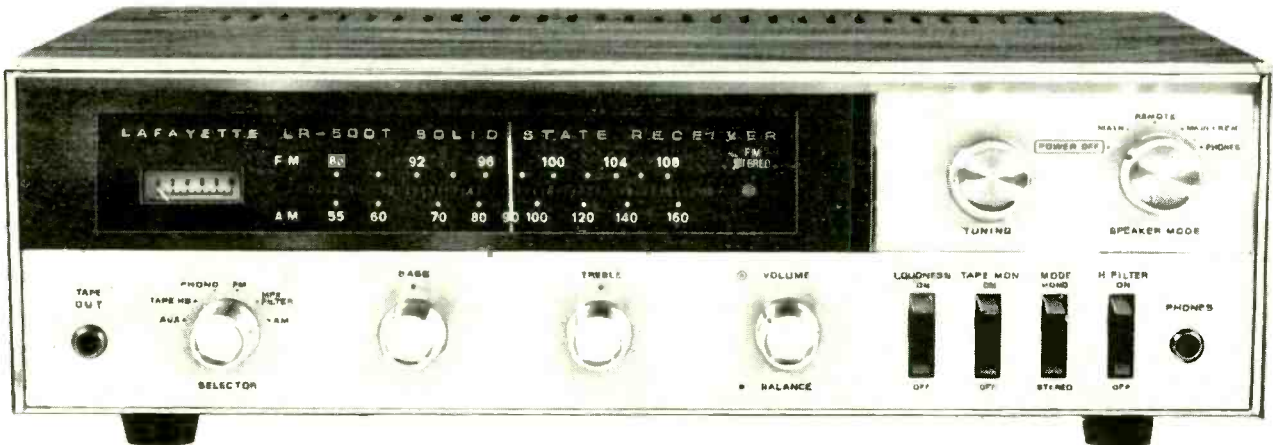
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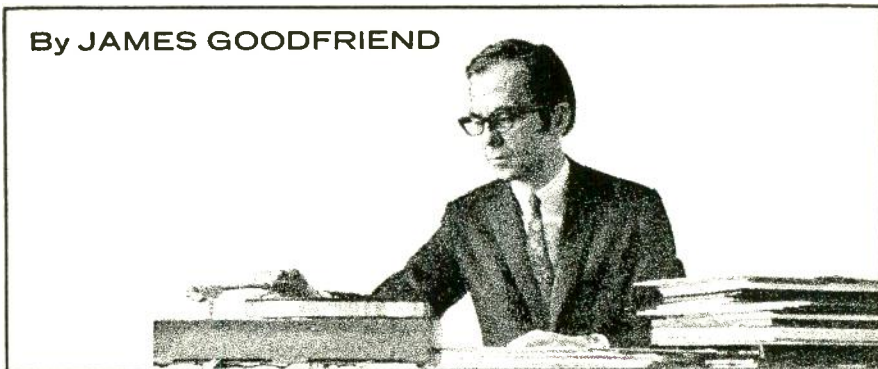
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50

By JAMES GOODFRIEND



GOING ON RECORD

YOUNG ARTISTS AND OLD MUSIC

I SEE by the Schwann Long Playing Record Catalog that there are now twenty available recordings of the Brahms Second Piano Concerto, and that at least seven of them are played by pianists under the age of fifty. I find this interesting, because a pianist of fewer than fifty years is still, by most standards, a young man, and the Brahms Second used to be thought of as a concerto for older men, the sort of work that required that a performer have the experience and maturity of most of a lifetime to set forth its musical message effectively. Whether or not you agree with the theory, the current status of the Brahms Second, *vis-à-vis* recordings, is representative of the standard repertoire as a whole: side by side with the recordings by older, established artists, there exist recordings by younger, not-so-well-established artists. And, were they given the opportunity, there are hundreds of other young artists, not so represented, who would gladly join the competition. But, in reality and in the minds of record buyers, can they compete?

On the surface of it, nothing is more logical than that record companies search out and audition young talent—performers who have made some reputation for themselves, who may have won a competition or two or appeared once with a major symphony orchestra. Great violinists, after all, are not born every day, and there will always be a need for someone to re-record the Beethoven and Tchaikovsky concertos (if nothing else) after today's great names have passed. But though sports have their minor leagues and amateur competitions, literature has its "little" magazines, and even live music allows a young artist to build a career slowly through recitals off the route of the grand tour, a recording company contemplating the talents of a new artist knows it can do only one of two things with him: it can make a record with him, or it can not make a record with him. There is no third choice.

If the company declines the opportunity we hear no more of it. But

should they choose to make the record, then one more competitor is in the ring, one more possible choice is offered to the prospective purchaser of, more often than not, a piece of the standard repertoire. To the average record buyer, barring the sort of extra-musical doings that surrounded the recording debuts of Van Cliburn and André Watts (no slight on them), the choice between older, established artists and young relative unknowns is no difficult choice at all. He is, in his own mind, buying Brahms, or Schumann, or whatever, and he finds it natural to assume, as many critics do too, that what he is after will be best afforded by one whose reputation is secure. In truth, it is only fair to the Rubinsteins, the Backhauses, the Heifetzes, and the Szigetis that their years of accomplishment be honored by such thoughts.

BUT something is missing. There is a whole dimension of music unaccounted for in so cut-and-dried a decision. In the simplest terms, there must be some reason, other than "updated sonics," why the standard repertoire is recorded again and again through the years and why each new version of it is, at the very least, interesting.

It will seem like heresy to some to say so, but the realization of the composer's intentions is only a *part* of the performance of a musical score. Music is mathematical and abstract only in its theory, and in the sense that it exists on a plane of expression so distant from more everyday realities that it is difficult, if not impossible, to say that a bit of music "expresses" any one particular thing. But music does indeed express something: the personality of the man who composed it. The number of musical problems to be set may be infinite, and the possible solutions of those problems myriad, but the choice of problem and the mode of solution are determined and circumscribed by the nature of the composer. Were they not, we could not tell Haydn from Mozart.

(Continued on page 52)

STEREO REVIEW

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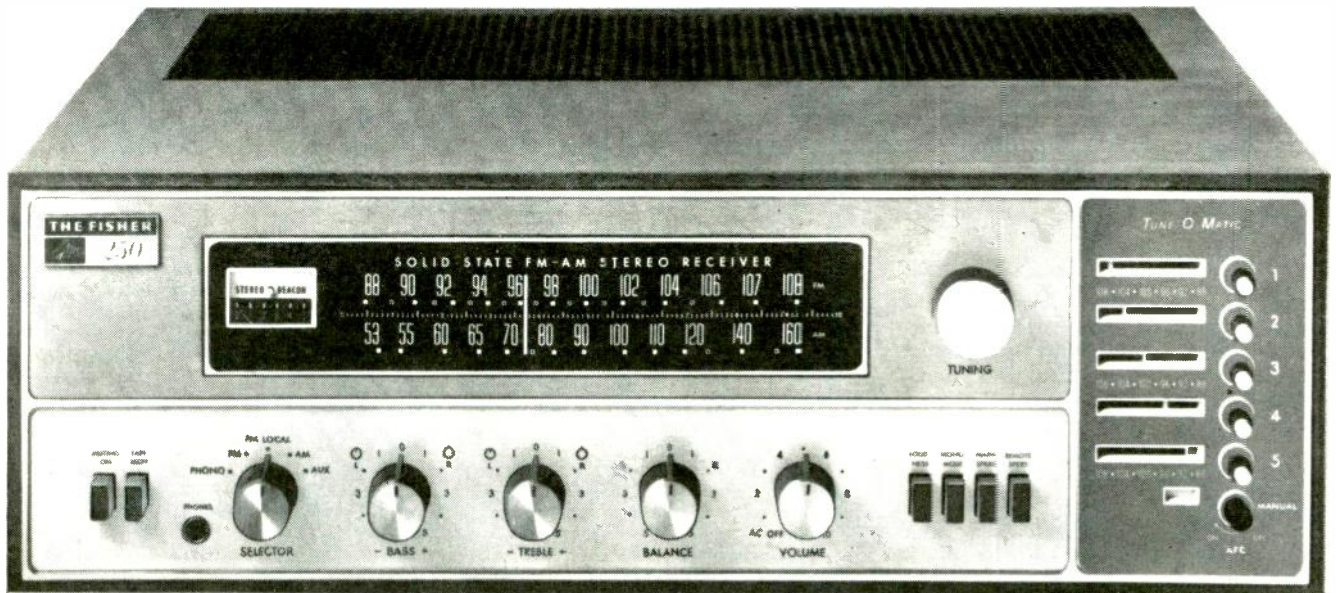
A composition, then, is a pattern of personality, as specific as any set of psychological tests, even though we may not (and perhaps cannot) "read" it in the same way. Performers too have their patterns of personality. One can not only predict that Oistrakh and Heifetz and Stern will play any given work differently, one can recognize which one it is that is playing, through a familiarity with the particular musical personality and a perception of its salient characteristics.

AND so there is a reason to listen to music, at times, differently; to listen to it, for example, as performance rather than as composition, for it exists in both ways. And beyond this, the superimposition of the performer's personality on the composer's creates yet a third pattern, a combination of the two, and one that may tell us something we did not know before about the music itself. Occasionally, such a combined pattern is of such overwhelming power and beauty that it becomes for us a temporary criterion of how that music *can* sound. This is a danger of recordings: that we hear a favorite performance too many times to the exclusion of other performances and we slowly and unwittingly convince ourselves that this is not merely how the music *can* sound but how it *must* sound. This is wrong. For the single interpretation is not the work; the composition itself remains the fixed, set problem, admitting of an almost infinite number of personal solutions and always awaiting the next.

So, too, there is a reason to seek out and know the performances of young artists, for they are personalities too, unique as individuals, perhaps strikingly different from the older masters as a group. Performing artists, as much as composers, are both shapers and reflectors of their own times, and perhaps there is as much to learn about these musical decades from the way Glenn Gould plays Beethoven or Peter Serkin plays Schubert as from a quartet by Elliott Carter or a tape piece by Milton Babbitt. And just as it is impossible to know the meaning of a chord without knowing its context, it is impossible to know a musical composition without knowing its performances—the million greater or lesser variations of emphases that result from the interaction of personalities and their patterns.

Therefore, I urge the reader to open his ears to the unfamiliar, the new, the young, and the promising, without discarding the old, the established, the great. There is more music past and to come than we can dream of, but let us at least listen to the fullness of what is here and not limit the musical experience by restrictions of name, age, and familiarity, or preoccupation with one aspect of a multi-faceted art.

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RICHARD STRAUSS'

**EIN
HELDENLEBEN**

RICHARD STRAUSS
An 1899 photograph

DURING the last five months of 1898, Richard Strauss produced the seventh of his nine monumental symphonic poems—from *Don Juan* (1888) to *Ein Alpensinfonie* (1911-1915)—that span the period between the death of Wagner in the 1880's and the outbreak of the First World War. Strauss at that time was thirty-four years old, a world-renowned composer and conductor with many successes behind him. Instantly, the new work became notorious as an extreme example of musical conceit: titled *Ein Heldenleben*—"A Hero's Life"—it attempted nothing less than a biography in tone of the struggles and victories of a heroic battler. And in order to remove any doubt about the identity of the hero, one section of the score was devoted to elaborate quotations from more than half a dozen of Strauss' earlier compositions.

Musical autobiography is a respected and venerable procedure that has been practiced over the centuries by such stalwart figures as Bach (*Capriccio on the Departure of his Beloved Brother*), Beethoven (the third movement from the String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 132, which the composer referred to as a song of thanksgiving by a convalescent), and Bartók (*Concerto for Orchestra*, which Bartók stated was a progression from gloom to life-assertion, mirroring his own circumstances at the time of composition). Strauss' arrogant pretensions, however, saddled his score with a major extra-musical problem to overcome. That the problem *was* overcome in a comparatively short period of time is

testimony to the sure-handed vitality and emotional range of the sumptuously scored work. *Ein Heldenleben* has its moments of bathos and banality, to be sure, but it also exudes a raw and fascinating power, and the concluding pages of gentle and contemplative introspection are among the finest that Strauss ever wrote.

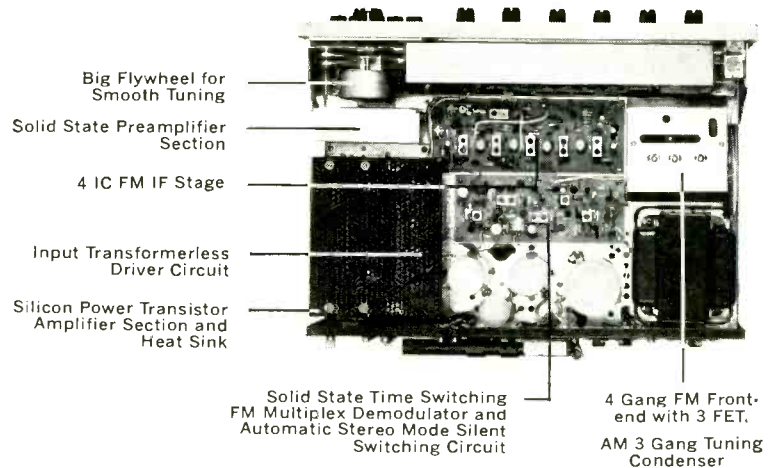
Though the work is played without pause, the vast structure of the music can be divided into six parts: The Hero, The Hero's Adversaries, The Hero's Helpmate, The Hero's Battlefield, The Hero's Works of Peace, The Hero's Release from the World and the Fulfillment of His Life. There are those who have compared the score to a sprawling symphonic movement in classical form. The first two parts can be seen as the first subject laid out elaborately and with many subsidiary themes; The Hero's Helpmate provides the contrasting second subject; The Hero's Battlefield is the working out of these themes, with a culminating recapitulation; and the last two sections are an enormous coda. Following is a detailed discussion of the parts:

(1) *The Hero*. The opening of the piece is one of the greatest exordiums in all music. Horns and strings introduce a wide-leaping melody that covers three and a half octaves in its first nine bars. It is full of energy and assurance, and boldly paints for us the vigorous and assertive side of the hero's character. The section builds to a tremendous climax of defiance on a long loud chord.

(Continued on page 58)

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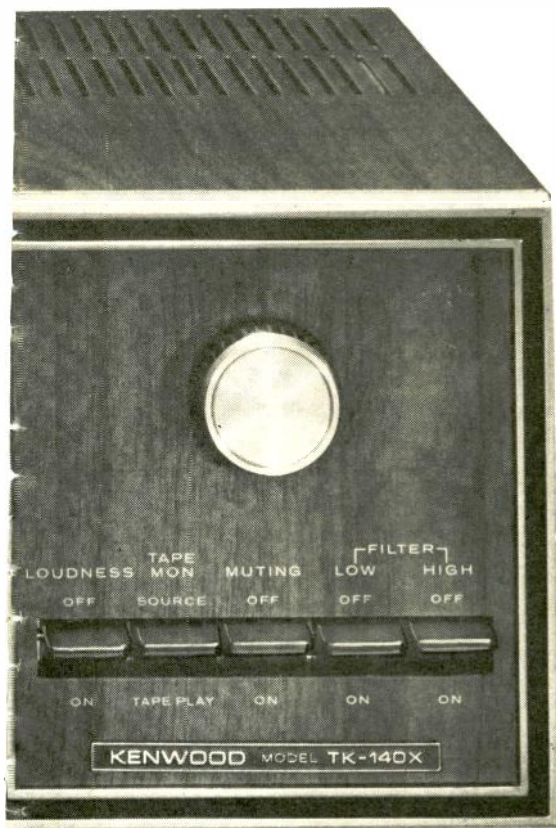
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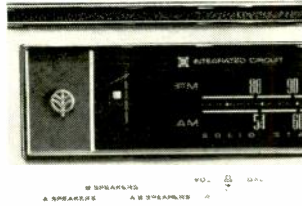
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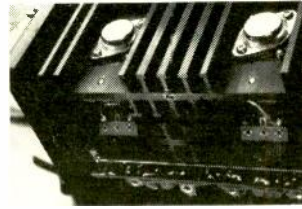
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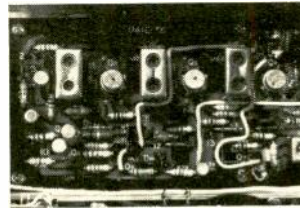


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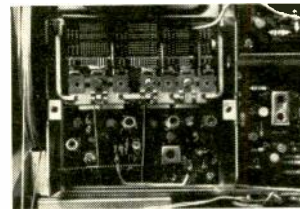


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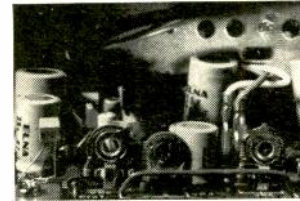
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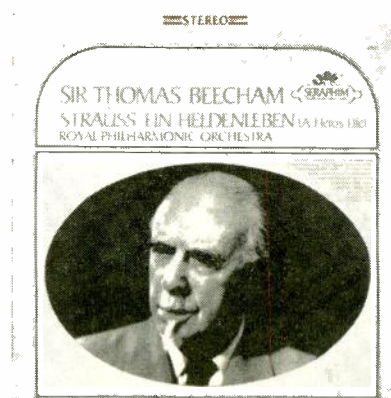
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CIRCLE NO. 32 ON READER SERVICE CARD



The sumptuous scoring of Richard Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben* seems to have been designed for stereo. Among the best available discs are Fritz Reiner's early-Fifties reading (RCA Victorla), Zubin Mehta's recent London release with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in superb form, and Sir Thomas Beecham's uniquely transcendent 1960 recording, now on Seraphim.

(2) *The Hero's Adversaries.* A carping, malicious, and envious crew is introduced, with cackling and snarling phrases assigned to the woodwind instruments. Later the theme of the hero is heard in sad and disillusioned guise, but then he asserts himself and puts his enemies to rout.

(3) *The Hero's Helpmate.* An elaborate solo violin cadenza introduces the hero's beloved. At first she appears to be capricious and willful, refusing to heed the repeated urgings of a phrase in the low strings and brasses. Gradually, however, the two protagonists merge their voices and the music rises to a passionate love song. When this subsides to a soft held chord, the music of the adversaries is heard in the distance.

(4) *The Hero's Battlefield.* Distant trumpet fanfares interrupt the gentle reverie, and the call to arms is heard. An extraordinary battle scene is depicted, with drums and brasses in full fury, and at the climax of the section the theme of the hero is heard once again in unmistakable triumph.

(5) *The Hero's Works of Peace.* The victory is a lonely one, however, and our hero muses upon his past successes. It is in this section that Strauss parades a host of themes from his earlier works, including *Don Juan*, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, *Death and Transfiguration*, *Don Quixote*, *Macbeth*, *Till Eulenspiegel*, the opera *Guntram*, and the song *Traum durch die Dämmerung*.

(6) *The Hero's Release from the World, and the Fulfillment of His Life.* There is a final confrontation with his adversaries, but it is soon resolved. A new serenity infuses the music, and there are pages of exalted beauty, with a tender dialogue between the solo violin and the horn. The chief theme, now greatly broadened, is heard in the trumpets, and the music rises to an impassioned climax. Then the mood of tranquility returns, and the music ends with the violin solo intertwining with the themes of the hero.

Ein Heldenleben is a virtual syllabus of brilliant and powerful orchestration, and in the hands of a virtuoso conductor and orchestra it cannot fail to make a deep and lasting impression. Such an impression is made by half a dozen of the currently available recordings of the

score, among them the performances by Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon 138025), Erich Leinsdorf and the Boston Symphony (RCA LSC 2641), Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic (London CS 6608), Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia MS 6249), and Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony (RCA Victorla VICS/VIC 1042). All five of these versions find their respective conductors and orchestras in top form, and all are superbly recorded by the various engineering teams. Though Reiner's is the oldest of the five, dating from the early 1950's, it is a stunning example of early stereo recording technology. The newest of the lot is Mehta's, and a measure of his success with the music is his ability to stand comparison with such distinguished older interpreters. But perhaps the biggest surprise of Mehta's performance is the quality of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which sounds here like one of the world's great orchestras.

My own favorite among *Ein Heldenleben* recordings is the one Sir Thomas Beecham made with his Royal Philharmonic Orchestra not long before his death in 1961 (Seraphim S 60041). The power and majesty of the music find full measure in Beecham's reading, but it is in the quieter, more contemplative and philosophical sections that Beecham is quite unique—especially in the transcendent closing pages of the Epilogue, which have a cathartic quality as Beecham renders them.

Only two performances are available to the stereo tape fancier—and Beecham's is not one of them. Between the versions of Leinsdorf (RCA FTC 3006) and Karajan (DGG C 8025), my recommendation would be Leinsdorf's, for two reasons: the reproduction is more brilliant, and the RCA processing takes advantage of the longer-playing possibilities afforded by the tape medium. *Ein Heldenleben* is presented complete and uninterrupted on one sequence of the reel, and the other sequence provides a similarly complete and uninterrupted spread for Leinsdorf's foursquare and generally routine performance of Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony. But the attraction of having both scores available without interruption is a powerful one.

REPRINTS of the latest review of the complete "Basic Repertoire" are available without charge. Circle Number 160 on reader service card.



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MILTON BABBITT AND JOHN CAGE

Parallels and Paradoxes

By ERIC SALZMAN

NO UNDERSTANDING of American music in the last quarter century—indeed, of new music anywhere—is complete without some comprehension of the work of Milton Babbitt and John Cage. Born within a few years of each other (1916 and 1912, respectively), they developed contrasting but complementary aesthetics—"world views" as well as artistic and musical theories—which dominated new musical thought after World War II and which have since had tremendous resonance in many areas of thought and creative activity.

It would be impossible to imagine two more contrasting figures than Babbitt and Cage, the one the apostle of total rationality with a boundless faith in the ability of human intellect to order and control, the other the perfect anti-rationalist with a conscious abdication of consciousness and an insistence on accident and non-intention as a way of breaking down the distinction between life and art and becoming one with the universe. But the two composers are united by much more than mere opposition and oppositeness. Both men are like magnetic poles attracting eager disciples and sending out force fields that have left almost no area of creativity unaffected. Both have carried certain ideas to their ultimate far-out conclusions by taking a premise and deriving an entire experience from it—almost in the manner of a scientific test or experiment. Both have been among the first and the most successful in using the new technology and in helping to make it an acceptable medium of musical thought and communication.

The more one looks, the more one finds parallels and paradoxes. Cage, the father of happenings, environments, and mixed media, lives out his own Zen beliefs; his personality and his life are his true works of art—unlike his works, which are not like art at all but like life. On the other hand, Babbitt the intellectual, the master mathematician, the theorist and professor, the obscure and difficult positivist, is, in "real life," a very hip character who got his start on Tin Pan Alley and still knows every pop song written between 1930 and 1950, and whose hobbies are watching old movies on TV and playing the horses. It is Cage, the Los Angeleno, who lives the idyllic life in the Hudson River Valley. It is Babbitt, the Southerner, and professor at idyllic Princeton, who spurns the ivory tower and lives in the big town. It is Babbitt, the professor, not Cage, the founder of the "New York school," who is the ultra-New-York character, who knows every musician in town by his first name, whom young composers call in the middle of the night for advice on personal problems. It was Cage, the apostle of freedom, indeterminacy, and chance, not Babbitt the logician, who first worked with tape and electronics and who is now working with computers. It is Babbitt the positivist, not Cage the mystic philosopher, who says that his music exists for its own sake and has its own validity whether or not anyone listens—or whether or not it is even performed! It is Cage, the mushroom-picking, country-dwelling Zen Buddhist, who barnstorms around the world performing with a troupe of dancers and commands \$1,500 lecture fees. It is Babbitt, the abstract theorist with unshakeable confidence in the rational powers of man to order his environment, who expresses a peculiarly American (and largely unexportable) aesthetic. It is Cage, the Thoreau of music, the man who accepts

the universe and tries to sublimate his own personality to become one with it, who has become the showman, the international star, and the most influential figure in avant-garde arts since World War II.

In the simplest of terms, we can say that Babbitt's contribution rests on the application of total rationality and control to musical thought. His work is the embodiment in sound of thought processes. Not surprisingly, he has turned (although not exclusively) to electronic means, not for groovy new sounds, but for better control, for the opportunity to work with greater precision directly on his medium. Some of Babbitt's more recent vocal and instrumental compositions seem more outgoing and accessible than his early work. Perhaps it is fortuitous or even unconscious, but since he began working with sound synthesis, his music for live performers—whether mixed with tape or not—seems to have a greater flexibility and directness. But all his work shares the same intellectual and aesthetic basis: maximum variety out of minimum material. A defined, limited number of given elements are put through every possible permutation, and this—*Q.E.D.*—is the composition, precise and totally defined.

IF Babbitt's work is totally rationalized, Cage's elevates the irrational, the non-rational, the imprecise, the non-self-contained, the unpredictable, the random or indeterminate. Cage's early work, with its emphasis on a kind of delicate percussion sound and complex rhythmic organization, has many oriental qualities. But it was not until after World War II that he began to eliminate the role of consciousness in organizing the art experience. Cage's first work on this line in the late Forties and early Fifties exactly parallels Babbitt's first totally organized music. One of the important implications (often overlooked in all the fuss about "chance," "happenings," and the like) is the opening up of the natural external world as material for musical and artistic experience. This, as much as anything else, is the significance of his infamous 4'33" of silence or the almost equally notorious *Music for 12 Radios*. Finally, because of the philosophical and gestural ideas inherent in many of his activities (they are hardly "works" in the old sense), one can speak of a new theater inspired in part by his ideas and example. Such diverse manifestations as happenings, environments, participatory theater, mixed- and multi-media can trace many of their origins to the work, thought, and activity of John Cage.

American culture is full of paradoxes and contradictions; indeed, it thrives on them. It is in the nature of a complex, polycentric, technological culture that it produces and embraces huge ranges of experience—even contradictory experience. It is in the nature of much of the best new art and music that it is made up of and expresses both the ranges and the contradictions. American music at its best—Ives, jazz, Copland, the best new rock, or what have you—has always been involved with these "dimensions." If this is more true than ever today, we must thank not only the contributions of technology, but also those who found new techniques with which to use them creatively. And if one wants to understand the genius of new American music and where it is leading us, one must examine the fascinating and complementary contradictory contributions of Babbitt and Cage.



Stereo Review presents the fifteenth article in the American Composers Series

THE AMERICAN AVANT-GARDE

Part I: MILTON BABBITT

By RICHARD KOSTELANETZ

“SOME people say my music is ‘too cerebral.’ Actually, I believe in cerebral music—in the application of intellect to relevant matters. I never choose a note unless I know precisely why I want it there and can give several reasons why it and not another.” Indeed, the musical importance of Milton Babbitt stems largely from the impact of his extraordinary mind. As a composer, he assimilated the serial revolution of modern music initiated by Arnold Schoenberg, and then later, in an intellectual leap, extended its organizing principles into other musical dimensions, producing what has been called “total serialization.” In addition, he was among the first American composers to realize the

potentialities of electronic machines: several of his pieces for the RCA Synthesizer, such as *Philomel* (1963-1964) and *Ensembles for Synthesizer* (1961-1963), are among the most acclaimed examples of electronic music.

As a scholar and critic, Babbitt has offered a steady stream of articles, book reviews, lectures, and symposium contributions, particularly on the achievements and possibilities of modern music, and no one else in America has done as much to institutionalize Schoenberg’s innovations. As an admired teacher, now the Conant Professor of Music at Princeton University, Babbitt fathered a school of rigorously serial composers, instructed well-known musicians as varied as the Broadway song-writer

Stephen Sondheim (a private pupil) and the jazz pianist (and "serious" composer) Johnny Eaton (who once composed a piece called *Babbitty*), and influenced numerous prominent young critics and musicologists. Although his reputation is hardly as public as John Cage's or Elliott Carter's, few professional observers would dispute the fact that Babbitt's multifarious presence lends a particular shape and flavor to the current American musical scene.

The mind of Milton Babbitt informs everything he does, and since he possesses one of the most overwhelming intellects of our day, his thought processes all but radiate from his work. Immensely learned in both the sciences and the humanities, and intensely curious about all facets of life, he radiates brilliance as his conversation travels, if not leaps, from music to criticism to literature to philosophy to acoustics to his favorite pastimes, movies and football. And perhaps because one-upmanship is among his penchants, there seems to be nothing, from the merits of the world's Chinese restaurants to female beauty, that he cannot discuss with considerable knowledge and decisive distinctions. He patently finds the expression and exchange of ideas among life's primary pleasures, and possesses the capacity (if perhaps not the desire) to talk forever in an emphatic style somewhat inclined to hyperbole. His quick mind never fails to provide him with words, sentences, paragraphs, and even memorable aphorisms, all uttered with an enthusiasm that suggests he discovered these ideas just yesterday, and yet so perfectly articulated that listeners often suspect he is remembering a prepared talk. He is asked to lecture so often that he is one of perhaps two or three American composers who could live entirely off their chatter.

Medium in height, balding with a grey fringe, compactly built, pale-complexioned, bespectacled, modest in dress, Babbitt looks like a schoolteacher or perhaps a small businessman. Once he speaks, however, he reveals his real identity and instantly becomes a commanding, if not intimidating, presence. Extremely friendly, he has a cheery word for everyone—during one of his bi-weekly excursions from New York City to Princeton, he offered an emphatic "Hi, how are you?" to the bus driver, the secretary of the music department, his colleagues, the custodial help, several fellow professors in other fields, all the graduate students he encountered, the manager of the restaurant where he lunched, and several unidentified passers-by. He has a notorious reputation for making several times more generous promises than he (or any other mortal) could possibly fulfill; his friends find it inexplicably paradoxical that such a ferocious intellect should be so incorrigibly cordial.

Talk and friendship are his vices as well as his virtues: he cannot resist, for instance, chatting at least half an hour with every friend who telephones him.

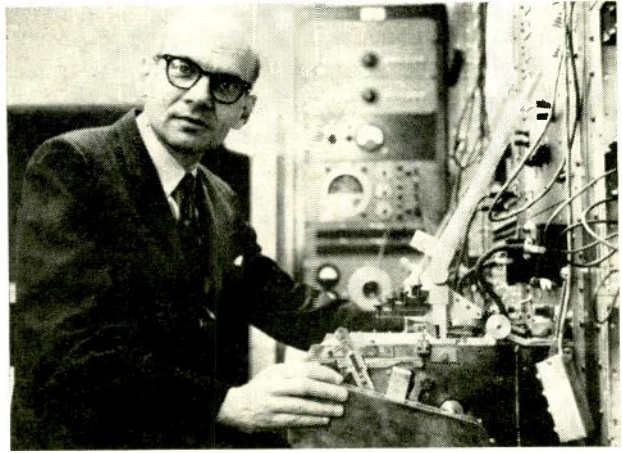
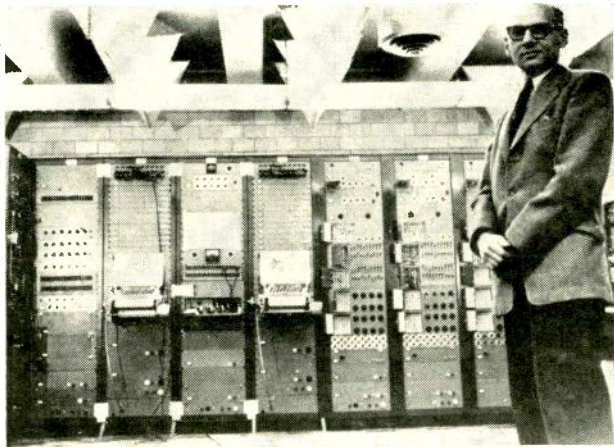
He has dozens of intellectual children (not all of whom are former students) who regularly report to him; and, like all good fathers, he checks on their current activities, remembers small details about their lives, and passes on relevant communiqués from one to another. Because he gives so easily of himself in conversation, listening as well as speaking, enthusiastically answering the familiar standard questions for the thousandth time, Babbitt is generally admired by his pupils and popular with his peers. Indicatively, his 1968 lectures for undergraduates at Princeton attracted over one hundred registrants, perhaps the largest number ever to attend a music course there. By now, he has met practically everyone on the academic music scene, so that whenever any of his colleagues needs to visit an obscure campus, he always asks Babbitt for the name of the local V.I.P.—the college dean, the chairman of the music department, the head of the arts council; Babbitt never forgets.

Though possessed of a passionate, if not necessarily impulsive, nature, Babbitt is intellectually a scrupulous rationalist and empiricist, with strong sympathies toward analytic philosophy. If he hears someone say that a piece of music "expresses" a certain experience or emotion, Babbitt will run him ragged by asking, "Precisely *what* does the music express?" Usually, since such people find themselves unable to make a statement so definite that it is universally verifiable, they retreat to the position of admitting that the music "expresses" something to *them*, a conclusion that generally reveals more about them than it does about the music. To Babbitt, the essence of music is the notes; the stuff of the composer's "inspiration" is discovering patterns that are more complex, coherent, and original than others; and the task of criticism consists of making substantive state-

The young Milton Babbitt took popular music seriously, striving for a brief period to make a living as a Tin Pan Alley tunesmith.



Milton Babbitt



The essential style of Babbitt's music remained relatively constant, but his encounter with the RCA electronic music synthesizer and its keyboard produced a music that explored sound combinations beyond the mechanical abilities of human performers to produce.

ments that all subsequent investigators can empirically verify. The result is, as he cheerfully admits, a wholly cerebral musical discourse.

Perhaps because he is a very passionate rationalist, he is anything but a square, and there seems to be some mysterious impulse that lends dimensions of originality or eccentricity to all he thinks and does. He used to be a chain-smoker of improbably esoteric brands of cigarettes, and his taste in beer runs to foreign labels few others have ever heard of. Politically he is a "conservative anarchist" with a distrust of all authority, a disillusioned liberal's distaste for leftist hypocrisy, and more admiration for certain young English Tories than for any American right-wing publicist. Since he regards substantive expression as a primary virtue, he rarely finds a candidate rational and intelligent enough to earn his vote. On more mundane matters, he always wears colored shirts "because white ones get dirty too easily," and he lives near Gramercy Park, a somewhat unlikely area of New York for a radical composer. "because my wife Sylvia's folks had the apartment before us." He bets the going odds on major sports events, and rumor has it that two decades ago he developed a fantastically successful system for beating the odds at the track.

