

Stereo Review

FEBRUARY 1972 • 60 CENTS

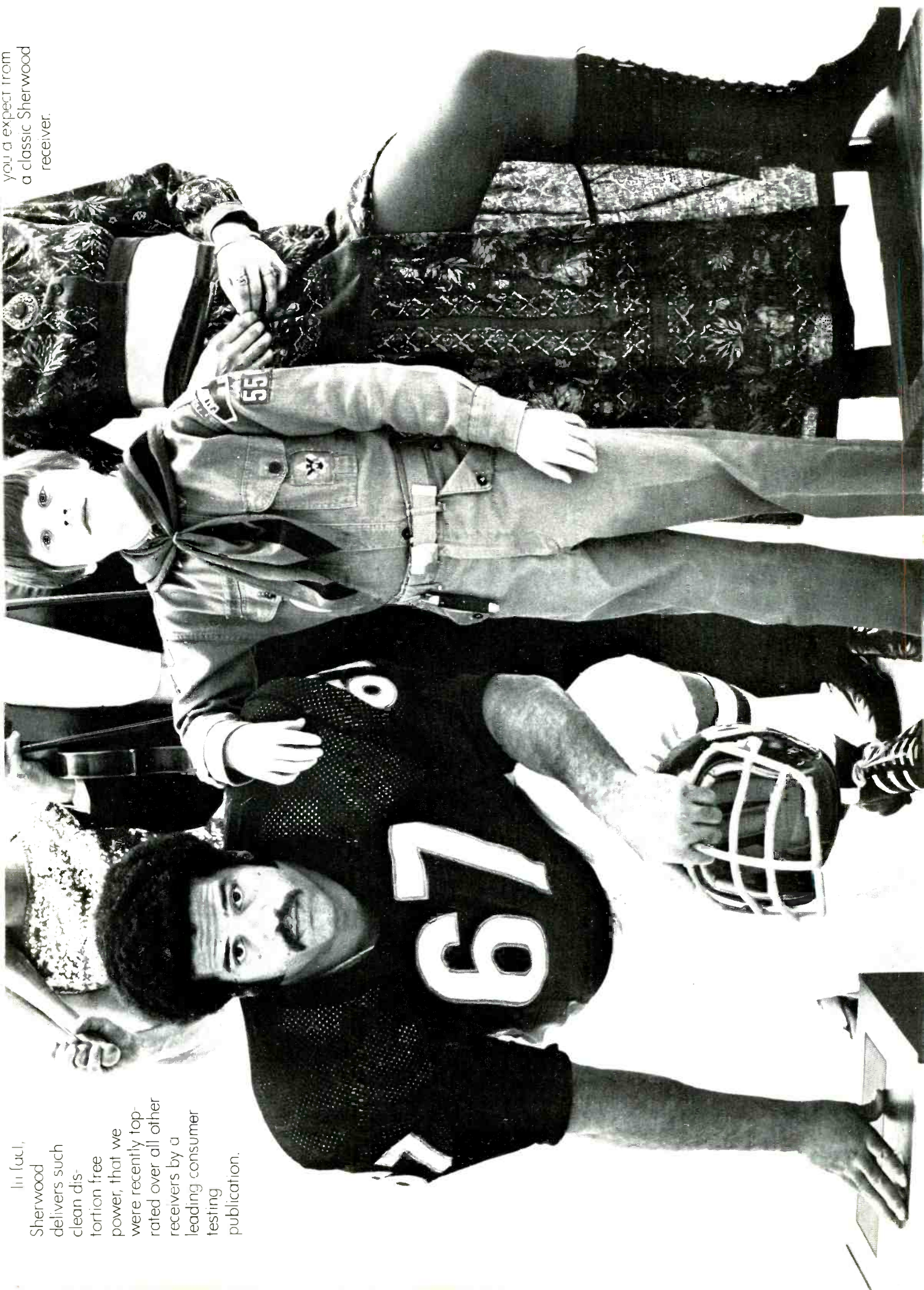
**INSIDE FM: THE HIDDEN LIMITATIONS ON SOUND QUALITY
IS ROCK GOING ANYWHERE, EVERYWHERE, OR NOWHERE?
FRANZ SCHUBERT: HOW TO GET BEYOND THE "UNFINISHED"**



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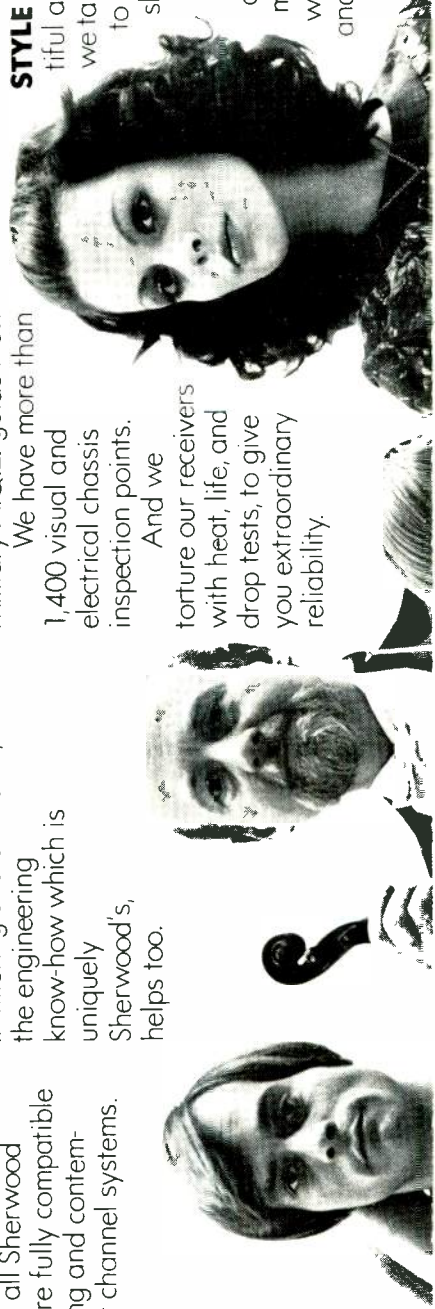
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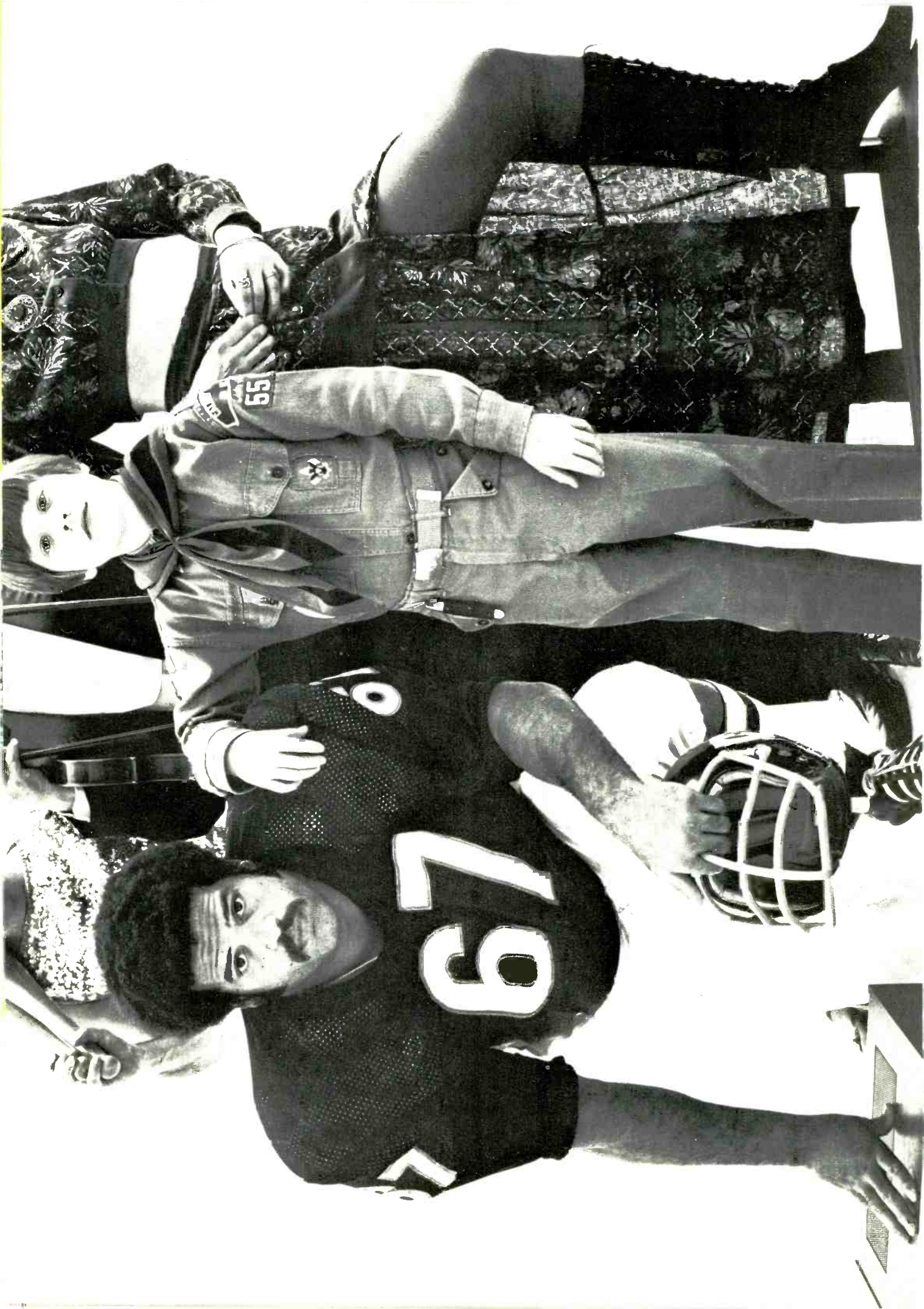
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STYLE We want to be as beautiful as we can for you. So we take the classic approach to receiver design: form should follow function.

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HIGH FIDELITY Sept. 1971

Altogether, this new arm strikes us as an excellent piece of engineering; it probably is the best arm yet offered as an integral part of an automatic player. □ Operation is simple, quiet, and reliable. □ All told, we feel that Garrard has come up with a real winner in the Zero 100. Even without the tangent-tracking feature of the arm, this would be an excellent machine at a competitive price. With the novel (and effective) arm, the Zero 100 becomes a very desirable "superchanger" with, of course, manual options.

AUDIO July, 1971

The Zero-100 performed just about as we expected after reading the specifications. Wow measured .08 per cent—that is in the band from 0.5 to 6 Hz. Flutter, in the band from 6 to 250 Hz, measured .03 per cent, both of which are excellent. □ Thus, the Garrard Zero 100 is certainly the finest in a long line of automatic turntables which have been around for over 50 years. □ We think you will like it.

Stereo Review July, 1971

Indeed, everything worked smoothly, quietly, and just as it was meant to. If there were any "bugs" in the Zero 100, we didn't find them. □ Garrard's Zero 100, in basic performance, easily ranks with the finest automatic turntables on the market. Its novel arm—which really works as claimed—and its other unique design features suggest that a great deal of development time, plus sheer imagination, went into its creation. In our view, the results were well worth the effort.

The GRAMOPHONE August, 1971

Reproduction quality was excellent with no detectable wow, flutter or rumble under stringent listening conditions. End of side distortion, which is always a possibility with pivoted arms, was virtually absent, due no doubt to the tangential tracking arm.

Popular Electronics August, 1971

Our lab measurements essentially confirmed the claims made by Garrard for the Zero 100. We used a special protractor with an angular resolution of about 0.5°, and the observed tracking error was always less than this detectable amount. The tracking force calibration was accurate, within 0.1 gram over its full range. □ The Garrard Zero 100 operated smoothly and without any mechanical "bugs."