Babbitt's conversation has a quick, engaging, informal, almost "hip" quality which contrasts with the academic weightiness of both his words and his written prose, as well as with the notorious style of the "eminent professor" whose pretense to wisdom increases in direct proportion to the silences that precede his utterances. Slow questions and replies to him rarely have a chance to reach their end. As he usually manages to distinguish people from ideas, becoming personally generous without compromising his intellectual principles, in conversation he practices the ethic of the "Southern gentleman," believing, as he does, that "I can never speak badly to someone's face." However, once the person has left, Babbitt has no qualms about blasting his ideas as "utterly idiotic."

Few subjects inspire his passionate words more than the state of serious modern music in America. "The situation has never been worse," he says, "less because of its general neglect than the ignorance of people of influence and power." The musical illiteracy of literary people never ceases to astonish Babbitt, for not only, in his opinion, does no serious general magazine in the country (except *The Nation*) publish substantial essays on music, but he is continually appalled by what passes for music "criticism" among serious, non-musical people: "In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man speaks gibberish." The major foundations, he notes, have not been successful in their attempts to aid composition, for in giving too much money to composers not seriously respected, and neglecting more promising talents, they are invariably disappointed with the results and then refuse to enter the area again. When the National Foundation on the Humanities in 1966 appointed Meredith Willson, noted primarily for writing *The Music Man*, as the only musician on its top selection committee, Babbitt got so angry that he joined other composers and musicologists in sending a protesting petition to President Johnson. The following year, Willson found reasons to step down.

BECAUSE the general public is so apathetic and patronage so scanty, serious contemporary composers must draw their incomes from elsewhere. Babbitt, like so many other creative artists, found that the most propitious compromise was a permanent teaching position on a university faculty. The primary disadvantage, he admits, is the infrequency of those sabbaticals that the composer needs for the time-consuming work of composition, although academic composers do have more free time than musicians who try to hold down nine-to-five jobs. Moreover, as composers find it almost impossible to publish their latest music (not even all of Babbitt's finished compositions are in print), "we have no means of communicating professionally." He adds, his emphatic

tone evincing a visceral concern, "I can't find out what composers are doing in various parts of the country. We can't infer a score from the tape of a performance, though we can imagine a performance from a score. The score must come first." To remedy the situation, Babbitt looks to the technological palliative of computer-assisted music-printing, as well as proposing that university presses should take the initiative; but neither a publisher, a foundation, nor the government has so far supported this latter effort. The recording situation is hardly more encouraging, and commercial companies have, up to now, favored marginally different arrangements of the old sure-fire warhorses to the best contemporary works, many of which, such as most of Stefan Wolpe's recent pieces or Babbitt's own *Composition for Tenor and Six Instruments* (1959), have never been recorded at all.

The "shape" of Babbitt's sensibility, as well as the variety of his interests, probably reflects his culturally diverse, though not atypically American, background. Born in Philadelphia May 10, 1916, Milton Byron Babbitt grew up in Jackson, Mississippi, where his father worked as an insurance actuary. Albert Babbitt had come to America from Russia, and Milton's mother belonged to the well-established Potamkin family of Philadelphia. Her brother, Milton's uncle, was Harry Alan Potamkin (1900-1933), perhaps the first serious film critic in America, and the composer credits his prodigious interest in films to staying with "Uncle Harry" in New York. "Nobody believes this," Babbitt continues, "but one of my great-grandfathers was a rabbi; another was a Metropolitan [of the Russian Orthodox Church]." He counts the novelist Eudora Welty among his oldest friends: "Her father was the president of the insurance company of which my father was vice-president." And he blames another novelist, Sinclair Lewis, for "some unpleasant experiences in my youth."

Having learned to read music, as he puts it, "soon after I learned to read books, around four or so," he studied various instruments, eventually specializing in reeds. "I was doing gigs at ten years old," he remembers, "and I played in a jazz orchestra." He began to compose before he turned ten; in 1929, when he was thirteen and one of his popular songs won a national contest, Babbitt became a professional composer. He says, "By the time I graduated from high school in Jackson, I had done so much work for Harms [a publisher of popular songs] that I faced the choice of serious composition or popular." Indeed, to this day, he claims to remember every pop hit between 1925 and 1935, and his knowledge of popular music is legendary among his acquaintances. He opted for serious music, briefly attending the University of Pennsylvania and later transferring to New York University's Washington Square College. Well into the Forties, however, he continued to write "gobs of popular songs, to see if I could make

a living at it. I couldn't." He also did the score for the film *Into the Good Ground* (1949), though today he is grateful that the version being shown on television omits his name from the credits. In 1946 he drafted the score and some lyrics for a musical adaptation of Homer's *Odyssey*, tentatively titled *Fabulous Voyager*, that never got off the docks.

After his 1935 graduation from N.Y.U. at the age of nineteen, Babbitt worked as a critic for the *Musical Leader* and studied privately with composer Roger Sessions, who, he recently remarked, "was the only good teacher of serious composition in America at the time." His first token of professional recognition was the Joseph Bearn Prize in 1941 for "a large, very distinctly twelve-tone Mass. It has never been performed, and now sits in the Columbia University library." After the war, Babbitt decided to retire all his pre-war music, including a symphony composed in the serial language. Like John Cage, who is a few years older, Babbitt received all of his musical education in this country; he rarely goes to Europe, and advises his own students to travel there for the food rather than for professional instruction. In 1939, he married Sylvia Miller, whom he had known from N.Y.U., where they met in a geology class and took music courses together. Seven years later their daughter Betty Ann was born; a recent graduate of Briarcliff College, she is now an actress.

WHEN Princeton asked Sessions to form a graduate department of music, he appointed his pupil, then twenty-two, to the faculty. In retrospect, Babbitt considers this the biggest break in his career. "If not for Roger, I might have spent my entire life teaching in South Dakota." In 1942, he received an M.F.A. from Princeton, but his elders in the department found themselves insufficiently knowledgeable to approve the short essay on twelve-tone theory that he later submitted for his Ph.D.—a degree he still does not have. He has since taught exclusively at Princeton, commuting a few days each week from his apartment in New York or, more recently, spending some nights at the family's new Princeton home. His academic office in the new Woolworth Center for Musical Studies is modest and cluttered, decorated with a Mondrian print and some enlarged Peanuts cartoons. He teaches courses in twentieth-century music, orchestration, the history of musical theory and musical acoustics, as well as seminars in composition. His pedagogical forte is giving two-and-one-half-hour uninterrupted lectures from a small sheet of notes.

Like many another eminent American professor, he has accepted short-term guest appointments all over the world, and he sits on numerous "advisory committees" along with Virgil Thomson, Aaron Copland, Elliott Carter, Leonard Bernstein, and other musical eminences. He suffers the distractions of the composer's

life with the complaint that "We all get asked to participate in symposia, to lecture, and to do articles and reviews twenty times more often than we do to write a composition." To cope with this situation, he has learned to compose in his head, on subways as well as on airplanes, jotting down notes in pocket-size books, and what composition he manages at home is done late at night while old movies or, preferably, sports events flash across the television screen.

The son and brother of accomplished professional mathematicians, Babbitt has always identified mathematics as his second love, although his detractors sometimes make too much of this. To those who charge that he selects his notes according to some mathematical system, Babbitt retorts, "Would God I could. It would make writing music a great deal easier for me than it is now." He studied mathematics extensively at college, even doing some graduate work in logic and algebra, and during the Second World War he earned his military exemption first by joining the Princeton mathematics department, teaching mostly advanced calculus, and then commencing "activities associated with the military effort [which] I still am not, and shall never be, at liberty to reveal." (Since he suffers from poor eyesight, he would not have made an auspicious foot soldier anyway.) To this day, Babbitt sprinkles both his lecturing and writing with what are, to the layman, hardly elementary

mathematical terms ("set," "determinant," "permutation," "invariant"), and some of his peers find this so intimidating that, rumor has it, the music professors at another Eastern school hired a mathematics graduate student as a tutor "so that we can talk with Babbitt." Nonetheless, music is clearly his vocational choice. "If not for Schoenberg," he once confessed, "I would have gone into mathematics. Schoenberg hit upon a technique that made composition more interesting and challenging."

Arnold Schoenberg was, after Sessions, a great influence on Babbitt's compositional career, though Babbitt was not, like some of his contemporaries, fortunate enough to study directly under him. Schoenberg's innovation, commonly known as "the twelve-tone system" (though he denied it was a "system" at all), implied a reordering of tonal possibilities into a new musical language which was radically different from that of the seven-tone scale and its diatonic harmony that informed the primary language in the post-Renaissance West. Although the familiar grammars of this "tonal" music sound "natural" to Western ears, they are in fact no more "natural" to Nature herself than ancient Greek, East Indian, or Medieval tonal systems. Prior to Schoenberg, many composers, including Claude Debussy, Erik Satie, Richard Wagner, and Charles Ives, more or less repudiated this language by consciously avoiding tonics and dominants, the key-

Martin Dain



Babbitt with Igor Stravinsky at a New York performance of the latter's Threni in 1959. Threni, a twelve-tone composition, embodies many of the ideas of musical organization that have also preoccupied the younger man.

Martin Dain



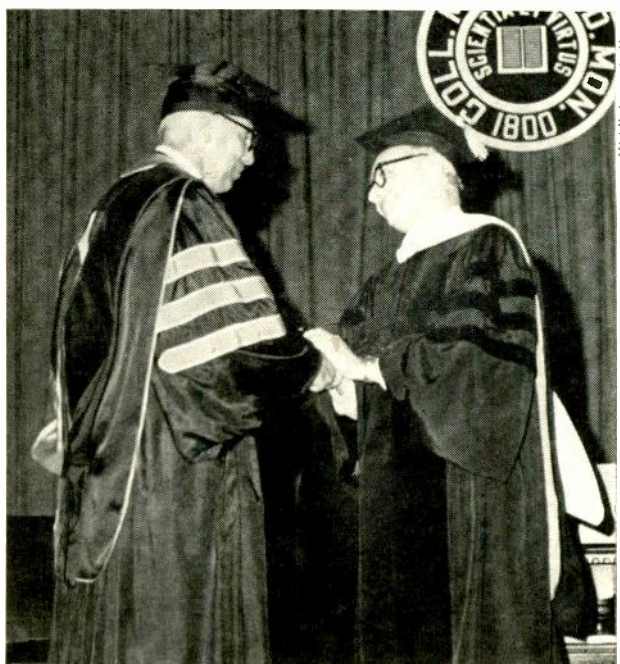
The four composer-eminences of the Electronic Music Center of Columbia and Princeton Universities: left to right, Otto Luening, Babbitt, Roger Sessions, Vladimir Ussachevsky.

stones of Western tonality, developing musics of freer tonal possibilities—in some cases what we call "atonal" or "polytonal" with respect to traditional tonality.

But at the turn of the century, when Schoenberg started to compose, an utter diversity of approaches characterized advanced music, and he gradually transcended the chaos for himself by devising an entirely new musical language with its own forms of order. For this new language, he also developed radically original rules for organizing musical material (its own "grammar," so to speak), its own patterns of interrelationship (syntax), and its own kinds of structures (sentences). In brief, Schoenberg suggested that the composer could, working within the open range of twelve tones to an octave, organize those tones into a certain order called, variously, the "row" or "set" or "series." Schoenberg referred to his ideas as the "method of composition with twelve tones"; in practice, it is really a method of composition with the eleven intervals outlined by those tones.

A single pattern of intervallic relations was the only thematic substance Arnold Schoenberg used in his magnificent opera *Moses and Aaron*, for example, and the fact that he could successfully transform this basic material into continuously varying structures illustrates the fact that the serial language is not as constricting as its rules might superficially suggest—tonal music, one remembers, had its rules too. Instead, even though twelve-tone procedure discourages the kind of repetition characteristic of tonal music, it nonetheless creates its own kind of syntactical and grammatical possibilities. "Simple in its principles of formation and transformation," Babbitt once wrote, "twelve-tone technique is enormously complex and deep in its ramifications." Most of the brightest young composers find the twelve-tone system the most attractive of the contemporary musical languages; indeed, since the middle Fifties, even Stravinsky, previously the symbol of anti-Schoenberg neoclassicism, has employed serial procedures.

Babbitt contends that the twelve-tone system represents one of the great achievements of modern thinking, "the result of a half-century of revolution in musical thought, a revolution whose nature and consequences can be compared only with those of the mid-nineteenth-century revolution in mathematics or the twentieth-century revolution in theoretical physics." Although Babbitt prefers to compose in this radically different serial language, he does not believe that the new language should or will replace its predecessors. "Ideally," he declares, his words approaching the tempo of a machine gun, "composers, as well as performers and listeners, should be multi-lingual. However, musicians and critics familiar solely with tonal music should no more judge a serial composition than people familiar solely with English can comment upon writing in French."



President James I. Armstrong of Middlebury College conferring an honorary Doctor of Music degree on Babbitt in June of 1968.

Precisely to combat such illiteracy within the musical profession, Babbitt has become increasingly concerned with musical education, not only writing essays that, in pianist Glenn Gould's words, "explain in an enormously elaborate way the actual operational procedures of twelve-tone music," but also becoming a guiding intelligence behind the critical journal *Perspectives of New Music* and the recently organized American Society of University Composers.

In the late Forties, after his return to Princeton, Babbitt developed the logical extension of the technique, further serializing the dimensions of musical structure—the concept of "total serialization" for which he first became widely known. He applied the serial principles of order not only to pitches, as Schoenberg had done, but to other elements of composed sound—duration, register, dynamics (attacks), the timbre—producing a twelve-tone music of unprecedented structural complexity, in which each and every note contributes to several lines of serial relationships. "The whole twelve-tone conception must concern the composer with order in every aspect of the musical domain." (The German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen once claimed to serialize even more dimensions, such as harmonics and the rate of change in timbre, but, perhaps because his scheme inevitably disintegrated in the course of the piece, Stockhausen has since moved on to other ideas.)

From this principle of composition Babbitt develops a rather revolutionary aesthetic which equates excellence with "the multiplicity of function of every event," with the variety of significant relationships each note simultaneously develops. In other words, every moment

in the piece should ideally "say" *several* things in relation to what has already been said. "I want a piece of music to be *literally* as much as possible," Babbitt once declared, and among his favorite words of praise are such cerebral epithets as "profoundly organized" and "structurally intricate." (Indeed, a young composer within this ambiance once boasted that his six-minute piece contained "over 900 musical events.")

In contrast to European examples of "totally organized" music—the early-Fifties pieces of Stockhausen and the Frenchman Pierre Boulez, for instance—whose sounds inhabit rather open spaces, the immediate impression conveyed by Babbitt's work is one of a wealth of rapidly interweaving activity. If the visual analog for the Europeans is the painting of, say, Paul Klee, Babbitt seems closer to the rich multiplicity of Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning. Recorded examples of this phase of his compositional career include *Du* (1951—Son Nova © S-1, now deleted), a song cycle; *Composition for Four Instruments* (1948—CRI ™ 138); and *All-Set* (1957—Columbia © C2S 831, ™ C2L 31), written for a fourteen-piece jazz combo. The most common objection to Babbitt's practice is that most ears cannot appreciate every discrete event in such works; to this Babbitt retorts, first, that his difficult music is not for the populace of concert-goers; second, that textural complexity itself *is* accessible to untutored perception; and, third, that progressively more thorough comprehension can be developed through training and experience.

To characterize the unprecedented intensity of Babbitt's music, the critic Benjamin Boretz, once a Babbitt pupil, has observed: "Every musical event is given a multiple function and the resulting syntax is so efficient that a single sound may convey as much information (*i.e.*, musical action) as, say, a whole section of a Mozart symphony." In the other arts, possible analogies to this multiple conception include symbolist poetry (Mallarmé, Apollinaire), in which, ideally, each word relates to

Mr. and Mrs. Babbitt with their daughter Betty Ann at a dinner during Father-Daughter Weekend at Briarcliff College in 1967.



Milton Babbitt

other words in a maximum number of ways; *Finnegans Wake* (Babbitt's favorite novel), in which James Joyce tells several stories at once on the same page and creates individual words that embody several possible meanings; and the early films of Orson Welles, in which, according to Babbitt, "each event has many perceptual dimensions."

Like other advanced composers concerned with the precise articulation of their intricate musical ideas, Babbitt became depressed by what happened to his pieces in performance; only a few musicians were able to cope with the rhythmic complexity of his scores. "Conventional instruments," he explains, "provide automatic or semi-automatic means of pitch-control, but no comparable means of rhythmic control." Toward the end of the Fifties, rather than submit to further "sabotage" by performers, Babbitt turned to the electronic music-making machines—not for new sounds ("nothing becomes old as quickly as a new sound"), but for the two-fold possibility of achieving precisely all the complicated effects he desired and of fixing a "performance" for all time. Just as print is more efficient than human lecturers in repeating a definitive exposition of complex scholarly ideas, so a tape, Babbitt recognized, would always be more efficient than human musicians in precisely articulating a complex musical pattern. He persuaded RCA to let him use the Mark II Electronic Music Synthesizer constructed, with Babbitt among the consultants, by RCA's David Sarnoff Research Center, as his tape-making instrument.

THE impact of electronics on music, it should be pointed out, has taken several forms. In the most elementary uses of electronic machinery, the composer and/or performers employ amplification equipment simply to raise the amplitude and often to change the timbre of a "live" sound. The most popular form of electronic composition is essentially sophisticated tape doctoring, in which, since tape machines do not generate the sounds themselves, a composer must first tape a sound, either live or electronically produced (oscillators or signal generators) and then modify it in various ways. By speeding up the tape, for instance, he can raise its pitch; by using sound-on-sound or a third machine to record the sounds from two others, he can combine sounds, and so forth. By splicing his phrases together, the composer produces a final, fixed piece. Professors Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky, who founded the Columbia Electronic Music Center in 1951, were among the first Americans to compose in this manner.

Babbitt's electronic pieces, in contrast, are composed directly on the Synthesizer, a wholly singular instrument whose huge cost of approximately \$250,000 permanently discourages imitation (although several cheaper synthesizers have since been built). Some twenty feet across, seven feet high, and a few feet deep, the Synthesizer contains various sound-generating devices (tun-

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American Avant-gardist
JOHN CAGE

ing forks, oscillators, signal generators, frequency multipliers, etc.) and about 1,700 tubes—all of which makes it capable of producing sounds precisely to the composer's instructions. Potentially, Babbitt says, the machine can create "any kind of acoustical event known to man"; however, he admits that it remains for the moment beyond his capacity to specify the components of certain sounds for the machine to synthesize. Since it does not compose, but responds, like conventional instruments, to the musician's instructions, the Synthesizer is in no sense a "composing machine." And since it computes nothing, it is not a computer either. This Mark II Synthesizer is currently housed in the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center, which is located in a most unlikely neighborhood for artistic creation—on 125th Street in Manhattan, west of Broadway, in a warehouse area. As the building also houses naval research equipment, it has a guard and a sign-in book at the door.

On the face of the machine are switches that program the following dimensions of a musical sound: frequency (pitch), octave, volume, timbre, and envelope (degree of attack and decay). All of these dimensions, appropriately enough, are subject to serial permutation in Babbitt's system. The composer can either set the individual switches by hand or, more conveniently, use a typewriter-like instrument attached to the Synthesizer's face to punch holes in a roll of broad paper tape that feeds into the machine. Once the composer assigns all the attributes of a note, the machine can immediately produce the specified sound, while an oscilloscope on its face indicates a visual analog of the aural experience—though this is, for practical compositional purposes, absolutely useless. If the composer finds that the result suits his intentions, he can then fix it on a tape which, as the storage medium, will contain the final version of the piece; if the result is unsatisfactory, he can readjust his specifications to make a new sound.

The composer can also place one sound atop another (as is standard practice in tape doctoring), transform live sounds, and even program wholly original scales of non-tempered pitches. In all, the composing process can be so painstaking that several months is par for a medium-length piece. Another temporal handicap is that the Center, which also houses a thriving tape studio, is so crowded during the working day that Babbitt goes there on weekends and at odd hours, sometimes staying until three or four in the morning. Babbitt used the machine for such serial compositions as *Philomel* (1963-1964) and *Ensembles for Synthesizer* (1961-1963), but since it lacks an aesthetic conscience, the Synthesizer could

theoretically just as well produce rock-and-roll. In practice, however, as Babbitt explains, "the Synthesizer is most useful for what it can uniquely do . . . it would take over an hour to imitate a long glissando on the piano, for example. If someone wants to do a jingle, he'd be wiser to hire people." In sum, Babbitt regards the Synthesizer as supplementing traditional instruments rather than replacing them. Devoting perhaps only half of his compositional activity to works for the machine, he recently did a pair of related pieces, *Relata I* (1965) and *Relata II* (1968) wholly for live orchestra. But Babbitt is enthusiastic over the wider choices the Synthesizer offers: "It is a wonderful opportunity to walk into the studio, close the door, and know that in one series of steps I'm going to be specifying what I have composed, copying the parts, proofreading, rehearsing, and walking out of that studio with the final performance for which I'm totally responsible. This is a unique and satisfying experience."

If only to convey Babbitt's conception of his purposes, as well as his inimitable prose style—at once energetic and stolid, complicated and generalized, overbearing and witty—here is the program note he supplied to the Lincoln Center 1966 performance of *Ensembles for Synthesizer*:

The title *Ensembles* refers multiply to characteristics of the work. In both its customary musical meaning and its

BABBITT ON RECORDS

ALTHOUGH the Milton Babbitt discography is, at the moment, slim, the current interest of record companies in the avant-garde is likely to lead to a greater representation of his music in the catalog in the near future. Composers Recordings, Inc., for example, is presently engaged in negotiations expected to lead to a new Babbitt recording. In the meantime, most of the following records are generally available; the one exception, on the Son-Nova label, may still perhaps be found in record-store stocks, though it has been deleted from the catalog.—J.G.

All Set (1957, for jazz ensemble). Included in the album "Outstanding Jazz Compositions—20th Century." COLUMBIA © C2S 831, (M) C2L 31.

Composition for Four Instruments (1948); *Composition for Viola and Piano* (1950). Wummer (flute); Drucker (clarinet); March (violin); McCall (cello); Trampler (viola); Bauman (piano). With compositions by John Bavicchi. CRI (M) 138.

Composition for Synthesizer (1960-1961). Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center. With compositions by Arel, Davidovsky, El-Dabh, Lucning, and Ussachevsky. COLUMBIA © MS 6566.

"Du" (song cycle, 1951); *Composition for Twelve Instruments* (1948). Bethany Beardslee (soprano); Robert Helps (piano); Hartt Chamber Orchestra, Ralph Shapey cond. SON-NOVA © S-1, (M) 1 (out of print).

Ensembles for Synthesizer (1961-63). With compositions by Cage and Pousseur. COLUMBIA © MS 7051.

more general one signifying "collections," the term refers more immediately to the different pitch, rhythmic, registral, textural, and timbral "ensembles" associated with each of the many so delineated sections of the composition, no two of which are identical, and no one of which is of more than a few seconds' duration in this ten-minute work. This speed and flexibility of succession in all musical dimensions which are made uniquely available by electronic media reflect, in turn, the particular and vast resources of these media in every aspect of the time domain. Also, in its meaning as a "set," the word "ensemble" relevantly suggests the, I trust, familiar principles of tonal and temporal organization which are employed in this work, as in other of my compositions.

Although Babbitt admits that his music is written for a specialist audience, consisting largely of other professor-composers, he still believes, perhaps too optimistically, that "anyone who hears well can be educated to appreciate my music. The more you listen to serial music, the better able you are to recognize its grammar, its configurations, its modes of procedure. . . . Sometimes I think that music is just beginning, reborn with such an utterly different musical language. Electronic instruments, I also believe, have shifted the boundaries of music away from the limitations of the acoustical [musical] instrument and the performer's coordinating capacities. The limitations for the future are the human ones of perception."

Despite his extreme emphasis on unifying structure, Babbitt cannot erase the fact that music does make sounds which contain their own appeal independently of how they are organized, and the qualities of this surface sound stimulate a listener's interest in a piece, particularly if the serial multiplicity is not immediately accessible to him, just as an effective use of color can provide an entrée into the complexities of a particular painting. Early examples of Babbitt's efforts at a more pervasive serialization, such as *Du* or the *Composition for Twelve Instruments* (1948), realize an immense structural complexity "at the sacrifice of a certain scope and variety in its line, texture, and articulation," as Benjamin Boretz puts it—at the price of a sound level too stubbornly constant for Babbitt's multiple purposes. However, in his recent work with the Synthesizer, particularly *Philomel*, Babbitt exploits the machine's ability to produce unprecedented sounds (although he frequently declares they hardly interest him) to create works that, to Boretz, "seem as beautiful in the conventional sense as [they are] effective as a medium for the transmission of subtle new ideas of reference and relation."

Philomel, using a text specially written by poet John Hollander, retells the Philomel-Procne legend of the acquisition of speech by drawing upon the unprecedented potentialities of a live voice, that of soprano Bethany Beardslee, in combination with transformed recordings of her voice and a range of sounds wholly produced on

the Synthesizer. "The strangled cries of the voice at the opening," writes Boretz, "gradually merge into a sustained vocal line that seems to trace a wider arc at each of its appearances, successions of pitches in the tape accompaniment gradually accelerate into beating and chattering wood noises; and the single voice of the soprano is first counterpointed against its recorded sound . . . which then is subdivided into choruses of Beardslees, transmuted into bass, alto, and piccolo Beardslees, and finally merged again into the single sound that sustains the 'live' soprano's final note with a breath capacity uniquely available to synthesizers." To every ear, both trained and amateur, the aural result is nothing but stunning, although one must add that the piece stuns various listeners in different ways. *Philomel* is admired by Babbitt's peers and yet accessible to the perceptive layman; it achieves a measure of popularity without compromising that immense musical integrity that has always been his trademark.

The standard professional criticism of Babbitt holds that "he talks a better piece than he writes." Another musician, with little sympathy for the serial language, charged: "He is said to have the greatest articulateness and the least compositional talent of any composer in America today." To the composer John Cage, Babbitt's music represents "an escape from one's experience, rather than an engagement with it." Goddard Lieberson, former President of Columbia Records, says for the defense, "The serious composers of each generation, whether Beethoven or Schoenberg, are always, with few exceptions, accused of over-intellectuality; [in Babbitt's case] it is a charge that comes most frequently from those people who have read about [his] music without hearing it."

It is precisely his belief that complex structures are more important than mellifluous or original sounds that makes Babbitt an extremist on the contemporary musical scene—the leader of the "academic avant-garde," as Morton Feldman, of the unacademic (Cagean) avant-garde puts it. Indeed, although one may disagree with his ideas, or dislike the musical creations of his thought, it is impossible to deny that Babbitt as a man demonstrates what immense power a great intelligence has over the new language of musical composition, over intellectual laxity, over dozens of students and scores of admirers, over philosophical discourse, over the challenges of contemporary artistic creation, over the new machines. For his career represents the various and extraordinary achievements of a rare and valuable mind.

Richard Kostelanetz is a widely published writer on diverse cultural subjects whose articles have appeared in many magazines and newspapers. He is also the author of The Theatre of Mixed Means and Music of Today. The present article will appear in the book Master Minds, to be published by Macmillan this year.



Stereo Review Celebrates The 1968 Record of the Year Awards

It pleases us immensely that hardly a week goes by without some reader's informing us that STEREO REVIEW is his "favorite magazine." It pleases us because we like to think of ourselves as being (among other things)

Photos by Christian Steiner



Editor William Anderson, center, presents an award to Emil Gils: John Coveney, Angel's Artist Relations Director, looks on.



Scott Mame, center, and Joseph Bott of Mercury Records accept violinist Arthur Grumiaux's award plaque from William Anderson.

◀ Reproduced on the facing page is the poster-size announcement of the Record of the Year Awards sent out to members of the recording industry in advance of the February issue. Artist Isadore Seltzer of New York's Push Pin Studios turned many of the award-winning album titles into visual puns that might require a program: London's Elektra, Warner Brothers' "Song Cycle" (Van Dyke Parks), RCA's Julius Caesar, Connoisseur Society's "Forty Minute Raga," Angel's "Five Beethoven Piano Concertos" (Gilels/Szell), RCA's "Duke Ellington Plays Billy Strayhorn," Philips' "Berg and Stravinsky Violin Concertos," Capitol's "Grass" (Jackie and Roy), RCA's "Rossini Rarities" (Caballé), CBS' La Mer (Boulez), A & M's "Liza Minnelli," and Columbia's George M!

in the entertainment business, and we are as delighted as any other performer with a favorable review. It is *our* favorite magazine too—we take enormous pleasure in putting together its various pieces each month, and we derive an equal proprietary satisfaction from the finished product. And so it was that, when announcement of our Record of the Year Awards in the February issue resulted in a particularly hearty eruption of good spirits, we decided to throw a party. We gathered up the staff, invited all the contributing editors, prize winners, and record-company representatives we could think of, and laid on a catered affair in the grand lounge of a hotel convenient to our lower Park Avenue offices. It was a great success, and we're sorry you weren't there. We can, however, share some of the pictures with you.

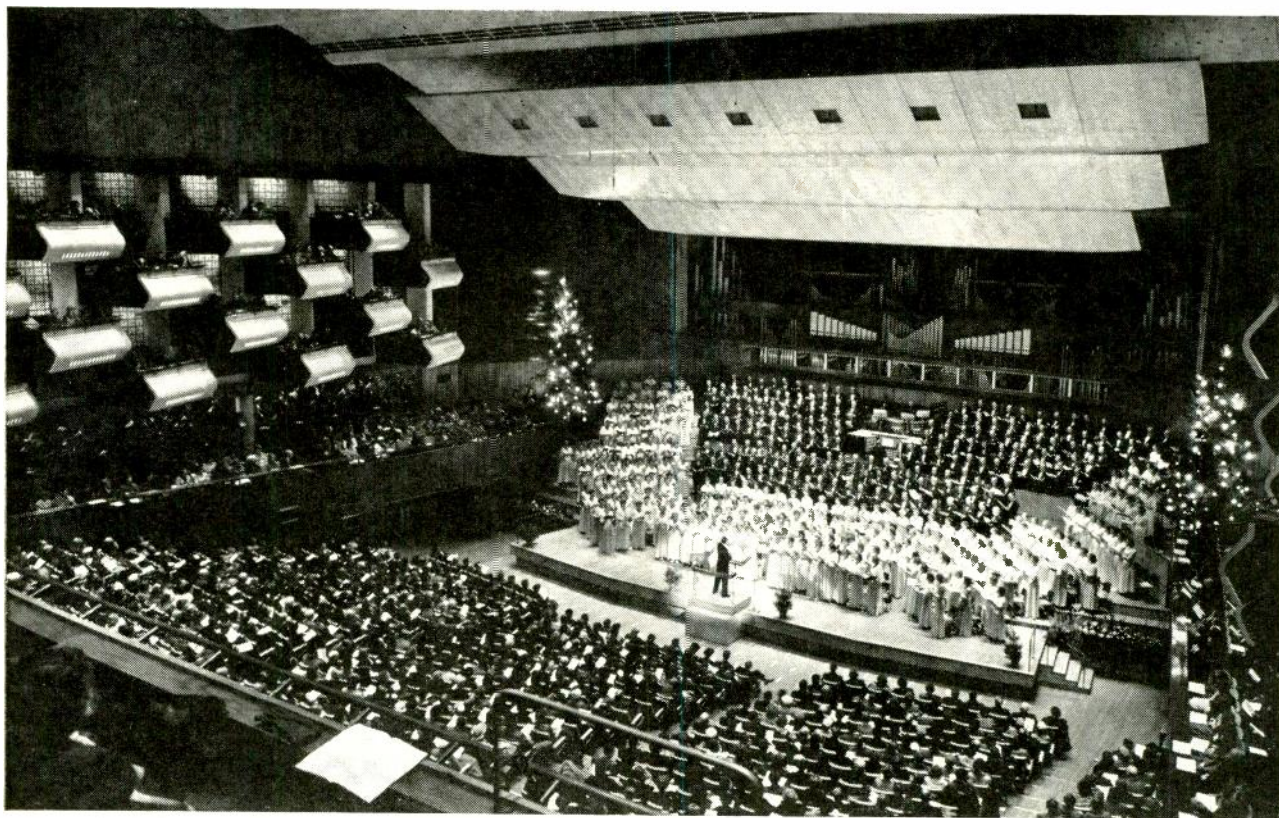
—Editor



Flanked by Anderson and critic Rex Reed, Liza Minnelli accepts the award for her album "Liza Minnelli" on the A & M label.



STEREO REVIEW's spoken-word critic Clive Barnes, right, chats with Sim Myers, who represented RCA at the award presentation.



British Travel Association

Sir Malcolm Sargent conducts a program of Christmas carols in London's heavily electronicized Royal Festival Hall.

ELECTRO-ACOUSTICS IN THE CONCERT HALL

SINCE MANY OLD AND NEW HALLS HAVE ACOUSTIC CHARACTERISTICS THAT ARE TOTALLY UNSUITED TO THE KINDS OF MUSIC TO BE PLAYED (OR RECORDED) IN THEM, THERE HAS DEVELOPED A TREND TOWARD ADJUSTMENT AND ALTERATION OF ACOUSTICS BY ELECTRONIC MEANS

By PETER SUTHEIM

IT HAS BEEN only a few years now since the concert-going public followed with interest the celebrated acoustical difficulties of Philharmonic Hall at Lincoln Center in New York. The raising, lowering, and modification of the acoustics-controlling "clouds," the reupholstering of the auditorium's seats, and other "tunings" and adjustments of the hall were noted in the popular press and by concertgoers with a certain amount of ill-concealed glee. Who were these scientists, after all, who were foolish enough to think they could apply the cold logic of the laboratory to the subjective aesthetics of concert-hall listening?

But if the goings on at the Philharmonic aroused amusement (and even some sympathy), horror, panic, and outrage swept the city when it was discovered that the New York State Theater just across the plaza had calmly solved its problems in advance—with *amplification*! Critics of this electronic finagling were quite right about at least one thing: it marked, if not the actual be-

ginning, at least the establishment of a trend. For what was done at the New York State Theater has since become almost standard in concert halls around the world, from Philadelphia to Moscow. Not content with recording and reproducing—and even creating—music electronically, audio engineers have begun to adjust the acoustics of concert halls electronically. Over the past few years the techniques have moved from simple sound reinforcement intended to provide uniform sound coverage throughout the house to the successful alteration of the overall acoustical characteristics of an entire concert hall. The alterations have in most cases—and to the dismay of the purists—won the unqualified approval of many musicians, critics, and concertgoers.