ROLLING STONE Sept. 16, 1971

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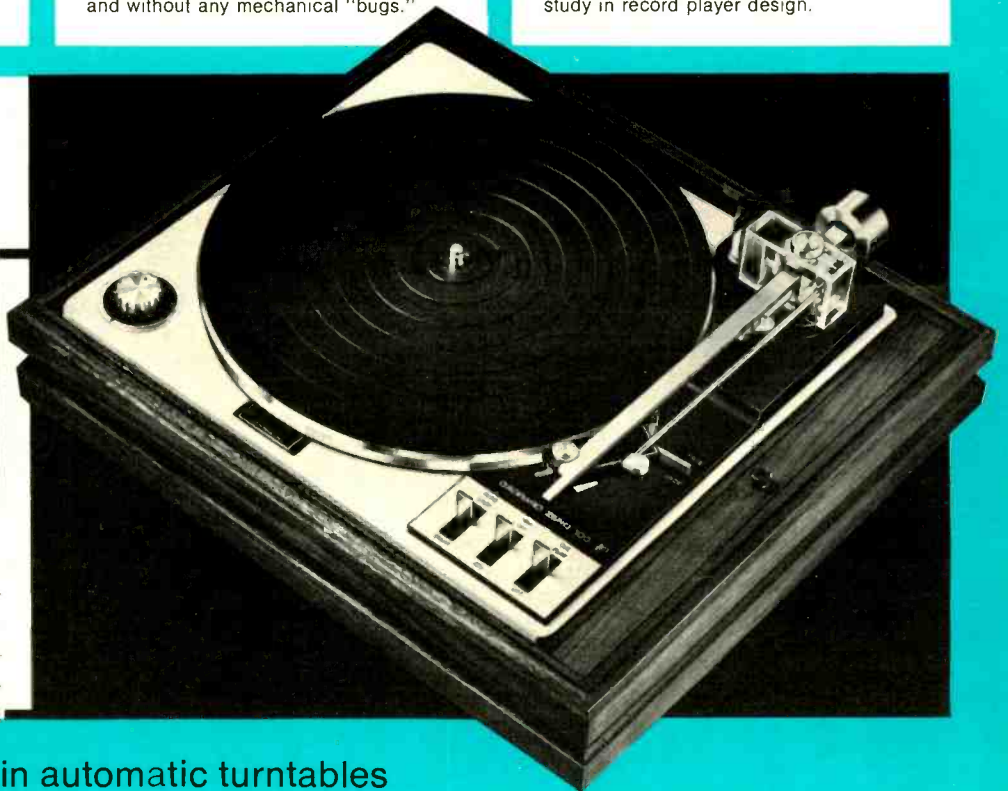
H-I-FI Fall, 1971

One could go on cataloguing the virtues of the Zero 100 indefinitely.



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Stereo Review

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

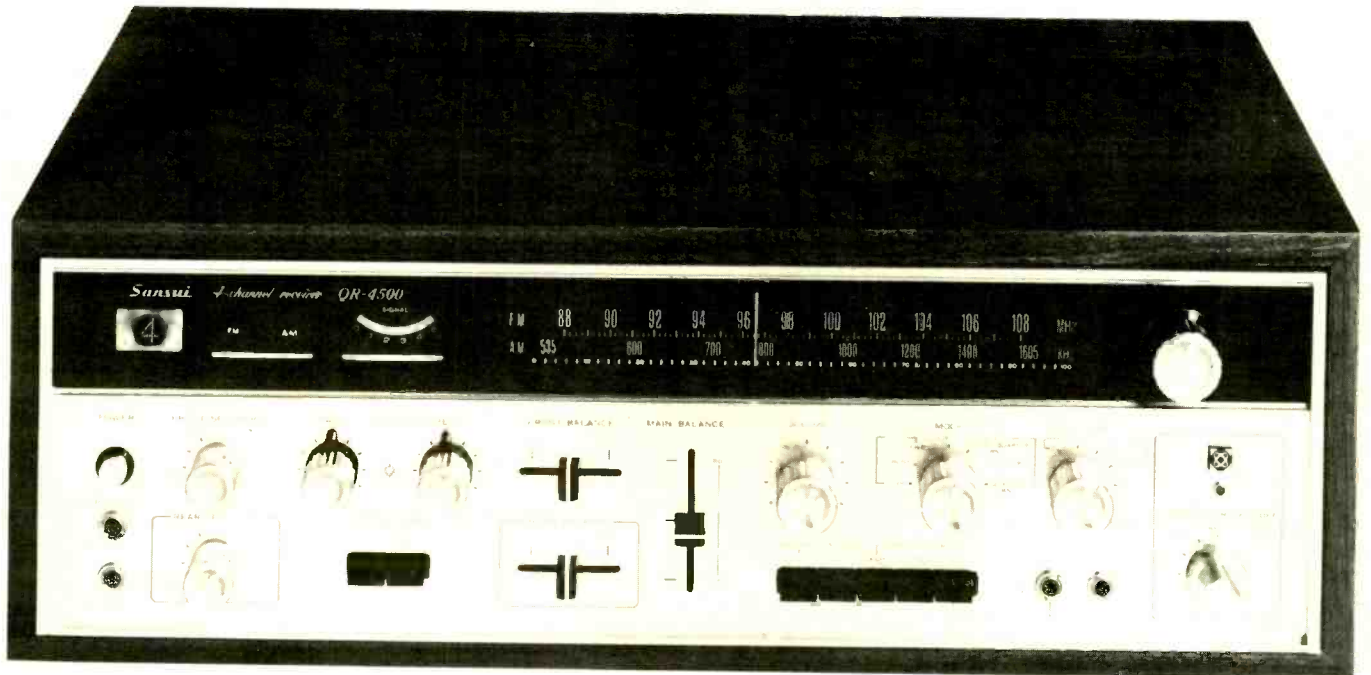
LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN

WELL, there's Mario Lanza, Nelson Eddy, Walter Liberace, Arthur Ferrante and Louis Teicher, Anunzio Mantovani, Lawrence Welk, George Melachrino, Percy Faith, Hugo Montenegro, Rod McKuen, and, I suppose, the Grand Funk Railroad, hard rock's very own Lawrence Welk. But you get the idea: all famous, all successful (if not beyond the dreams of avarice, they must at least—in Liberace's justly famed phrase—cry just a little on the way to the bank), and almost universally scorned by "serious" critics. It is this last, I think, that makes these men dangerous as well—for, far from being mere sitting (and performing) ducks, they are a constant threat, a tempting trap, for the unwary or over-confident critic. It's all too easy: "everyone knows" that so-and-so, as singer, as piano player, or as band leader, is beneath the notice of reasonable, tasteful men, that it is therefore foolish to waste real criticism on him, to try to discover either what it is he does badly enough to earn such contempt or well enough to please so many millions. And since illogic breeds illogic, it therefore seems natural to slip into mere name-calling, and to use these unmeasured measuring sticks to beat other performers with. Worse still, when critical responsibility has been so cavalierly dismissed, it becomes possible—perhaps inevitable—to shift one's sights and review not the performer but the audience. That this sin deserves to be called Critical No-No No. 1 can be illustrated by a recent example drawn from the nation's press.

Late last October, there appeared at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall Mr. Rod McKuen, poet, composer, and folk philosopher. In covering this event, a critic for the *Washington Post* (who shall here be nameless to deny him the delights of infamy) fell easily and all too predictably into the alliterative echoes of received opinion: "boring, banal bathos." Perfectly permissible, if uninspired; I am not myself a McKuen booster, finding his work too easily improved. I could expand on that, but it is not my purpose to do so. It *should* have been the purpose of the *Post's* critic, but he chose instead to wonder how the audience could accept McKuen, "who is by now at least a gillionaire, as some sort of rustic nomad, wandering highways with a backpack and a pocketful of appleseeds" (I suppose one might once have wondered much the same thing about Will Rogers), and to conclude with a really monstrous no-no: "The Concert Hall was full on Saturday night—but in certain real ways, it was never emptier." Has a critic ever been flayed?

It is interesting to me that the Kennedy Center has contrived so soon after its opening to begin functioning in precisely the way it ought to: as a kind of focus for the various cross-currents of national opinion on the arts. The fact that it has managed in the process to bring out the worst in some of its critics should not be permitted to obscure the central issue: What do the American people want the Kennedy Center to be? The full house for McKuen is certainly one answer; its critical reception is another. From the broad spectrum of attractions the Center's administration has already presented, it would appear that they have chosen to remain above the battle. They may not be able to do so for long. The Center stands, both geographically and philosophically, at that point where culture meets politics, and even politicians feel very strongly about culture—particularly when they face up to the prospect of spending public money on it. When they do so, they will also be facing a seeming paradox of cultural life in this country. "High" culture was once the property of the elite who could afford its high cost. Now, thanks to democracy and technology, the best things in life are often literally free—and the majority unaccountably rejects them. Should the Congress, like a benign committee of cultural commissars, *make* us eat cake because it's good for us, or leave us to whatever socially unrealistic fare we prefer? The critic of the *Washington Post*, at least, has already given us *his* answer.

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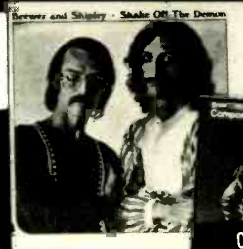
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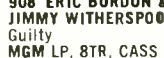
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bach by Goodfriend

● The reader response to James Goodfriend's article "The Music of J. S. Bach" (December) should be interesting, perhaps overwhelming, and as flattering, in some cases, as mine is derogatory. Those who are approaching Bach for the first time might think it quite satisfactory as an introduction. But for others who already know Bach, Mr. Goodfriend's observations are somewhat elementary, and—at times—juvenile.

When I first received the issue, I expected some fresh insights into Bach's music. Alas, such was not the case! He talked down to the reader, and conveyed nothing inspiring or even *new*. Furthermore, Mr. Goodfriend only hinted that Bach "perfected" a few forms in his developing, arranging, and recombining. Actually, Bach's greatness as a perfecter can never be overestimated, and perhaps a greater critic than either Mr. Goodfriend or myself, George Bernard Shaw, makes the point better: "... in art, the highest success is to be the last of your race, not the first. Anybody, almost, can make a beginning; the difficulty is to make an end—to do what cannot be bettered."

Doesn't Bach, surely one of the greatest composers in all of music, deserve a better tribute than Mr. Goodfriend's?

JAMES MAFFETT
Lakeland, Fla.

The Editor replies: "Well, we haven't stopped beating our wife because we don't have one. Which is to say that Mr. Goodfriend cannot be charged with concocting a poor tribute to Bach when he did not intend a tribute in the first place. If Mr. Maffett reads headlines (a lot of people don't), he will see that the article is subtitled 'What to listen to and what to listen for' in Bach. If he would like to criticize this announced intention as being an unworthy one, all well and good, but he cannot claim that anybody promised him a rose garden. That Mr. Maffett is apparently still looking for big breakthroughs in Bach scholarship is perhaps a little insulting to the competence of several generations of Bach specialists, but we are flattered that he would expect to read such news here first. GBS is entitled to his opinions, of course, but that cited is only one of many of his pronouncements in the musical area with which it is easy to disagree, and I

cannot see that it has anything to do, one way or another, with the article in question."

● Many huzzas to James Goodfriend for his outstanding article on the music of J. S. Bach. Mr. Goodfriend displayed unusual insight and depth of understanding in his analysis of Bach's music for those not yet familiar with the Baroque master. I am no newcomer to Bach, yet after reading the article I immediately listened to compositions I knew very well and discovered a wealth of things that had gone unnoticed by me. Mr. Goodfriend deserves thanks both from those just beginning with Bach, and from those with extensive knowledge of the composer.

A famous musical personality once said, "Bach is the beginning and the end of music." Mr. Goodfriend has written an invaluable introduction to that music.

JOSEPH R. SUTTON
New York, N.Y.

Bach Portrait

● On page fifty-four of the December issue there appears a splendid woodcut portrait of J. S. Bach, executed by Jacques Hnizdovsky. Could you give me sufficient information by which I might obtain a copy of this wood-cut on good paper stock?

S. HAMMOND
Durham, N.C.

Reader Hammond and other interested parties are asked to write directly to the artist, Jacques Hnizdovsky, 5270 Post Road, Riverdale, New York 10471, for information. The Bach portrait is one of a series of graphic studies of great composers STEREO REVIEW has commissioned from prominent American artists. The second, Al Blaustein's portrait of Franz Schubert, appears in this issue. Mr. Blaustein's address is: 141 East 17th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Frank Sinatra

● Congratulations are in order for the splendid article on Frank Sinatra ("A Great Vocal Artist Retires") in your November issue. It is without a doubt one of the best pieces ever written on this extremely talented man. I've followed Mr. Sinatra's career for twenty-eight years, having started collecting his records at age fourteen. Today, that collection is complete. I have every

single disc he's ever recorded commercially, plus hours and hours of tapes of noncommercial material. I've seen all his films, attended all his concerts whenever possible, caught him in Vegas, and attended his final concert in June of this year, a performance I'll never forget. It's nice to know that as talented a writer and music critic as Henry Pleasants appreciates Mr. Sinatra's voice as much as I do.