Long before we learned how to record and reproduce sound electronically, we were aware of acoustics (Greek *akoustikos*, relating to hearing, from *akouein*, to hear). Acoustics can be defined loosely for our purposes as the set of physical characteristics that establish the sound

quality of an environment. The presence or absence of pronounced resonances and the length of time a distinct sound persists are two immediately identifiable aspects of the acoustics of an enclosed space, and they are what make a particular hall sound "bright," "warm," "dry," "dull," or "boomy" (just a few of the tactile/visual metaphors we use, almost instinctively, to describe the subjective "sound" of a room).

It is clear that the Greeks knew a good deal about practical architectural acoustics; certainly they took full advantage of the sound-focusing effect of the amphitheater type of construction. But for the next thousand years or so, the acoustics of public buildings was largely a hit-or-miss affair. It took Wallace Sabine, an American physicist working in the first quarter of this century, to put structural acoustics on a more solid footing. An enormous amount of information has since been compiled concerning the relative sound-absorbing power of various materials, from cinder blocks to human bodies (the latter usually participating in the acoustic environment as listeners, too, not just absorbers). There are data on the reflectivity of various kinds of curved surfaces; on the desirability of various structural shapes; on the effects of balconies, bandshells, floating "clouds," nonparallel walls, and the like.

One thing was established which musicians and music lovers had known all along: a particular kind of music or a particular assortment of instruments sounds best in a certain acoustic environment. Chamber music (music composed, literally, for enjoyment in a moderate-sized private chamber) demands a more intimate kind of acoustical environment than a Mahler symphony. The chief difference between the two kinds of rooms is in their reverberation time, which is the time required for a sound to die away to one-millionth its original intensity (-60 dB) after the source has stopped producing the sound. Small instrumental or vocal ensembles, or soloists, tend to be most acceptable in "dry," relatively non-reverberant rooms—rooms with a reverberation time of a second or less. Lush orchestral, choral, or operatic works demand (by consensus) a considerably longer reverberation time—in the neighborhood of two seconds (sometimes more, sometimes less), depending on preference and type of music.

It is difficult, obviously, to design an all-purpose studio or concert hall. The nearest thing to it is probably the broadcast or recording studio that makes use of sliding or hinged panels or wall sections that are relatively absorbent on one side and relatively reflective on the other. The reverberation time of the room can then be controlled quite precisely over a moderate range of frequencies by exposing more or fewer absorptive or reflective surfaces.

But what is practical in a recording studio is not likely to be practical in a concert hall, which may seat up to six

thousand people. Recently, the tremendous mechanical problems of providing alterable acoustics in a large auditorium have been tackled electronically. The phrase "active acoustics" (as distinguished from "passive acoustics") has been used to describe electronically modified acoustic environments.

It should be stressed at this point that the various acoustic-modification techniques to be discussed are far beyond the usual concert-hall sound-reinforcement system. As the term implies, "sound reinforcement" is intended simply to boost the sound in areas of a hall or stadium where acoustic conditions cause losses or dead spots.

The most flexible and promising electronic technique now in use is related to acoustic feedback—the well-known phenomenon that causes a howl or squeal when too much of the amplified sound from a loudspeaker gets back to a microphone. The howl or squeal has a particular pitch because the energy in the system tends to bunch around some frequency at which there is a dominant response. Acoustic feedback in a system with boomy speakers—ones with a bad bass resonance—tends to have a tubby, howling quality. On the other hand, a system with prominent treble (owing to the characteristics of the speakers or microphones) tends to produce a shrill shriek.

AN engineer named William B. Snow showed that a sound system that is set just below the point of acoustic-feedback oscillation increases the decay time of certain sounds. This is roughly equivalent to increasing the reverberation time of the room in which the sound system is operating.

If you connect a microphone to your music system (perhaps through a tape recorder), you can try a few simple experiments to make this effect more understandable. Place the microphone at some distance from the speakers and facing away from them. Turn up the volume control slowly until the system "rings" for a moment after you speak a few words. (Just speak into the room, not into or especially near the mike.) Notice how almost every sound tends to hang over. The decay of sounds has been slowed by the regenerative effect of the microphone-amplifier-speaker system. The gain of the system is not high enough to sustain a steady howl; normal losses in the microphone, speaker, and in the walls of the room and even the air eventually silence the "ring." But there is enough regenerative feedback to slow the decay of the live sound.

An arrangement as simple as this is obviously not usable as is; the tendency of the system to ring at a particular frequency would blur and mask the original sounds beyond recognition. But try altering the tone-control settings on your amplifier and notice how the ringing frequency changes. Opening or closing a door, a

window, or drapes may have a similar effect. Now imagine dozens or even hundreds of microphones, each with different resonances, and dozens or hundreds of speakers, also with different resonances, concealed in the walls and ceiling. Each mike is feeding one or more speakers, widely separated from the mike and from each other, through amplifiers with variable gain and frequency response. The system as a whole is carefully tuned and adjusted to provide a slight amount of hangover without ever going into actual ringing or oscillation. The effect would be much the same as increasing the reverberation time of the room, and of altering its resonances as well. And this is exactly what is done in large concert halls to permit changes in their acoustic characteristics.

A system such as this, called "assisted resonance," has been in use since 1964 at the Royal Festival Hall in London. The hall's acoustics were judged to be insufficiently warm and reverberant, and the intent was to enhance the inadequate resonances of the hall. The system was originally installed experimentally without any public announcement. After puzzled critics and the public noticed the change and began to comment on it, officials ended the mystery by explaining what had been done. Response seems to have been generally favorable.

In the Royal Festival Hall system, the speakers and the microphones are all enclosed in separate and individually tuned resonators, so that each is most efficient over a relatively narrow band of frequencies. This is, of course, precisely the opposite of the usual hi-fi design approach, which is (or ought to be) to minimize such selectivity. The resonances are staggered so that quite a broad range of frequencies from about 70 to 300 Hz is covered uniformly. The microphones and speakers are installed in the ceiling. Each microphone is about 50 feet from its corresponding speaker, and the spacing and the actual position are quite critical.

Any normal room, regardless of size, acts as a resonant cavity at several frequencies—frequencies at which the wavelength of the sound wave is some whole-number fraction of a room dimension. This results in the establishment of *standing waves* in the room. These appear as areas at which particular frequencies are reinforced or absent. If you connect an audio oscillator to your system you can easily hear the effect of standing waves by tuning the oscillator to some low mid-range frequency (a few hundred hertz) and walking around the room or just moving your head. At some frequencies the loudness of the tone will rise and fall noticeably as you move around. Places where the sound is loudest are called *anti-nodes* (points of maximum sound pressure). For maximum coupling between a mike and a speaker in a single resonant system, both should be located at anti-nodes for the center frequency of the range covered by that resonant system.

There is no practical way of *decreasing* the reverbera-



Adrian Steigel

Electronic adjustment of the acoustics of Philadelphia's Academy of Music has so far been used only for recording purposes.

tion time of a room electronically. For complete control over the sound of a hall with an electronic-acoustics installation, the hall must first be made acoustically neutral. This means a short reverberation time and few prominent resonances. Such a hall, with its electronics shut off, would be usable for speeches, dramatic readings, and chamber music. For works that demand richer acoustics, with a longer reverberation time, the electronic system could be set to provide the optimum sound quality.

A very elaborate system in the enormous Grand Kremlin Theater in Moscow almost completely controls the acoustics of the hall, going far beyond mere "assistance" or "enhancement" of natural acoustics. The hall seats 6,000, so any mechanical method of controlling the acoustic properties over a broad range is impractical. Here, the hall was initially made quite dead (acoustically absorbent, with a very short reverberation time). The

TO AMPLIFY...

I find . . . alarm reasonable only if we may assume that the essential element of singing is a loud voice. . . . Far from meaning the death of singing, electrical amplification can mean its salvation. Spared the requirement of singing at the top of his voice and beyond his normal range, the singer can turn his attention to the musically more important objective of singing beautifully, to the subtle problems of tone and phrase. . . . Serious music critics almost to a man . . . share the curious notion that a microphone can make a singer sound better than he really is. It can't. Quite the contrary. Its hearing is more acute than any human ear, and it broadcasts exactly what it hears. It exposes a singer's shortcomings more mercilessly than any critical invective. It is a crutch only insofar as it can make a voice louder. It cannot make a voice more beautiful, nor can it transform bad singing into good.

HENRY PLEASANTS

New York Times, February 20, 1966



Fotobronika Press

The Grand Kremlin Theater in Moscow provides a totally controlled acoustic environment—and seats six thousand people.

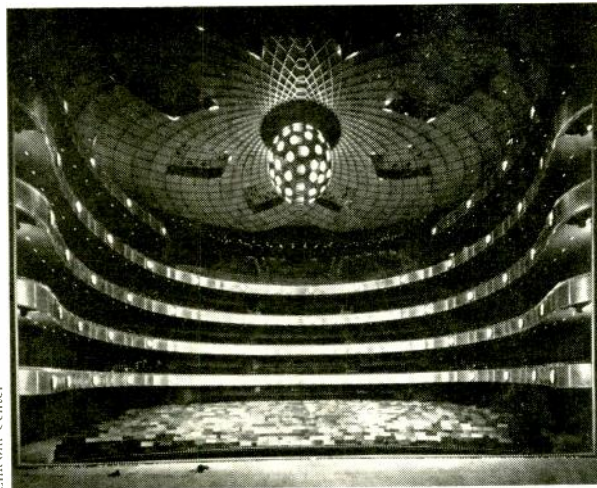
electronic system, with hundreds of speakers and microphones, augments the resonances and reverberation time in ways that are completely under the command of a skilled operator at a control console. Almost literally, the hall is "scored" or "orchestrated" along with the composition to be performed. For chamber works, a quick first reflection of sound can be fed instantly to all the speakers in the hall, creating the illusion that the room is quite small. Different parts of the hall, which would normally have different reverberant characteristics, can be brought to uniformity. Needless to say, it takes a great deal of skill to operate the system to best effect, and operators are trained especially for the job, musically as well as technically.

The most recent application of electronics to the task of increasing reverberation time is in the Academy of Music in Philadelphia, the home of the Philadelphia

...OR NOT TO AMPLIFY?

Streisand's fame comes primarily from her ability to belt out a song. But can she? . . . It may be that she could carry to the reaches of Yankee Stadium in a thunderstorm with her unassisted vocal chords. Or it may be that she is not able to project three rows into the Winter Garden without her mike. . . . She may be a real singer, or she may be merely a microphone baby. . . . [Amplification] means the death of singing as we know it. It means every man a Caruso or Tampagno, every woman a Ponselle or Flagstad. Microphones today have become so small and so efficient . . . that audio engineers can isolate any specific performer on stage and ride gain for the benefit of that single fortunate singer. . . . Singing will then be meaningless, and critical standards will be meaningless. The whole idea should be fought—for the sake of music, for the sake of singing, for the sake of art, for the sake of the future.

HAROLD SCHONBERG
New York Times, February 6, 1966



Lincoln Center

Electronic amplification was the big news when the State Theater at New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts opened.

Symphony Orchestra. The Academy hall's "dry" acoustics were superb for articulation and clarity, but inadequate for recording orchestral and choral works. John H. Volkmann of RCA Laboratories and John Pfeiffer of RCA Red Seal records designed an electronic system that increased the hall's reverberation time from about 1.4 seconds to more than 2.2 seconds.

Quite a different method of altering the sound of a hall or studio has been used by the BBC in its Television Center Studio 4. Central to the technique is a specialized form of tape recorder, in which the tape forms a continuous loop about 60 inches long. As usual, an erase head wipes out the previous signal, and a record head puts the new signal on the tape. From that point on, a succession of playback heads is available to reproduce what has just been recorded. The play head nearest the record head "hears" the signal first, and each succeeding head gets the same signal a fraction of a second later—how much later depends, of course, on the speed of the tape (which is fixed) and the spacing between heads (which is adjustable). The record head is fed a signal that represents whatever is going on in the studio, as picked up by one or more microphones. (A unit similar in principle is manufactured by EMT in West Germany and is imported into this country by Gotham Audio. Instead of a tape loop, Gotham's "audio delay unit" employs oxide-coated Mylar foil stretched over a rotating ring. Three playback heads provide delay times of from 25 to 250 milliseconds.)

Signals from each of the playback heads in the BBC unit are distributed (via amplifiers) to speakers in the walls and ceilings of the studio. The effect is similar to increasing the room's natural reverberation time. The positions of the speakers are correlated with the distance of the record head to the appropriate playback head in such a way that speakers farther from the sound source receive their signal later than those closer to the sound source, thus preserving the natural time relationship be-

tween direct and reflected sound. As an aid to keeping the tape-delay reverb system from sounding too mechanical, some speakers are "shuffled"—connected not exactly according to their position—which introduces some blurring of the reverberant effect and makes it sound more natural.

The spacing between the recording head and the first playback head establishes the delay time of the first "reflection" and is most responsible for establishing the acoustical character of a room. Also important is the relative loudness of each of the pseudo-reflected signals. In general, each succeeding playback signal is lower in level, corresponding to the natural damping of successive reflections caused by absorption of sound by walls, padding, and so forth.

The delay systems do not depend on the acoustic-feedback principle central to the assisted-resonance technique. Some feedback is present, since the microphone used to feed the system does pick up the artificial reflections produced by the system as well as the original sounds. This adds to the effectiveness, but it must be kept under control to prevent ringing or excessively long reverberation times.

A similar tape-delay technique has been in use since 1952 in St. Paul's Cathedral in London, but for a different purpose. There, the normal reverberation time (with a full congregation) is as long as 6 seconds. This excessively long decay time caused terrific problems when a sound-reinforcement system was installed. The direct sound from the choir or clergy took noticeably longer to arrive at some remote parts of the building than the amplified sound. This happened because sound in the form of electricity travels much faster through wires than sound in the form of pressure waves travels through air. Sound from other speakers a greater distance away, or from the original source, was heard as echoes. The profusion of artificial echoes made it more difficult to understand whoever was talking even though the volume of his voice had been raised through amplification. The problem was solved by connecting the speakers through a tape delay system similar to the one described just above. Speakers a greater distance from the original sound source received their signals later than those closer to the sound source. The psychoacoustic "precedence" effect guaranteed that hearers would in general perceive the sound as coming from the area of the original source, even though the audio level from the "later" loudspeakers might be as much as 10 dB higher than the first one.

Notice the distinction between increasing the reverberation time of a concert hall, listening room, or studio, on the one hand, and, on the other, adding artificial reverberation during playback. If the reverberation constants are modified during recording, the effect *can* be quite natural, or at least satisfying. But artificial reverberation added to a reproducing system (for example, by a coil-

spring device or a tape-delay unit) has a grosser, cruder effect, quite different from altering the reverberation characteristics of the listening room itself. The distinguishing feature lies in the fact that natural reverberation tends to be diffuse, random, and nondirectional, while artificial reverb/echo/delay has a tacked-on aspect and sounds as though it originates in the *speakers*, rather than with the source material.

Even classrooms, small churches, or meeting halls are being affected by this "systems" approach to sound reinforcement and reproduction, which includes the room's natural acoustics as a crucial but controllable factor in the sound system. Sound-reinforcement systems for use in such rooms can be equalized (that is, have their frequency characteristics tailored) to adapt them to the room's natural acoustics. Properly applied, this results in a pleasing, intelligible, unobtrusive, sound-assist, with a minimum of disturbing ringing or howling.

The most sophisticated version of this is Altec's "Acousta-Voicing" technique. The trademarked name for the process is rooted in the "voicing" of pipe organs to fit them acoustically to the church or hall in which they are installed. In the words of Don Davis, an Altec engineer, "Acousta-Voicing regulates the amplitude/frequency response of the total electro-acoustic system, including electronics, transducers, *and the room itself* to achieve the best tonal quality and greatest acoustic gain." This is done by first making a complete sound survey and then critically tailoring the frequency-response characteristics of the sound reinforcement system to match the demands of the environment—and the sounds that have to be reinforced or produced in that environment.

AMONG audiophiles and hi-fi pundits it has long been popular to pontificate that speakers—or cartridges, or whatever—are the weakest link in the audio chain. However, anyone who has had the opportunity to hear the same group of stereo components in a variety of home acoustic environments is aware of the crucial and determining differences contributed by room acoustics. In brief, a room that is bad acoustically can wipe out the essential sonic differences between a \$40 speaker and a \$400 one. Happily, however, the acoustics of domestic listening rooms present problems that are less severe and more easily corrected than those of concert halls—though audiophiles seldom have the know-how to deal with them properly. It would seem that the home stereo industry has been remiss in not really getting into the area of acoustic-environment control. When, and if, they do so it will be a breakthrough for the average listener at least as important as stereo reproduction.

Peter Sutheim writes on audio and other electronics topics for a number of publications. In addition to being a regular contributor to these pages, he is also an audio-equipment designer.



The experts pick 25 STEREO DEMONSTRATION RECORDS

By LARRY KLEIN and WILLIAM WOLLHEIM

IN OUR July 1965 issue we ran an article titled "25 Stereo Demonstration Records." The popularity of that article was attested to by the thousands of requests we've had for reprints, plus many others asking us to update the list. With so many good new (and old) recordings to choose from, it would seem to be easy to find twenty-five more excellent ones to recommend. But

most people, including the writers, don't have very good information filing and retrieval systems in their heads. Over the years, we have both been impressed by the sound quality of various recordings. However, when recommended-record-list time comes around, their names escape us—or worse, we remember but find that they were not as good as we thought on first listening.

An obvious starting point is the "authorities"—the critics whose reviews appear in this and other magazines. Unfortunately, we have found them at best to be a very rough guide to the sonic quality of a disc. This is quite understandable, because reviewers are usually listening for the musical, not the sonic, values. Unless a recording is really bad, their attention is not always drawn to the audio quality *per se*. And if they are particularly pleased with the performance, they may quite humanly be seduced into giving the sonics a high score also.

Then, of course, there are all those records played at the audio shows. You would think that the manufacturers of stereo components would play those records (or tapes) that best demonstrate the sonic virtues—if such exist—of their products. You would think so, but it's not always true. However, there *are* a few manufacturers who go to great lengths to choose demonstration material that will best show off the merits of their products, and a number of their suggestions have found their way onto our list.

Another possibility would be to call up all the major record manufacturers and ask them to send over a few of their best-sounding discs. The trouble with this approach is that each company has its own idea as to just what constitutes "good sound." And, as we learned in preparing this article, some of those ideas are peculiar, to say the least. How, then, did we arrive at the balance of this year's selections?

ALLEX KARWOWSKI is a member of the New York Audio Society and a gentleman blessed with keen ears, apparently limitless patience, and a fanatical interest in good sound reproduction. For the past several years, he has kept a set of file cards listing every record album cited for its sonic excellence in any of seven or eight different magazines. If a disc received several raves for its sound, and if Mr. Karwowski liked the composition, he would buy the recording and append his own comments. It was Mr. Karwowski's notes and recommendations that formed the nucleus of our listening list. To it, we then proceeded to add a number of records we and other staff members and audio professionals remembered as being outstanding.

We then began a weeding-out process. While questions of taste were obviously involved, there were a number of standards that guided us. Ruled out right at the start were some otherwise fine recordings such as:

- those that bore no relation to the sound of conventional musical instruments—for example, Columbia's "Switched-On Bach"
- those that did not contain a very wide dynamic and frequency range (this automatically disqualified almost all recordings of solo instruments)
- those that we found boring or annoying musically (we admit the arbitrariness of our decisions here).

Among the sonic flaws we listened for were:

- noise; either caused by bad surfaces or hiss in the tape master
- lack of dynamic range
- distortion—from whatever cause
- sudden shifts in the recording perspective
- unnatural reverberation—such as when an instrument with close-up miking has more echo around it than another instrument miked more distantly
- excessive boosting of any part of the frequency spectrum in an effort to make the disc have more presence or impact
- breakup—and this of course relates to the quality of the record player and cartridge used.

In respect to this last point, the question of the equipment we used to audition the recordings becomes significant. Assuming that our readers have at least *good*-quality audio equipment, they should hear very much the same sound performance from the discs as we did—with two possible exceptions. The phono cartridges we used were the top-ranking units reviewed in last July's issue. If you are using a lesser cartridge, there's a good chance that you will hear breakup or shatter on loud high-frequency passages that a better cartridge will handle with ease. The other point has to do with the frequency balance of your speakers. If you prefer to set your speakers' high-frequency controls above their "normal" settings, you may find that several discs on the recommended list sound slightly too bright. The amount of "top-end" that should be in a recording is an area where there can be legitimate disagreement, and we have not penalized any recording for extra brightness—if correction to our tastes could be achieved by a few decibels of tone-control treble cut. On the other hand, recordings in which the engineers have seen fit to hype up the upper mid-range by 10 to 15 dB were disqualified in the first thirty seconds of listening.



The remainder of the equipment used was a selection of those components that received top ratings over the past year or two. The system, excluding the tuner, tape deck, oscilloscope, and other test instruments, could be duplicated at a cost of about \$1,300.

Some final notes. We are aware that the list that follows is in no sense exhaustive, and that there are a number of excellent recordings that just never came to our attention. In the four years that have passed since our previous demonstration-disc article (reprints are available—send a stamped self-addressed envelope to STEREO

REVIEW, Dept. DR, 1 Park Ave., New York, New York, 10016), the *overall* quality of recorded sound has obviously risen. However, the records on our previous list are almost all still available and are in no sense sonically inferior to those on our new list. The one advance that is occasionally apparent results from current use of the Dolby noise-reduction system in preparing some master tapes. In general, the Dolbyized discs have less background hiss, although there are a number of very quiet discs available that got that way without ever encountering the Dolby device.

BACH: *Organ Recital*. Karl Richter. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138907. A clean recording of a Baroque organ with somewhat less reverberation than is usual in organ recordings. Aside from a touch of pre-echo here and there, the recording is flawless.

BARTÓK: *Bluebeard's Castle*. Christa Ludwig, Walter Berry, London Symphony Orchestra, István Kertész cond. LONDON OSA 1158. Orchestral texture has less definition than some of the other selections because of the more distant miking, but concert-hall sound quality is well captured.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 4*. London Symphony, Pierre Monteux cond. **WAGNER:** *Siegfried Idyll*. San Francisco Symphony, Pierre Monteux cond. RCA VICTROLA VICS 1102. A straightforward recording with full, warm sound and a nice compromise between concert-hall acoustics and instrumental definition. The sound of the Beethoven seems to have been compressed slightly, but overall this is an excellent recording.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 3; Variations on a Theme by Haydn*. London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati cond. MERCURY SR 90502. Good dynamic range and fine definition of the sound of the double basses. Best tonal balance is achieved with a touch of treble cut and perhaps some bass boost.

BRITTEN: *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. **PROKOFIEV:** *Peter and the Wolf*. Sean Connery (narrator), Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Antal Dorati cond. LONDON SPC 21007. A good variety of instrumental sounds, with especially good percussion effects. The recording has a pleasant concert-hall ambiance, although the top end is excessively bright in spots.

LOS CHIRIGUANOS OF PARAGUAY: *Guarani Songs and Dances*. NONESUCH H 72021. This disc of high-spirited South American Indian music for voice, guitar, and *Guarani* harp is clean, crisp, warm, and beautifully recorded. The stereo effects and overall sound quality are first-rate. Band two on the second side is particularly impressive.

DANCE MUSIC FROM THE TIME OF PRAETORIUS. Works by Praetorius, Widmann, and Schein. Collegium Terpsichore. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 198166. Despite its advanced age of nine years, this recording is remarkably good. The engineering is nothing short of superb, and the sixteenth-century music performed on the ancient instruments is a delight.

DON ELLIS ORCHESTRA: *Electric Bath*. COLUMBIA CS 9585. With three bass players and four percussionists, this recording should make big-band-jazz *aficionados* very happy. Some selections are rather hyped-up sonically, but the sound is clean, big, and brassy throughout.

FALLA: *La Vida Breve*. Victoria de los Angeles, Orquesta Nacional de España, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos cond. **GRANADOS:** *Colección de Tonadillas*. Victoria de los Angeles, Gonzalo Soriano (piano). ANGEL BL 3672, two discs. A clean, well-balanced recording. The beginning of Act Two, with orchestra, solo guitar, castanets, singing, foot-stamping, and hand-clapping is quite spectacular.

FRENCH ORGAN MASTERPIECES OF THE 17th AND 18th CENTURIES. Works by Marchand, Clérambault, F. Couperin, L. Couperin, and others. Pierre Froidebise (organ of the Laurenskerk at Alkmaar). NONESUCH H 71020. A Baroque organ with a buzzy, reedy quality recorded with a fine balance between the direct and the reverberant sound. The piece by Clérambault is astonishingly live-sounding, with marvelous presence.

MANITAS DE PLATA: *Recital*. Manitas de Plata (guitar). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2006. An unusually good job of recording a live performance. *Malagueñas clásicas* and *Farruca* capture the sound of this fiery flamenco guitarist beautifully.

LA MARSEILLAISE AND OTHER FAVORITE FRENCH SHOWPIECES. Works by Berlioz, Chabrier, Debussy, and others. Orchestre de Paris, Jean-Pierre Jacquillat cond. ANGEL S 36518. The overall sound is very smooth and clean, with exceptionally low background noise. The Berlioz arrangement of *La Marseillaise* for

orchestra, soloists, chorus, and children's chorus is a real sonic blockbuster.

MOZART: *Three Divertimenti for Strings; Serenata Notturna*. Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner cond. ARGO ZRG 554. An extraordinary example of a small string orchestra recorded close-up with a very natural room ambiance. Very smooth-sounding, with a great deal of mid-bass warmth.

ORFF: *Carmina Burana*. Gundula Janowitz, Gerhard Stolze, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Chorus and Orchestra of the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, Eugen Jochum cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139362. Although somewhat distantly miked, this recording's smooth sound, great dynamic range, and excellent definition make it one of the best. *In taberna quando sumus* is especially spectacular, but don't be surprised if your cartridge has trouble tracking it.

ORFF and KEETMAN: *Musica Poetica*. The Tölzer Knabenchor, plus other vocalists and instrumentalists under the direction of Carl Orff. HARMONIA MUNDI HMSt 530 652. A student's introduction to music, the record includes sounds ranging from a gigantic bass drum to children's voices and hand-clapping. In addition, you'll find dulcimer, zither, alto xylophone, double bass, trumpet, and several more instruments. An altogether charming and spectacular-sounding disc whose didactic purpose doesn't get in the way of sheer fun. It may not be readily available in some parts of the country.

TAJ MAHAL. Taj Mahal (guitar and vocals). COLUMBIA CS 9579. Very clean recording of a variety of city-blues instruments. Miking is very close on voice, and everything has exceptional clarity. Especially good is the *Celebrated Walking Blues*.

THE PENTANGLE. The Pentangle (vocals and instrumentals). REPRISÉ 6315. An exceptionally clean recording of a fine folk/rock/blues group playing acoustic instruments. The very close miking and some engineering gymnastics don't get in the way of the overall fine sound.

RACHMANINOFF: *Sonata in C Minor*. **KODÁLY:** *Sonata, Opus 4*. Harvey Shapiro (cello), Earl Wild (piano). NONESUCH H 71155. Exceptionally quiet background—a fine job of catching the nuances of the cello and piano tone. Close-up sound with an extra live quality. A disc that is a showcase for the Dolby method of reducing noise in recordings.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 5*. London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn cond. RCA LSC 2866. A smooth recording with big, full-bodied sound. Spacious, open sounding.

STRAUSS, R.: *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Los Angeles Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta cond. LONDON CS 6609. An

outstanding demonstration record—very quiet, with solid bass (particularly in the almost sub-sonic opening moments). Good overall tonal balance and dynamic range.

STRAVINSKY: *The Fairy's Kiss*. Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky cond. COLUMBIA MS 6803. The stereo perspective, which is fairly close but not of the "on-stage" variety, strikes a good acoustical balance. The overall sound is more sweet and mellow than crisp, and the most interesting section sonically is about one-third into the first side.

STRAVINSKY: *L'Histoire du soldat*. Soloists, instrumental ensemble, Leopold Stokowski cond. VANGUARD VSD 71165/6, two discs. The first Dolby-process recording to be released in this country, the discs' only flaw is that the narrator's voice is a bit too loud in relation to the music. A little treble cut helps the tonal balance, but the clarity and intimacy of the small-ensemble recording and the excellent use of stereo make this perfect for showing off your system.

DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET: *Time Further Out*. COLUMBIA CS 8490. Good recording of a small jazz group, with excellent percussion reproduction. *Far More Drums* and *Unsquare Dance* are especially outstanding.

THE TRANSCENDENTAL TAL. Pandit Mahapurush Misra (tabla), Ustad Ali Akbar Khan (sarod). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2001. This recording of solo Indian drums (accompanied by two stringed instruments) has tremendous low-frequency definition. The recording is an object lesson in good engineering techniques, and the music is brilliant and exhilarating.

VERDI: *Requiem*. Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, Luciano Pavarotti, Martti Talvela, Vienna State Opera Chorus, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti cond. LONDON OSA 1275, two discs. Quiet background, super-clean massed sound, and a bass drum (in the *Dies Irae*) that may knock you out of your chair. One of the very best.

STEREO REVIEW'S DEMONSTRATION DISC

EXCERPTS from twelve different—and excellent—commercial discs are gathered together on STEREO REVIEW's own demonstration record. Each selection is designed to show off one or more specific aspects of musical sound and its reproduction. Included with the recording is a booklet describing the aspect of stereo sound to listen for in each selection. The recording is available in both 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ - and 45-rpm versions. To get your copy (postpaid), send \$4.98 (and a note stating which speed you want) to: Stereo Demonstration Record, P.O. Box 3463, Church Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10008. Outside the United States, the cost is \$7.00. New York State residents please add local sales tax.

STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT BEST OF THE MONTH



CLASSICAL

PIANIST NELSON FREIRE: A COCKEYED SENSATION

Extraordinary technique and musicianship revealed in a two-disc debut on Columbia

IT ISN'T OFTEN that a young pianist makes his recorded debut in the sort of production that Columbia Records has mounted for the twenty-four-year-old Brazilian Nelson Freire. Four "concertos" at once—the Tchaikovsky First, the Schumann A Minor, the Grieg A Minor, and the Liszt *Totentanz*—make up a package not easily ignored. If we add to that the fact that he is being supported by an orchestra never, to my knowledge, recorded previously by Columbia, led by a conductor who also, to my knowledge, has never previously appeared on the Columbia label, that Columbia refers to Mr. Freire on the album as "a new star in the pianistic heaven," and then decides to sell the whole package at a bargain price, we might get the idea that there is a story behind this. There is.

First of all, as a pianist, Mr. Freire is a cockeyed sensation. I don't think I can say it better than that, for what he has, on the basis of these records, is not so profound or subtle as it is immediate and exciting. He has an altogether extraordinary pianistic technique, even in an age when extraordinary techniques are common. And he has the kind of incisiveness—the cutting, biting edge to the technique—that, coupled with an instinctively dramatic *rubato* and a flair for the big gesture, reminds me of the younger Horowitz. I find him utterly un-mechanical; his phrasing is musical and he doesn't throw away much. His tone is big and lovely and he seems to have a beautifully clear and controlled *pianissimo*. What

he doesn't have I cannot yet tell; I would have to hear him play other music to know, because he seems to have everything that *this* music calls for.

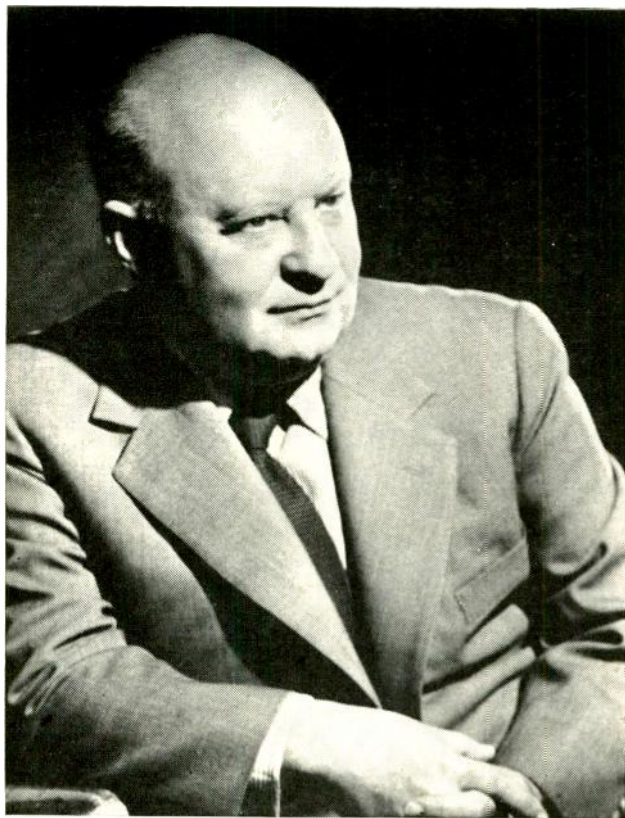
Nelson Freire is almost *too* perfect an example of "young artist and old music," the subject of my "Going on Record" column this month. He is, at the moment, virtually unknown in the U.S. His recorded repertoire consists of four warhorses, already represented, I'm sure, in most collections. But he is well worth listening to. I listened to the four concertos straight through in one day, and I can't remember the last time I did anything like that.

I have not yet spoken to Freire myself (I look forward to the opportunity), but I know a couple of his friends and they have filled me in on him. He was born in Boa Esperanza, Brazil, in 1944. At the age of thirteen he took a prize in a big piano competition in Brazil, which apparently gave him the opportunity to go to Europe for further study with Bruno Seidelhofer. Even at that age, he astonished everyone with his keyboard technique. Stories began to filter back to Brazil about him, stories that had nothing to do with music and that led many people there to think the rocket had misfired. At eighteen or so he gave a "comeback" recital in Rio. He played the Brahms First Sonata, the Brahms Third Sonata, the Paganini Variations, and the Liszt Sonata, and capped a long series of encores with the Brahms Second Sonata. He blew the roof off the place.

Back in Europe, he concertized



NELSON FREIRE
A brilliant future



Broadcast Music Inc.