BOB CHIAPPARI
San Francisco, Cal.

● I read with great pleasure the feature article on Frank Sinatra in the November issue. A lot of artists and entertainers are very shy about retiring. Some refuse to retire even after they have been shoved off the stage by more popular young entertainers. Frank Sinatra is a great man, and a great man realizes when his public days are over.

MICHAEL RAY
Cupertino, Cal.

● STEREO REVIEW's sixteen-page paean to Frank Sinatra on his retirement quoted Rosalind Russell's estimate of him as "the century's greatest entertainer." Surely this is debatable, for if the word is used in the sense clearly intended by the article, then the century's greatest entertainer may well be Mickey Mouse. The talents of this pair are complementary rather than competitive, for Mouse projects his vocal art but rarely, while Sinatra is not primarily a mummer. Whether Sinatra sings and acts better than Mouse is for posterity to judge.

A. C. HALL
Dallas, Tex.

Mr. Pleasants replies: "Fine. We'll leave it to posterity, confident that in each case a jury of their peers would grant a peerage."

Stravinsky and Sinatra

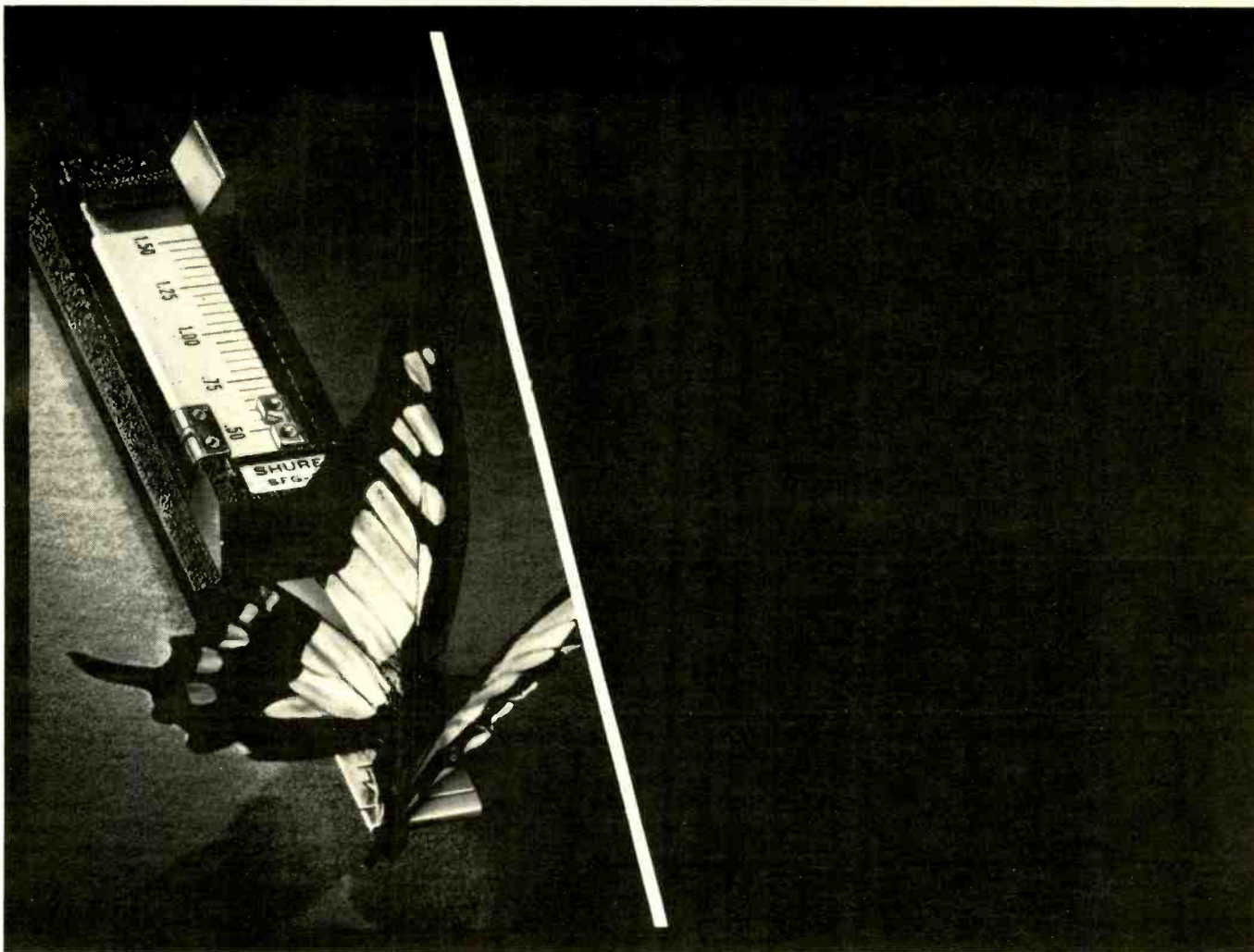
● The very last of the great composers of this century, Igor Stravinsky, not only deserved the tribute you paid him with four fine articles in the November issue, but should have had his picture on the cover as well. Instead, we have that of an aging, retired crooner, who, to add insult to injury, is compared to John McCormack and Richard Tauber. I'm sure that either tenor could have sung one of Frankie Boy's hits, *Paper Doll*, though I must admit the interpretations would probably have been bizarre. However, I cannot imagine that Sinatra, even with coaching, could manage *Dichterliebe*, "Il mio tesoro," or their equivalent.

ROBERT REIFF
Middlebury, Vt.

Mr. Pleasants replies: "Who said anything about 'Il mio tesoro' or Dichterliebe? I didn't. If Mr. Reiff wants to play with critical red herrings, I would ask him to contemplate the probable outcome if Maria Callas (in her prime) had been tempted to emulate Ella Fitzgerald's How High the Moon? or Lady Be Good. It ain't what you sing; it's the way you sing it!"

Mr. Reiff's letter is of the kind I might have written myself—about thirty years ago when my view of Sinatra was as benighted as his is today. And his use of the terms 'crooner' and 'Frankie Boy' suggests that his prejudices may date from about that time. I would recommend that he do what I did: start listening.

(Continued on page 10)



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He might try reading, too, beginning with the chapters on McCormack and Tauber in my book The Great Singers."

Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto

● The non-reappearance of the introductory theme of Tchaikovsky's B-flat Minor Piano Concerto, discussed by reviewer Eric Salzman and readers Reece and Smith in the December "Letters to the Editor" column, is considered by Eric Blom in a chapter on the concertos appearing in *The Music of Tchaikovsky*, edited by Gerald Abraham (W. W. Norton, New York, 1946). Mr. Blom carefully analyzes the overall structure and key relationships of the concerto and concludes that the theme in question should reappear at the end of the final movement to provide a satisfactory balance. He hypothesizes that Tchaikovsky may have had this in mind but then decided that the second subject of the finale, "another good, broad lungful of a tune," should stand alone as the peroration of the work. Mr. Blom goes on to show that actually the two themes could be effectively combined in counterpoint, almost as though the composer had invented them with this in mind. Mr. Blom concludes: "It [the second subject of the finale] returns a third time in the coda, as we have seen, in the tonic major, and it is here, in this B-flat Major peroration, that Tchaikovsky might—or dare one say 'ought to?'—have let his first song ring out once more, entwined with its companion. . . . It did not happen; but if we like to imagine that the second subject of the finale is nothing else than the introductory tune in fancy dress and that the composer had in mind some such solution as I suggest, if only subconsciously, we shall be able to feel that even as it stands the B-flat Minor Concerto is at least potentially satisfactory in form."

ROBERT R. MUNRO
Lafayette, Ind.

Concert-Hall Realism

● As a footnote to Craig Stark's article "O. O. That Concert-Hall Realism Rag" in the November issue, I would like to point out that the quest for "absolute fidelity" does not necessarily involve recreating a facsimile of a large concert-hall in the home, for the simple (and, no doubt, obvious) reason that "live" music is often played in much smaller places. The lover of jazz or folk music is quite accustomed to going to intimate night clubs and coffee houses to hear what he likes, and while a 2,000-cubic-foot living room may be a poor approximation of a 400,000-cubic-foot concert hall, that same living room can be quite close to a small club acoustically.

It seems that to attain "absolute fidelity" one must not only be able to recreate concert-hall realism in the home, but one must also be able to eliminate it at will; only then can one accurately reproduce music as originally played in various surroundings.

DAVID MAROUN
Vancouver, B.C.

Schütz vs. Monteverdi

● I was forced to conclude from Bernard Jacobson's review of Schütz's *Resurrection Story* ("Best of the Month," November) that he has a real lack of appreciation for the music of this great master. First, there is no way of assessing the comparative value of the music of Schütz and Monteverdi. In his

Masses and many of his early madrigals, Monteverdi reveals the same "Olde Musick feeling" that Mr. Jacobson accuses Schütz of displaying.

Though Mr. Jacobson claims not to consider the new Baroque style better than that of the Renaissance, he proceeds to judge the music of Schütz by this very criterion, assigning the German master a status inferior to his Italian counterpart. He claims that Schütz came into "his own style" (meaning the early Baroque) in his *Kleine geistliche Konzerte* of 1636. However, what about the *Geistliche Chormusik* of 1648? Though these pieces were composed after the sacred concertos, they are very much in the old motet style. Does Mr. Jacobson feel that he has to make allowances for these beautiful German motets also? Both composers were masters of the Renaissance and newer Baroque styles which they used deliberately and consciously. Schütz did not resort to the older style merely because he had not grasped the innovations of the Baroque. It may be true that some of his early music shows an evolution from the old to the new style. However, the music of Monteverdi shows this same development.

Finally, it is of no importance that the world doesn't regard Schütz as a major composer. To anyone who takes the trouble to become familiar with the musical era before 1750, Schütz emerges as perhaps the greatest single figure in seventeenth-century music, and certainly a major composer.

KATHERINE CALKIN
Los Angeles, Cal.

Mr. Jacobson replies: "Since there is no way of assessing the comparative value of the music of Schütz and Monteverdi, I will charitably assume that Ms. Calkin's parting shot about 'perhaps the greatest single figure in seventeenth-century music' was fired after she had somehow or other gone to sleep. But as for my point about Schütz's 'own style,' she misunderstands me. What I meant was simply that Schütz, at least in the Kleine geistliche Konzerte, practiced the early Baroque style more convincingly than he ever practiced either the transitional style of the Auferstehungs-Historie or the Renaissance style of the motets Ms. Calkin mentions. I agree that those motets are beautiful, but I still find them less convincing than the concertos. Perhaps I should have made myself clearer, but I doubt if that would have helped, since Ms. Calkin is, apparently, persuaded that she alone has 'real appreciation' of Schütz."

Quality and the Classics

● Articles and letters in STEREO REVIEW have bemoaned both the plight of the classical record market and the decline in the quality of pressings of records in general, but the connection between these two phenomena has been insufficiently stressed. Of all record purchasers, it is the lover of classical music who is most put off by defective records. Most pop music, especially rock, is recorded at such a uniformly high volume that the signal-to-noise ratio is fairly respectable even in the presence of a dimpled and pimpled surface. And the guy who buys an album of "Magical Midnight Moonlight Mood Music" is probably in the next room mixing a drink when the record skips a groove or two. But classical-music lovers listen to their records, and classical music

has prolonged quiet passages during which surface noise is particularly noticeable. While a few single-minded souls are able to ignore all sorts of extraneous noise when listening to a recorded performance, most people, myself included, are distressed when, in the middle of a well-turned phrase, we hear an unscored volley of artillery fire or perhaps the injudicious editing of twenty measures or so while the needle hunts for a groove it can actually track. That is carrying aleatoric music a bit far.

And so the whole business of record collecting becomes a terrible drag. Every time a record is purchased it must be listened to carefully to make sure it isn't defective. Over half the time the record must be returned, which means going back to the store or, if it was ordered by mail, packing the record in its box complete with covering letter and postage. The whole procedure is tedious, time-consuming, and unpleasant. That is why my own rate of purchase has dropped in the last three years from about one LP per week to one per month. Right now, I'm carrying the trend to its logical conclusion and declaring a moratorium on the purchase of recordings until I feel more confident of getting acceptable pressings. I'm sure this is happening to much of the classical-music market, and it will continue until the industry recognizes the need to maintain reasonable standards in record production.

WILLIAM F. LONG
Bloomington, Ind.

Record Lending Libraries

● In the November issue I noted an interesting letter from a young man who commented on the pleasure he receives from borrowing records from his local library, and how this privilege also lets him know exactly which records he wishes to purchase. For twenty years I have been in charge of the record section in the Akron Public Library, and I know what value there is to the collector in a service like this. We have a collection of about 10,000 records, and last year our circulation was 59,531. Today, when it is almost impossible to find any unusual records or something on an unknown label in a record store, how is one to know whether or not he wants a particular recording? A record lending library is one sure way of solving this problem. Each week we put new releases on display for a week so our patrons can see what is being added to the collection. Those who want their records in mint condition reserve what they want so they will get them before they go on the open shelves. Some of our patrons borrow only from the new list by reserve because they want records only in the best condition.

The record collection in the Akron Public Library has been in existence since 1948, yet we constantly have people come in who have just discovered they may borrow records for home use for a two-week period. I believe many citizens are not aware of the riches available to them just for the effort of going to the library.

G. WARD EVANS
Akron, Ohio

Now, why do you suppose it is that some of Mr. Evans' music-loving "customers" insist on being on the privileged "mint-condition" list? Are their ears in some way more delicate?
(Continued on page 12)

Citation wins at Hialeah!

Several months ago, an independent testing service pitted "four of the best stereo amplifiers on the market" against each other.

The judges were the people from the Sound Publications Company of Hialeah, Florida—a group of professional audiophiles dedicated to finding out what's right and wrong with high-fidelity equipment. They publish their findings in the highly-respected *Hi-Fi Newsletter*.*

As you already know, we won. But in contests like this, it's not just whether you win or lose, but how they conduct the contest that counts.

The Sound Publications people conducted comparisons of the four amplifiers in three different areas.

In *high frequency response*, Citation took an early lead. "This unit not only does not 'sweeten' nor 'brighten' in any way the upper range but presents it in a razor-sharp, crystal-clear way..." Out of a possible four points, only Citation scored four points.

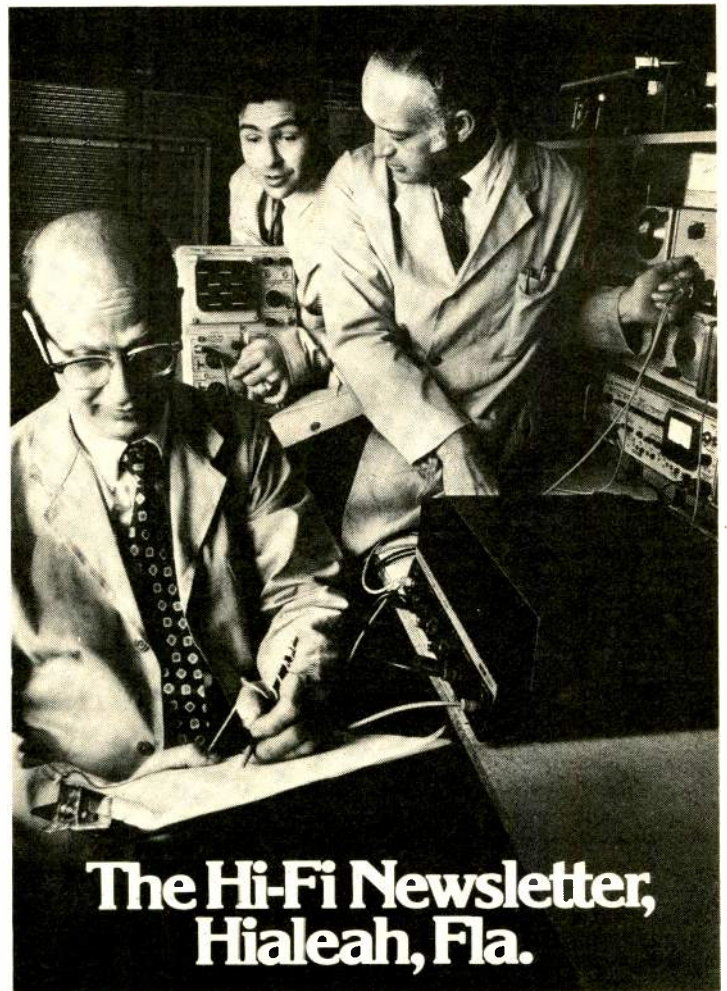
In *low frequency response*, Citation withstood a stiff challenge. "It not only brought out the best of the deepest bass material that we fed it via our master tapes, but it did it with less apparent effort and strain than the others." Again, Citation alone scored the maximum four.

Finally, in *transient response*, Citation won going away. It "was able to impart an impact and thrill to staccato brass and complex orchestral climaxes, without slurring the transient content we always come to expect in a live performance." Once again, Citation alone scored the maximum four.

Of course, no one contest will resolve forever the question of which is the single best amplifier in the world.

But if you haven't reached a decision yourself, you may be interested in the decision of the experts at Hialeah:

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The Hi-Fi Newsletter, Hialeah, Fla.

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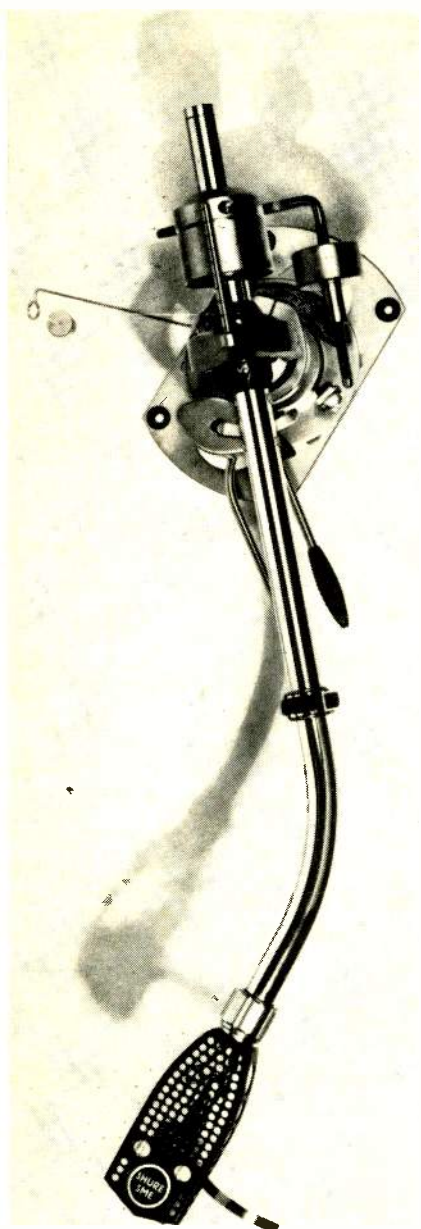
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cate than those of the hoi-polloi users of this public library?

New Riders of the Purple Sage

● There is no excuse for any reviewer's placing personal opinion regarding musical style in a record review, and under no circumstances should it be the *entire* review. An excellent example of such an absurdity is Peter Reilly's review of the "New Riders of the Purple Sage" album (December). If Mr. Reilly is not particularly moved by Western or country-and-western music, he should not have used trite sarcasm and poor wit to compensate for his feelings about this style. Someone who is capable of reviewing the album more objectively should have handled it.

The album is, as a matter of fact, one of the finest of its kind. It is extremely well produced, and the performance is very polished. The disc is one that makes those who have heard the New Riders in concert grateful, and should not have been assigned to someone who obviously spends much of his time recalling lines from his Famous Writers course to use in his reviews.

MARTY WAX
Rochester, N.Y.

Mr. Reilly replies: "Unfortunately, I was dropped from my Famous Writers course shortly before I wrote the NROPS review, and was so upset I couldn't recall a thing to use in the review. (If I am to believe the rumor, it was Faith Baldwin who black-balled me.) Under these circumstances, if it had been in my power I would gladly have given the album to 'somebody'—anybody—who was 'capable of reviewing it more objectively.' Gladly!"

As for commenting on an album solely on the basis of style, when the style is as insistent and as obviously bogus as it seemed to me to be here, the technical ability of the performers is of only minor interest."

Are European Pressings Better?

● I read with great interest Igor Kipnis' article entitled "Are European Pressings Better?" (November). He has struck many sympathetic vibrations.

I am not sure how the record-buying public can best convince the major record manufacturers that we *do* care about the quality of the records they foist upon us, but I, for one, applaud the responsive approach of Philips-Mercury to improve its product.

WILLIAM S. HOFFMAN
Narberth, Pa.

Grand Funk Funk

● I don't know what all the controversy about Grand Funk in the November issue was for. I don't like Lawrence Welk and I don't really care what Jimi Hendrix had to say—Grand Funk has no talent. This time you're not hearing from a member of the older set, but from someone who's young, and has heard enough rock music to compare groups and conclude that Grand Funk has nothing to offer hard rock fans.

MARK FORKER
Fairless Hills, Pa.

● As a serious rock fan, I find it impossible to ignore the letters in the November issue which take to task those critics who pan Grand Funk.

The band is popular, there's no doubt

about that, but they have neither the talent nor the sophistication of a good number of serious rock bands. The amateur wailings of the group are regrettable, since such antics tend to reflect badly on rock music in general. If Grand Funk played only simple music, perhaps they would be a bit easier to ignore. But that they play simple music *badly*—yet make money at it—is simply too depressing to long consider.

JIM HEALEY
Ames, Iowa

Wuthering Heights, USA

● I'd like to correct an impression given by Paul Kresh in his review of composer Bernard Herrmann's "Music From Great Film Classics" ("Best of the Month," October). He mentions Herrmann's opera *Wuthering Heights* and states that the work has not yet reached our shores either via performance or records. Not so. I have found several copies of the opera on imported Pye Records (CSI 30173). The performance is conducted by the composer and is excellent. Furthermore, our local "good" music station (KFAC, Los Angeles) broadcast a tape of the opera a few years ago with a different cast. The tape was the composer's own from a performance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, definitely on Mr. Kresh's turf.

JOE BILLINGS
Hollywood, Calif.

Russian or Ukrainian?

● In the September issue of STEREO REVIEW there was a review of a recording called "Russian Choral Music of the 18th Century" with the Russian Academic Chorus. The album features the music of Maksim Berezovsky, Dmitri Bortnyansky, and Artemiy Vedel, all of whom were born in the Ukraine, influenced by Ukrainian culture and folklore, and whose music is (and I quote the liner notes), "characterized by a haunting melancholy and loneliness reminiscent of Ukrainian folk songs." Using any reasonable approach, can you explain the motive of the genius who entitled the album Russian? Gentlemen, please—give credit where credit is due.

GEORGE MARTYNU
New York, N.Y.

The Editor replies: "With all respect to the great gifts of the Ukrainian people, I imagine Angel's decision to call the album 'Russian Choral Music' rather than 'Ukrainian Choral Music' was based on their wish to sell a few copies, and they stood a better chance of doing so with 'Russian' than with 'Ukrainian.' Ethnic justice aside, Ukrainian entanglement in the Russian web dates back to the mid-seventeenth century, which explains why the area is 'part of Russia' to the rest of the world. The silver lining in the cloud is that many of those who bought this album of 'Russian' music will have been introduced to Ukrainian music instead. They might not have otherwise."

Willem Mengelberg Society

● A Willem Mengelberg Society has been formed in honor of the Dutch conductor. A specimen newsletter and information will be sent upon receipt of a request addressed to the society at 2132 North 70th Street, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53213.

RONALD KLETT
Wauwatosa, Wis.