PAUL HINDEMITH: *startling instrumental color*

frequently, won the Dinu Lipatti medal in London, and picked up first prize in the Vianna da Motta in Lisbon. Last year a representative of German C.B.S. heard him, signed him, and signed Rudolf Kempe and the Munich Philharmonic into the bargain for the recording sessions. Already issued in Europe, the records apparently came over here with little fanfare, while Freire made a not generally known debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic (playing the Bartók Second). I rather think that Columbia will not really know what they have on their hands until Freire gets the big concert appearances—perhaps next year. I can tell them, though: they have a knockout.

About Kempe and the Munich Philharmonic I'm a little less sure. The orchestra makes beautiful sounds, and makes them often, and the ensemble has spirit aplenty. But the oboist's tone is not really to my liking, and there are some quirky phrasings and some odd dragging of tempos that cannot be laid at the door of the soloist. Freire, as a matter of fact, seems to push things along subtly when the piano part comes in. But we are talking about moments here. The overall impression is certainly a good one.

The recording, I'm afraid, shows evidence of being something of a tape patch job. The basic sound is good—big, wide-range (in dynamics too), and with a nice stereo spread, though perhaps a bit too reverberant. But the balance of piano and orchestra shifts rather too fre-

quently (the four *tutti* chords at the end of the Schumann first movement are a case in point: the piano is *forte* on the first, almost inaudible on the second, up slightly on the third and fourth), which suggests the splicing together of different takes done with different microphone setups. The woodwinds, too, are rather larger-than-life in some places.

And so we come back to the really outstanding thing in this set: the pianist. Freire, I think, has a brilliant future ahead of him. His repertoire is reputed to be vast and all-embracing. I look forward to hearing more of it, and advise all who are interested in piano concertos and pianists to make his musical acquaintance at the first opportunity.

James Goodfriend

GRIEG: *Piano Concerto, in A Minor, Op. 16*. SCHUMANN: *Piano Concerto, in A Minor, Op. 54*. TCHAIKOVSKY: *Piano Concerto No. 1, in B-flat Minor, Op. 23*. LISZT: *Totentanz*. Nelson Freire (piano); Munich Philharmonic, Rudolf Kempe cond. COLUMBIA Ⓢ M2X 798 two discs \$7.98.

PAUL HINDEMITH'S *KAMMERMUSIKEN*

The Concerto Amsterdam plays his seven chamber "concertos" to absolute perfection

THE seven pieces Paul Hindemith composed during the Twenties under the collective title *Kammermusik* (and referred to on the album cover as his "Brandenburgs") have been given absolutely superb performances in impeccable recorded sound and stereo in a valuable, fascinating, almost documentary new issue by Telefunken. And though I have some nit-picking to do (which I shall get to presently), I recommend the release wholeheartedly, particularly to those who are familiar only with the solemn, perfunctory, neo-Baroque formulas that were to dominate Hindemith's music in what are, for a critic, the almost exasperatingly over-productive years that followed.

To be sure, the Baroque Hindemith was in evidence even during the Twenties—the long lines, the complex contrapuntal textures, the rather too symmetrical rhythmic patterns. But these *Kammermusik* works, taken in sum, show flashes of humor, an occasional touch of *grotesquerie*, and a startlingly coloristic approach to instrumentation that I found surprising set against the solid professionalism and mastery I have long associated with Hindemith. I was also somewhat surprised to be reminded of the Stravinskian strain in Hindemith's music—particularly by the extent to which it is evident here. The First *Kammermusik*, for example, has distinct

echoes of *Petrouchka* in its sparkling first movement; it also has a beautifully spare-textured slow movement, its phrases punctuated at unexpected points by a delicate, enigmatic bell sound.

Even in so late a work as the rather less attractive Concerto for Viola d'amore (No. 6), the solo writing in the last movement brings Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du soldat* to mind, and the last movement of the Viola Concerto (No. 5) is, though characteristically neo-Baroque, quite surprisingly more in the parodistic, stylized manner of Stravinsky's Octet than in the poker-faced style one associates with Hindemith.

Along with the First Concerto, I admire the Violin Concerto (No. 4) almost without reservation. It has a first movement of almost snarling ferocity, an absolutely ravishing slow movement, and a wonderfully fanciful closing movement (particularly inventive in scoring) that is a sort of perpetual motion for violin that speeds up at the end, seems to run out of breath, and then just quits. The Piano Concerto (No. 2) is more self-consciously Baroque in gesture, although it explores certain percussive aspects of the piano that—again—I associate with composers other than Hindemith. The Organ Concerto (No. 7) is by far the most mundane of the entire series.

Valuable as this collection is, I'm far from sure that it works as a straight-through listening experience (Hindemith, of course, didn't intend it as such) because in virtually every piece involving a solo instrument (six out of seven) the solo parts are kept maddeningly busy. Also, since the pieces are not performed chronologically, the plan of putting the four concertos for solo stringed

instruments together, logical as it might seem, strikes me as unwise, since neither organ, piano, nor the First Concerto, which has no soloist, is actively repetitious in quite the same way as a stringed instrument. This apart, I have no quarrel whatever with the release. The soloists and the Concerto Amsterdam play to absolute perfection. Since none is named, I must assume that the performances are all without conductor—an incredible feat if such is the case.

I suggest that you look into this release, particularly if you are one of those (they are many) who are today puzzled by reports of the excitement Hindemith's music created during the Twenties. *William Flanagan*

HINDEMITH: *Die Sieben Kammermusiken*. Op. 24, No. 1; Op. 36, Nos. 1-4; Op. 46, Nos. 1 and 2. Gerard van Blek (piano, in Op. 36, No. 1); Albert de Klerk (organ, in Op. 46, No. 2); Jaap Schröder (violin, in Op. 36, No. 3); Paul Doktor (viola, in Op. 36, No. 1); Joke Vermeulen (viola d'amore, in Op. 46, No. 1); Anner Bylsma (cello, in Op. 36, No. 2); Concerto Amsterdam. TELEFUNKEN Ⓢ SLT 43110/11/12-B three discs \$17.85.

◆◆ ENTERTAINMENT ◆◆

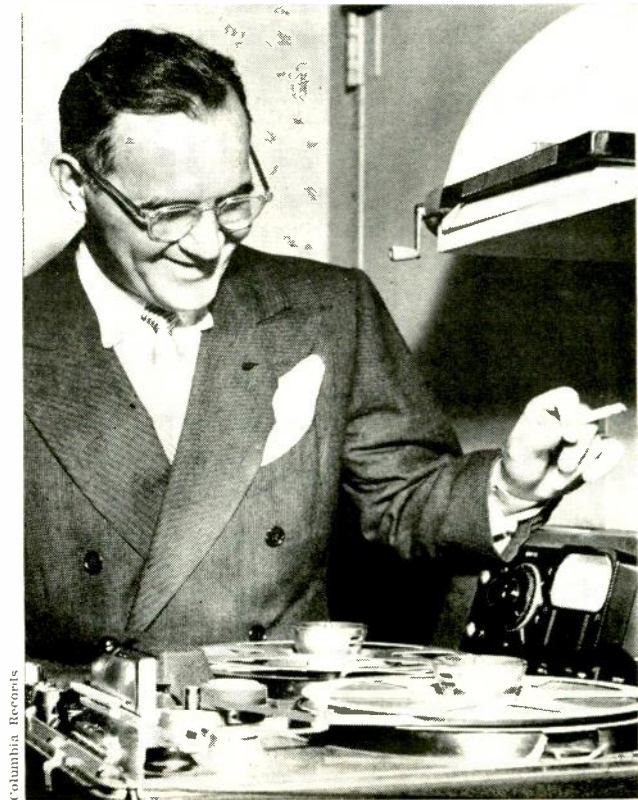
VAULT TREASURES OF THE FORTIES: BENNY GOODMAN

Epic's "Clarinet à la King" makes available rare selections by the Orchestra and Sextet

THE Benny Goodman Orchestra and Sextet of 1941-1942 made some memorable recordings: Many of them have been reissued extensively; those that have not, but deserve further hearing, constitute this album." So say the liner notes of Epic's new "Clarinet à la King." Did you hear that, Virginia? Benny Goodman recordings *rarely heard before!* But here they are in all their glory—with even a few gaffes preserved for good measure—and all just as they used to be. These selections have been buried in the Columbia vaults for years while you and I grew older. And this record is more than just a trip down memory lane—each and every performance is a masterpiece of its kind, making of this Epic issue a musical education.

Russ Connor's liner notes are great reading, as packed with information as a gossip column. In fact, Mr. Connor's comments live up to everything liner notes should be—they really tell you something about what you are hearing. Benny Goodman, as even the Now Generation knows, was never just a passing musical fad. He was The Great Swing Original and a true musician, always aware of the changes taking place in his art. Benny was always "in there," experimenting with the new and about-to-be-new (as Russ Connor points out

BENNY GOODMAN: *The Great Swing Original*



Columbia Records

concerning *St. Louis Blues*, Goodman exhibited boppish overtones six years before bop arrived), and he never hesitated to dip back into the old jazz masters and even the classics to squeeze everything he could through that black and silver woodwind he made synonymous with his name. What came out of his horn lives on as pure original sound, as significant today as ever.

There are other reasons for listening to this album too. How amazing to hear little just-discovered Peggy Lee, way back then, so vocally thin and unsure, so unlike the sultry, sexy Peggy of later stardom. And along with Peggy's, the other names on some of the numbers read like the roster of music's Hall of Fame: Billy Butterfield, Jimmy Maxwell, Cootie Williams, Dave Tough, Vido Musso, Mel Powell, Eddie Sauter, Sid Catlett, and on and on.

Two of the selections, *The Earl* and *Let's Do It*, are drumless—very unusual for a swing band. Goodman said it was an experiment; the trade hinted that it was because Goodman wanted to show drummer Sid Catlett that he didn't need him. Trivia? Sure. But I enjoyed every dishy moment of this album's notes and every swinging second of this long-buried but not forgotten set of recordings. Rex Reed

BENNY GOODMAN: *Clarinet à la King*. Benny Goodman and his Sextet/Orchestra. *Cherry; How Deep Is the Ocean; The Earl; Clarinet à la King; I'm Here; Peter and the Wolf; Let's Do It; Shady Lady Bird; Buckle Down Winssocki; Paganini Caprice XXIV; I Got It Bad; Everything I Love; If I Had You; Limehouse Blues; St. Louis Blues; Before*. EPIC ® EE 22025 \$4.98.

THE ROLLING STONES AND PARADISE LOST

*"Beggars' Banquet" offers further evidence
of their Adversary role in popular music*

THROUGHOUT most of their career, the Rolling Stones have played the role of alter-ego to the Beatles. Their fascination with the forces of darkness has acted as a counterfoil to the sweet Pepperland enthusiasms of the Beatles. The temptation, obviously, is to hear the music of the Beatles as an expression of the Ego and the music of the Stones as the dark voice of the Id.

The contrast has never been more apparent than in the most recent releases from these stellar English groups. The Beatles' latest album is head music—very good head music, to be sure—which appeals to one's conscious tastes and desires. The Rolling Stones' new "Beggars Banquet" for London is another matter entirely. Such titles as *Street Fighting Man*, *Prodigal Son*, *No Expec-*



THE ROLLING STONES: *A word from the Sponsor?*

tations, and *Sympathy for the Devil* clearly reach down into the depths of the viscera. The most characteristic piece, and one that may well turn out to be the best pop song of 1969, is *Sympathy for the Devil*. It poses the reasonable, but highly provocative, premise that the Prince of Darkness has not been receiving his due. In a world (and particularly a culture) which has been concerned too long with the supposed purity of its aspirations and ideals, it is a pleasure to hear a call for understanding, appreciation, and, yes, sympathy for the less admirable qualities that are elements within us all. That such a call can be made in the form of a popular song is about the best testimony that can be offered for the importance of music in the society of the young.

The rest of the songs on this release do not quite reach the very high level of *Sympathy for the Devil*, but they are very good indeed. The Stones have received ample press notices in the past, but they have too often focused on image and personality rather than musicality. The group's genuine ability to speak, in musical terms, of the deeper significances of the decade will probably not become truly clear to us for some time to come. But don't miss this one. It will be one of the year's most important recordings. Don Heckman

ROLLING STONES: *Beggars Banquet*. Rolling Stones (vocals and instrumentals). *Sympathy for the Devil; No Expectations; Dear Doctor; Parachute Woman; Jig-Saw Puzzle; Street Fighting Man; Prodigal Son; Stray Cat Blues; Factory Girl; Salt of the Earth*. LONDON © PS 539 \$4.98.

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CIRCLE NO. 1 ON READER SERVICE CARD



CLASSICAL

Reviewed by WILLIAM FLANAGAN • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS • ERIC SALZMAN

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BARBER: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 14.* **MILHAUD:** *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.* Claire Bernard (violin); Orchestre National de l'Opéra de Monte Carlo, Edouard Van Remoortel cond. WORLD SERIES (S) PHC 9105 \$2.50.

Performance: Clean and to the point
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Fine

Although the coupling of these composers looks arbitrary in print, and although there is nothing in either piece that is likely to change your view of the world, I nonetheless recommend this release—because the music gives pleasure and because each work makes subtle points about either its composer or the music of the middle years of our century, or both.

The Barber Concerto, which is reasonably well known in the United States, was composed in 1911, when the In Things among American composers were the conscious nationalist gesture or neo-classicism à la Stravinsky. Particularly at this point in his career, Barber was a loner—a gifted, successful one, make no mistake about it—and would have truck with neither. A lyrical eclectic by nature, Barber laid his influences on the line in the Concerto—a bit of Sibelius, a moment surprisingly like Shostakovich—but there is also a good deal of Barber's elusively personal youthful lyricism. In 1941, I had barely begun to explore Brahms and Beethoven and knew nothing of the contemporary musical scene; but I would bet the proverbial dollars to doughnuts that the In Crowd must have been pretty patronizing about the work. Little could they have known that in 1969, when even the subsequent In Thing (post-Weberism) is beginning to sound old hat, Barber's Concerto would sound fresher, truer, and more real than all but a handful of pieces by the imitators of Stravinsky, Copland, Harris—and, oh yes, I forgot, Hindemith.

I don't have the most recent Schwann catalog handy, but the relatively recent one I have just consulted does not list the Milhaud Concerto, which was written while the composer was in residence at Mills College, California, in 1946. In any case, this is my first contact with the piece—not of itself a critical cultural deficiency, because Mil-

haud is one of those composers so exasperatingly prolific and, resultantly, so variable in quality that it would take at least a year of forty-hour-a-week study to learn the Milhaud canon sufficiently well to be able to separate the wheat from the chaff. Well, the Violin Concerto is not only wheat, but a work that provokes both surprise and speculation. For example: few twentieth-century composers have more personal, immediately recognizable styles than Milhaud. Yet, unbriefed, I'm not entirely certain I would have sworn the work was his. Yet, given that information alone, I'm quite certain I would

piece is one of the best I know by Milhaud—composed since 1940.

The performances are crisp, definitely of the no-nonsense variety. The sonics are excellent; the release, viewed either as sheer pleasure or as object of musical study, is uncommonly worthwhile. W. F.

BARTÓK: *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta.* **STRAVINSKY:** *Firebird Suite (1910).* BBC Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Boulez cond. COLUMBIA (S) MS 7206 \$5.98.

Performance: Bartók good, Stravinsky excellent
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Very good



SAMUEL BARBER
A photograph taken in 1962

have guessed it to have been influenced by what was in the air during Milhaud's stays in the United States. At its worst, Milhaud's music (since the fun-and-games of the Twenties) can be a meandering, amorphous, self-resembling, polytonal discourse over which floats a highly characteristic melodic line. But the Violin Concerto is almost severely classical in its structural clarity; the typically opaque polytonal texture has been scrubbed clean and often discarded. What is more surprising is the unmistakably American—specifically Coplandesque—intervallic structure—texture that appears in the orchestra both at the end of the first-movement cadenza and in spots in the beautiful slow movement. Scarcely less unexpected are the undisguised figurational flourishes and chordal punctuations of Stravinsky's neoclassic manner; they all but leap out of the final movement. But nothing I have written alters the fact that the

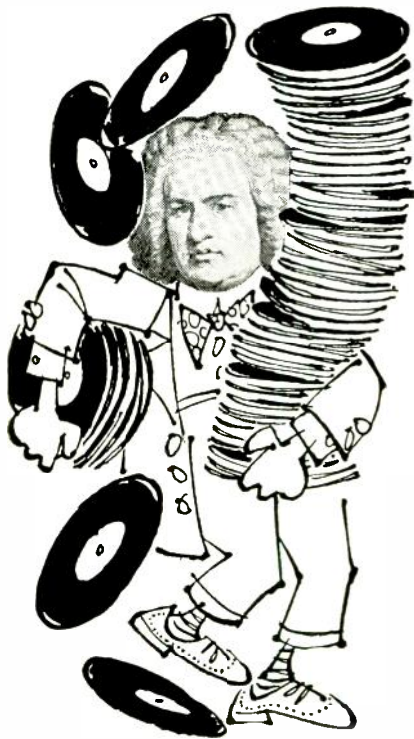
The special item of interest here is the Stravinsky, partly because it is the not-so-well-known 1910 Suite, and partly because it is so marvelously performed by Boulez and the British musicians. Boulez is, of course, known for his affinities—as a conductor if not as a composer—with Stravinsky, and perhaps it ought not to be such a surprise that his *Firebird* is so skillful and fresh, set forth with perfect strokes of balance, dynamics, color, and rhythmic energy. As Boulez points out in his notes, the work, in spite of its Romantic connotations, already suggests Stravinsky's mature harmonic style in the opening measures, and the rhythmic phraseology and energy of the *Dance of Katschei* clearly adumbrates the *Rite of Spring*. What he does not mention, curiously, are the obvious and strong affinities with Debussy, affinities that certainly appeal to the French musician, and which, in no small measure, help to explain the success of his reading here. The original Suite differs considerably from the later and more familiar one—notably in the extended versions of the Introduction and the Firebird's Dance, in the inclusion of *The Princesses' Game with the Golden Apples* and *The Princesses' Khorovod*, and in the fact that it ends with the *Infernal Dance of the Subjects of Katschei*, thus omitting entirely the familiar Berceuse and Finale!

Bartók's MSPC (as it is known in the trade) is by now one of the most-recorded works of the modern repertoire—it is written for double string orchestra, and its exceptional vogue has at least something to do with the fact that it is ideal for stereo. Boulez's version is very impressive, particularly in the slow, chromatic (and partly Impressionistic) movements One and Three; the diatonic, dancy-folksy movements go just a little less well. This seems not so much a question of style as of under-rehearsal; the musicians do not quite achieve that incredible meshed sound, perfect asymmetrical sym-

Explanation of symbols:

- (S) = stereophonic recording
- (M) = monophonic recording
- * = mono or stereo version not received for review

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metry, and powerful accentual energy that one has come to expect from Boulez—and finds in the *Firebird*. Still, this is hardly a negligible performance, and a reasonable pairing for what is—Berceuse-Finale or no—an extraordinary oversight. Good sound on the test pressings. E. S.

BERLIOZ: *Te Deum*, Op. 22. Alexander Young (tenor); London Philharmonic Choir and Dulwich College Boys Choir; Denis Vaughan (organ); Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham cond. ODYSSEY © 32 16 0206 \$2.49.

Performance: Strong
 Recording: Inadequate
 Stereo Quality: Ersatz

Odyssey has done us Berliozniks a great favor by restoring to the catalog this Beecham performance, the one and only commercial recording ever made of the composer's great *Te Deum* for three choruses, orchestra, and organ. Not that the disc is anything more than a stopgap—it was recorded in 1953, and given the state of the sonic art then, it is little more than a shadowing forth of the music's intricacies and splendors. The original monophonic recording could not have been expected to capture one important dimension of this work: the spatial relationships of the three choruses and the orchestra. And other problems beset the disc (I have not heard the Columbia original, so I cannot say whether the sham stereo adds to or detracts from what the engineers started with). Only the organ and the solo tenor come through well; even with the help of a low-end boost, the basses of the choruses are almost inaudible throughout the *Dignare Domine* and elsewhere, and in loud passages voices and instruments both are lost in a harsh blur. But technically inadequate as the recording is, it has merits beyond merely whetting the appetite for a successor: the choruses sing quite beautifully, and so does Alexander Young in the *Te ergo quaesumus*—he treats it almost operatically. Beecham's generalship of these gargantuan forces did not call forth absolute precision, but it did produce a strong sense of both the scope and the depth of this score. Still, I hope that the *Te Deum* is near the top of the list of Colin Davis' recording plans in this centennial year of Berlioz's death.

Robert S. Clark

BONDON: *Concerto de Mars* (see CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO)

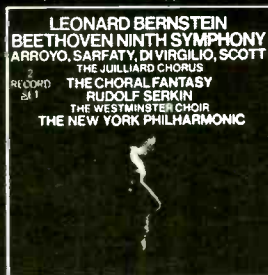
RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BRUCKNER: *Eight Motets: Graduale "Locus iste"; "Ave Maria"; Antiphon "Tota pulchra es Maria"; Alleluja-Vers "Virga Jesse"; Graduale "Ecce sacerdos"; Graduale "Os justi"; Hymnus "Vexilla regis"; Graduale "Christus factus est pro nobis." 150th Psalm.* Maria Stader (soprano), Chorus of the Berlin Opera and Berlin Philharmonic, Eugen Jochum cond. (in the Psalm); Richard Holm (tenor); Hedwig Bilgram (organ); Chorus of the Bavarian Radio, Eugen Jochum cond. (in the Motets). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON © 136552 \$5.79.

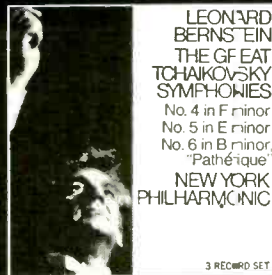
Performance: Excellent
 Recording: Excellent
 Stereo Quality: Good

(Continued on page 90)

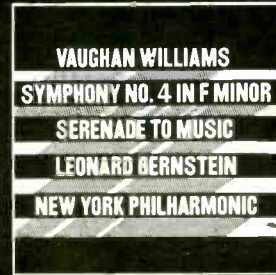
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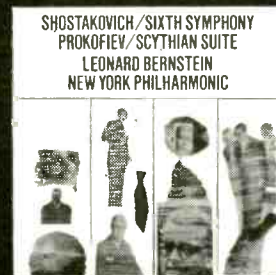


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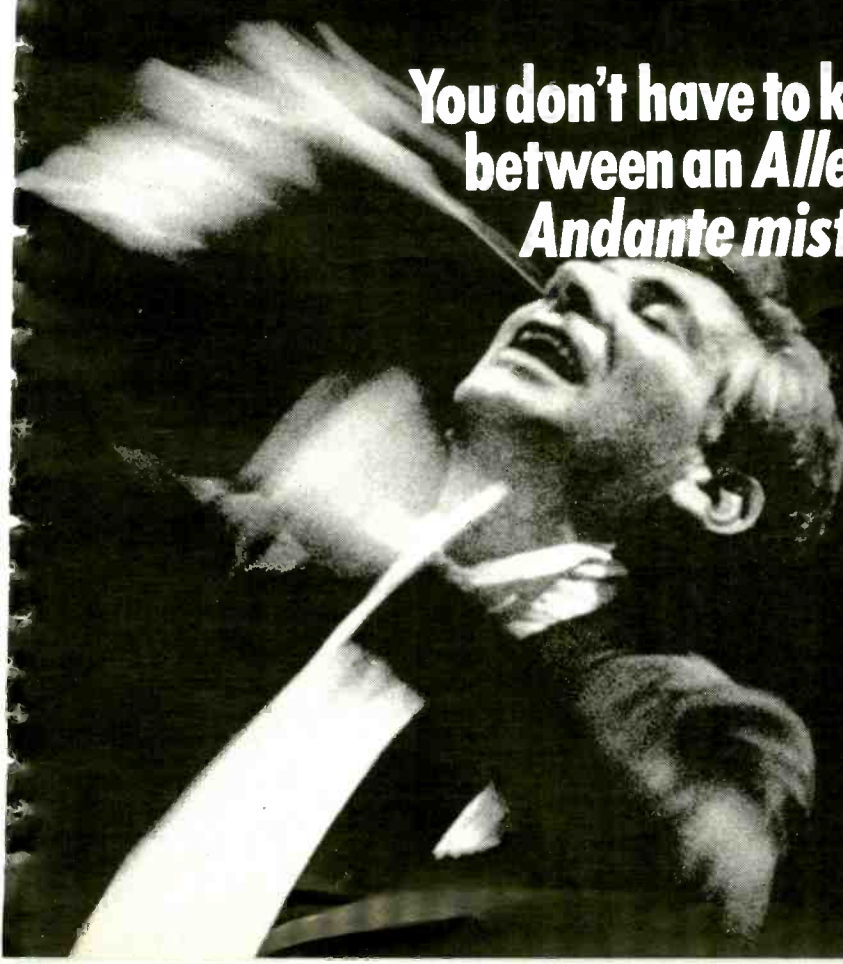


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These are very good performances of very beautiful pieces—mostly unaccompanied (one motet has brass and organ and the psalm is a major work with soprano solo and symphony orchestra as well as chorus). All of these performances were previously issued on the fourth sides of two three-sided Bruckner symphonies. All put together, it's a lot of rapturous, triadic, non-contrapuntal choral earnestness, but it is all (endlessly) heavenly and very well performed and recorded, too. E. S.

CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: *Quintet for Guitar and String Quartet, Op. 143.* Manuel Lopez Ramos (guitar); Parrenin Quartet. **BONDON:** *Concerto de Mars for Guitar and Orchestra.* Manuel Lopez Ramos (guitar); Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Konrad Ragossing cond. RCA VICTROLA © VICS 1367 \$2.50.

Recording: Good
Performance: Convincing
Stereo Quality: Okay

Although I suppose Castlenuovo-Tedesco is the "name" composer involved here—the one most likely to sell the record—I personally find his Quintet, like most of his music, bland, excessively comfortable, without personality but, withal, highly professional. Bondon's Concerto, on the other hand, is of far greater interest, although the composer's music is pretty much news to me. The piece makes adventurous use of the guitar, its harmonic texture has bite, and its contrapuntal fabric and constructive methods suggest a composer who is not only gifted but willing to take risks. If Bondon's road is a little bumpier than Castlenuovo-Tedesco's, the ride is still more interesting. W. F.

CHAUSSON: *Poème for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 25.* **RAVEL:** *Tzigane.* **SAINT-SAËNS:** *Havanaise, Op. 83; Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28.* Igor Oistrakh (violin); Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL © SR 40077 \$5.79.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CHAUSSON: *Poème for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 25.* **RAVEL:** *Tzigane.* **VIEUXTEMPS:** *Violin Concerto No. 4, in D Minor, Op. 31.* Arthur Grumiaux (violin); Lamoureux Orchestra, Manuel Rosenthal cond. PHILIPS © PHS 900195 \$5.98.

Performance: Oistrakh excellent,
Grumiaux superb
Recording: Both good, Melodiya more vivid
Stereo Quality: Both very good

These two releases offer a virtual glorification of French music for violin and orchestra. The duplications (Chausson and Ravel) are, in a way, regrettable, yet they serve in a valuable way to allow one to compare the styles of two eminent masters of the bow.

It is surprising that the D Minor Violin Concerto of Henri Vieuxtemps, a gem among the old-fashioned virtuoso concertos, has never become a recording staple. For two decades, Jascha Heifetz's dazzling performance (Victor DM 297, never transferred to LP!) held a monopoly in the catalog. Its successor, Zino Francescatti's fine account on Columbia ML 5184, was deleted after only a few years. The present disc, the first stereo version, deserves a longer life. Grumiaux

plays the piece lovingly, with luminous tone and admirable dexterity. There is a proper air of reverence in his treatment of the soaring *andante religioso* melody, and the last movement has plenty of dash and fire. In the *Scherzo*, Grumiaux does not try to match the lightning speed and daredevil approach of Heifetz (will anybody, ever?), but his playing leaves nothing to be desired in terms of spirit and accuracy.

In the Chausson and Ravel pieces, Grumiaux is steadier and more relaxed, while Oistrakh displays more variety and more temperament. The Russian artist's heavier vibrato and stronger bow pressure may be preferred by those who like a fiery approach in this repertoire. For me, the elegance and absolute control of Grumiaux, mixed with just the right amount of passion, is preferable. But Oistrakh's playing is never less

ballades and the Fantasia—young Mr. Frankl cultivates a tautness of phrasing and rhythm that makes his performances seem rather small in scale. His handling of the more lyrical middle ballades sounds more effective to my ears. However, at \$2.50, this disc—originally issued on Vox in 1964—is one of the best Chopin buys in the Schwann catalog. Those who don't mind paying double the price understandably will go for the Ashkenazy and Rubinstein readings of the ballades, for these pieces want the grand Romantic manner in addition to the kind of rhythmic precision and glittering passage-work offered by Frankl. As far as I am concerned, the great F Minor Fantasia has yet to achieve full realization in an up-to-date recorded performance. Will it be Ashkenazy or Horowitz or someone else who will finally turn the trick with this stirring work? D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CHOPIN: *Concerto No. 2, in F Minor, Op. 21; Grand Fantasy on Polish Airs, Op. 13.* Artur Rubinstein (piano), Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. RCA © LSC 3055 \$4.98.

Performance: Slick
Recording: Dazzling
Stereo Quality: First-class

A simple look at the cast and producers of this record tempted me simply to concede that it was a Recording of Special Merit and not bother to listen to it. Since the editors would take a dim view of such a critical practice, I could do no such thing; but, excepting the opportunity to hear the Grand Fantasy (I never had), there were no surprises. Rubinstein and Ormandy have collaborated in an impeccable performance of the Chopin Concerto. I have often had the impression that the pianist has played Chopin to the point of no return, but there is a youthful, ebullient quality to his work here that is refreshing. Ormandy's collaboration puzzles me a little. Chopin's orchestration, unless I am deluded, is rather on the thin side. It could be the result of RCA's dazzling recorded sonics, it could be the dazzling sonority of what is legendarily known as the "Philadelphia sound," or it could be a combination of both, but in this recording, Chopin's reticent orchestration comes out sounding like Berlioz at times. Still, it's quite an effect, and, right or wrong, I am not about to put it down.

The *Grand Fantasy on Polish Airs* was composed when Chopin was eighteen and just before his flight from Poland to Paris. It's a youthful piece—precocious, representing the awakening of genius—but it doesn't quite come off with the almost invariable formal and textural perfectionism that I associate with Chopin. The piece rambles a bit, and its overt Polish folklore is somehow too raucous for Chopin's already elegant, refined style, or perhaps it was merely a youthful failure of technique in integrating the two. Hearing it is nonetheless an interesting musicological encounter, and it's good to feel that one has had his first exposure to the piece in as classy a performance as this.

Both sound and stereo effect are excellent. What more can I say? W. F.

Next Month in

Stereo Review

Part Two of a Two-Part
Examination of the "New" Music:

Composer
JOHN CAGE

By Richard Kostelanetz

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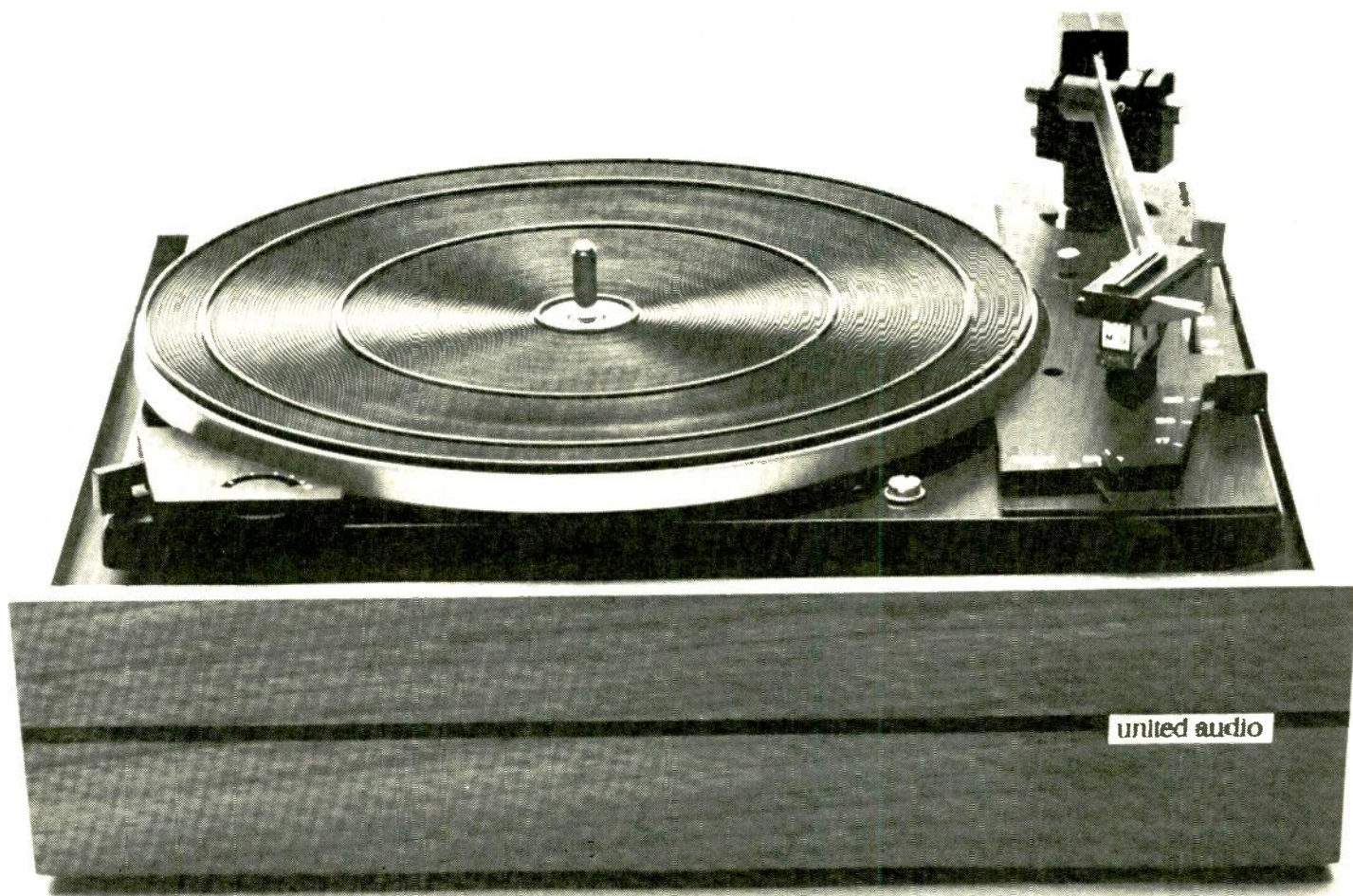
The orchestral backgrounds conform to the personalities of the violinists involved: the support given to Oistrakh is more colorful, that to Grumiaux more suave. It is, in fact, too suave in the *Adagio* movement of the Vieuxtemps concerto: the orchestra is not given enough prominence when it sings the theme against the simple countermelody for the solo violin. Chalk this up to critical hairsplitting, however—the Grumiaux disc is superb, the Oistrakh is delightful all the way. G. J.