STEREO REVIEW

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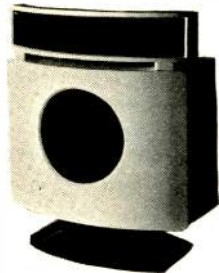
CIRCLE NO. 20 ON READER SERVICE CARD



NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN
HIGH-FIDELITY
EQUIPMENT

B&W 70CA Speaker System

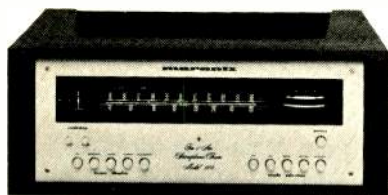


● LINEAR DEVICES INC. is marketing the new B&W 70CA speaker system, a two-way design with a 13-inch cone woofer and an electrostatic mid-range/tweeter assembly with a radiating area of approximately 100 square inches. The electrostatic element, which is mounted on top of the sealed woofer enclosure, is in the shape of a shallow convex arc to improve dispersion. A single diaphragm is used in the element, but clamping techniques serve to divide it into a number of smaller radiators. The crossover frequency is 400 Hz; the network has an 18-dB-per-octave slope. The 70CA's

frequency response is 25 to 18,000 Hz ± 3 dB, and the nominal impedance is 8 ohms. Amplifiers with an output of at least 50 watts per channel are recommended; the system is rated to handle inputs up to 50 watts on a continuous basis. The two enclosures that make up the 70CA are constructed of wood, available in walnut or white lacquer finishes. An iron stand is provided. Overall dimensions of the speaker with stand are approximately 27 x 32½ x 15½ inches. The weight is 80 pounds. Price: \$660.

Circle 118 on reader service card

Marantz Model 120 AM/Stereo FM Tuner



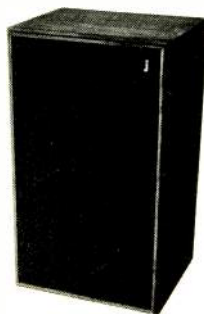
● MARANTZ has introduced a medium-price tuner, the Model 120, which incorporates a 1½-inch oscilloscope tuning indicator. Five scope-display pushbuttons permit the selection of signal strength and center-of-channel tuning, multipath indication, display of the audio signal at the tuner's outputs, or display of the audio signal from an external source that has been plugged into the appropriate jacks at the rear of the unit. The fifth pushbutton turns off the scope. Small trace-centering knobs are located just below the scope. With the exception of the tuning knob—which follows Marantz's familiar "Gyro-Touch" configuration—the controls for the tuner

itself are also pushbuttons. Their functions are on/off, AM, FM, FM mono, interstation-noise muting for FM, and high-frequency blend for cancellation of some of the hiss components of stereo FM broadcasts.

IHF sensitivity of the Model 120 is 1.9 microvolts, and the frequency response is 50 to 15,000 Hz ± 1 dB. Stereo separation is 42 dB at 1,000 Hz and 26 dB at 10,000 Hz, with distortion rated at 0.3 per cent at full modulation for stereo broadcasts. Image rejection is 93 dB. The overall dimensions of the unit are 15¾ x 5¾ x 13 inches. Price: \$395. An optional walnut cabinet is \$32.50.

Circle 119 on reader service card

Jensen Model 5 Speaker System

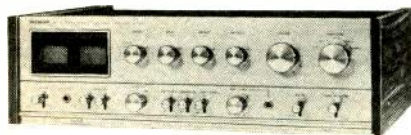


● JENSEN has a new line of speaker systems that consists of six models operating on the air-suspension principle. Models 1 through 5 are in the bookshelf configuration and range from one-way to three-way designs; the Model 6 is a four-way floor-standing system. The largest of the bookshelves is the Model 5, which incorporates a 12-inch woofer, two 5-inch cone midranges, and a 1-inch dome tweeter. The smaller drivers are individually installed in their own separate chambers to isolate them from the back pressure of the woofer. The crossover points are at 500 and 4,000 Hz,

and there are separate output-level controls for the mid-range and treble frequencies. The frequency response of the system is 32 to 30,000 Hz, with a 60-watt power-handling capability and a nominal impedance of 8 ohms. Dimensions: 26 x 15 x 13 inches. The enclosure is finished on four sides in oiled walnut veneer, and has spring-loaded binding-post connectors for the cables from the amplifier. Suggested price: \$147. Other speakers in the new Jensen line range in price from \$30 (Model 1) to \$198 (Model 6).

Circle 120 on reader service card

Hitachi 1A-1000 Integrated Stereo Amplifier



● HITACHI has a new integrated stereo amplifier, the 1A-1000, with several unusual operating features. The first is a front-panel microphone input that permits the output of a microphone to be mixed into both channels of any program passing through the amplifier. (The microphone signal is available both at the speaker terminals and the tape-output jacks.) Second is a pair of illuminated front-panel level meters to read signal levels in the two channels of

the amplifier, with a four-position sensitivity switch that turns the meters off when fully counterclockwise. Finally, there are phono inputs for both magnetic and ceramic cartridges, plus special provisions for accepting low-impedance moving-coil cartridges. The sensitivity of the magnetic-phono input is adjustable at the rear panel.

The 1A-1000 has a continuous power output of 50 watts per channel when
(Continued on page 16)

THE FIRST PURR IN SPEAKERS

At Jensen all our woofers woof. Our tweeters tweet. And only *our* mid-range speakers purr like a kitten.

That's because Jensen mid-range speakers cover more than just the middle ground. They're designed to carry the lower mid-ranges woofers usually have to stretch for.

In a Jensen speaker system, everybody does what they're supposed to do. And more. The result is a flawless performance, and a big credit is due to those purring mid-ranges.

Of course, you can hear this for yourself in our Model 4 Speaker System.

Model 4 is one of the finest values—bar none—on the market today. Because it's a three way system with a walnut cabinet that sells for only \$99.

As you can see, Model 4 has a 10" woofer, a 5" direct radiating mid-range (purring like crazy), and our spectacular Sonodome® ultra-tweeter.

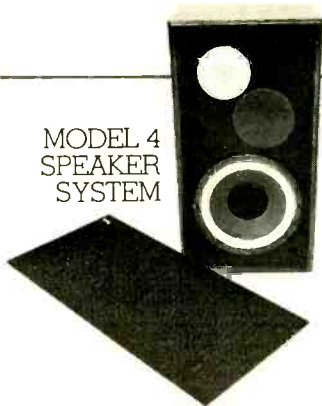
Each speaker in the Model 4 system uses our Total Energy Response design for a fuller, richer sound. There's our Flexair® suspension for clarity. A crossover network that provides exceptional tonal blend. And the best 5-year warranty around.

Our specifications make Model 4 look good, too. Power Rating—50 watts. Frequency Range—36—30,000 Hz. Crossover—500/4,000 Hz. Dispersion—170° Two balance controls.

Ask a dealer for a demonstration of Jensen's Model 4. You'll find yourself cheering an outstanding performance.



MODEL 4
SPEAKER
SYSTEM



JENSEN SOUND LABORATORIES

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60638

both channels are driven into 8-ohm loads. Harmonic and intermodulation distortion are 0.1 and 0.2 per cent, respectively, at rated output, with signal-to-noise ratios of 65 dB for the magnetic-phono inputs and 85 dB for high-level inputs. Frequency response is 10 to 100,000 Hz $\pm 0, -1$ dB. The amplifier's control complement includes, along with the usual volume and balance controls and mode selector (stereo, reverse stereo, mono, or either channel alone), step-type bass and treble controls that span a range of ± 12 dB in 3-dB incre-

ments. Lever switches turn the amplifier on and off, independently control two pairs of stereo speakers, introduce high- and low-cut filters and loudness compensation, perform tape-monitor switching, and mute the amplifier to a -20 dB level for brief interruptions in listening. There is a front-panel stereo headphone jack and high-level inputs for tuner and two auxiliary sources. The 1A-1000, which comes with rosewood end pieces, measures $17\frac{5}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{8} \times 13$ inches. Suggested list price: \$319.95.

Circle 121 on reader service card

Scott Model 477 AM/Stereo FM Receiver



● SCOTT's new Model 477 is the most powerful receiver in the line, providing 70 watts continuous power per channel (both channels simultaneously driving 8-ohm loads) over the full 20- to 20,000-Hz audio band. Harmonic and intermodulation distortion are both 0.5 per cent at rated output. The power bandwidth is 15 to 40,000 Hz; hum and noise are down 65 dB at the phono inputs and 75 dB at high-level inputs. FM specifications include a sensitivity of 1.9 microvolts, a 2.5-dB capture ratio, 0.5 per cent harmonic distortion, 80-dB spurious response rejection, and 55-dB AM suppression. Stereo separation is 35 dB, alternate-channel selectivity is 40 dB.

The Scott 477 has the customary volume and balance controls, separate concentric bass and treble controls for each channel, and a five-position input selector (PHONO 1, PHONO 2, FM, AM, EXTRA). The RIAA equalization on one of the magnetic-phono inputs can be disabled, permitting the phono preamplifiers to be used with a pair of microphones (microphone jacks of the miniature phone type are located on the front

panel). Phono sensitivity is adjustable via a two-position rear-panel switch. The rest of the controls, other than the tuning knob, are pushbuttons. Five of these control up to three pairs of speakers, with the possibility of driving two pairs simultaneously. The other pushbuttons control loudness compensation, tape monitoring, mono/stereo mode, high-frequency filter, FM interstation-noise muting, and a.c. power. There are tuning meters for AM and FM signal strength, and FM center-of-channel. On the rear panel are spring-loaded connectors for the main speaker pair and phono jacks for the two remote pairs. Two a.c. convenience outlets, one unswitched, are provided, as well as terminals for 300- and 75-ohm FM-antenna lead-in. A plug-in ferrite-rod AM antenna is provided. The tape input and output facilities are duplicated by phone jacks on the front panel, which also has a stereo headphone jack. Dimensions of the Model 477 are $17\frac{1}{2} \times 6 \times 15\frac{1}{2}$ inches, including the walnut-finish cabinet supplied. Price: \$399.90.

Circle 122 on reader service card

Institute of Audio Research

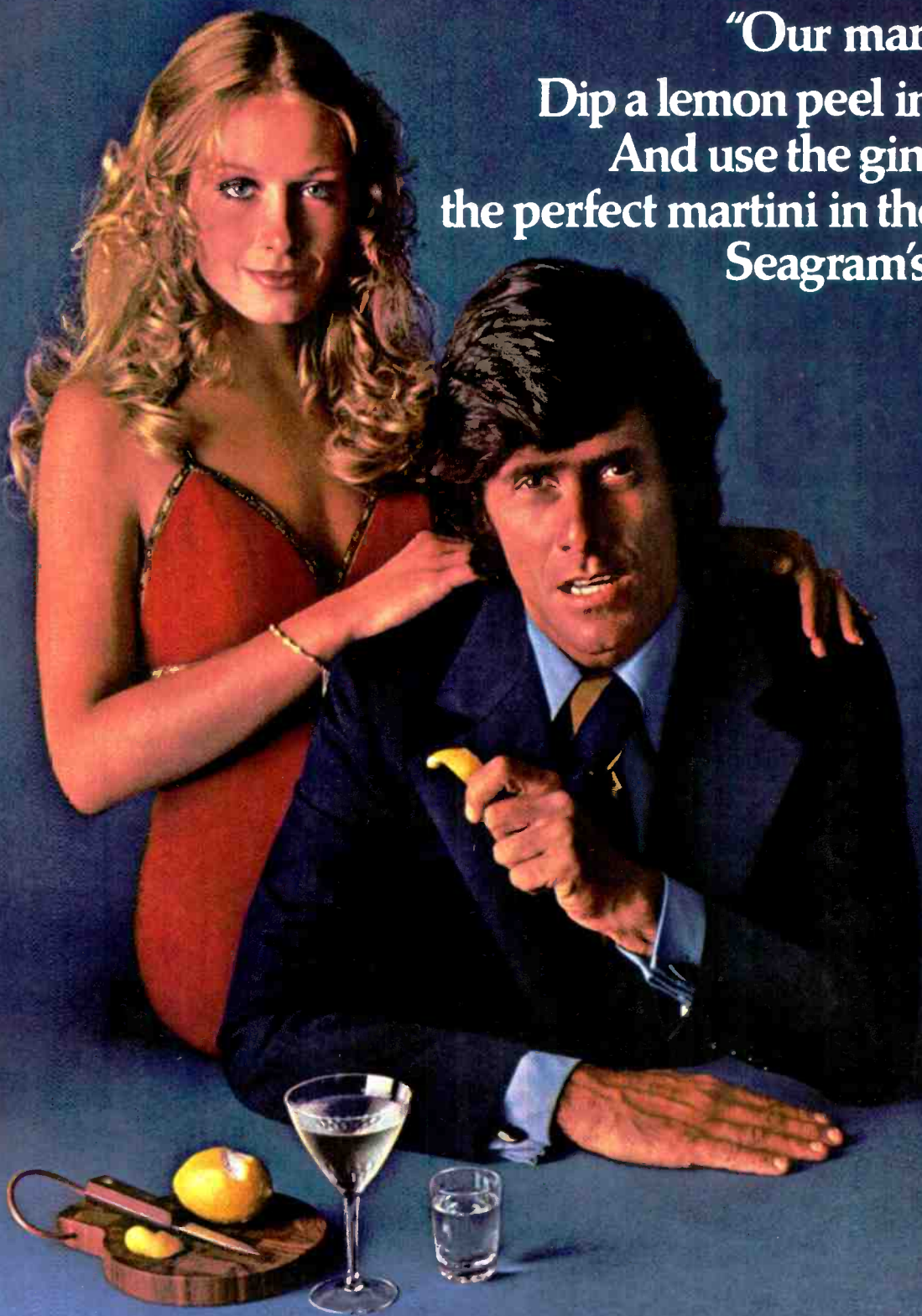
● THE Institute of Audio Research offers practical training in the techniques of the recording studio for those planning or already pursuing careers in the recording industry. The institute's basic course, Studio Technology and Practice (course number 101), teaches the appropriate fundamentals of acoustics and electronics, the theory and practice of tape and disc recording, and the use of microphones, consoles, and mixing desks, with attention given to the differences between U.S. and European standard line levels, impedances, and equalization. The instructors are experienced professionals involved with the design and maintenance of commer-