CHOPIN: *Ballades: No. 1, in G Minor, Op. 23; No. 2, in F Major, Op. 38; No. 3, in A-flat, Op. 47; No. 4, in F Minor, Op. 52; Fantasia, in F Minor, Op. 49.* Peter Frankl (piano). TURNABOUT © TV 3-4271 \$2.50.

Performance: Small-scale but good
Recording: Satisfactory
Stereo Quality: All right

In the bigger Chopin—the first and fourth

(Continued on page 92)



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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DELIBES: *Lakmé*. Joan Sutherland (soprano), Lakmé; Jane Berbié (mezzo-soprano), Mallika; Alain Vanzo (tenor); Gerald; Claude Calès (baritone), Frederic; Gabriel Bacquier (baritone), Nilakantha; Emile Belcourt (tenor). Hadji; Monica Sinclair (contralto), Mistress Bentson; Gwenyth Annear (soprano), Ellen; others. Monte Carlo Opera Chorus and Orchestra. Richard Bonyngé cond. LONDON © OSA 1391 three discs \$17.37.

Performance: **Sutherland outstanding**
 Recording: **Excellent**
 Stereo Quality: **Excellent**

The charm of *Lakmé* lies in its lack of pretentiousness. Its music is a tuneful mélange

of perfumed, sinuous Orientalism, cast over a very simple story in which complications gather in an orderly fashion and are eventually resolved neatly and predictably. There is more musical substance in many operettas, but what little musical interest there is in *Lakmé* is handled skillfully and with unerring taste in this new production.

London Records is to be congratulated for replacing its serviceable fifteen year-old mono set of the opera with a superior new stereo version. The gentle, wistful character of Lakmé proves an ideal vehicle for the lustrous voice and inward, monochromatic Sutherland vocal personality. We accept her portrayal of the distant, mysterious Hindu maiden without question, and rejoice in the sounds which, while unintelligible as always, are constantly bewitching. Her "*Pour-*

quoi dans les grands bois" has the sensuousness and control of a flute; her Bell Song is all sparkle and virtuosity; and she executes the arduously difficult upward phrase at the conclusion of the third-act *Berceuse* (from middle D to high C) with an exquisitely turned *diminuendo*.

The show is pretty much all Sutherland, but there is able assistance. The smooth mezzo of Jane Berbié blends harmoniously with Sutherland's tones in their Act I duet; Calès and Belcourt turn in expert and well-sung characterizations. Vanzo's light voice tightens in the higher reaches—more than his slender vocal means are needed to make the role of Gerald exciting—but he is better than adequate. Bacquier (a kind of French Tito Gobbi) projects a strong Nilakantha, but his vocal timbre is too light. The role was once the domain of the likes of Léon Rother and Ezio Pinza, and their kind of *basso* weight is needed for the right balance and authority. Bonyngé's conducting is characterized by the kind of placid repose that befits the opera, and, aside from one imperfect passage in the brass, the orchestra gives a good account of itself.

In sum, we have here an admirable display of the Sutherland bravura, and a praiseworthy presentation of an unexciting but gently soothing opera. G. J.

ELGAR: *Cockaigne—Concert Overture, Op. 40; Chanson de matin, Chanson de nuit, Op. 15; Serenade for Strings, in E Minor, Op. 20; Pomp and Circumstance Marches, Op. 39: No. 1, in D Major, No. 4, in G Major.* Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Pro Arte Orchestra, George Weldon cond. RCA VICTROLA © VICS 1377 \$2.50.

Performance: **Bright**
 Recording: **Likewise**
 Stereo Quality: **Good**

This is an odd grab-bag of the lighter Elgar, but George Weldon's bright and extroverted readings of the evocative *Cockaigne* and of the rather saccharine *Serenade* are more to my taste than the weightier treatments by Colin Davis and Sir John Barbirolli, respectively. The two *Pomp and Circumstance* marches are smartly and brilliantly done, too, and I'm sorry that Weldon did not do the entire set of five. The two *Chansons* come more under the rubric of salon music, and are well done as such.

The recorded sound is bright and spacious, with the obligato organ parts at the end of *Cockaigne* and of *Pomp and Circumstance* No. 1 clearly audible. D. H.

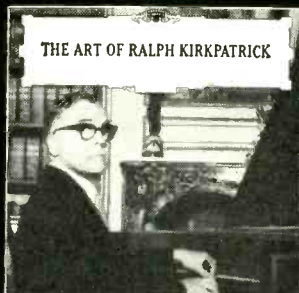
FALLA: *El Amor brujo.* Nati Mistral (soprano). **GRANADOS: *Goyescas: Intermezzo.*** **RAVEL: *Alborada del gracioso; Pavane pour une infante défunte.*** New Philharmonia Orchestra, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos cond. LONDON © CS 6521 \$5.79.

Performance: **Sensuous but not stinging**
 Recording: **Superb**
 Stereo Quality: **Spacious**

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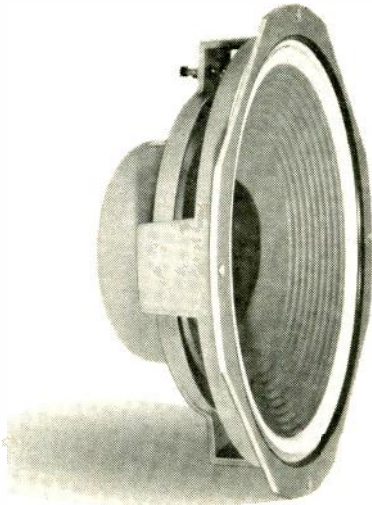
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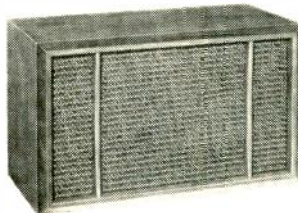
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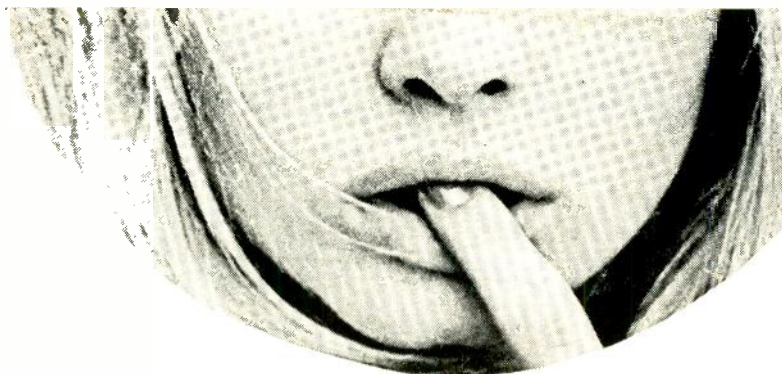
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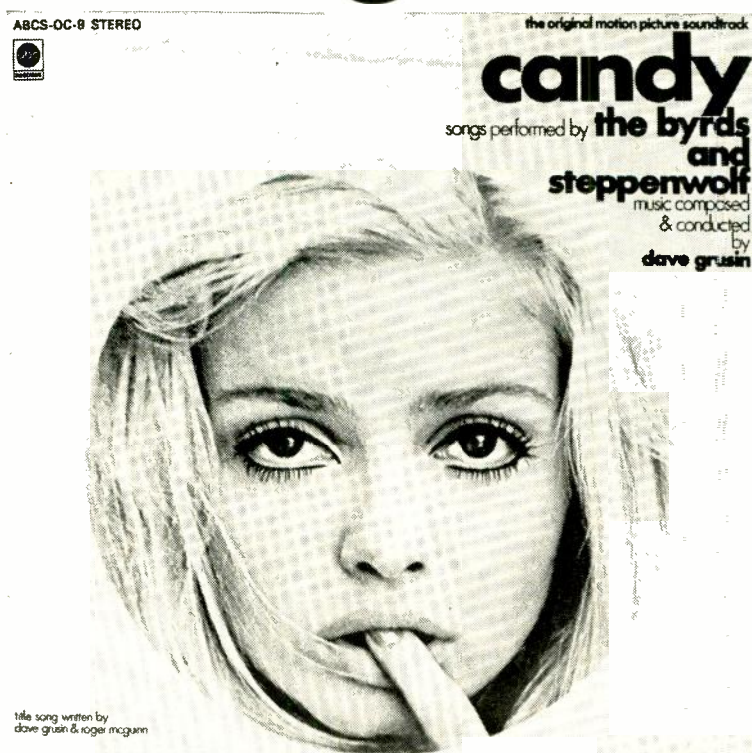
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friend, Carmelo, has become a staple in the world's musical diet, and its famous *Ritual Fire Dance* has been overlaid to the exhaustion of the world's ears. *El Amor brujo* has fared particularly well on records, where the variety of its rhythmic and tonal colors and the exciting interspersing of the solo arias for Candelas make for a stirring experience when the right conductor is at the helm, the right forces playing, the right soprano or mezzo-soprano singing. I remember one astonishing old record in which the dancer Argentinita, who had made the part her own, could be heard clicking her heels in flamenco patterns as she intoned the "dance of the game of love." I count nine versions in the current Schwann catalog before this new one, some of them featuring the voices of such singers as Grace Bumbry, Victoria de los Angeles, Leontyne Price, and Shirley Verrett. Of these, Miss Verrett's, with Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra, seems to me still the version that strikes the best balance between flame and form—with the exception of the older and even more sensuous Stokowski mono disc (now out of print) featuring the mezzo of Nan Merriman. Frühbeck, looking like Dracula on the album cover, exhorts his players to a spacious performance, abounding in great arcs of sweet sound, but short on the necessary taut Iberian bite: as for Miss Mistral, there is idiomatic authenticity and musical validity in her treatment, but too little of the savagery needed to add real impact to her arias. The effect must come across at once, or the spark fails to strike. The other familiar pieces in this package are played with the expansive approach this conductor favors, building up to vast swoops of vivid tonal color. The *Alborada del gracioso* ("Morning Song of a Buffoon") especially comes off brilliantly. I'd thought the Cluytens version on Angel was absolutely the last word where this piece was concerned, but Frühbeck has, as they say in the commercials, seen more in it and got more out of it.

Paul Kresb

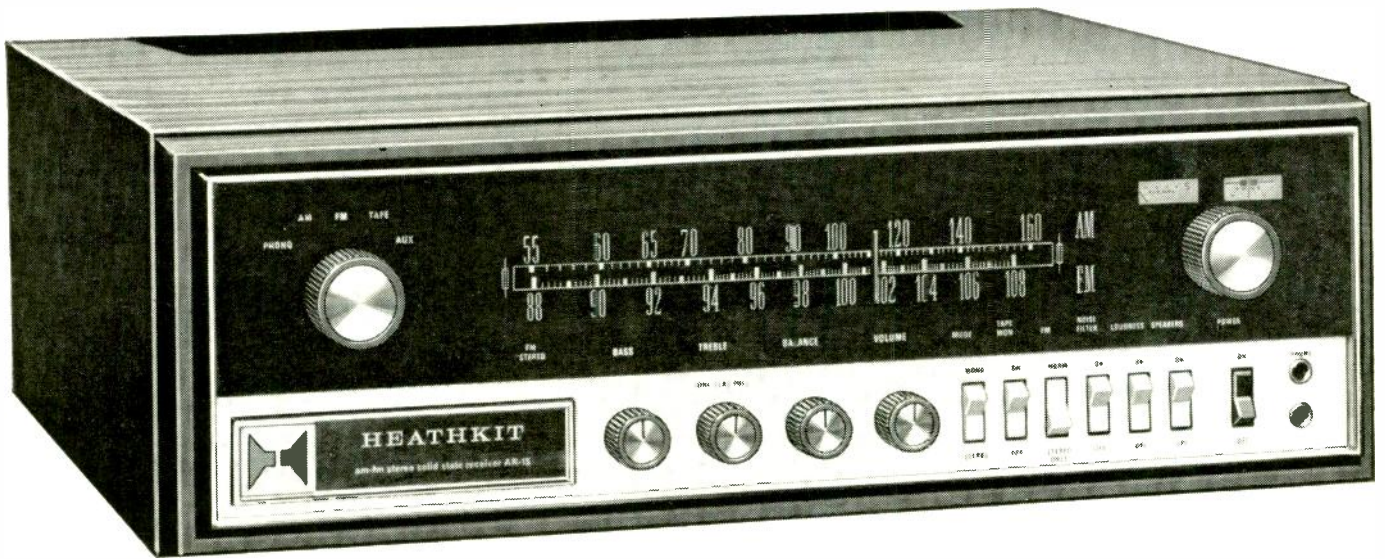
GABRIELI: *Canzon Septimi Toni No. 2; Canzon Duodecimi Toni; Canzon à 12 in Echo; Sonata Octavi Toni; Canzona per Sonare No. 27; Canzon Quarti Toni; Canzon à 12; Canzona per Sonare No. 28; Sonata pian' e forte; Canzon Primi Toni; Canzon Septimi Toni No. 1; Canzon Noni Toni; Canzona per Sonare No. 2.* Philadelphia Brass Ensemble; Cleveland Brass Ensemble; Chicago Brass Ensemble. COLUMBIA (S) MS 7209 \$5.98.

Performance: Spectacular
Recording: Spectacular
Stereo Quality: Spectacular

Spectacular, spectacular, spectacular. And, in case you didn't get the message, SPECTACULAR! Columbia didn't go all the way to Venice to put this one together, but they did fly the brass sections of the Cleveland and Chicago Symphony Orchestras to Philadelphia to join the brass of the Philadelphia Orchestra—which, of course, still recorded for Columbia those many months ago—in music by Gabrieli for two and three brass choirs. All of it comes from the famous Giovanni Gabrieli collections of 1597 and 1608 for multiple wind choirs, and it is brilliantly played on modern brass and recorded to maximum effect—depth, reson-

(Continued on page 97)

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NEW SONY® 6120
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 APRIL 1969

ance, antiphony, and all. Why no "Recording of Special Merit"? Well, only because the organizers of this record forgot one thing: someone who knows something about how music was performed in Venice in 1600. But even when it's wrong, it is so magnificently wrong—spectacularly, sensationally, gloriously unauthentic! E. S.

GOUNOD: *Roméo et Juliette*. Mirella Freni (soprano), Juliette; Franco Corelli (tenor), Roméo; Eliane Lublin (soprano), Stephano; Michèle Vilma (mezzo-soprano), Gertrude; Robert Cardona (tenor), Tybalt; Henri Gui (baritone), Mercutio; Claude Calès (baritone), Capoulet; Xavier Depraz (bass), Frère Laurent; Pierre Thau (bass), Le Duc; Christos Grigoriou (baritone), Grégorio; others. Orchestra and Chorus of the Paris Opéra, Alain Lombard cond. ANGEL © SCL 3734 three discs \$17.37.

Performance: Well-sung, but wanting in authenticity

Recording: Good
 Stereo Quality: Good

Gounod's lovely *Roméo et Juliette*, which once enjoyed perhaps excessive popularity, then suffered from equally undeserved neglect, seems currently to be making a comeback of sorts. Since its noble theme works less well in opera than it does on the dramatic stage (Berlioz had the right idea when he turned his back on a conventional operatic treatment), the theatrical success of the Gounod work varies with the performers. On records, it has been well served for the past dozen years or so by London A 4310, with Raoul Jobin and Janine Micheau in the roles of the legendary lovers. The present version, the first in stereo, offers singing of undeniable attraction but a performance somewhat wanting in stylistic unity. To borrow a phrase from a relevant source: ay, there's the rub. It would be easy to take Angel to task for entrusting the title roles to Italian artists and thereby disrupting what is on the whole a homogeneous production steeped in the proper style. But speaking as one who is familiar with certain basic requirements of the record industry, I understand that an opera like *Roméo et Juliette* cannot be launched upon the uncertain waters of sales competition without superstars to keep it afloat: hence Franco Corelli and Mirella Freni.

I understand, but I must still criticize. Corelli's ardent singing is most appropriate to Roméo's character, but his faulty diction, explosive Italian mannerisms, and unsubtle sliding attacks constantly clash with the opera's musical spirit. He does his most impressive work in the finale of Act 3, which he caps with a ringing (unwritten) high C. But the aria "Ab!ève-toi, soleil!" is excessively melodramatic, and the gentle duet "Ange adorable" is overpowered with passion. There are admirable moments here and there: the voice is a rich and gleaming instrument, and several nicely turned *diminuendi* show good artistic intentions. If only more of that undeniably legitimate gold were visible through the brass plating!

Mirella Freni's French pronunciation also leaves much to be desired, but her lovely tone quality, natural and understated style, and always tasteful, always disciplined singing create a lovable and most enjoyable Juliette. It is puzzling, however, that she disregards the *marcato* accentuations given to each

quarter note in the opening of her Arietta, turning the phrase into a descending chromatic run.

Roméo et Juliette requires a large supporting cast, and, happily, the present performers are at least adequate or better in every instance. I was most impressed with the charm and vocal elegance of Eliane Lublin (Stephano) and the suave if somewhat youthful-sounding Claude Calès (Capoulet). The Mercutio is a bit bland, and Xavier Depraz, the Friar Laurence and an excellent artist, has been heard to better advantage before.

In the first act, Alain Lombard's pacing seems too energetic, causing M. Gui considerable difficulty in keeping up with the brisk tempo of the Queen Mab Scherzo. Thereafter, however, the performance settles into the appropriate mood, in which the all-important love scenes have their requisite repose and poetry, and the orchestral execution is of a consistently high quality. The same applies to the recorded sound, despite some inconsistencies—different aural presence allotted to Capoulet in different scenes for one, the elevation of the triangle to the rank of a quasi-solo instrument in the Valse, for another.

There are several cuts: the omission of two scenes in Act IV conforms to standard practices at the Paris Opéra, and the duets in both the Balcony and the Bridal Chamber scenes are abbreviated. None of these is really damaging, and I am not sufficiently familiar with the opera to say whether or not these scenes are given more fully in other productions. My overall verdict: Gallic purists may quibble, but the more tolerant will find much to enjoy in this *Roméo et Juliette*. G. J.

GRANADOS: *Goyescas: Intermezzo* (see FALLA)

GRIEG: *Piano Concerto, in A Minor* (see Best of the Month, page 81)

HANDEL: *Six Organ Concertos, Op. 7*. Carl Weinrich (organ of the General Theological Seminary, New York City); Arthur Fiedler Sinfonietta, Arthur Fiedler cond. RCA © LSC 7052 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: Very commendable
 Recording: Excellent
 Stereo Quality: Fine

This seems to be the second installment of Handel's Organ Concertos, from Messrs. Weinrich and Fiedler, they having previously recorded the complete Op. 4 set. As in the earlier recording, there are some excellent things here: a fine account of the solo part, with some very effective interpolations from some of Handel's other music for the *ad lib* movements; a sprightly, wonderfully spirited accompaniment; and, finally, a first-rate, vivid recording. On some points of style, however, the problem of properly begun trills or the matter of double-dotting, for instance, the conducting does not represent the last word. And there should have been a harpsichord continuo. In these respects the Aschive (Müller) and Decca (Alain) performances have the edge, but the Weinrich-Fiedler collaboration has more than its share of enjoyable moments. I. K.

HINDEMITH: *Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2*. **NIELSEN: *Quintet for***

Winds, Op. 43. Westwood Wind Quintet. CRYSTAL © S 601 \$5.79.

Performance: **Crystal clear**
Recording: **Likewise**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

The wonderfully tart Hindemith *Kleine Kammermusik* for wind quintet received its first recording back in the late Thirties at the hands of a group of skillful Los Angeles woodwind players. And such is the case again with its latest recording, which features the ultra-refined and precise playing of the Westwood Wind Quintet. The sonic ambience is all-important in this music—the essence of its *sec* quality needs the tight room sound and close miking it gets here. One may take issue with certain details of pacing—in the very deliberate tempo of the

slow movement's middle section, for example—but save for this, the recorded performance is highly satisfactory.

The Wind Quintet of Denmark's Carl Nielsen, composed in 1922 (the same year as Hindemith's Op. 24, No. 2) was barely known outside Denmark before World War II, but has received a half-dozen LP recordings since. A serious first movement and an intermezzo-minuet pave the way for a chorale and extended set of "character" variations (in at least five instances inspired by Nielsen's own views of the players for whom he wrote the music).

In any event, this music demands something beyond the dry precision and wit called for in the Hindemith, and here I find the Westwood Quintet's performance a bit lacking in comparison to the freely lyrical

reading by the Lark Woodwind Quintet on Lyricord. D. H.

HINDEMITH: *Die sieben Kammermusiken* (see Best of the Month, page 82)

LISZT: *Totentanz* (see Best of the Month, page 81)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LUTOSLAWSKI: *String Quartet.* **PENDERECKI:** *Quartetto per archi.* **MAYUZUMI:** *Prelude for String Quartet.* La Salle String Quartet. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON © 137001 \$5.79.

Performance: **Expert**
Recording: **Very good**
Stereo Quality: **Violins on the right**

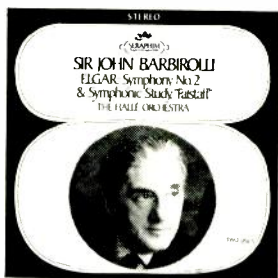
The La Salle String Quartet is a Cincinnati-based group which has made a specialty of European avant-garde music. No program notes arrived with this European test pressing, but at least one of these quartets—the Lutoslawski, if I recall correctly—was written for them, and both Polish works were originally recorded by the group in Poland for the Polish national recording company. All three are strikingly static works which "solve" the problem of creating a contemporary form for a classical medium by avoiding the problem—that is, by merely exposing material. The Lutoslawski, the biggest and most important work of the three, is a partial exception. It presents a series of flat, blocked-out "moments"—isolated notes, sliding textures, sprays of plucked or *spiccato* notes and the like—in an introductory movement and then integrates them into a larger context in a busy, buzzing, energetic-static main movement. Like many recent string quartets that struggle to remain doggedly outside the hallowed halls of tradition, this one somehow hovers (a little wistfully) in the vicinity of the pearly gates. One constantly expects (and almost gets) the throbbing contrapuntal *espressivo* of a slow movement or the vigorous attack of the scherzo. Never mind; the piece is full of ingenious, witty, and even quite beautiful things.

The problem is of course that, if the medium is the message, the string quartet is an awfully traditional medium. Penderecki gets around it by treating it as a noise-making machine. This string quartet is a-tonal in the true sense because tone as such is a secondary and unimportant element. What we have consists of six minutes of textures: rapping to *staccato* to plucked to *tremolo* to *spiccato* to extreme held notes to giant *vibato* to clusters to unison notes to *glissandos* to static, held notes, white and *tremolando*—all in simple, slow transformations or (as the piece progresses) combinations. Toshiro Mayuzumi has made his piece almost entirely out of held and *tremolo* notes cut into by tiny accents—often in the form of two- or three-note repeated interjections or plucked *glissandos* which produce the effect of an elegantly static Oriental sound. The whole is *misterioso*, suggestive, and quite motionless except in dynamic flow; it gets louder and louder all the time and goes into a big, brief strumming session—with open and mistuned strings—before returning to the original piercing calm.

All of this is delivered most effectively by this extraordinarily capable and adventurous. (Continued on page 100)

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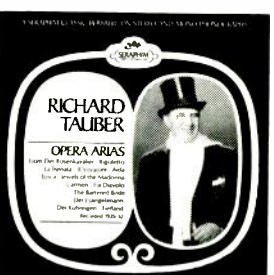
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natural and impressive than the typical Establishment speaker's, whose larger woofer may go a few (just a few) cycles lower.

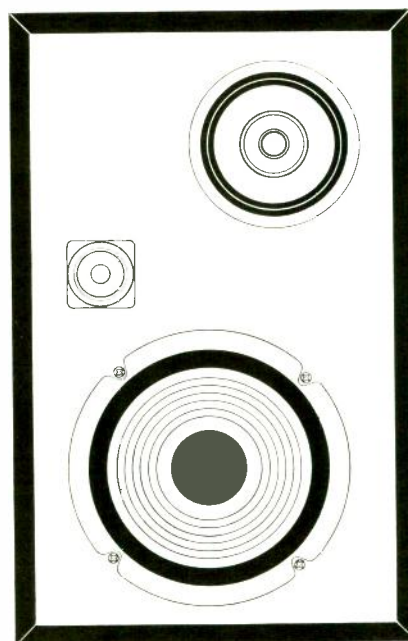
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some quartet, for whom mighty praises are due. Good sound. E. S.

MAYUZUMI: *Prelude for String Quartet* (see LUTOSLAWSKI)

MILHAUD: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (see BARBER)

MOZART: *Rondo in D Major* (K. 485); *Sonata in E-flat Major* (K. 282); *Fantasia in D Minor* (K. 397); *Sonata in A Minor* (K. 310). Harris Goldsmith (piano). MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY © MHS 910 \$2.50 plus 50¢ handling charge (from The Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10023).

Performance: Thoughtful
Recording: Hollow-sounding piano
Stereo Quality: Fair

There have been many examples of critics who were frustrated pianists but not many who have maintained active lives as keyboard performers, all the while writing about their *confères*. (Our own Igor Kipnis is both a critic and a top keyboard player, but his instrument is, of course, the harpsichord.) Harris Goldsmith is a musician who is willing to lay his own ideas about the piano right out on the keyboard as well as on the typewriter. A brave man! Will hordes of disgruntled pianists now have the chance to strike back? Perhaps Goldsmith's pianism is not as fluent as some—although only an occasional awkwardness suggests as much—and perhaps the tone is occasionally a little harsh, a little forced. Otherwise, these are attractive and musical readings with a fine sense of phrase, line, and form. Etched detail is carefully spun out to make big shapes of real substance. The playing is never self-indulgent, but always thoughtful and assured; listen, for example, to the precise, witty, elegant shape of the finale of K. 282. The recorded sound has a rather hollow ring that is clear but not especially attractive. Labels were reversed on the review copy.

E. S.

NIELSEN: *Quintet for Winds, Op. 43* (see HINDEMITH)

PARRIS: *Concerto for Trombone*. **ROCHBERG:** *Contra Mortem et Tempus*. **WUORINEN:** *Janissary Music*. Roman Siwek (trombone); Polish National Radio Orchestra, Ldzistan Szostak (in the Parris). Aeolian Quartet of Sarah Lawrence College (in the Rochberg). Raymond Des Roches (percussion, in the Wuorinen). COMPOSERS RECORDINGS, INC. © CRI 231 USD \$5.95.

Performance: All excellent
Recording: Generally okay
Stereo Quality: Fair to good

George Rochberg, formerly one of the most austere serial composers, suddenly changed direction after the death of his son in 1964. The change may not be immediately apparent in "Against Death and Time," a piece that seems to be as intense and abstract as any of his earlier compositions. But things are not quite what they seem; this is not a serial work but a great serial ruin, blasted by time and the mutability of human affairs. It is in fact a collage of fragments from many sources—including earlier Rochberg works! The idea of quotation-collage-assemblage has become a striking feature of the recent musi-

cal landscape; Rochberg's own more recent *Music for a Magic Theater* contains something like ten minutes of pure Mozart. There is nothing quite so startling in this piece; only a splicing together of all the organized, agonized serial gestures of past years culminating in the whispered words of the title—like a kind of inscription carved into the crumbling stones. It is—perhaps in part because one knows and understands the particular and general circumstances behind its creation—a genuinely moving work. And this is an excellent performance of it by the Aeolian Quartet.

The title of Charles Wuorinen's *Janissary Music* refers not only (as the anonymous program-note annotator rightly points out) to the famous elite corps of Turkish mercenaries but also (as the commentator fails to note) to the percussion music they brought into Europe. Wuorinen is a still-very-young composer of particular note in American



JOHN OGDON
A brilliant advocate of Rachmaninoff

music today; he is one of the organizers and leaders of the Group for Contemporary Music at Columbia University and a prolific, extremely musical, intense, and methodical composer. The piece at hand is an interesting attempt to apply his mode of thought to percussion music, and the results have a certain tension born out of restraint. Although the music is far less wild than the typical percussion pieces of recent vintage, it is actually much more difficult than most; it took Ray Des Roches (no mean drummer, let me tell you) no less than eighteen months to master. Master it he did and the results are—even with the faint sing-along (?) that seems to accompany the most strenuous activities—indubitably impressive.

The program notes make considerable claims for the difficulties of the Parris, and the way they carry on, I was set for a really far-out trip. The piece turned out to be quite neo-classic in feeling and I was at first disappointed. But it repeated well and, in its own genre, it is a genuinely intense, hard-driving piece with rumbles of thunder and flashes of wit. And it is well-played and has good sound.

The review copy had annoying echo and a bad pressing defect on the Rochberg-Wuorinen side. Otherwise it is a production of merit.

E. S.

PENDERECKI: *Quartetto per archi* (see LUTOSLAWKI)

RACHMANINOFF: *Piano Sonatas: No. 1, in D Minor, Op. 28; No. 2, in B-flat Minor, Op. 36*. John Ogdon (piano). RCA © LSC 3024 \$5.98.

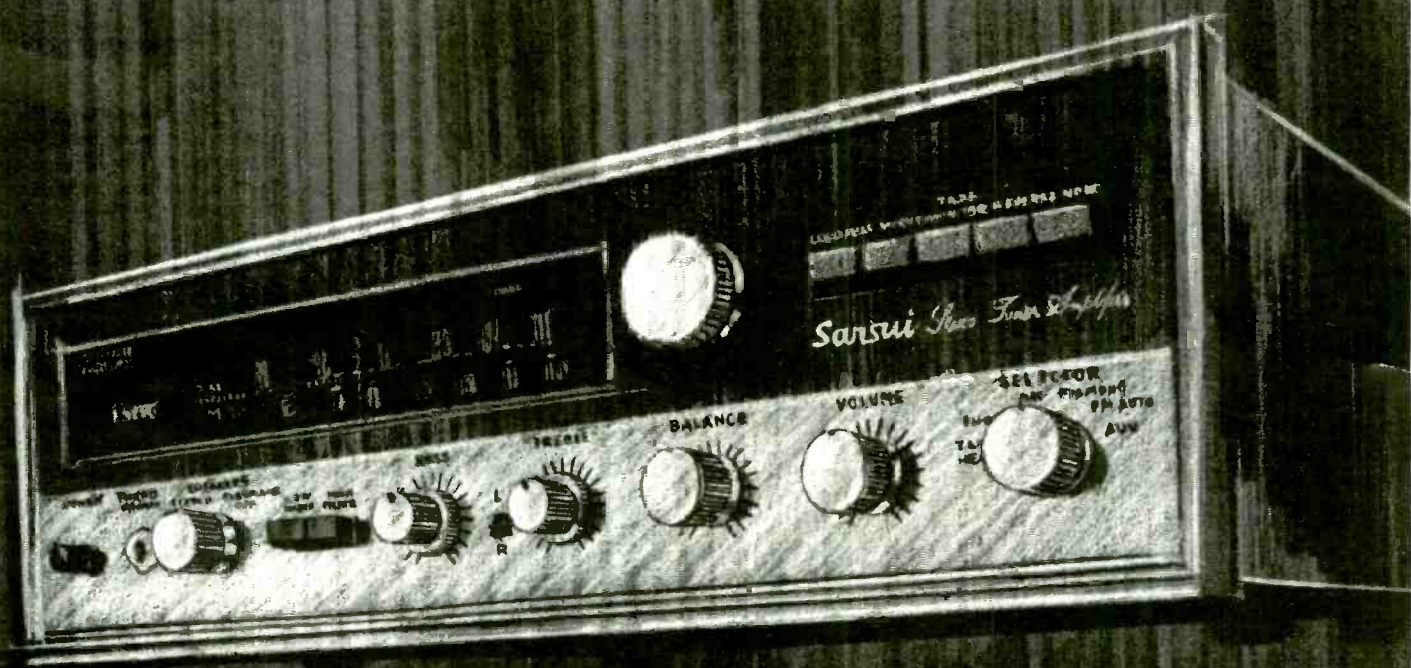
Performance: Top-notch
Recording: Not to my taste
Stereo Quality: Good for what it is

Well, it's old Sergei's turn. In case you haven't already noticed, there's a big re-evaluation of the turn-of-the-century post-Romantics in progress, and it was obvious that Rachmaninoff would sooner or later be reached. Robert Offergeld in his liner notes brilliantly describes the experience of hearing these pieces today as like receiving "two bulky and important letters . . . that were mailed fifty years ago." Unread these letters certainly have been—even Rachmaninoff himself played them very little. But one can hardly ascribe their unpopularity to their *retardataire* qualities in an avant-garde age. They are, quite simply, long works which, although extremely beautiful, meander terribly. Far from sounding old-fashioned, they come off as exactly what they are—early twentieth-century Russian music. The First Sonata was written in 1907, the Second in 1913 (although later revised); they could hardly have been written much earlier. While not exactly up there with the most advanced works of Scriabin, Stravinsky, or Schoenberg (who were, after all, barely moving into their first far-out periods), both pieces show a tonal freedom and lack of strong directionality that would have been unacceptable only a decade or two earlier. The Lento of the First Sonata, cited as an excellent example of Rachmaninoff's incurable nostalgia and Romanticism, nevertheless could scarcely have been written before 1900; indeed, it expresses just the kind of melancholic unrest that one does associate with the *post*-Romantics. I would not go so far as the avant-garde composer Morton Feldman who, when asked what composers have influenced him, always replies "Rachmaninoff," but it is clear that Sergei was a man of his age; he just happened to outlive that age by a good many years. He even outlived his own music—most of the best of it was written before World War I, and it is of course that age, not our own, that it expresses.