cial recording systems. Course sessions, which are held in New York City, normally meet in the evenings over a ten-week period for a total of sixty classroom hours; some of the sessions take place in functioning New York recording studios to familiarize students with equipment. Tuition is \$300, plus a non-refundable \$75 registration fee. This covers textbooks, classroom materials, and other incidental course costs. The institute also offers more advanced courses in theory and design for candidates with the appropriate training and background. For course descriptions and information on applying write: Institute of Audio Research, Inc., Dept. SR, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010 (212-242-1915).

Sherwood FM Station Guide

● SHERWOOD has compiled a directory of FM stations that lists all FM broadcasters in the United States, its possessions, and Canada. The listings are organized into two sections: section one gives the stations in the order of their assigned broadcasting frequencies, from 88.1 to 107.9 Megahertz; section two is arranged alphabetically by state (or province) and city. The $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ inch volume is square-back bound within a four-color cover printed on heavy stock. It contains 79 pages. Price: \$1.95, from the manufacturer (Sherwood Dept. SR, 4300 North California Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60618) or from Sherwood dealers throughout the country.

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6045



6055

Try the Sony Ears-

There are two ways to pick a receiver: by examining your budget, or by using your ears. They both can work—but the best approach is a combination of the two.

For example, you could simply decide which of the four Sony receivers best matches your budget: the low-priced 75-watt Sony 6045; the moderately-priced 100-watt Sony 6055 and 220-watt 6065; or the top-of-the-line Sony 6200F with 245 watts of power (and many other goodies).

Taking that approach you're bound to get good value for your money, but not necessarily the best value for your circumstances. You could wind up buying a little less Sony than you need—or shelling out for a Sony that more than surpasses your requirements. But you should be able to narrow it down, on price alone, to two or at most three Sonys. From there on, you have to use your ears and your intelligence.

First, look for a Sony dealer fairly near you; that's not only for convenience, but so his FM reception problems will be just about the same as yours. Then visit him, carrying a record



that you know and love (if you've loved it to death already, get a fresh copy).

Test first for general sound quality. Using the same speakers you have at home (or ones of similar efficiency), play the loudest portion of your record



at the loudest volume you're likely to listen to. See which Sony sounds cleanest to you (though, thanks to our direct-coupled circuitry, they all sound very clean); that tells you which have enough power for your needs. (But remember, if your room's noticeably bigger than the dealer's, or you're planning to switch to a less efficient speaker, you may need a bit more power still.)



Now try to tune your favorite stations. Even if the dealer's on your block, reception conditions won't be absolutely comparable. But the receiver that brings your station in most clearly



6065

6200F

vs. Budget Test...

there should do the same when you get home with it.



Now look for other features that you think you will need. If stereo is your abiding interest, you will appreciate the 6200's stereo-only switch, that blanks out mono FM stations. And its hi-blend switch that cuts distant-station noise without eliminating the highs or losing much stereo separation in the mid-range. If you find a second phono input or a center-channel output jack very desirable, you'll choose the 6200F or 6065, which have them, over the 6055 and 6045, which don't. And so on.

Some similarities:

All four Sony receivers have: 70dB signal-to-noise ratios, and such features as linear tuning dials, headphone jacks, switchable loudness contour and hi-filters, FET front-ends and solid-state IF circuits, dual power supplies and direct coupled outputs, speaker selector switches. All

but the 6045 have: muting switches, front panel AUX jacks, quick-disconnect DIN tape recorder jacks, and center-tuning meters (the 6045 has a signal-strength meter instead; the 6200F has both types). All but the 6200F have 80 dB IHF selectivity and 1.5 dB capture ratio (6200F has 100 dB and 1.0 dB respectively).

Some differences:

	6200F	6065	6055	6045
IHF FM Sensitivity	1.8 μ V	2.2 μ V	2.6 μ V	2.6 μ V
IHF Music Power, 8 Ω	245W	220W	100W	75W
IHF Music Power, 4 Ω	360W	255W	145W	84W
RMS @ 4 ohms	90/90W	80/80W	50/50W	25/25W
THD & IM @ rated power:	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%
Power Bandwidth, IHF	10-40,000	15-30,000	15-30,000	10-30,000



But, if you would prefer to sit at home and pick your Sony by its specs, go ahead. You'll find the basic ones in the box above – and you can get the rest by sending for our pocket-sized Sony Selector Guide. All you'll miss will be the fun of playing with the units themselves at your dealer. Sony Corporation of America, 47-47 Van Dam Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

SONY®

AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



Big vs. Little Speakers

Q. *I've been told that inefficient acoustic-suspension speakers have to be played at high volume to sound good. The larger, more efficient speakers don't have this problem. Also, because of their heavy cones the acoustic-suspension systems can't reproduce transients as well. Is all this true?*

ALLEN MARTIN
Grand Rapids, Mich.

A. I asked Craig Stark to make some measurements that bear on these questions while he was researching his article on concert-hall sound (November, 1971). He compared the reproduction both of a calibrated master tape of a live organ performance and of $\frac{1}{3}$ -octave bands of "pink" noise using popular representatives of each type of speaker system: a \$250 acoustic-suspension bookshelf system and a large floor-standing bass-reflex system. Measurements revealed (see curve) that in the mid-bass region (the octave from 100 to 200 Hz), the big system had a substantial rise in response compared with the bookshelf speaker. When the music was played back at the original sound-pressure levels, the big system sounded somewhat boomy in contrast to the smaller one. However, when the volume was turned down to background music levels, subjectively the bass end appeared to hold up better on the big speaker. Another set of measurements revealed that the shapes of the response curves of the two speakers were not altered by the level at which they were played. Yet the ear heard a lack of bass with the acoustic-suspension system, while the large system simply lost its boomy quality.

The apparent mystery is easily explained away by the so-called Fletcher-Munson effect. At low levels our ears are less sensitive to bass notes than at high levels. Therefore, the small speaker seemed to lack bass when played at very low levels, while the "excessive" bass of the larger speaker under the

low-volume situation provided a sort of automatic loudness compensation. Unfortunately, there is no way to switch off the "compensation" (that is, without a multi-band equalizer) when the speaker is played at high levels.

As for your second question, the Hirsch-Houck Laboratory tests have never revealed any fault in bass-transient performance that could be attributed solely to the use (or non-use) of an acoustic-suspension type of woofer cone. Furthermore, most of what listeners interpret as being indicative of bass-transient response (such as the initial impact sounds of percussion instruments) is reproduced by the mid-range and tweeter units, not the woofer.

Quality Control

Q. *I understand that only a few audio manufacturers test each individual product they make, and that most use a statistical sampling with ranges of acceptability. Given that circumstance, if I purchased a perfectly aligned receiver or tape deck, it would be a very unusual occurrence. Conversely, I assume that any equipment that reaches Hirsch-Houck Laboratories is carefully aligned by the manufacturer, and therefore Mr. Hirsch's test results bear no relation to what the consumer can expect when he buys a piece of equipment off the dealer's shelf. Am I correct?*

JEFFREY BLOOM
Chicago, Ill.

A. There are several misconceptions in Mr. Bloom's letter, and I'll take them in order. Most manufacturers do test every product that comes off the assembly line, not because they are good guys, but simply because most products need some type of adjustment before they will work properly, if at all. This is certainly true of tape recorders, whose heads must be individually aligned and whose bias must be individually adjusted. It is also true of tuners. As a matter of fact, the only stereo

component I can think of that could be manufactured and shipped out without requiring tests or adjustment would be a speaker system. But even in that case, the manufacturer who cares, and I would include *most* in that category, checks every unit. What Mr. Bloom may be thinking about is that some manufacturers have wider ranges of acceptance on their specifications than others. In other words, for a given component, one manufacturer may accept variations that another manufacturer with different standards would reject. Of course, what we are talking about here are not gross defects but the difference, let us say, between 0.5 per cent and 1 per cent distortion at a given power output.

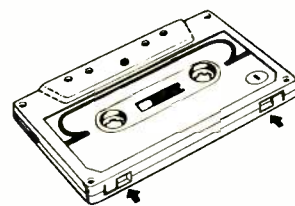
In the long run, it would seem that there are two tests for the validity of any product report: (1) whether or not a report contradicts or confirms the experiences of the hi-fi dealers and the consumers, and (2) whether the results agree, despite differences in "taste" and interpretation, with those of independent test laboratories such as Consumers Union. I think you will find that STEREO REVIEW's history is excellent in both areas.

Automatic CrO₂ Switching

Q. *In the New Products write-up on BASF's "SM" chromium-dioxide cassettes in the November issue, it was mentioned that they had provisions for automatically "switching specially equipped machines into the chromium dioxide mode." Can you tell me more about that?*

MICHAEL T. YOUNG
San Francisco, Calif.

A. At present the tape machines that have special bias switching provisions for CrO₂ tapes require that the user make the switch manually. The new BASF "SM" chromium-dioxide



cassette has a "notch" on the rear edge of the cassette in addition to the knock-out tab notch that is now used to prevent erasure of recorded material (see illustration). The extra notch is designed to interact with a switch in future tape players that will automatically set up the proper characteristics for CrO₂ tapes. I understand that Philips, the originator of the cassette format, is trying to establish a standard for the modification. Now how about a similar notch (with knock-out tabs) for automatic Dolby switching?

You can't please everybody. Some people just can't enjoy Mantovani when Dr. Welby is on (and vice versa).

But with Koss Stereophones you can live and let live. Because your wife won't hear your music. And Mantovani's strings won't interfere with her program.

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Or try the Koss PRO-4AA Professional Dynamic Stereophone. Used and enjoyed by both the professional and amateur music enthusiast. Only the PRO-4AA provides crisp, clean response two full octaves beyond the range of ordinary dynamics. With a deep, full-timbered bass that's never boomy.

To get complete information, write for our free full-color catalog, c/o Virginia Lamm, Dept. SR-6.

Or if hearing the sound of Koss suits you better, your favorite Stereo Dealer or Department Store can demonstrate how to live and let live with Koss Stereophones . . . from \$19.95 to \$150. Just tell them Dr. Welby sent you.

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Marcus Welby, M.D.



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CIRCLE NO. 15 ON READER SERVICE CARD



AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES

PHONO-STYLUS SHAPE

THERE IS at least one important factor in phono-cartridge design that hasn't been touched on in this column: the *shape* of the diamond stylus tip. There are two basic shapes offered to the consumer today. One, the long-lived "standard" of the industry, is the so-called *conical* stylus (*spherical* in the purists' lexicon). The stylus is in the shape of a cone (of circular cross section) with a smoothly rounded tip usually a little over one thousandth of an inch (1 mil) in diameter at the point where it contacts the record-groove walls. The more recent, second stylus type, also a cone but roughly oval in cross section, has come to be known as the *biradial* or *elliptical* stylus. Why the two types?