All this is neither for nor against. I find the music quite attractive in detail but weak in its tonal structure and sense of direction. Many of Rachmaninoff's contemporaries found compelling substitutes for the old techniques, but he did not; hence the difficulty of staying with the music. The First is far and away the better work; its inwardness seems, in spite of its much greater length, much more authentic. The Second is more obviously a concert piece, an intentionally public display of private sentiment, and that much less believable (it has, though, a lovely "pop" slow movement that fairly drips with tasteful but unmistakable sentiment). Ogdon is a brilliant advocate of this music, although it would take, I suspect, the impact of personal showmanship in a "live" situation to make the obviously incredible virtuosity fully effective. As it is, I find that I (quite unfairly) begin to take it for granted after a while.

(Continued on page 102)

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The recorded sound here is resonant, dreamy, woozy, as if fake period atmosphere were being evoked. The sound has also been recorded, or processed, at very low levels, so that playback volume (and all the attendant noise) must be boosted. This is not the first recent RCA release to be so plagued; what's the trouble? *E. S.*

RAVEL: *Alborada del gracioso; Parape pour une infante déjunte* (see FALLA)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RAVEL: *Sonatine; Le Tombeau de Couperin; Gaspard de la nuit*. John Browning (piano). RCA Ⓢ LSC 3028 \$5.98.

Performance: **Beautiful**
Recording: **Fine**
Stereo Quality: **Fine**

Taken as a whole, RCA's new release of three of Maurice Ravel's most enduring and endearing works for the piano contains some of the most elegantly styled, perceptive Ravel performance I have encountered in a good while. It is no surprise, of course, that John Browning—high on the totem pole of what I guess could be called the Van Cliburn Generation—has the technical equipment to conquer even the most harrowingly difficult pages of *Gaspard de la nuit*. This being the case, there is even more reason to admire his stylistic alertness to a work like the *Sonatine*, which asks for a pianist who has not only manual dexterity but the ability to scale it down, even throw it away in deference to a miniaturist attitude. The *Sonatine* is a work

that always provokes a snarl from me because, after a manful struggle, I failed to manage even a fairly decent performance of it as a student. But Browning makes it sound as fresh as tomorrow. There is a beautiful sense of formal proportion to his playing, a perfectionist attention to detail. And unlike most pianists, he hits the nail exactly on the head in the degree to which he matches his climaxes to the scope and dynamic "size" of the piece. Listen only to the sensitivity the pianist brings to the closing bars of the first movement and the enchantingly light, pixie-like quality he brings to the ensuing Minuet: I have little doubt you will share my admiration.

At least on the surface, *Gaspard de la nuit* is much more Impressionist in manner, but Ravel's essentially classical approach to composition and the post-Lisztian virtuosity required for playing the piece make it one of the most difficult works in the piano repertoire. Browning quite mysteriously manages to recognize and reconcile in performance these diverse factors: the gossamer texture of *Ondine* (in which Ravel's classicist concern with clarity and preciseness of effect is in no way sacrificed); the lugubrious mood of *Le Gibet*, which Browning sustains from first note to last; and the pianistic fireworks required for *Scarbo*, which Browning releases so brilliantly that one is left with the impression that the poor piano, after such a drubbing, just has to have been carted off to the appropriate shop to undergo extensive corrective surgery.

The least compelling performance here is that of *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, and I am

not at all certain that Browning is at fault. Particularly in the first movement of the piece, the phrasal symmetry *à la mode antique* strikes me as monotonous and the movement seems too long—faults of which Ravel would otherwise appear to have been temperamentally incapable. It is quite possible that Ravel was aware of this and orchestrated the piece to bring to it the contrasting colors of the orchestra. In any case, once Browning is out of the hot water of the first movement, he does well except for a few explosive climaxes which are out of the work's context (and which Browning—instinctively or knowingly—probably did as a corrective measure).

The above is either criticism on the highest comparative level or merely nit-picking. In any case, I don't recall having heard the music played better, and the record is a must for anyone who wishes to hear a pianist who all but analyzes and demonstrates the vast difference between what Debussy was all about and what Ravel was all about. The recorded sound is nothing less than brilliant.

W. F.

RAVEL: *Tzigane* (see CHAUSSON)

ROCHBERG: *Contra Mortem et Tempus* (see PARRIS)

SAINT-SAËNS: *Havanaise; Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* (see CHAUSSON)

SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9; Sonata No. 2, in G Minor, Op. 22*. Alexis Wechs (Continued on page 104)



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senberg (piano). ANGEL Ⓢ 36552 \$5.79.

Performance: **Some very good things**
Recording: **Harsh**
Stereo Quality: **Okay**

This record includes a highly inflected and continuously fascinating performance of *Carnaval* and a rather routine one of the rare sonata. Weissenberg is an extraordinarily impressive technician—although there are a couple of places where I wish he wasn't quite so anxious to demonstrate just exactly how extraordinary his fast fingerwork actually is. Similarly, he is full of ideas about *Carnaval*—but there are moments when you wish he would stop fussing and just play the music. And, though some things are played with exclamation points, there are some plainly indicated inflections—dynamic changes, accents, and the like—that are glossed over. Nevertheless, this is what one might call a great performance *manqué*. Again and again, he comes close—and there are many beautiful and impressive things—to the highest kind of Romantic expression. In "live" performance this is probably a very exciting reading; it just doesn't quite take the close scrutiny that the recording medium inevitably affords.

The G Minor Sonata is disappointing for other reasons. This is a little-known work (why?) which is in fact one of Schumann's most successful efforts in large-scale classical form. I have the feeling that Mr. Weissenberg has not known it or played it that long. Technically, he plays up a storm; the outer movements are whirlwinds. What is missing is a quality of reflection—a moment of hesitation, a breathing space, a second thought—which the work certainly demands. *Carnaval* has been overworked, the Sonata under-elaborated. The piano sound is big, clear, clangy, and harsh, and produces an unpleasant edge on the highs. E. S.

SCHUMANN: *Piano Concerto, in A Minor* (see Best of the Month, page 81)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SCRIABIN: *Nocturne for the Left Hand, in D-flat Major, Op. 9, No. 2; Etudes: Op. 42, Nos. 4 and 5; Op. 8, No. 12; Sonata No. 4, Op. 30; Guirlandes, Op. 73, No. 1; Preludes, Op. 11, Nos. 5, 14, 15, 24; Poème-Nocturne, Op. 61; Vers la flamme, Op. 72.* Hilde Somer (piano). MERCURY Ⓢ SR 90500 \$5.79.

Performance: **Disciplined and powerful**
Recording: **Intimate ambiance**
Stereo Quality: **Good enough**

As regular readers of this magazine may know, the post-Chopin ultrachromaticism of Scriabin's piano music is not precisely to my taste, but it must be said that the Russian mystic-voluptuary has been singularly fortunate in his interpreters on discs, since the most important recordings have boasted the likes of Horowitz and Richter.

Viennese-born Hilde Somer has been associated in recent years with performances of contemporary music such as the Ginastera Piano Concerto, which she recorded for the Desto label. So it comes as a surprise to hear her playing Scriabin. Save for some of the smaller pieces, she has wisely steered clear of Horowitz and Richter territory in her choice of repertoire. There is no other currently available recording of the F-sharp

Sonata, none of the near-atonal *Poème-Nocturne*, and no easily available competitive version of the *Guirlandes* and *Vers la flamme*. I was most surprised to find only one other available version of the left-hand Nocturne, which has been a popular recital encore piece over the years.

Miss Somer's Scriabin performances may not probe the perfumed harmonic subtleties in quite the manner of a Richter or Horowitz, but she does bring an element of rhythmic spunk to the music which it can well stand. The Sonata, *Guirlandes*, and *Vers la flamme* all profit thereby. That Miss Somer can display exquisite delicacy as well is demonstrated in my favorite of the dozen pieces in the album, the D-flat Prelude, Op. 11, No. 15—a perfect little masterpiece that anticipates the pan-diatonic style of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*. There has been no recording of this gem since the long-deleted Gina Bachauer disc of the complete

Carnegie Hall



HILDE SOMER

Delicacy and rhythmic spunk for Scriabin

Op. 11 issued by Capitol-EMI a decade or so ago. For me, it is worth the entire price of the album.

The Sonata gets a powerful, well-knit performance; however, the test pressing I listened to for this review was troubled by tiny pitch fluctuations—most noticeably at the tempo change from *andante* to *prestissimo* marking the transition from the first to the second movement. I hope that this situation will be remedied in the production pressing.

The recorded sound is very clear but a little hard, as though a living room rather than a largish studio or auditorium had served as recording locale. D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SMETANA: *My Fatherland—Symphonic Cycle: Vyshehrad; The Moldau; Sárka; From Bohemia's Meadows and Forests; Tábor; Blaník.* Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Vaclav Neumann cond. LONDON Ⓢ CSA 2222 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: **Impressive**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

As if the cover of this album were not horri-

fying enough in its irony, with its montage of photos of the August occupation of Prague by Soviet, Polish, and East German soldiery, the impact is redoubled by the fact that the most revered work of the Czech symphonic repertoire is performed on these discs by a tradition-hallowed East German orchestra under the baton of one of Czechoslovakia's finest conductors—presumably well before the August 1968 catastrophe (indeed, it is my understanding that all major Czech artists contracted to East German musical organizations—as Mr. Neumann was following the death of Franz Konwitschny—promptly terminated their contracts after the events of August 21).

In any event, this recorded performance of Smetana's *Fatherland* cycle, taken on its own terms, is an impressive one from every point of view. Whoever has heard Neumann's recorded performances of the Mahler Fifth Symphony (Vanguard-Cardinal) or the masterly Janáček opera *Cunning Little Vixen* (Artia) cannot help but sense that he is a formidable and uniquely sensitive musician. Neumann's conception of *My Fatherland* is all of a piece. Where it has been all too common to have the later pieces of the cycle come as a letdown after first two, Neumann builds everything toward an overwhelming final climax. The first and last pairs of the cycle are thematically linked, with the middle pair serving as dramatic and evocative set-pieces, and it is with this in mind that Neumann puts everything in perspective—from a Czech point of view. Thus the opening harp motto of the bard Lumir is in truth prelude in both the first pages of *Vyshehrad* and at the end of *The Moldau*, and reaches its true culmination only in combination with the Hussite battle hymn, "All Ye Who are Warriors of God," at the very end of *Blaník*, a continuation thematically and dramatically of *Tábor*.

There have been a number of memorable past recordings of *My Fatherland* complete, including those by the late Vaclav Talich and the Czech Philharmonic and by Rafael Kubelik and the Chicago Symphony; but for all the interpretive merits of these earlier readings, neither achieved a proper balance between woodwinds and brass on the one hand against strings and percussion on the other. Vaclav Neumann, in company with Herbert von Karajan in his DGG disc of *Vyshehrad* and *The Moldau*, has accomplished this feat superbly—and undoubtedly with the help of canny engineering and a fine recording locale. D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

R. STRAUSS: *Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30.* Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta cond. LONDON Ⓢ CS 66J9 \$5.98.

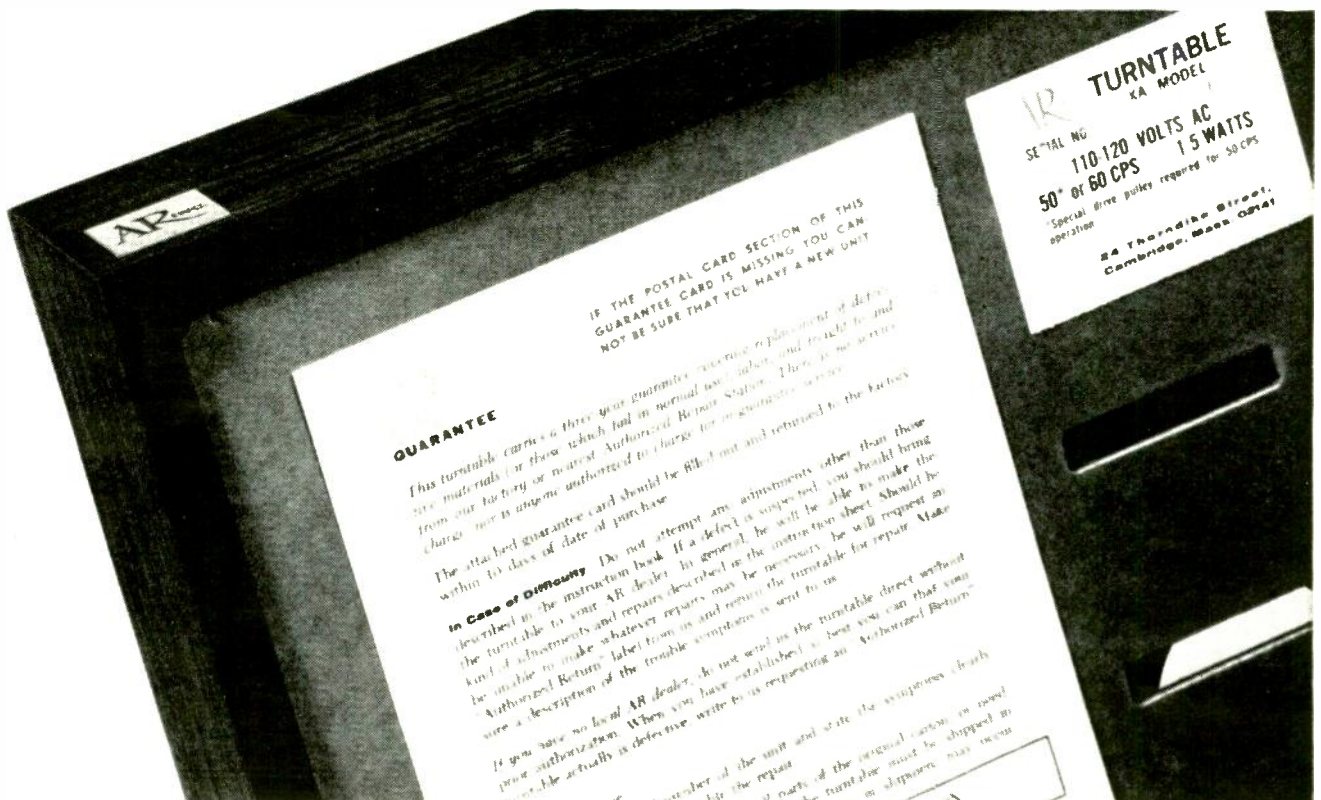
Performance: **To the hilt**
Recording: **Likewise**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

R. STRAUSS: *Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30.* Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan cond. LONDON Ⓢ STS 15085 \$2.49.

Performance: **Impassioned**
Recording: **Faulty re-mastering**
Stereo Quality: **Fair**

(Continued on page 106)

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With the use of its elemental "sunrise" opening in the film *2001—A Space Odyssey*, Strauss's Nietzschean tone-poem has acquired a strange new lease on life. My own memory of the piece goes back to Serge Koussevitzky's stirring Boston Symphony performances of it in the 1930's and his subsequent recording, which was a "hi-fi" landmark in its day and still an unforgettable interpretation. Indeed, it is to memories of the all-out virtuosic Koussevitzky reading that one must turn in order to find a point of comparison for the new Zubin Mehta-Los Angeles Philharmonic recording. The two Fritz Reiner-Chicago Symphony *Zarathustra* recordings are the only currently available ones that come near to Mehta's, but on a leaner, colder level of expression. The sheer physical impact of the London recording—notwithstanding a tendency of the horns to dominate the texture as a whole at times—is overwhelming. In any event, I shall keep and value my two Reiner recordings, my old Koussevitzky 78's and Camden reissue, and most certainly this new Mehta disc.

Herbert von Karajan's 1959 Vienna Philharmonic recording of *Zarathustra* was no slouch in its day, even against the formidable competition of Karl Böhm and Fritz Reiner. The reading was one of passionate conviction and great lyrical feeling, although the recorded sound was not as well focussed as that of the competition. Hearing the bargain reissue in the Stereo Treasury series is disappointing, in comparison with the original, not only in that the stereo localization is not nearly so well defined in the re-mastering, but that the latter portions of both sides are troubled by intolerable pitch waver. Too bad someone in London quality control failed to spot the pitch problem before final shipment of finished product; the disc cannot be recommended in its present shape. *Zarathustra* bargain hunters will find a good buy at about the same price with Reiner and the Chicago Symphony on Victrola VICS 1265. *D. H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

R. STRAUSS: *Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40*. Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta cond. LONDON Ⓢ CS 6608 \$5.98.

Performance: **Superb**
Recording: **Ditto**
Stereo Quality: **Ditto**

If there are any scoffers who still think the Los Angeles Philharmonic is just another provincial orchestra, this one ought to bring them around. The music is, of course, just perfect for these Hollywood musicians. Strauss was the Cecil B. De Mille of composers, and *Ein Heldenleben*, is without a doubt, a wide-screen Technicolor spectacular. We have here glorious playing, grand sweep, and fabulous orchestral sonorities, brilliantly balanced for clarity and detail as well as full, clear, gorgeous recording beautifully balanced for stereo. Need one say more? *E. S.*

STRAVINSKY: *Firebird Suite—1910* (see BARTÓK)

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Piano Concerto No. 1* (see Best of the Month, page 81)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 5, in E Minor, Op. 64*. London Symphony Orches-

tra, Igor Markevitch cond. PHILIPS Ⓢ PHS 900207 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good and straight**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Among the twenty-plus Tchaikovsky Fifth recordings listed in the current catalog, there should be an interpretation for every possible taste. As for this one, conductor-composer Markevitch likes his Tchaikovsky straight, with cleanliness of line and rhythm, plenty of forward movement, and brilliant coloration. So do I. No hassling with unusual phrasing or exaggerated dynamic effects, just plenty of zing, ample lyric passion, and for a bit of festive individuality a very broad treatment of the motto theme apotheosis in its final major-mode transformation at the end. This thoroughly satisfactory reading has been given good, clean, if not wildly spectacular, recorded sound throughout. *D. H.*

TELEMANN: *Concerto Grosso, in D Major, for Three Trumpets, Two Oboes, Timpani, Strings, and Continuo; Concerto, in D Major, for Horn, Strings, and Continuo; Concerto, in B-flat Major, for Three Oboes, Three Violins, and Continuo; Concerto, in D Major, for Violin, Cello, Trumpet, Strings, and Continuo*. Gilbert Johnson, Seymour Rosenfeld, and Donald McComas (trumpets); John de Lancie, Charles Morris, and Stevens Hewitt (oboes); Gerald Carlyss (timpani); Mason Jones (horn); Norman Carol, David Madison, and William de Pasquale (violins); Samuel Mayes (cello); Roger Scott (double bass); William Smith (harpsichord); Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. RCA Ⓢ LSC 3057 \$5.98.

Performance: **Brilliant, but not ideal in style**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**

How tastes change! Had the Philadelphia Orchestra switched its affiliation to RCA twenty years or so ago, among the first records released under the new arrangement one might have found Pinelli's orchestrations of Corelli, the Harty arrangements of Handel, or the Stokowski-type transcriptions of Bach. Today, however, it's an all-Telemann collection, the scoring untampered with, and even a harpsichord continuo included. The works themselves are by and large top-drawer Telemann; only the final D Major Concerto is relatively unfamiliar. All four pieces give the first-desk men of the Philadelphia a chance to shine, and the performances in general are brilliantly set forth. Stylistically, there are some drawbacks: not much regard for the correct execution of ornaments, and a fairly beefy orchestral tone. Part of the general feeling of heaviness is undoubtedly the result of the manner of articulation, especially in the bass, through which all beats seem to receive equal emphasis. Norman Carol's obvious vibrato is also something less than an asset in this kind of music. On the whole, I would say that there are other recordings of this repertoire that do Telemann greater justice (for instance, the Horn Concerto in Erich Penzel's spectacular rendition on Nonesuch 711-48), but this is not to say that Ormandy's Telemann is not enjoyable in its own way. The recording is excellent. *I. K.*

(Continued on page 108)

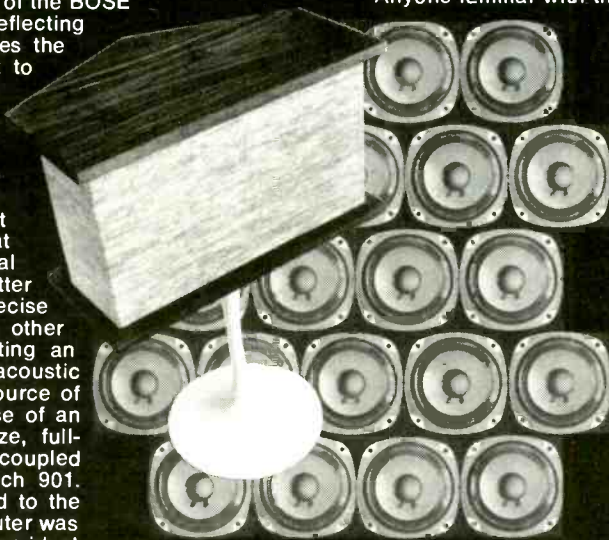
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*From 'ON THE DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF LOUDSPEAKERS', Dr. A. G. Bose, a paper presented at the 1968 convention of the Audio Engineering Society. Copies of the complete paper are available from the Bose Corp. for fifty cents.

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TOSTI: Marechiaro; Aprile; Malia; Vorrei morire!; La Serenata; Ideale; L'alba separa dalla luce l'ombra; A vucchella; L'ultima canzone; Mattinata; Sogno; Tristezza. Luigi Alva (tenor); Ricordi Symphony Orchestra, Benedetto Ghiglia cond. EVEREST © 3220 \$4.98.

Performance: **Suave**
Recording: **Fairly good**
Stereo Quality: **Okay**

An all-Tosti recital points up forcefully the prolific song writer's great gifts as a melo-dist, but also his limitations as a composer. Still, it's good to have an easily accessible reference to Tosti's best, including such relatively unfamiliar items as the last three named titles. Alva is a pleasant, cultivated singer, and many of the songs benefit from his relaxed approach. His voice, however, is limited in volume, and it loses its agreeable quality when subjected to pressure. Thus the performance is variable, tending to lessening control and imperfect intonation in the passionate passages. Variable, too, are the accompaniments, reaching their worst in the noisy, intrusive scoring of *Marechiaro*. Occasional distortions in the technical quality suggest that a good basic recording was ruined through overmodulation. *G. J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VERDI: La Traviata (highlights sung in German). Hilde Gueden (soprano), Violetta; Fritz Wunderlich (tenor), Alfredo; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), Giorgio Germont; others; Bavarian Radio Chorus and Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Bartoletti cond. HELIODOR © HS 25088 \$2.49.

Performance: **Compelling**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Intelligent**

I have often idly wondered why *La Traviata*, more often than any other opera with the exception, perhaps, of *La Bohème*, is the victim of those misguided attempts to "cast a new light on it" by means of setting and staging gimmickry. I think it may be that even the most insatiable opera fan no longer really expects much of this work. To many the story now seems as quaint and faded as something viewed through a stereopticon, and Verdi's music, apt and appealing as it is, never really cuts very deep, its general effect being pathetic and touching rather than tragic and powerful. Opera-house intendants, many of whom perhaps share these attitudes, may feel audiences will not sit still for "just another *Traviata*." But none of their expedients—at least none I know of—has come close to matching the freshness conferred upon the music for me by hearing it sung in German on this recording. If you think you can no longer enjoy these arias, duets, and ensembles, I advise you to try this disc—it's the same old meat and potatoes, but the flavor is distinctly different.

As for the performance, the expectations aroused by the names of the three principal singers are not disappointed. Hilde Gueden, of course, sounds like a Viennese *soubrette* rather than a Parisian *démimondaine*—her voice has little of the delicacy the role needs. But this aside, her singing is lovely, marred only by a bit too much vibrato above the staff, and with one marked exception—the downward-moving sixteenth notes after Alfredo's first interjection near the end of

"*Sempre libera*"—her rapid passage work is brilliant. Wunderlich sings with the freedom that made him almost unique among our era's foremost tenors. Fischer-Dieskau's voice lacks the weight for Germont's music, and when he tries to supply it by hard attacks—as during "*Di Provenza il mar*"—the results are troubling. But throughout the Act Two scene with Violetta he displays his customary expressive power—when he begins "*Puà siccome un angelo*" ("*Unschuldig wie ein Engel*" here), the phrases are the very embodiment of the words "*dolcissimo cantabile*" that appear in the score at this point. Bartoletti's conducting is a little square in the two Preludes, but good elsewhere, and the recording is clear and warm. But Heliodor considerably reduces the attractiveness of this release by failing to include the German text. *Robert S. Clark*



HILDE GUEDEN
A brilliant Violetta—in German

VIEUXTEMPS: Violin Concerto No. 4 (see CHAUSSON)

VIVALDI: Concerto in B Minor for Four Violins and Orchestra, Op. 3, No. 10; Concerto, in G Major, for Mandolin and Orchestra (P. 134); Concerto, in G Major, for Two Mandolins and Orchestra (P. 133); Concerto, in C Major, for Lute, Violin, and Continuo (P. page 7, No. 3). Angel, Celedonio, Pepe, and Celin Romero (guitars); John Corigliano (violin); Domenick Saltarelli (viola); Margaret Bella (cello); San Antonio Symphony Orchestra, Victor Alessandro cond. MERCURY © SR 90487 \$5.79.

Performance: **In part exciting**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Wide separation**

The pieces performed by the Romeros here are, of course, transcriptions of the works listed above. In the case of the Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins, Strings, and Continuo, the four guitarists play the four solo parts. The double mandolin concerto (like the previous concerto one of Vivaldi's gems) is a straight rendition with the two guitars (Pepe and Celin) playing the transcribed mandolin parts, whereas the single Mandolin Concerto, P. 134, performed by Celedonio, has for the sake of instrumental facility been

put in the key of C (it was originally in G). The last concerto, a C Major work for lute, violin, and continuo, is here heard in A Major, with solo guitar (Celedonio), violin, an added viola, and cello. So much for the sources (not all of which information is provided by the jacket notes). The playing is not notable for an understanding of style (although I was pleasantly surprised to hear some double-dotting here and there), but then, authenticity is almost the last thing one expects from guitarists. The main thing is that the performances, especially the multiple ones, are often quite exciting; the best is the B Minor, with some scintillating effects from the guitar team. The solo performances, especially in slow movements, are a bit dull, and the rearrangement of some harmonies because of the absence of a harpsichord makes the C Major sound at moments as though it came from someone other than Vivaldi. The orchestral playing is bright and nervously energetic, a little unpolished but on the whole quite enjoyable. The recording, which had some pressing faults on side one, is very close-up but extremely vivid. Generally, then, this is a disc that should appeal to guitar fanciers, especially for the excellent ensemble work of the Romeros. *I. K.*

WAGNER: Götterdämmerung: Prologue; Daybreak, Duet ("Zu neuen Taten"), and Siegfried's Rhine Journey; Act III: Immolation Scene. Helen Traubel (soprano); Lauritz Melchior (tenor); NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini cond. RCA VICTROLA (M) VIC 1369 \$2.50.

Performance: **Exceptional**
Recording: **Dated**

Although these extended scenes from *Götterdämmerung* were originally recorded only two days apart—the former at a radio broadcast on February 22, 1941, the latter in Carnegie Hall two days later—this is the first time they appear on the same disc. No longer in his fresh-voiced prime at the time, Melchior still offers a heroic, altogether admirable Siegfried here, with a rich, solid sound quite unapproached by present-day interpreters. Traubel unquestionably is heard here in her best voice. Only the climactic high C in the duet strains her resources somewhat; for the rest, she pours out a luminous stream of thrilling tones. And of course the disc offers the powerful, propulsive, yet forever *singing* Toscanini approach to Wagner. Unfortunately, imagination must help in the reconstruction of the orchestral sound, for what emerges from the grooves is a fuzzy, often distorted, generally inadequate likeness. In terms of sound reproduction, 1941 seems ages away, but the art preserved on this disc is ageless. *G. J.*

WEBER: Clarinet Concerto No. 1, in F Minor, Op. 73; Clarinet Concerto No. 2, in E-flat Major, Op. 74. Benny Goodman (clarinet); Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Jean Martinon cond. RCA © LSC 3052 \$5.98.

Performance: **Very commendable**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**

Neither of these concertos, commissioned in 1811 by the Bavarian court, is, to my mind, as interesting as the shorter Clarinet Con-
(Continued on page 110)

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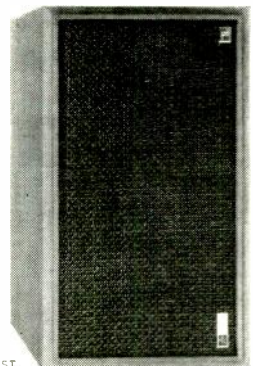
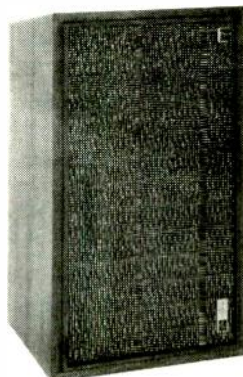
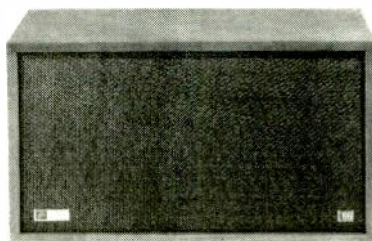
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certino, but they do reveal Weber's great affinity for the instrument and his understanding of its possibilities, both technical and tonal. The second is perhaps the better piece, with its mellifluous slow movement and its brilliant *alla Polacca* finale. Both works are certainly typical of the burgeoning spirit of Romanticism, and the Romantic flavor is exceedingly well caught by Martinon; his soloist handles his part with skill and sensitivity. Though Goodman performs the first concerto rather reflectively, by the last movement of the second he quite matches the brilliance of the accompaniment. The reproduction is most satisfactory, except for some slight distortion at climaxes. *L. K.*

WUORINEN: *Janissary Music* (see **PAR-RIS**)

COLLECTIONS

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MUSIC FOR THE HARPSICHORD PLAYED ON OLD INSTRUMENTS. Caccini (arr. P. Philips, 1603): *Amarilli*. Farnaby: *Spagnioletta*. Tomkins: *Par.v.m & Galliard of Three Parts* (Nos. 49 & 50). Anonymous (Camphuysen ms.): *Daphne*. Frescobaldi: *Toccatas settima and undecima; Canzona terza; 5 Galliards*. J. S. Bach: *Prelude and Fugue in A Minor* (BWV 895); *Suite in F Minor* (fragment BWV 823); *Prelude and Fuguetta in D Minor* (BWV 899). J. C. Bach: *Sonata in D Major* (from *Six Sonatas, Op. 5*). Gustav Leonhardt (historical harpsichords from the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and England, c. 1650-1775). TELEFUNKEN © SAWT 9512-B Ex \$5.95.

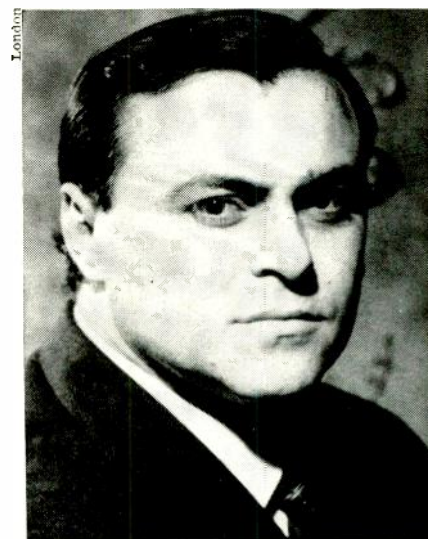
Performance: **Skilled**
Recording: **Mostly excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Satisfactory**

With the mushrooming enthusiasm for the harpsichord, it is only natural that interest has also attached itself to the sonic qualities of the old instruments. Most of the antiques, if they are in playing condition, have a surprisingly rich and full sound, rather more so than most people think. (Harpsichord makers, especially in the United States, have begun to realize this and have for the last few decades based their work more and more on the emulation of designs and sound characteristics of the antiques.) Opportunities to hear these older instruments are rare, for, except in museums, there are not many around, and even museum models are not always in good working order, or for that matter working at all. On records, from time to time, we have had examples of restored harpsichords; at best, they have been fascinating to hear, but on occasion they have also been either poorly restored or poorly recorded—or both.

With the present collection we have a valuable opportunity to hear four well-restored, well-recorded instruments from as many harpsichord-making centers: a 1648 harpsichord made by the Fleming Andreas Ruckers (heard in the Caccini, the Farnaby, the anonymous *Daphne*, and the Tomkins); a second instrument, an anonymous 1693 model, tuned like the first to meantone temperament and typical for its rather more strident tone (Frescobaldi); a 1741 harpsichord made by the German Christian Zell (the J. S. Bach pieces—all of them, by the way, only attributed to him); and finally, a splendid

1775 Kirkman from England, heard in the J. C. Bach sonata. I myself have had the opportunity to play on the Kirkman and the Ruckers, both of which are owned by Leonhardt, and I can attest to the excellence of the harpsichords themselves and to the fidelity of the present recording to their "live" sound.

The performances here are technically on the highest level, fiery when need be (*i.e.*, the Frescobaldi), and extremely stylish and scholarly in conception, even if for my taste Leonhardt is at times a little too serious and unsmiling in manner. His matching of instruments to the repertoire that will best show them off is also excellent. This may be a disc more for the specialist than for the average listener, but all harpsichord enthusiasts will find much to interest them here. The recording is good, but must be played back at lower than normal volume. Notes and photographs of the instruments are included. *L. K.*



LUCIANO PAVAROTTI
Passion, control, and thoughtful artistry

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LUCIANO PAVAROTTI: *Verdi and Donizetti Arias*. Verdi: *Luisa Miller: Quando le sere al placido. I Due Foscari: Ah si, ch'io sento ancora . . . dal più remoto esiglio. Un Ballo in Maschera: Ma se m'è forza perdersi. Macbeth: Ah, la paterna mano*. Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor: Fra poco a me ricovero. Il Duca d'Alba: Angelo casto e bel. La Favorita: Spirto gentil. Don Sebastiano: Deserto in terra*. Luciano Pavarotti (tenor); Vienna Opera Orchestra, Edward Downes cond. LONDON © OS 26087 \$5.79.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**

I liked Luciano Pavarotti in his first recorded appearance, London's *Beatrice di Tenda*, found him "sensational" in the same company's *La Fille du régiment*, and am perfectly content to apply the latter adjective to this, his first solo recital. Here is a singer of prodigious gifts, with a voice of fresh, true lyric quality, and with evident solid training in the *bel canto* tradition. It is not a big voice, but it is well managed, with a healthy dash of what the Italians call *slancio*, recalling Giacomo Lauri-Volpi and the young Giuseppe di Stefano.