The cutting stylus that engraves the master disc for a phonograph record is a pointed chisel of roughly triangular cross section. As it carves its vibratory path into the lacquer disc surface its sharp edges are capable of forming some pretty tight curves—too tight for the usual conical stylus (deliberately rounded for reduced record wear) to trace accurately. Confronted with a source of tracing distortion that was not only theoretical but also audible with the best equipment, cartridge manufacturers saw two possible remedies: reduce dimensions of the stylus tip so that it would fit into the tighter corners (which would also cause it to ride lower in the groove than is optimum, running the risk of striking bottom), or alter the dimensions of the stylus, making it broad enough to straddle the full width of the groove but narrow enough at the edges to trace the more tortuous rounded wiggles. The elliptical stylus, a sort of compromise shape between the smooth roundness of the conical and the angularity of the cutter, is the result of the latter scheme. Ellipticals are usually described in terms of the curvatures to which they are ground. Thus their broad dimensions might be based on a circle with a radius of anywhere from 0.7 to 0.9 mil, while the edge radii typically range from 0.2 to 0.4 mil. The smaller the edge radius the better the stylus can resolve minute groove detail. However, the smaller the edge radius the "sharper" the stylus as well, and this has momentous consequences for record wear.

Last month I discussed tracking *force* without distinguishing it from tracking *pressure*, a term that is often, but incorrectly, considered the equivalent. Tracking force is the simple quantity measured (usually in grams) by weighing the tone arm at the stylus tip. *Pressure* is defined as the force *per unit area*, the area being the tiny points of contact between stylus and groove walls. It is actually this pressure that produces record wear, and for the same tracking force the pressure increases rapidly as the stylus radii (and therefore the contact area) shrink. Engineers at Shure Brothers have estimated that an elliptical stylus with 0.2-mil edge radii resting with a 1-gram force on a stationary vinyl disc exerts a pressure on the order of 3½ tons per square inch! The moral of the story: elliptical styli are only for those cartridges capable of tracking well at forces less than 2 grams.

RUM BLOODY MARY IT'S CATCHING ON.



People don't drink Bloody Marys just because they like the taste of snappy tomato juice. Yet there isn't much else to taste.

So it's only natural that these people would turn by the thousands to Bloody Marys made with White or Silver Puerto Rican Rum.

Because Puerto Rican Rums are distilled at high proof and aged and filtered with charcoal to be smooth, dry, light, clear, with no strong aroma and no sweet, syrupy taste.

But Puerto Rican Rum doesn't just sit there and soak up the Worcestershire Sauce either.

It has the taste, ever so subtle but with a little something extra, to give a snappy Bloody Mary just a little more snap.



THE RUMS OF PUERTO RICO

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A Rum Bloody Mary is made like any other Bloody Mary, except with rum. For a free book of the many drinks you can make with rum, write: Rums of Puerto Rico, 686 Fifth Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10019.

Stanton quality is a very special quality... in headphones too.

The headphone is, after all, a speaker system for the head.

And the new **Stanton Dynaphase Sixty** is an advanced two-way speaker system designed for heads instead of shelves. Its unique, extremely wide-range two-way dynamic reproduction system is acoustically mounted with a separate woofer and tweeter. A special crossover network precisely channels the highs and lows into each ear, creating a truly breathtaking feeling of presence.

In keeping with the high-quality approach to the design of the Stanton Dynaphase Sixty headphone, the fully adjustable headband and softly cushioned earpieces are stitched (not heat-sealed). Stanton even improves convenience in amplifier connection and disconnection by providing a

larger and specially designed plug. A simple blue-black and chrome color scheme adds the quality finished touch. \$59.95.

Stanton Dynaphase Forty, a high-performance economy version of the Dynaphase Sixty with wide range single speaker system is also available. \$39.95.

ACCESSORIES

Stanton Model 5741 control unit—The most convenient in-

line control unit ever developed for headphone listening. Works with Stanton Dynaphase headphone systems as well as with other headphones. Lets you control listening at your location by providing separate volume and tone controls and a stereo-mono switch. Complete with 17-foot coiled cord, it acts as a perfect extension accessory. \$19.95.

Model 5742—Separate 25-foot coiled extension cord works with all headphones. \$7.95.

For complete technical data write Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803



Manufacturers of the world famous Stanton Calibration Cartridges and the renowned Isophase Electrostatic Headset Systems.



TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **CARTRIDGES VS. CAPACITANCE:** The frequency response (and, to some degree, the output level) of a magnetic phono cartridge can be affected by the "load" impedance presented to it by the input stage of the preamplifier section. One function of the load resistor the signal encounters at the magnetic phono input is to damp the electrical resonance resulting from the interaction of inductance of the cartridge coils and the total circuit capacitance. This resonance should not be confused with the mechanical resonance resulting from the interaction of the stylus mass and the compliance of the plastic record material, which may be in the same frequency range (it usually occurs in the octave between 10,000 and 20,000 Hz). If the resonance is underdamped because of too high a load resistance, a frequency-response peak is created. If this coincides with the mechanical resonance peak, the sound quality is likely to be unpleasantly shrill or strident. If, on the other hand, the load resistance is too low, high-frequency response may be lost, since designers usually use both electrical and mechanical resonances to extend a cartridge's high-frequency range.

In high fidelity's early years, the recommended load resistance for magnetic cartridges was somewhere between 25,000 and 100,000 ohms. The most common value was 47,000 ohms, and this has now become the standard. However, even with the correct input resistor present, the cartridge load impedance is not entirely resistive. The capacitance of the interconnecting shielded cables and amplifier input-circuit capacitance can be quite appreciable, although their combined value may be quite difficult to determine with any certainty. The cartridge manufacturer must assume some value of circuit capacitance in designing his product, but rarely is this value stated in his specification. Since the external capacitance can have a major effect on the cartridge's

high-frequency response (and, as we shall see, on its mid-range response as well), it is not surprising that the sound of a given cartridge model can differ widely from one installation to another. This may also explain some of the discrepancies between various reviewers' comments on the same cartridge, and contradictions between the reviewers' and some consumers' experiences.

I am indebted to Mr. James Kogen, Vice President of Engineering for Shure Brothers, for calling this problem to my attention and providing me with some of the data he has accumulated. He found a wide range of phono input capacitance on modern amplifiers and receivers, from essentially zero to over 1,100 picofarads (pf)! Most fell in the range from zero to 350 pf. The typical automatic-turnstile cartridge wiring capacity, including the three- or four-foot cables supplied, is between 100 and 200 pf. Therefore, in a typical installation, the cartridge may see anywhere from 100 to 550 pf of capacitive loading, in parallel with the 47,000-ohm resistance at the preamp input. Some manufacturers suggest operating their cartridges with less than 300 pf, while others merely recommend keeping external capacitance to a minimum.

Clearly, a potential problem exists here, since it is entirely possible for the phono frequency response to be seriously degraded with the "wrong" combination of cartridge, turntable, and amplifier—even if all the components are from reputable manufacturers and of excellent quality. Shure has faced the question by recommending a load capacitance of between 400 and 500 pf for their V-15 Type II Improved cartridge (and presumably for their other cartridges with similar electrical characteristics). This assures optimum cartridge response, and only a few combinations of components will exceed 500 pf input capacitance.

What about a not-too-hypothetical system with

TESTED THIS MONTH

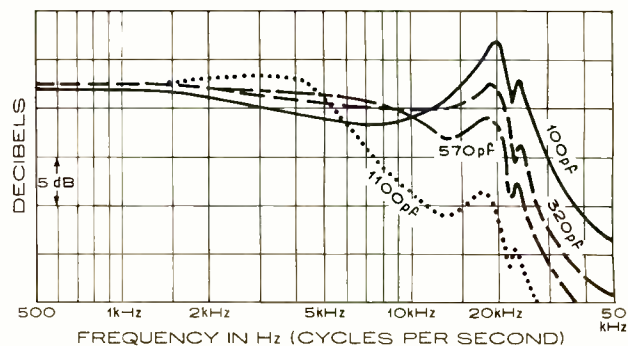
●
Crown D-150 Power Amplifier
Scott 433 Stereo FM Tuner
Rectilinear III Lowboy Speaker
Teac 4010SL Tape Recorder

only 200 pf of input-circuit capacitance? (At least one manufacturer has a turntable in which the lead capacity has been kept to approximately this figure.) It is easy to add fixed capacitors, at the amplifier's input terminals, sufficient to raise the total to the correct value. Specific questions regarding the use of their cartridges with any given amplifier should be addressed to Shure. It is quite probable that other high-quality magnetic cartridges are subject to the same effect, and their manufacturers should be able to identify any amplifier that might produce less than optimum results with their products.

We were able to demonstrate, in a rather convincing manner, the effect of load capacitance on the frequency response of a Shure V-15 Type II Improved cartridge. Its response was measured with a CBS STR 120 test record, which sweeps at constant velocity from 500 to 50,000 Hz. (The test curves should *not* be compared with those obtained by previous H-H Labs tests with a different cartridge, test record, and measurement setup.) The cartridge was operated at 1 gram, in an SME 3012 arm, and terminated by a 47,000-ohm resistor. With the shortest possible length of shielded cable, the measured capacitance in the circuit was about 100 pf.

The frequency response with a 100-pf load, shown on the accompanying graph, has a slight "sway-back" response dip in the upper mid-range, and a peak of about 5 dB at 20,000 Hz. Adding another 220 pf, for a total of 320 pf, brought the peak down to the mid-range level and eliminated most of the sway-back shape. More capacity, to a total of 570 pf, actually raised the mid-range response by about 1 dB at the sacrifice of about 3 dB at frequencies over 12,000 Hz. Going to an extreme, we found that a capacitance of 1,100 pf elevated the upper mid-range appreciably, but rolled off the highs at a 12-dB-per-octave rate above 5,000 Hz.

Note that the frequencies of the cartridge's *me-*



chanical resonances at about 20,000 and 24,000 Hz were not affected significantly by the capacitive loading, nor were their amplitudes. The entire high-frequency portion of the cartridge response curve is depressed by added capacitance without changing its basic shape.

Obviously, a total capacitance of between 300 and 500 pf will give the flattest overall response, essentially what Shure recommends. If you plan to use only the output cables supplied with your record player, you can safely figure on a total of 150 to 250 pf of capacity overall. Shielded cables vary widely in their capacitance—we measured values ranging from 20 to 43 pf per foot—but an assumption of about 33 pf per foot would be close enough. As for the amplifier, in the absence of other information, assume a 100-pf input capacitance.

Whether or not to trim the cartridge capacitance for optimum response, especially without the facilities to measure the actual circuit capacitance, is for each person to decide. A critical listener should be able to hear the difference between the 100- and 570-pf responses on our graph; whether he could distinguish the intermediate curve from its neighbors is questionable. Fortunately, the actual capacitance is noncritical as long as it is somewhere between 300 and 600 pf. Although other types of cartridges might require less capacitance, the actual value probably would not be more critical than in the illustrated case.

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

Crown D-150 Stereo Power Amplifier



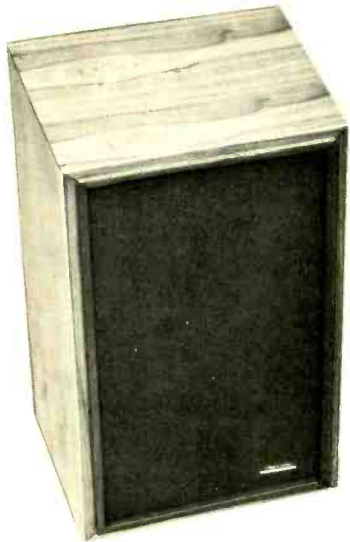
● THE Crown International D-150 stereo power amplifier is the halfway model between the compact, moder-

ate-power D-40 and the Crown "Lab Standard" DC-300, with its 150 (and up) watts per channel. The D-150 is rated for at least 75 watts per channel with both channels driven into 8 ohms. Its signal-to-noise ratio exceeds 110 dB at rated output. Like other Crown audio amplifiers, the D-150 has extremely low distortion, with harmonic and intermodulation distortion less than 0.05 per cent at any power level from 0.01 to 75 watts. Its circuits are direct coupled throughout, except for blocking capaci-

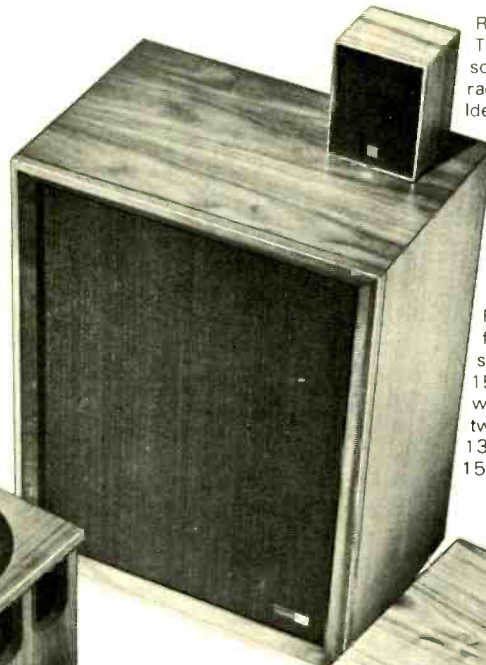
(Continued on page 30)

Radio Shack puts more into its speakers by leaving a few things out!