The comparison with Di Stefano is particularly to the point. A lyric voice of this kind is a vulnerable instrument that may not be able to survive the pressures of a punishing repertoire, and during the current season at the Metropolitan, Pavarotti seems to have experienced some difficulties. But what is heard here—the passionate yet controlled delivery, the flawless intonation, the superb high notes—gives rise to the highest expectations. And some nicely executed *diminuendi* and carefully molded embellishments indicate that thoughtful artistry complements the singer's extraordinary vocal gifts.

What relatively little the orchestra has to do is done neatly under Edward Downes' direction. Special praise is in order for this imaginative program, and for Gerald Fitzgerald's informative notes. *G. J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

NORMAN TREIGLE: *Operatic Heroes and Villains*. Offenbach: *Les Contes d'Hoffmann: C'est moi Coppélius*. Massenet: *Manon: Epoque quelque brave fille*. Charpentier: *Louise: Les pauvres gens*. Massenet: *Don Quichotte: Death Scene*. Rossini: *Le Comte Ory: Vegliar mai sempre*. Verdi: *Attila: Mentre gonfiarsi l'anima*. Ernani: *Infelice! e tuo crederci*. Boito: *Mefistofele: Ave Signor; Ecco il mondo*. Norman Treigle (bass); Ellen Klein (soprano) and Erwin Fogarasi (tenor), assisting artists; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Jussi Jalas cond. WESTMINSTER © WST 17145 \$4.79.

Performance: **Compelling**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Emphatic**

This is a very unusual program, but it is the kind to be expected from Norman Treigle, a very unusual singer. It opens with Coppélius' scene from *The Tales of Hoffmann*, the kind of vocally unspectacular music that hardly ever induces a singer to record it. Exploiting the scene's histrionic possibilities to the fullest, Treigle succeeds in creating a vivid dramatic realization. Then he proceeds to turn the same trick over and over again. As the worldly-wise elder Des Grieux, the embittered father of Louise, the dying Don Quixote, the terrified warrior Attila, and, finally, Satan himself, he is always convincing, always assured, molding his characters with intelligence and dramatic power.

Treigle's voice is like the man himself: lean, flexible, expressive. Its sound lacks the Italianate fullness and sensuous beauty, and at times it is not focused with absolute purity. Consequently, the smooth vocalization needed to impart maximum expression to the *cantabile* of the *Ernani* aria is not his to give. Moreover, although his range is impressive, his top notes are somewhat strained. But Treigle is a real *presence*, an artist of magnetizing qualities, who is at his most rewarding when vocal demands are combined with histrionic challenges.

Jalas favors slowish tempos, but he provides expressive and meticulous leadership, and receives exceptionally fine support from the engineers. The *Don Quichotte* scene is handled with particularly deft stereophony: the Knight dominates the scene, the vision of Dulcinée comes in from the right, and Sancho Panza (also Treigle, but with an entirely different vocal coloration) cries disconsolately from the left channel. *G. J.*

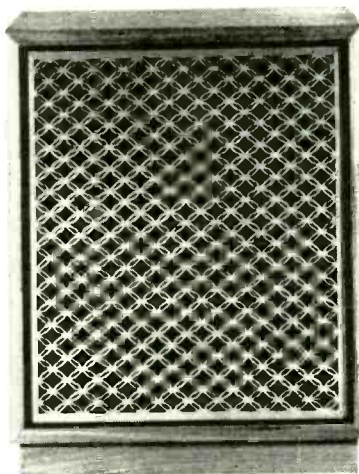
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Music Editor

JAMES GOODFRIEND

By JOHN MILDER

AN evening of music and talk with Jim Goodfriend is something his friends pass up only with a good bit of reluctance. The current Goodfriend apartment, like his earlier ones, has the kind of chairs you can really plop down into, and people do. Besides the music and the chairs, the prospects include seeing a lovely (the word really applies) wife and sipping something extraordinary from the wine closet.

The main attraction, though, is the chance for a genuine give and take with someone whose rare ability to look and listen closely tends to put both of you "into it" very quickly. What you are into may vary from quiet listening to a new pianist to quiet contemplation of a newly acquired old master drawing to quiet discussion of the recent vintage years in Burgundy and Bordeaux to noisy arguments about how the lowly New York Mets managed to come up with three almost-twenty-game winners. But into it you go.

Jim Goodfriend was born in 1932 in the Bronx. His father was, until his recent retirement, the Bronx's best-known obstetrician and gynecologist. (Evidence suggests he chose that occupation out of a conviction that the world is, for all its visible faults, a very interesting place into which to bring children.) Because of Dr. Goodfriend's wide interests, Jim grew up in a home filled with books, prints, and Japanese *netsukes*, and neither his father nor his mother believed that any of these should be off-limits to a curious child once he had begun to comprehend their value.

Surprisingly, although music was frequently played at home, it didn't become a real part of Jim's life until his last years at the Bronx High School of Science—his notions of what to do with his life had, up to that time,



Christian Steiner

centered around being a bacteriologist. One year in pursuit of that end at Tufts University convinced him that science was not really his field and that the arts perhaps were.

He registered the following year at New York University and shortly became a music major. He studied music there with such teachers as Martin Bernstein and Philip James and also studied philosophy with William Barret (Existentialist, mostly). At this time he first got into the business of records by selling them in a midtown appliance store. His boss there was Stanley Pressman, who, a few years later, became Vice President of KLH.

N.Y.U. and the record business were followed by a year of post-graduate study in composition with Leon Kirchner at Mills College in California and by a brief stint as "arranger's assistant" (coffee and sandwich getter, according to Jim) with the Ray Bolger TV show. Drafted out of his first big job, he spent two years in the army as arranger and pianist for the still-unheralded 434th Army Band at Fort Gordon, Georgia, and didn't get to Europe until after he got out—and then on his own money.

Back in the United States, Jim went to work for Bourée Productions (his boss was Alan Silver), an unusual musical organization that did such things as producing classical discs for Kapp Records and programming live concerts for Captain Kangaroo. Jim got involved in both and spent much time preparing performing editions of Baroque music for Kapp's Music for Trumpet and Orchestra series with Roger Voisin.

But under the day-to-day pressure to produce commercially viable classical records, both Jim and Alan began to itch to produce records of "unfeasible" excellence. The itch resulted in Con-

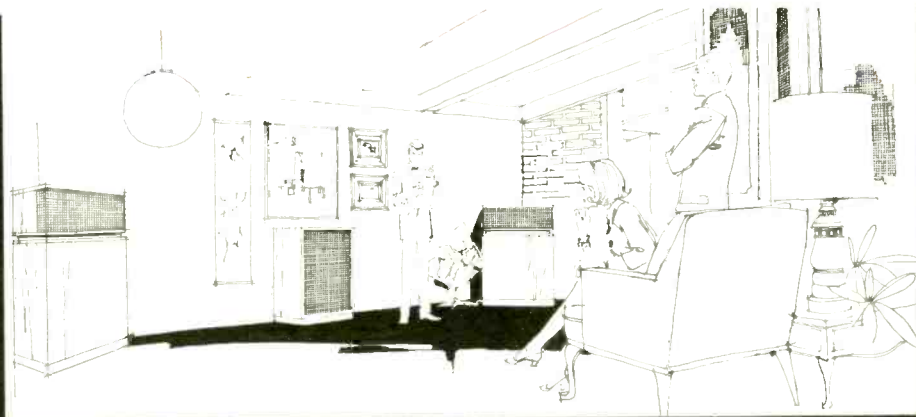
noisseur Society, a company whose records critics have praised as unparalleled in musical and technical quality. Connoisseur Society was responsible for introducing the Czech pianist Ivan Moravec, the gypsy guitarist Manitas de Plata, and the Indian sarodist Ali Akbar Khan to their American constituencies. The company survived rather than prospered, and, though Jim is no longer actively associated with it, it survives still.

In searching for a job to keep him alive while struggling with the record company, Jim reviewed records and concerts for *Musical America* and *Music Journal* and wrote articles and record liner notes, until he became one of the founders of a guaranteed-not-to-be-lucrative magazine called *Listen, A Music Monthly*. Today *Listen* exists only as a collector's item (\$50 for a complete run of five issues), but it had a top-flight, if short-lived, reputation in the music world.

Eventually Jim became Masterworks Literary Editor for Columbia Records, where he met Carol Hodgdon. He had his first date with her on the night of the famed New York City blackout, and marriage was inevitable after such a beginning.

FROM Columbia, Jim came to his current job at STEREO REVIEW in 1966. It has proved an ideal place for him to do many of the things he does best. As Music Editor, he is responsible for soliciting manuscripts on musical subjects, for working with their authors to guarantee the best possible presentation to an audience of general rather than specialist readers, for assigning records for review to the magazine's roster of contributing editors, for keeping track of the current activities and future plans of the multifarious American recording industry, and for lending his considerable knowledge of musical iconography (including choice items from his own extensive collection) to make STEREO REVIEW the tastefully illustrated magazine it is.

As he has indicated in more than one way in his own column, "Going on Record," Jim believes that observation of an art develops taste, that taste in turn develops accuracy of observation, and that taste can be transferred from one field or object to another. The level of his developed taste and its catholicity are best supported by the response of his friend Stan Pressman, no mean taster himself, when I asked him for a quotation about Jim. "I guess," Pressman said, "that the thing that really comes to mind is just that he's the one I find myself more and more looking to for advice on practically anything."



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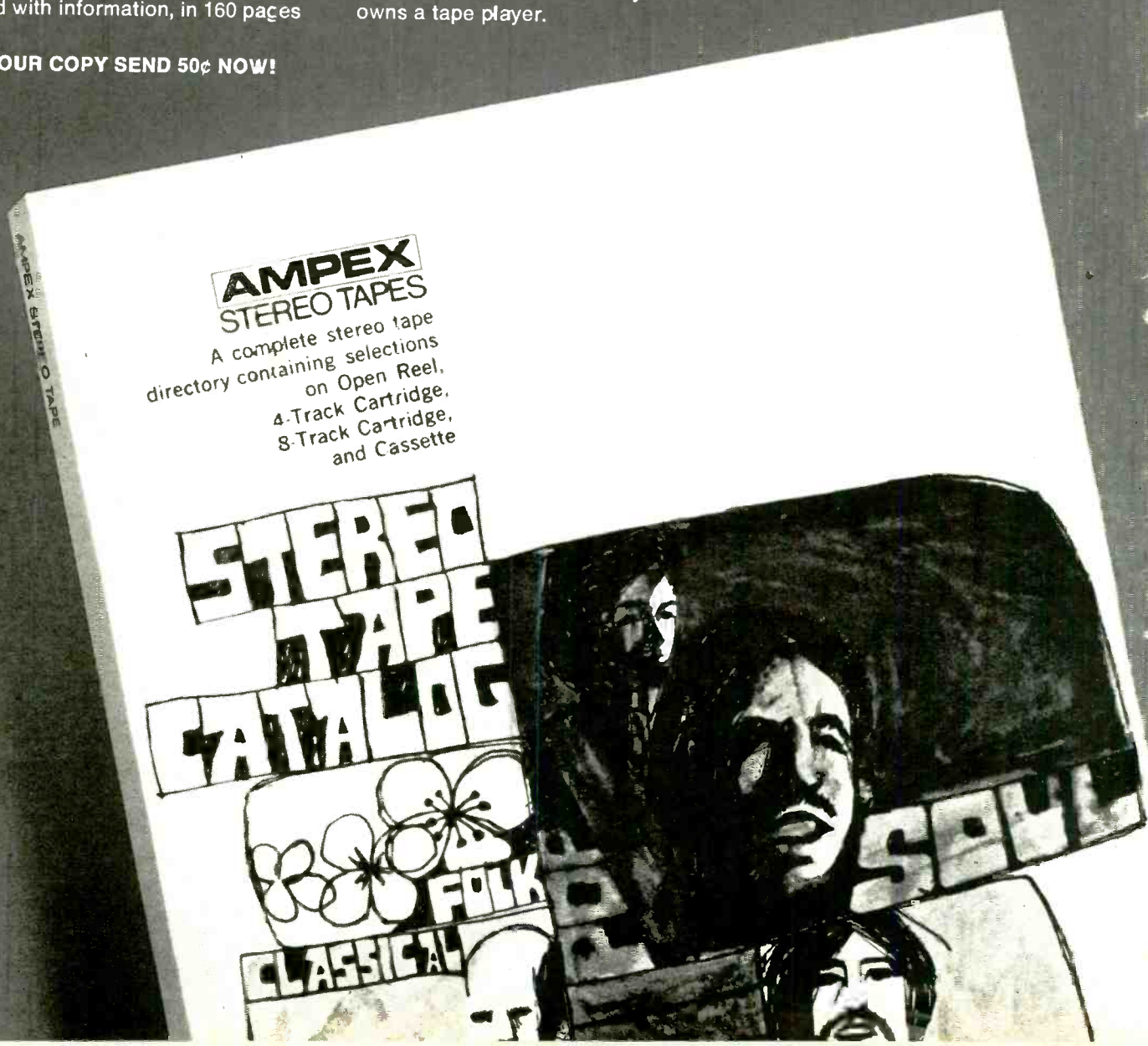
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ENTERTAINMENT

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Reviewed by CLIVE BARNES • DON HECKMAN • PAUL KRESH • REX REED • PETER REILLY

JOAN BAEZ: *Any Day Now*. Joan Baez (vocals); various accompanying musicians. *Love Minus Zero/No Limit; North Country Blues; You Ain't Goin' Nowhere; Drifter's Escape; I Pity the Poor Immigrant; Tears of Rage*; and ten others. VANGUARD (S) VSD 79306/7 two discs \$11.58 (\$9.58 for a limited time).

Performance: Uneven, and four years too late
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Very good

Three or four years ago, an album of Bob Dylan's tunes sung by Joan Baez would probably have been viewed by most young followers of pop music as an event only slightly less important than the Second Coming. But things have changed; Dylan has gone to electricity and back; Baez has cut her hair and gotten married. More important, the scene is no longer folk and love and peace and flowers. And yet, out of its time though it may be, "Any Day Now" is an important collection. It provides a faint, poorly developed, and dog-eared picture album of what a truly creative liaison between Dylan and Baez might have produced. If it comes too late (a last look back can be filled with pain, even longing, but never passion), it is Joan Baez singing Bob Dylan's songs, and I suspect that many who will play this album only rarely for enjoyment will nonetheless not regret having added it to their collections.

Virtually everything here has been recorded before. Baez apparently made her choices from the available Dylan material presumably without recommendation or assistance from its creator. Vanguard informs me that two pieces, *Love Is Just a Four-Letter Word* and *The Walls of Redding*, have not been recorded before. Neither is particularly good Dylan, and neither is particularly exciting. Baez is accompanied by a group of Nashville studio musicians, players whose reputations for rhythmic swing and professional competence are rivaled only by the fine New York recording sidemen. They perform very well indeed, and the unidentified guitarist who solos here and there (Steve Stills?) should have been given special credit for his superb ability to underscore and emphasize Baez's lines.

I wish I had more positive feelings about the lady's singing. But the simple fact is that

the penetrating intensity that was so characteristic of her earlier recordings seems gone, replaced by professionalism, tight control, and, surprisingly, a kind of studied indifference. Baez's performance, in fact, sounds almost like a summing up, as though her devotion to various aspects of the peace movement had sapped her energies, leaving little for her music. It will be interesting to see if she wants, or is able, to recapture her artistic focus in future months. I will not be surprised if she cannot. (At least one other disc, "David's Album," a collection of country-and-western songs, was recorded during

played too important a part in your life for you to pass up the first musical confrontation of their individual arts. If Baez and Dylan are just names mentioned reverently by your kids, don't bother. D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE COMFORTABLE CHAIR. The Comfortable Chair (vocals and instrumentals). *Child's Garden; Now; Princess; I'll See You; Be Me; Stars in Heaven*; and six others. ODE (S) Z 12-44005 \$4.98.

Performance: Relaxing
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Excellent

An extraordinarily relaxed and relaxing bunch to listen to, the Comfortable Chair is a six-boy, one-girl group which seems to have a future. The sound is a comfortable blend of folk-tinged rock distinguished by the group's lead vocalists, Barbara Wallace and Bernie Schwartz. They start off nicely with *Ain't No Good No More* and continue on with such pleasantries as *Be Me* and *Some Soon-Some Day*. Though all the music on the album is written by members of the group, these three songs are by the combination of Tad Baczek, Bernie Schwartz, and Gene Garfin, and they are by far the best material on the album. Not that the rest is bad; it just doesn't light the fire the way those three did. The recording is beautifully produced and there is a nice air of modest sureness about everything on the album. Recommended listening. P. R.

VANGUARD



JOAN BAEZ

A Dylan collection four years too late

(the same sessions and will be released soon.)

Of the sixteen songs included, only a few really catch the spirit of the old Baez. *Drifter's Escape*, enlivened by a rolling, intense swing from the rhythm section, nicely mates her cool melodic statement with Dylan's bare, exposed lyrics. *Tears of Rage*, sung a cappella, has golden touches and traces of early Baez, but wanders off vaguely as it closes. *Sad Eyed Lady of the Lowlands*, presumably written for Baez, is a fine song with an unusually good Dylan melody, but it goes on for eleven minutes and eighteen seconds, and that's too long. On *Dear Landlord*, Baez can't seem to find the rhythm section's swing, and winds up sounding like Stan Getz trying to play funky. On *Boots of Spanish Leather* and *Restless Farewell*, she sounds great.

Should you buy it? If you were into the folk thing in the early Sixties, you don't really have much choice; Baez and Dylan

CONNIE FRANCIS: *Connie Francis Sings Bacharach and David*. Connie Francis (vocals); orchestra. *Wanting Things; Promises, Promises; Don't Make Me Over; Alfie; What the World Needs Now; Wishin' and Hopin'; Do You Know the Way to San Jose?; Medley: This Girl's in Love with You; I Say a Little Prayer; Walk on By*; and four others. MGM (S) SE 4585 \$4.79.

Performance: Adenoidal but nice
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Okay

In this world of ordinary people there is always Connie Francis. She's nice, but also ordinary, and her success is the result of her extraordinary appeal to the lower middle class, who tend to ignore the adventurous originals and embrace performers who can take the works of gifted composers and translate them into mediocrities. Connie Francis is such a performer.

On this, her latest disc, she takes Burt Bacharach and Hal David, two of the decade's more innovative musicians, and brings

Explanation of symbols:

- (S) = stereophonic recording
- (M) = monophonic recording
- * = mono or stereo version not received for review

them down to the level of Tin Pan Alley songwriters. Her style is evasive, but sticks mainly to the plain approach of hitting the rhythm *on* the beat and staying on pitch. All this comes to us through what has to be the most abused set of adenoids ever. Every note is labored and pushed through a stopped-up aperture until it finally reaches the ear, true but thin, like *al dente* spaghetti.

The songs on this album have become standards, to moderns at least. And that is as it should be, considering Burt Bacharach's and Hal David's vast talents. Two of the numbers are from the current Broadway hit *Promises, Promises*. Miss Francis does allow us to understand the lyrics by means of her nasal yet precise diction, but this can't compensate for the total lack of soul, fire, or fervor of the kind that sent Dionne Warwick zooming to stardom on the music of these composers.

Claus Ogerman has retained much of the tinkerbell arrangements of the original Bacharach & David recordings. Call him copy cat or say he had the good taste not to try to improve on perfection.

Wouldn't it have been wonderful if the jacket had read "Mabel Mercer Sings Bacharach & David?" You have not heard *Alfie* until you hear Mabel sing it—and so far she hasn't recorded it. But then the fabulous Miss Mercer never could make a cash register ring. Miss Francis can, but let it ring for thee, not me.

R. R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LISTENING. Listening (vocals and instrumentals). *You're Not There; Laugh at the Stars; 9/8 Song; Stoned Is; "Forget It, M.M."; I Can Teach You, M.M.; So Happy; Cuando;* and three others. VANGUARD Ⓢ VSD 6504 \$4.79.

Performance: **Refreshing**
Recording: **Natural**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Vanguard has an extraordinarily promising new group named, simply enough, Listening, and everyone will probably be doing just that to them before long. Consisting of Michael Tschudin, Walter Powers, Peter Malick, and Ernie Kamanis, Listening is notable for several reasons, among them the composing and performing skill of Tschudin, who has written most of the songs here. A graduate of Harvard, where he composed two of the Hasty Pudding shows, he has turned to rock music as the legitimate expression of his time. He brings to his composing and his performing (principally on the piano) a delightfully humorous and lyrical talent with slight jazz inflections. Equally appealing is the sound of the group itself, still a bit raw but contagiously enthusiastic and obviously having a ball while performing. Their genuine high spirits can be heard in something like *Cuando*, an improvisational romp apparently aided by bottled spirits. At times it is a bit of a mess musically, but it is a joyful mess. As I say, there is a good deal of lyricism here, but there are also some rather sophisticated goings-on—*9/8 Song*, for example, which is something in between jazz and rock and very good as both. And there is *Stoned Is*, which is distinguished by a sound that Listening calls an "organ wash."

With rock pretty much in the doldrums of late, and getting more and more complex and

less alive, it is refreshing to come across a group that not only seems to enjoy what it is doing but projects vitality and real energy doing it. Perhaps some of this impression stems from the fact that all the songs were done in complete takes—no tape splicing was done at all. That itself is a relief, in a day when every other album seems to have been assembled by a dozen or so hands, and you are never quite sure just what in hell you are listening to.

This is far from being the album of the year, but it most certainly is one of the freshest, most promising debuts in several months. Go and play that on your Moog.

P. R.

THE LOVIN' SPOONFUL: Revelation: Revolution '69. The Lovin' Spoonful (vocals and instrumentals); various accompanying ensembles. *Amazing Air; Never Going Back; The Prophet; Only Yesterday; War*

SIRE



PHYLLIS NEWMAN
Talented and hell-bent on pleasing

Games; and five others. KAMA SUTRA Ⓢ KLPS 8073 \$4.79.

Performance: **Not like the original Spoonful**
Recording: **Very good**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**

The life expectancy of rock groups is not very heartening, I'm afraid. Given a year or two on the crest of popularity, their energies seem to dissipate. Ego problems can be suppressed while a group strives for the top forty, but they often swell to unmanageable proportions when the golden jackpot is finally hit.

The Lovin' Spoonful—if not specifically a rock group—is a case in point. I wouldn't care to speculate on what internal explosions (if any) have rent the group, but the fact remains that only two of its original members are present on this recording. John Sebastian's departure, in particular, has diminished the group's performing skills and the quality of its material. The new billing—The Lovin' Spoonful featuring Joe Butler—presumably reflects a mediated solution, but, having gotten top billing, Butler, the group's original drummer, has not managed to put together a group that in any way approaches the light-hearted *joie de vivre* of the original Spoonful.

D. H.

JOHNNY MATHIS: Those Were the Days. Johnny Mathis (vocals); orchestra. Robert Mersey arr. and cond. *Those Were the Days; The 59th Street Bridge Song; Light My Fire; Turn Around Look at Me; Little Green Apples;* and five others. COLUMBIA Ⓢ CS 9705 \$4.98.

Performance: **Bland**
Recording: **Glossy**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Evelyn Waugh once said: "I used to have a rule, when I reviewed books as a young man, never to give an unfavourable notice to a book I hadn't read." Rather the same thing applies here. While I did listen to this new Mathis recording, I don't think that I really heard it. It is precisely the same performance that Mathis has been giving for years—sentimental, banal, and commercially distant. By distant I mean that the singer is remote from his material. All is sacrificed for the pretty sound, the quirky phrasing, and the gelatinous timbre that has for so long identified Johnny Mathis. Each song sounds all too predictably like the next, so that after two or three bands the ear gives up and *Light My Fire* becomes indistinguishable from *The 59th Street Bridge Song* or *Those Were the Days*. Whatever talent Mathis started out with has now ossified into memories of things past—the memory of feeling in lyric projection, the memory of a distinctive sound, and the memory of trying to communicate with an audience. It is all a bit sad to listen to a singer turning himself into a Muzak machine. In such instances, critical comment also seems quite unnecessary.

P. R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

PHYLLIS NEWMAN: Those Were the Days. Phyllis Newman (vocals); orchestra. *Those Were the Days; When I'm Sixty-Four; Until It's Time for You to Go; Gentle on My Mind; The Party's Over;* and six others. SIRE Ⓢ SES 97002 \$4.79.

Performance: **Charming**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Phyllis Newman is the singing version of Rona Jaffe. I mean she's just got to be "that Cosmopolitan Girl." In other words, she's strictly for the average man—and what a great big world that encompasses. Whatever Phyllis Newman really is, she comes across on records as a dippy party girl, yet at the same time she remains touching, naïve, and charming. She takes all the seriousness of the original songs, pokes gentle fun at them, and pulls it off because she's very talented and hell-bent on amusing her audience. Phyllis Newman has one incredibly important thing—the will to please. Like enthusiasm, it can't be faked, and it's worth its weight in gold.

The Newman will, enthusiasm, and charm hold through the entire record. I thoroughly enjoyed both sides. On *Those Were the Days*, her perfect little-girl voice so erases the Brechtian quality of the original song bit that I could relax and enjoy the song for the first time. The Beatles' *When I'm Sixty-Four* is a pert song anyway; Phyllis makes it positively bouncy. *Until It's Time for You to Go* is a serious modern torch song by Buffy Sainte-Marie that doesn't usually re-

(Continued on page 118)



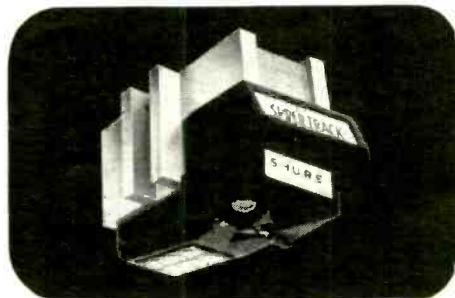
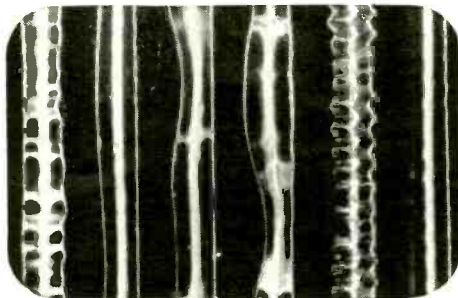
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mind me of tripping through tulips, but Miss N. just can't help herself. Vocally she lifts her petticoats and disappears over the next hill. In *World of Music*, the beat tells you her costume is now *cair sauvage* jacket, mini-skirt, and boots, but her indisputable panache carries it off. Sheer energy sweeps her through a superfast *Gentle on My Mind*. Is there just a bravado touch here, too? It doesn't matter; I could hardly wait to turn the record over.

Side two starts with *Frank Mills* from the musical *Hair*. If only Miss Newman had added her talents to that overrated show I might have enjoyed it more, but she has the taste to make *Frank Mills* sound almost like a folk classic. She minuets directly from that to a most humorous arrangement of *Hold Me Tight*, a hard-rock hit which benefits enormously from her take-off on the stutters of so many rock singers. She finishes up with *The Party's Over*, and I had the melancholy feeling I'd just left one.

It would be nice to end on that note, but I can't resist telling you that some credit must be given to Adolph Green, Miss Newman's super-talented husband, who wrote that last gem (along with Betty Comden and Julie Styne) for Judy Holliday in *Bells Are Ringing*. Mr. Green also deserves credit for letting his wife deliver the number like an early Motown arrangement for the beginning Supremes. It sounds especially like their version of *Santa Claus Is Coming to Town*, and it's great fun.

Talent will out, and Mr. Green's liner notes are also a refreshing change—fun, funnier, funniest. I admit that performers like Phyllis Newman are special to each person, possibly an acquired taste. In which case, pass the olives again. Adolph Green is not the only one who loves her. R. R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE PENTANGLE: *The Pentangle*. The Pentangle (vocals and instrumentals). *Let No Man Steal Your Thyme; Bills; Hear My Call; Pentangling*; and four others. REPRISE © 6315 \$4.79.

Performance: A great new English group
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Very good

There's been a lot of talk lately about influences back and forth between rock, folk, jazz, blues, etc. Much of it has been too concerned with proselytizing for one style at the cost of the special qualities of another. Even so, I suspect that the next year will see some genuine consolidation taking place, with the musical fragmentation of the last few years finally beginning to wane.

Assuming such a consolidation, the Pentangle will surely be in the vanguard of groups that claim a genuine familiarity and adeptness with the subtleties of several musical styles. Interestingly, the Pentangle has arrived at its (I hate to use the word) "synthesis" through an emphasis upon folk and jazz rather than rock and blues. Though I don't see this as the only kind of consolidation that can take place, it certainly suggests that folk and jazz may possess more room in which to maneuver musically than the more circumscribed and better-defined hard rock and blues styles.

Without exception, the members of the Pentangle are attractive performers. Singer Jacqui McShee (forget the affected spelling)

sings with cool understatement and penetrating rhythmic control. Guitarists Bert Jansch and John Renbourn (I can't determine who plays what solos) improvise with an awareness of musical space and placement that is rare in contemporary pop music, and the rhythm team of bassist Danny Thompson and drummer Terry Cox is superb. The Pentangle, incidentally, is an *acoustic* group; by this I mean that their guitars are true acoustic instruments, not electric or electronic, and even the bass, to my ears, at least, does not sound like the Fender variety.

I am not suggesting, by the way, that the Pentangle is intentionally imposing one musical style upon another. The natural musical development of the group as a whole—and the skills of its individuals—has led them into venturesome improvisations, into bass lines that are contrapuntal and harmonic rather than repetitive, into a style of drumming that is unlimited by the rudimentary eighth-note figures common to most rock groups, and into a healthy respect for the



THE PENTANGLE: in the vanguard of a stylistic consolidation?

contrast of sounds and silences. And that's the way it should happen.

Yes. A very fine group, indeed. I commend it to your attention enthusiastically. D. H.

LINE RENAUD: *Line Renaud's in Love*. Line Renaud (vocals); orchestra. *Majorca; Isle of Love; Goodbye, My Souvenirs; Teach Me French; La La La Song; Love is the Little Things; It's Over*; and six others. CAPITOL © ST 2963 \$4.79.

Performance: A Frenchwoman in Las Vegas
Recording: So-so
Stereo Quality: Okay

"The French love her as their most formidable super-star since Mistinguett, Piaf and Chevalier," say the liner notes, but in Las Vegas, where they say she is now performing, they must love her as the closest thing to Dorothy Lamour, Carmen Miranda, and Alice Faye. If you like to be reminded of these wonderful ladies—and I do—you'll enjoy Line Renaud, who shows us how innocent the world of entertainment once was. Naïveté rides rampant and unhampered—in the arrangements, in the lyrics, in Miss Renaud's phrasing and pouty delivery. She has an elusive French accent that seems to come

and go at will. Oddly enough, she uses it heavily in her version of the very American hit *Can't Take My Eyes Off You*.

Most of the songs are just terrible and, sad to say, most were written by the poor dear's husband. They are all about love. "Of what else would a Frenchwoman sing?" ask the liner notes. Well, how about Britain and the common market for a start? R. R.

ROLLING STONES: *Beggars Banquet* (see Best of the Month, page 84)

JOE SIMON: *No Sad Songs*. Joe Simon (vocals); orchestra. *Hanging On; My Special Prayer; Long Hot Summer; No Sad Songs; I Worry About You*; and six others. SOUND STAGE SEVEN © SSS15004 \$4.98.

Performance: Holy-rolling sound
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Okay

Everyone needs a little soul in his life every now and then, and Joe Simon delivers just

that on this disc. He may not be earth-shattering, and he never builds to that burning fever known as Aretha, but he keeps you finger-popping and in one or two selections on this album he will really get to you. The first song, for example—*Hanging On*—is the best kind of soul, the kind that you've just got to keep gliding across the floor to, with hips a-swivel and head a-rockin'. In *My Special Prayer* he treats a soul hymn to his own unique brand of torture, and the results are as they should be, painful but brave. Unfortunately, the album as a whole begins at a volume about as loud as Joe Simon ever gets, then slowly fades away, almost as if he got tired and just couldn't keep up. He is rather stereotyped in his approach to music, and actually he could use this cliché feeling to advantage by expanding it. You know—just a little more tambourine, and that wonderful left-handed gospel piano which I never seem to get enough of. There is a piquant touch in the middle of *My Special Prayer* as you suddenly hear that newly-minted flute now so popular with the groups, right there in the middle of a "Hallelujah." It's an amusing and appealing touch.

(Continued on page 120)

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But then, for all his lacks, Joe Simon is appealing. No extraordinary pyrotechnics or in-vogue stuff for Joe, just a simple white shirt, no tie, a big smile, no sad songs, and lots of simple honest soul. R. R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

FRANK SINATRA: *Cycles*. Frank Sinatra (vocals); orchestra, Don Costa arr. and cond. *Rain in My Heart*; *From Both Sides, Now*; *Moody River*; *My Way of Life*; *Gentle on My Mind*; *Wandering*; and four others. REPRISE © FS 1027 \$4.79.

Performance: In the style
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent

Here is an offhand but thoroughly enjoyable recital by one of the great masters. Sinatra is again in variable voice but, in the main, manages to bring off everything he sings with just that extra bit of suave musicality that has always distinguished his work. His ability to take lyrics that are made of brick and turn them into marble remains unimpaired. The only two things here that come close to fumbles are *By the Time I Get to Phoenix* and *Gentle on My Mind*. Both are securely the performing property of Glen Campbell, and Sinatra is able only to dent them interpretively. He is in fine form in such things as *Little Green Apples* and the prismatic *Moody River*. Don Costa contributes a solid job as arranger and conductor, and the whole album has the customary high professional sheen of any Sinatra enterprise. At times the sheen turns into glossiness and sets me to thinking that Sinatra might consider getting together with some of the newer and younger composing and arranging talents. It might be fun both for him and for his listeners.

For once the liner notes on a Sinatra album are pitched somewhat below the level of hysterical adulation, and Hal Halverstadt, who wrote them, is to be congratulated on their amused equanimity about, and lucid observations on, a Sinatra recording session.

P. R.

TINY TIM: *Tiny Tim's 2nd Album*. Tiny Tim (vocals); orchestra. *Come to the Ball*; *We Love It*; *When I Walk with You*; *Communism*; *Great Balls of Fire*; *I'm Glad I'm a Boy*; *My Hero*; and ten others. REPRISE © 6323 \$4.79.

Performance: You'd better believe it
Recording: Okay
Stereo Quality: Excellent

Some rewards come late in life, and for the parents of Tiny Tim one of the rewards of their son's fame is to be photographed with him on the cover of his newest album. There they sit, with Tiny Tim between them, the father decked out in clothes so new-looking that you can hear the shoes squeak, the mother with her brand new wedgies and harlequin glasses, her arm possessively resting on Tim's knee. And I thought, well, of course, that's what they would have to look like, isn't it? Eminently average, unremarkable people. And what I take to be school graduation pictures of Tiny Tim on the inside cover show an equally average young man several years ago. There is no pictorial record of the change that he wrought in himself over the years, only recent pictures, along with those old ones, which show him in the

full flower of his new celebrity estate. He has become the ultimate of the put-on, that mid-twentieth-century phenomenon which masks a great deal of real hostility.

The performances are more of the same put-on. There has been a feeble attempt to give some continuity to the album by having Tiny Tim the tenor interview Tiny Tim the soprano, but it isn't very original or very funny. He duets with himself in *My Hero*, and although I didn't think he was all that hilarious, the arrangement, an enormous galumphing one by Gene Page, most assuredly was. If you think campy put-ons are the cat's pajamas, I guess you will enjoy the album. I didn't. P. R.

THE TROUT. Cassandra Morgan, Frank Romeo and Tony Romeo (vocals and instrumentals). *The Beginning*; *Crazy Billy*; *Carnival Girl*; *November Song*; *Arizoua*



FRANK SINATRA
That extra bit of suave musicality

Two Thoughts; *Hushabye Wee Bobby*; and seven others. MGM © SE 4592 \$4.79.

Performance: Shaggy but good-humored
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Ingenious

This lively little program starts with what seems to be a car engine warming up and ends with what possibly was intended as a highway crash—there's no explanation, only the noise. In between, the affable-sounding trio uses other tricks (splashing water, carnival calliopes) to enliven a series of ballads all engaging enough but all with a tendency to drone on and on. The topics are *Crazy Bill*, who "talks to the sun and sings to the river"; a city boy who longs "to swim in fresh water" (that's where the splashes come in); a catalog of complaints about "the worst day I've been to"; a yearning bit about how nice it would be to live in a mountain cabin "cuddlin' warm to your silken body"; a number about a "carnival girl"; and a hymn (whether of praise or hate it is hard to say) to the Sunrise Highway. What makes this record diverting rather than simply monotonous like so many of its counterparts is the sly humor of the group; you know they don't take themselves too seriously, so you don't mind so much the way they hang around. P. K.

JAZZ



BENNY GOODMAN: *Clarinet à la King* (see Best of the Month, page 83)

GENE KRUPA AND HIS ORCHESTRA: *That Drummer's Band*. Anita O'Day (vocals); Gene Krupa Orchestra. *He's Gone*; *Feeling Fancy*; *Blues Krieg*; *The Sergeant Was Shy*; *Who*; *Hamtramck*; *Sweet Georgia Brown*; *Full Dress Hop*; and eight others. EPIC © EE22027 \$4.98.

Performance: Suede shoes, zoot suit, bow tie still intact
Recording: The original trip

Time was when all the "cats" sat in the drugstores of their home towns and played runs with straws on the marble counters of the soda fountain. Classrooms were awash with the staccato of lead pencils on hollow wooden desks, everyone imitating their hero, the one, the only Gene Krupa. So who's the greatest drummer of them all? The answer will still be—Krupa! Even today, though he is nearly sixty years old, that title goes unchallenged. This is not to say there weren't better, more disciplined artists on the skins (Chick Webb, say, and some even preferred Buddy Rich), but until Ringo Starr came along, no drummer existed whose reputation was so extensive and flamboyant. His trade mark was his custom-made suede shoes, and he sweated through three pairs every performance. Hollywood even made a terrible movie called *The Gene Krupa Story*.

Today it's all nostalgia, and who cares, you say. Most times, I agree. Re-releases of stars gone by are only for historians and those who want to rekindle memories of youth. But I challenge anyone to play Krupa's version of Kern and Hammerstein's *Who* and not be knocked dead by his sheer genius.

Swing, swing, swing—we've learned to live without it, but when Krupa comes back and gives us a chance to hear again yesterday's message via his old drum massage, the sound sure is rare and delicious. R. R.

LEE MORGAN: *The Genius of Lee Morgan*. Lee Morgan (cornet); others. *Mogie*; *Bess*; *Terrible "T"*; *Expobident*; *Five*. EVEREST/TRADITION © 2079 \$5.98.

Performance: Fiery young jazz man
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Fair (electronic?)

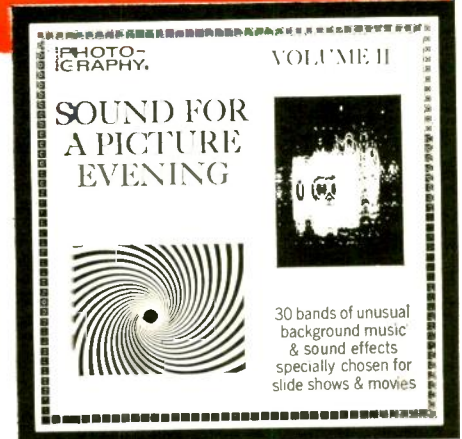
Lee Morgan was playing beautifully at the time these tracks were recorded. They consist of excerpts from two Vee Jay albums originally released in 1960 and 1961. The three tracks on side one were on Vee Jay 3007; personnel consisted of Morgan, Clifford Jordan, Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers, and Art Blakey. The two tracks on side two were on Vee Jay 3015; personnel included Morgan, Jordan, Eddie Higgins, Art Davis, and Blakey (I am indebted to *Down Beat* (Continued on page 122)

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associate editor Ira Gitler for providing details.) Morgan had just left the Dizzy Gillespie band where he was viewed as a kind of jazz child prodigy—at the age of eighteen he was taking many of Gillespie's solo spots. In retrospect, his great facility with be-bop was probably the first major sign that the idiom—as a musical style—had begun to reach its creative limits. An improvisational style which had become so readily accessible to a generation not yet in its twenties (Morgan was not the only youngster who could casually rip off ferociously difficult bop licks) could hardly be said to possess many unrevealed aesthetic secrets.

At the time of this recording, however, the style is still relatively clean, and Morgan plays in a musical environment which is a direct descendant of the boppish groups led by Clifford Brown and Max Roach in the early Fifties. Morgan plays vibrantly throughout, his fingers alive with the joy of a youthful performer who has technique to burn and ideas aplenty. Tenor saxophonist Clifford Jordan is also at the top of his form, and the rhythm section has the tight drive that has always been characteristic of New York accompaniment teams.

It is my impression, by the way, that record companies are required by Federal regulation to indicate that a disc had been issued before. Not only does Everest/Tradition fail to do so, but the liner notes inform us that we are about to hear the "now" Lee Morgan, the "mature" Lee Morgan. *D. H.*

MAX ROACH: *Members, Don't Get Weary.* Max Roach (drums); Gary Bartz (alto sax); Charles Tolliver (trumpet); Jymie Merritt (electric bass); Stanley Cowell (piano); Andy Bey (vocal on the title track). *Abstractions; Libra; Eff; Equivoise; Members, Don't Get Weary; Absolutions.* ATLANTIC © SD 1510 \$5.79.

Performance: Disappointing

Recording: Very good

Stereo Quality: Very good

Max Roach has had a long and respectable career as a jazz performer. But curiously, despite occasional accolades in the jazz press, he rarely has been given the attention he deserves. Roach is, after all, one of the few bop innovators from the Forties who is still musically and artistically productive. More important, he is one of the few who have not only stayed abreast of the times but have continued to influence the changing patterns of jazz for nearly twenty-five years.

Having made such a laudatory introduction, I regret that I cannot find equally positive comments to make about this particular Roach outing. It smacks too much of musical vagueness, of a scatter-shot technique that attempts to hit a musical target by distributing its fire in as many directions as possible. There are good moments, to be sure, almost always centered on Roach's superb drumming. Unfortunately, other players are present, too, and they do not always match the leader's quality.

The one who sometimes does—although he is not at his best here—is pianist Stanley Cowell, a brilliant young player who will surely become one of the major jazz musicians of the Seventies. Altoist Gary Bartz plays here with bristling enthusiasm and a sturdy rhythmic swing. The remaining players have all been heard to better advantage elsewhere. *D. H.*



THEATER • FILMS

RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE MEGILLA OF ITZIK MANGER (Dov Seltzer-Joe Darion). Original-cast recording. Pesach Burstein, Lillian Lux, Mike Burstein, Susan Walters, Ariel Furman, and Zisha Gold (vocals); orchestra and chorus, Dov Seltzer cond. COLUMBIA © OS 3270 \$5.98.

Performance: A pleasure

Recording: Stunning

Stereo Quality: Wide-awake

How a nice Jewish girl originally named Hadassah changed her name to Esther, got to be the Queen of Persia, and managed with her clever Uncle Mordecai to save her people from destruction at the hands of the wicked Prime Minister Haman is the plot of the Book of Esther (Megilla of Esther) in the Bible, and the theme of the Jewish feast of Purim. It's also the plot of this wonderful musical, but this time the action takes place in Eastern Europe, in a Jewish village, or *shtetl*, where an ex-tailor and folk poet named Itzik Manger put down his version of the Megilla in a series of poems. And so the play-within-a-play is staged in a tailor's shop, where six tailors, donning costumes from the shelves and hangers, and attaching putty noses and beards to their faces, re-enact the ancient legend to a score of singular charm and vivacity by Dov Seltzer. To the original characters they add Fastrigosso, a tailor's apprentice and Esther's rejected suitor, who in a jealous rage stabs King Ahasuerus in the marketplace with a penknife. It's only a flesh wound, but Fastrigosso is hustled off to jail while the chorus sings *Gevald* (which is Yiddish for *o, vay iz mir*). Songs happy and sad—of the humiliation of the king's first wife Vashti when he orders her to appear naked before his courtiers, of the brilliance of Mordecai and the heartaches of motherhood, of the joys of health and the woes of rejection—abound amid the action, sometimes with an exhilarating irrelevance to it. The whole production was brought here fresh from a long and happy run in Israel, and has been produced for Columbia by Thomas Z. Shepard with thoughtful attention to folks like you and me who have little or no Yiddish. This gap has been bridged with an English narration performed with perhaps too much enthusiasm by its author Joe Darion, but it clears up the story line admirably. As for the performers, who leap from role to role without the slightest sign of strain, every one of them—especially Lillian Lux as Vashti, Mike Burstein as Fastrigosso the spurned suitor, and Pesach Burstein as the king—deserves a big wet kiss. With a flavor part traditional Yiddish theater and part *commedia dell'arte*, *The Megilla of Itzik Manger* is a *hamantashen* (Continued on page 124)

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DEBUSSY: Feux d'artifice (excerpt). Connoisseur Society • Virtually the entire range of the piano is used, including the full force of the bass notes. This is the sound of a piano in reverberant surroundings heard fairly close-up.

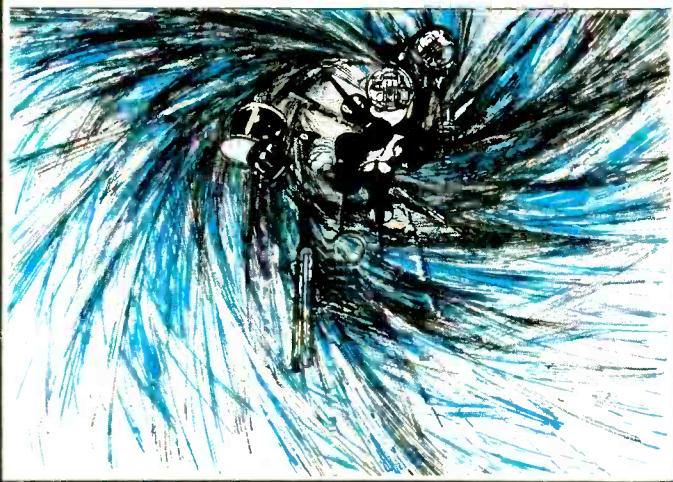
BEETHOVEN: Wellington's Victory (Battle Symphony) (excerpt from the first movement) Westminster • The recording emphasizes extreme directionality. It is a dramatic presentation engineered specifically for stereo reproduction.

MASSAINO: Canzona XXXV à 16 (complete) DGG Archive • Performed on old instruments, and recorded with techniques that combine directionality with depth and ambiance, this band reproduces the sound of the music in its original environment, a large and reverberant cathedral.

CORRETTE: Concerto Comique Op. 8, No. 6, "Le Plaisir des Dames" (third movement) Connoisseur Society • Recording demonstrates the

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sound and special layout of a small performing group (harpsichord, cello and flutes) in fairly resonant surroundings.

KHAN: Raga Chandranandan (excerpt) Connoisseur Society • This classical Indian music provides some of the most exciting musical experiences imaginable. Directionality between vastly different instruments is the point here, as well as the sheer sound of the instruments themselves.

RODRIGO: Concert—Serenade for Harp and Orchestra (excerpt from the first movement) Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft • This excerpt provides a wealth of instrumental color behind a harp solo. The music is clear, colorful, rather classical, and immensely entertaining.

MANITAS DE PLATA: Gypsy Rhumba (complete) Connoisseur Society • The recording puts the listener in the center of a flamenco party by precisely transmitting the directionality, depth and ambiance of this completely impromptu recording session.

MARCELLO: (arr. King): Psalm XVII "The Heavens are Telling" (complete) Connoisseur Society • This arrangement of the brief Marcello Psalm is for brass, choir and organ, who answer one another antiphonally.

PRAETORIUS: Terpsichore: La Bourrée XXXII (complete) DGG Archive • A musical gem played by a raft of renaissance instruments including recorders, viols, lutes, harpsichord, small kettle drums, chimes, bells, and triangle.

BERG: Wozzeck (excerpt from Act III) Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft • The acknowledged masterpieces of modern music incorporating the use of many unusual and extraordinary musical devices, including dramatic crescendos for full orchestra.

BARTOK: Sonata for two pianos and Percussion (excerpt from the first movement) Cambridge • The work is a stunning exploration of percussive sounds used as the basic material of the composition.

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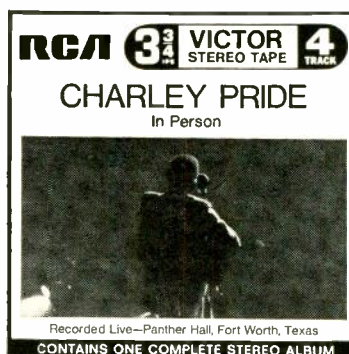
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STEREO TAPE

Reviewed by DAVID HALL • DON HECKMAN
IGOR KIPNIS • PAUL KRESH • PETER REILLY

BIZET-SHCHEDRIN: *The Carmen Ballet*. Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL (S) Y1S 40067 \$7.98.

Performance: **Brilliant**
Recording: **Very live**
Stereo Quality: **Highly effective**
Speed and Playing Time: 3¾ ips; 41'15"

The thirty-seven-year-old Russian composer Rodion Shchedrin clinches his place as the Morton Gould of the USSR with this gorgeously colorful string-percussion treatment of Bizet's *Carmen* music for the Bolshoi Theater Ballet. Every trick in the book that we in America know from Gould's arrangements and lighter original works is brought into the aural picture here. Like Robert Russell Bennett for his *Porgy and Bess* Symphonic Picture, Shchedrin has altered the original dramatic sequence of the various episodes to suit his own purposes. He has also interpolated the *Fandole* from *L'Arlésienne* and the *Dance bohémienne* from *Fair Maid of Pentb*, which is done in some opera houses to extend the dance sequences in the Bizet original.

In playing and sheer dazzling sonics, this recording is a Hollywood spectacular, USSR-style—a great showpiece for anyone with an urge to show off super-duper stereo equipment. My only criticism of the overall sound arises from the amount of bass-transient distortion induced by the somewhat over-reverberant recording locale. *D. H.*

BRAHMS: *Piano Concerto No. 1, in D Minor, Op. 15*. Rudolf Serkin (piano); Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell cond. COLUMBIA (S) MQ 1008 \$7.95.

Performance: **Romantically powerful**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**
Speed and Playing Time: 7½ ips; 46'56"

Of the now half-dozen formidable four-track tape versions of the Brahms D Minor Concerto, three are conducted by George Szell. The present Serkin performance and the decade-old Leon Fleisher reading on Epic have the backing of the Cleveland Orchestra, while that by Clifford Curzon for London finds Szell with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Whereas the Fleisher-Szell collaboration offered a highly dramatic, yet startlingly lean, projection of Brahms' early and dark-hued

masterpiece, Curzon and Szell in 1962—supported by London's extremely rich sonics—came forth with a treatment both more romantic in phrasing and more somber in coloration. The new Serkin-Szell performance seems to fall midway between these two approaches. Szell's accompaniment in the first and last movements exhibits a maximum of dynamic contrast, eloquent rhetoric, and rhythmic pulse, and the slow movement is treated with a fine sense of balance between the delicately ruminative and the impassioned aspects of its musical content.

Serkin's handling of the all-demanding solo role emphasizes contrast elements on

CARNEGIE HALL



RAFAEL KUBELIK
A gentle, gemütlich Mahler Fourth

his own level, which is to say that the dramatic episodes are imbued with the intense nervous energy one has come to associate with this artist's playing over the years, and the lyrical episodes are handled in a far more improvisatory fashion than one would expect. The whole makes for a highly personal, yet in no sense of the word eccentric, interpretation.

As my colleague Martin Bookspan indicated in his July updating of the Basic Repertoire, a choice between Szell's two earlier recordings of the Brahms D Minor is a difficult matter. Now the situation is further complicated except in the matter of recorded sound, where the new entry takes a decided top spot, being cleaner and richer than the old Epic tape and decidedly less overweight than the London. *D. H.*

HANDEL: *Concerti Grossi, Op. 6: No. 3, in E Minor; No. 7, in B-flat Major; No. 9, in F Major*. Leon Spierer and Emil Maas (violins); Ottomar Borwitzky (cello); Edith Picht-Axenfeld and Horst Göbel (harpsichords); Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON (S) DGC 9036 \$7.95.

Performance: **Polished but bloated**
Recording: **Excellent, but faulty processing**
Stereo Quality: **Fine**
Speed and Playing Time: 7½ ips; 45'36"

Karajan's work here is full of personality and given to extreme contrasts of dynamics—it is athletic in the fast movements, and soupy in the slow ones. But the superb polish of the orchestra and its soloists notwithstanding, the performance is quite in the wrong style, notably by dint of its heavy texture. The tape version sounds excellent, except for a faulty first sequence in which the left channel was out of alignment. For far better Handel, stick to the complete Op. 6 with Wenzinger. *I. K.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4, in G Major*. Elsie Morison (soprano); Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Rafael Kubelik cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON (S) DGC 9339 \$7.95.

Performance: **Worthy**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Fine**
Speed and Playing Time: 7½ ips; 51'25"

This is a gentle, *gemütlich* performance of Mahler's Fourth, utterly without mannerisms. It is exceedingly well played, with marvelous, full-blown sound, and it compares most favorably—especially in the expressive heights reached in the slow movement—with the fine Szell performance on Columbia. It is highly recommended. *I. K.*

VERDI: *Rigoletto*. Nicolai Gedda (tenor), Duke of Mantua; Cornell MacNeil (baritone), Rigoletto; Reri Grist (soprano), Gilda; Agostino Ferrin (bass), Sparafucile; Aana di Stasio (contralto), Maddalena; Limbania Leoni (mezzo-soprano), Giovanna and Page to the Duke; Ruggero Raimondi (baritone), Monterone; others, Rome Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Francesco Molinari-Pradelli cond. ANGEL (S) Y3S 3718 \$17.98.

Performance: **Lacks genuine distinction**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**
Speed and Playing Time: 3¾ ips; 115'57"

(Continued on page 128)

Explanation of symbols:

- (S) = stereophonic recordings
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The generally bright and spacious recorded sound, especially in the final act with its requirements for spatial differentiation, is the major asset of this first 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -ips taped *Rigoletto*. Otherwise, the 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ips RCA Victor performance at \$11.95 with Kraus, Moffo, and Merrill has something of an edge, not only in price, but because Alfredo Kraus' delineation of the profligate Duke is more effective than Gedda's rather flat portrayal here. MacNeil delivers a solid and powerful, if not always emotionally gripping, treatment of the title role. Reri Grist as Gilda is very "little girl" in the opening scenes, and although she clearly makes an effort to produce a more mature vocal coloration in the episodes following her seduction, the total result is still something less than irresistible. Molinari-Pradelli's conductorial pacing is excellent, but the orchestral discipline is a good deal less than perfect in the opening court ball scene.

What this *Rigoletto* lacks is the combination of fierce passion and rhythmic precision that a Toscanini with an all-star cast could bring to it. Unfortunately, we have only Act IV in the unforgettable 1944 performance with Milanov, Peerce, and Warren (Victrola VIC 1314) as a sample of what the Maestro might have revealed to us in a complete reading of the opera. D. H.

WAGNER: *Der fliegende Holländer* (original Dresden version). Anja Silja (soprano), Senta; Annelies Burmeister (mezzo-soprano), Mary; Ernst Kozub (tenor), Erik; Gerhard Unger (tenor), Steersman; Theo Adam (baritone), the Dutchman; Martti Talvela (bass), Daland; B.B.C. Chorus; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer cond. ANGL. © Y&S 3730 \$17.98.

Performance: Weighty
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Satisfactory
Speed and Playing Time: 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ips; 152'55"

Klemperer's view of this opera is generally heavy and serious in tone. Although he emphasizes the lyricism of the score, he also manages to make some of the climaxes extremely exciting. The choice of singers is, on occasion, less than happy. Altogether, I felt that there was too much shouting (certainly ill suited to Klemperer's orchestral approach). Few of the soloists provide the range of color their parts demand—this is certainly true of the Dutchman himself and even of the young soprano Anja Silja, the Senta. The tape processing provides good if not outstanding sound and commendable stereo, but there is one bad turnover at the end of the first sequence (right in the middle of Senta's Act II aria). Obtaining a copy of the libretto requires writing to the company. I. K.

ENTERTAINMENT

THE BUCKINGHAMS: *Portraits*. The Buckingham (vocals and instrumentals). *Hey Baby; Susan; C'Mon Home; Anyplace in Here; The Mail; We Just Know*; and five others. COLUMBIA © CQ 1018 \$6.95.

Performance: They'll never play the Palace
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent
Speed and Playing Time: 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ ips; 40'14"

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ing going for them on the second side of this tape. The something is called an "electronic collage," which has been devised by the album's producer, James William Guercio, and while it fulfills the basic requisite of providing a roomful of bloated noise, there is at the same time something rather subtle and musical about it. These collages appear a couple of times, and I think I would like to hear more of them. As for the Buckingham's, their average is pretty average. *Hey Baby* isn't bad, nor is *C'Mon Home*. But then *The Mail* and *Susan* aren't very good either. P. R.

BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD: *Last Time Around*. Buffalo Springfield (vocals and instrumentals). *On the Way Home*; *It's So Hard to Wait*; *Pretty Girl Why*; *Four Days Gone*; *Carefree Country Day*; *Special Care*; and six others. ATCO © ATX 256 \$5.95.

Performance: **Thumping and wailing**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**
Speed and Playing Time: **3¾ ips; 33'57"**

"Last Time Around" is a hopeful title if these chaps, in their quaint Beatles haircuts that are bound to hamper their careers in the Nixon Age, really mean it. With the copy I got, the tables of contents for sides one and two were reversed on the tape-box, but it took me quite a while to notice anything was wrong. All I could hear was the usual muffled muttering and murmuring, awash in a sea of electronic caterwauling, in which the tunes merged indistinguishably from item to item and the words, when you could hear them at all, turned out to be lyrical observations on the insightful order of "The sky is blue and so is the sea." I finally made the discovery of the printer's error in the midst of a piece called *Carefree Country Day*, which sounds more like a motorcycle race than a suburban pastorella, but which caught my attention because I couldn't altogether believe that this was *Uno Mundo* as labeled. I didn't have the heart to start over. P. K.

COUNTRY JOE AND THE FISH: *Together*. Country Joe and the Fish (vocals and instrumentals). *Rock and Soul Music*; *Susan*; *Mojo Navigator*; *Bright Suburban Mr. & Mrs. Clean Machine*; *Good Guys/Bad Guys Cheer*; *The Streets of Your Town*; and six others. VANGUARD © VGX 9277 \$5.95.

Performance: **Versatile**
Recording: **Very good**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**
Speed and Playing Time: **3¾ ips; 33'37"**

Country Joe and the Fish are one of the most musically sophisticated and technically secure groups on the current pop scene. Their initial recordings covered a wide range of material, from gentle folk melodies to rousing anti-war (and anti-Administration—the old one) songs.

The most widely known pieces included here are *The Harlem Song* and *Rock and Soul Music*, but I find both disappointing. Effective satire loses its point when it descends to the level of parody, and duplication of its target, after all, should not be its goal. The points which are implicit in both these songs are surely worth making, but the use of imitation, no matter how humorously or satirically intended, is hardly the most effective way to go about doing it.

The balance of the material shows off the Fish versatility. Most of the group's mem-

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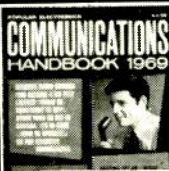

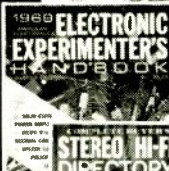


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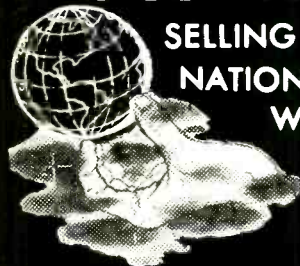
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bers are represented as composers. Despite the failings noted, Country Joe and The Fish are one of the best assemblies of pop musicians around. This latest collection, although not as rewarding as the first two, should not be overlooked. *Don H.*

THE ELECTRIC FLAG: A Long Time Comin'. The Electric Flag (vocals and instrumentals); with various other musicians. *Killin' Floor; Groovin' Is Easy; Over-Lovin' You; She Should Have Just; Wine;* and five others. COLUMBIA © CQ 1033 \$7.95.

Performance: Uneven, sometimes very good
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent
Speed and Playing Time: 7½ ips; 41'

The Electric Flag is now regrettably defunct, so this release will have to stand as sole evidence of what the group might have been. Led by such strong performers as Mike Bloomfield, Harvey Brooks, and Buddy Miles, the group seemed on the verge of making a breakthrough to a brilliant coalescence of rock, pop, and jazz. Whether continued activity would have resulted in genuine innovation is difficult to say, but certainly the suggestion was there.

Unfortunately, it was little more than a suggestion, however, because for all their good moments, the performances are artistically diffuse, attempting to move in too many directions at one time. Most of the principal members of the Electric Flag have now formed groups of their own. It will be interesting to see what effect their first faltering steps together will have on their individual groups. *Don H.*

SIMON & GARFUNKEL: Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme. Simon and Garfunkel (vocals and instrumentals with various musicians). *Scarborough Fair/Canticle; Patterns; Cloudy; Homeward Bound; The Big Bright Green Pleasure Machine;* and seven others. COLUMBIA © CQ 1017 \$7.95.

Performance: Classic S & G
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent
Speed and Playing Time: 7½ ips; 28'30"

First released in December 1966, this is one of Simon and Garfunkel's most representative collections. It includes such now well-known pieces as *Scarborough Fair*, *The 59th Street Bridge Song* (also called *Feelin' Groovy*), *The Dangling Conversation*, and *The 7 O'Clock News/Silent Night*. In retrospect, I find my initial feelings about the pair, and about Paul Simon's music in particular, to be confirmed. Simon's melodies can be excellent and are almost always better than what one finds in run-of-the-mill pop songs. But I also find his general point of view, as expressed both in the lyrics he writes and in the attitudes expressed by such pieces as *The 7 O'Clock News*, to be admirable but somewhat out of touch with the realities of a complex world. Humanism is fine, it would be great if everyone loved everyone else, it sure is easy to be lonely and out of touch, and war is awful—but is it enough simply to report the malaise of our society in sweet songs? I think not.

In any case, if you did not acquire this collection when it was first released, I suggest that you try the tape. As usual, the production—by Bob Johnston—is excellent, and performers S & G cannot be faulted. *Don H.*

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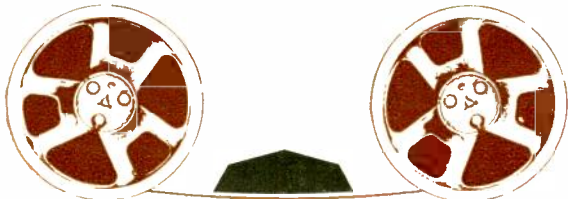
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STEREO REVIEW



TAPE HORIZONS

By DRUMMOND McINNIS

"HAIL AND FAREWELL"

FOR THREE YEARS now this column has explored new ideas and techniques for the audiophile to use with his tape recorder. All too often the recorder sits on a shelf gathering dust, only rarely being turned on to dub a record or an FM broadcast. Generous reader response has shown that some of these proposals have proved helpful, and I, in turn, am very grateful for the many ideas and comments readers have showered on me during the years I have written the column.

Unfortunately, the increasing pressure of other obligations forces me to turn over my task to a colleague, Craig Stark. Regular readers have seen some of his work in STEREO REVIEW. His article on dynamic range in music reproduction (June 1968 issue) was very well received by readers. An avid recordist with considerable experience, he is dedicated to the idea that accomplished amateurs can produce professional-sounding results, and has proved the point by getting his own tapes aired on commercial FM outlets. He also brings a novel perspective to the column, for his primary occupation is teaching philosophy at a Midwestern college.

Craig and I had lunch recently, and I asked him then how he came to be so interested in tape recording. His answer is perhaps the best introduction I can give him. So I take my leave, with thanks for three wonderful years, by turning over the microphone to him:

"I think it's that tape recording unites so closely both the technical and the artistic aspects of audio. While I don't play a musical instrument, what I do as a recordist has a definite—and potentially creative—effect on the end musical result. Ultimately we depend on live performance, but recording itself initiates a new kind of art, that of music reproduction. The achievement of high fidelity involves faithful copying, where one's major concern is with technical accuracy. While I might get some argument here, I'd say that in theory, at least, every stage in the process after the recording could be evaluated in purely scientific terms. Taping has plenty of this technical aspect, too—there's a lot more to it than just pushing the record button! A skilled recordist can achieve better results with a home recorder than a neophyte could with a professional recorder simply because he knows how to get the best out of his machine.

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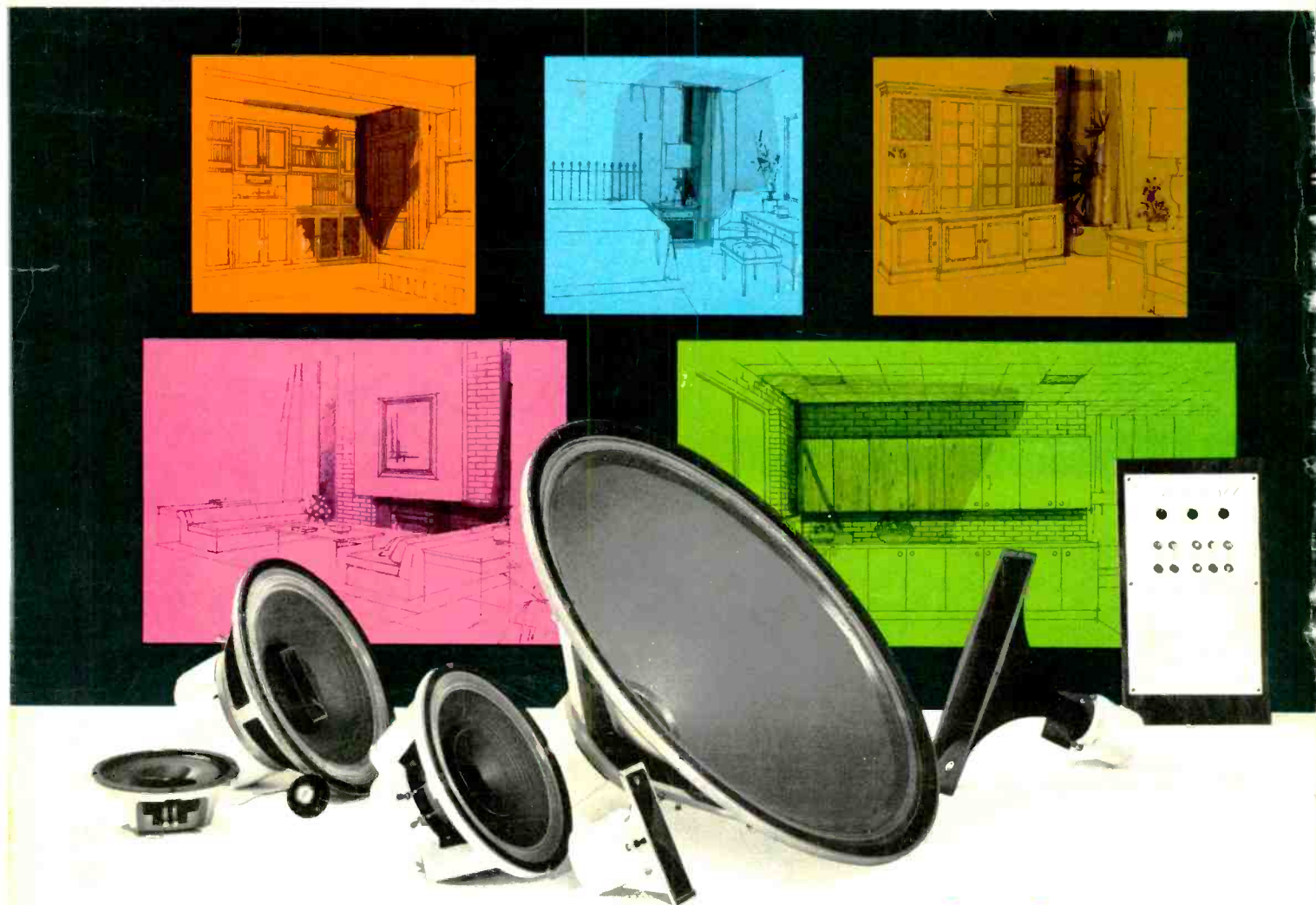
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