Things like distributors and their profits... and costly (to you!) trade shows, factory salesmen, promotional programs, and more. We leave those things out because we design our own Realistic® speakers... and build them in our own plants... and sell them factory-to-you in our own 1300 stores. We put in more quality, more special features, more beauty per \$ because we leave out costs other brands are forced to "pass on." Now you know our secret. Visit our nearest store and see how it pays off for you in superior sound at Real(istic) savings!



Realistic Optimus-5.
Our deluxe bookshelf model. 12" acoustic-suspension woofer, 3 tweeters, unique crossover, tonal balance controls. 11½ x 14 x 25" 99.95*



Realistic Minimus-0.5.
Tiny add-on "beefs up" sound of portable radios, recorders. Ideal extension too. 10.95*

Realistic Nova-9. Our floor model with bass so deep you can feel it. 15" acoustic-suspension woofer, midrange, tweeter. Our best. 13½ x 20½ x 27" 159.95*



Nova-Omni.
Solves those placement problems with 360° dispersion - put a pair anywhere for great stereo. 8" top-firing woofer, side tweeter. Ornamental iron grille. 11½ x 11½ x 19½" 69.95*

Realistic Optimus-1.
Over 50,000 sold. 10" acoustic-suspension woofer, 2 tweeters. 11½ x 12 x 23" 79.95*



Realistic MC-500.
EIG-sounding 5" acoustic-suspension woofer, 2" tweeter. 9 x 11-3/4 x 15½" 30.00*



Realistic MC-1000.
Compact for serious music lovers. 8" acoustic-suspension woofer, 3" tweeter. 8¼ x 11¼ x 17¼" 50.00*



RADIO SHACK

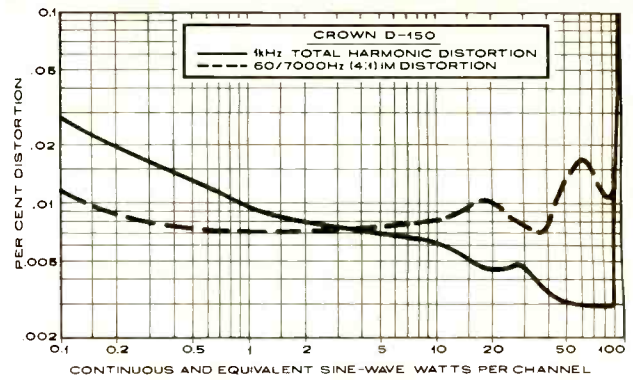
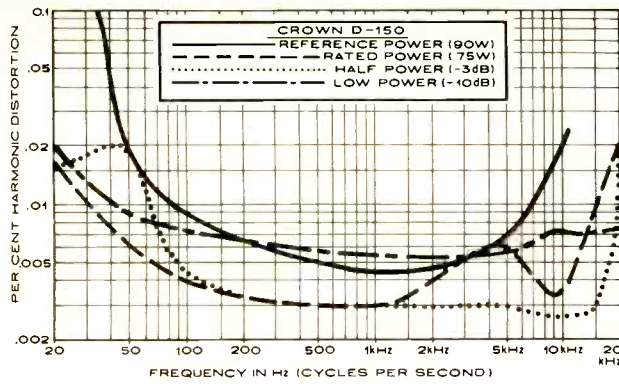
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Both graphs start at a low 0.1 per cent rather than the conventional 1 per cent distortion level. Because of Crown's very conservative power rating, the reference power selected for distortion tests was 20 per cent higher than specification.

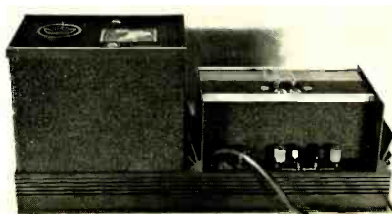
tors at the inputs. Each channel has a screwdriver-adjusted input-level control adjacent to its phone-jack input. The outputs are through heavy five-way binding posts, spaced on 3/4-inch centers to accept standard GR-type dual banana plugs.

Almost half of the D-150 chassis is occupied by its power supply, which consists principally of a large power transformer and two 9,400-microfarad filter capacitors that account in large measure for the amplifier's low-frequency power-output capability. Its frequency response would extend down to the direct-current level if it were not for the input capacitors. The output transistors are protected against short circuits in the speaker lines or other overloads by an instantaneously acting electronic circuit. The black anodized chassis of the D-150 is finned over much of its surface, so that the entire chassis serves as a heat sink and radiator for the power transistors mounted inside it. A single printed-circuit board above the chassis contains all the other circuits, including a single integrated circuit whose dual operational amplifiers provide the necessary voltage amplification. Shield covers enclose the amplifier and power-supply sections.

A decorative panel, finished in brushed aluminum and black, is supplied with the amplifier. This can be used, along with other furnished accessory pieces, for rack mounting or cabinet installation. The Crown D-150, with its front panel mounted, measures 5 1/4 inches high, 17 inches wide, and 8 3/4 inches deep; it weighs 24 pounds. Price: \$399. A walnut cabinet is \$33 extra.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** With a 1,000-Hz test signal the power output of the D-150 at the clipping point was 95 watts per channel into 8 ohms, 147 watts per channel into 4 ohms, and 54 watts into 16 ohms, both channels driven. The distortion was extremely low at all power levels. At 0.1 watt it measured 0.03 per cent, but this was principally hum and noise. At 1 watt, the 0.0096 per cent measurement was approximately half hum, half distortion, and at higher power levels the distortion dropped off to 0.003 per cent between 50 and 90 watts, increased to 0.055 per cent at 95 watts, and to 0.76 per cent at 100 watts, at which point clipping started to occur. The IM distortion, which could have been measured only with our Crown IM analyzer, was between 0.007 and 0.018 per cent at all power levels from

The speaker-output terminals are adjacent to the line fuse post. The two phone-jack inputs and their associated level controls are located on the upper surface of the subassembly.



0.1 watt to 90 watts, rising to 0.025 per cent at 95 watts and 0.36 per cent at 100 watts.

The performance of the D-150 at 90 watts encouraged us to select that power for a "full-power" reference level, although Crown's ratings are based on a 75-watt output. At 90 watts the distortion was under 0.02 per cent, and typically was well below 0.01 per cent, from 50 to 10,000 Hz. It increased at lower frequencies, to 0.2 per cent at 30 Hz and 0.78 per cent at 20 Hz. At half power and one-tenth the reference power the distortion was under 0.02 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz, and less than 0.006 per cent at mid-frequencies. Performance at the rated 75 watts per channel was essentially the same.

The D-150 is protected against prolonged overload by a thermal circuit breaker, which triggered as we were making our last measurements. Of course, the amplifier would never be called upon to deliver 90 watts per channel for such sustained periods in normal service, but it is very reassuring to know that it can survive this kind of abuse without damage.

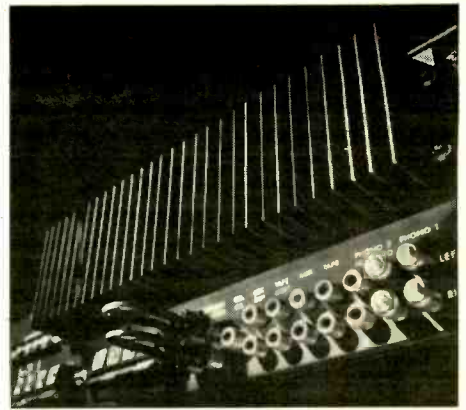
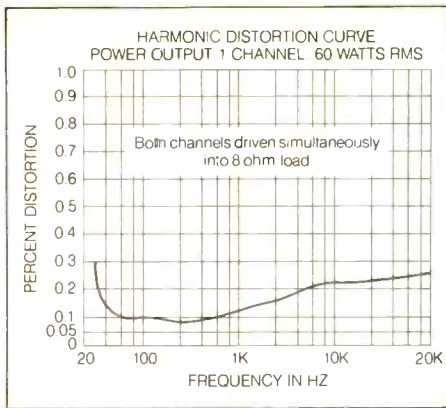
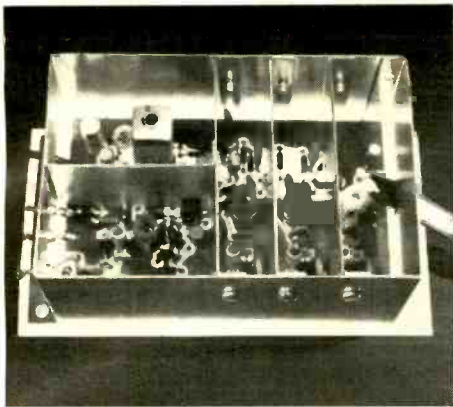
A signal input of 0.42 volt was sufficient to drive each channel to 10 watts output, and the noise level was at a completely inaudible level of 78 dB below 10 watts. The square-wave response was excellent, with a rise time between 2 and 3 microseconds and no overshoot. Capacitive loads exceeding about 0.25 microfarad produced a slight overshoot, and a large capacitive load such as 3 microfarads caused considerable ringing on the square wave, but at no time was there any sign of instability. We would judge the D-150 suitable for driving electrostatic speaker systems.

● **Comment.** There are not many speaker systems capable of absorbing the full output of the D-150, but since its distortion at any level, no matter how low, can be measured only with the most advanced test equipment, one would expect it to sound first rate, and indeed it did. We were able to operate it "flat out" with a pair of the new speakers we have under test that can handle the Crown's output power. Neither speakers nor amplifier showed any signs of distress, which is more than can be said for our ears!

A simple internal modification converts the D-150 to a mono amplifier, with a balanced output capable of delivering 320 watts (before clipping) to an 8-ohm load. We did not use it in this manner, but for anyone so inclined, this is certainly one of the most compact 300-watt mono amplifiers we have seen. All in all, the Crown D-150 is an excellent amplifier, quite literally "state of the art" in its performance. It should make an ideal companion to the Crown IC-150 preamplifier, which it matches in size and appearance.

For more information, circle 105 on reader service card

(Test reports continued on page 32)



It's the only receiver with the Varitronik™ FM tuner—with 4 FET's and balanced Varicap tuning for lower distortion and for higher sensitivity. By using 4 FET's instead of ordinary bi-polar transistors, cross modulation problems are virtually eliminated. And by using 4 double Varicaps instead of a conventional mechanical tuning capacitor, a better balanced circuit performance is achieved with perfect linear tracking. The 725A's FM tuner also uses a combination of Butterworth and crystal filters for better selectivity and stereo separation. And, it features an advanced muting circuit with full muting at 2.5 μ V for quiet tuning without loss of stations. Specifically, here's how the new Altec 725A receiver performs. Harmonic distortion is a low 0.3%, IHF sensitivity is 1.8 μ V and capture ratio is 1.3 dB.

Altec's new 725A AM/FM stereo receiver gives you 60/60 watts of RMS continuous power. The 60 watts of power per channel you hear with the new Altec 725A receiver is not IHF music power at 4 ohms for just an instant. It's not music power (plus or minus 1 dB) either. And it's not peak power, or EIA power or any other rating. Instead, it's 60 watts of RMS continuous power per channel with both channels driven simultaneously at 8 ohms from 30 to 20,000 Hz—rated in the same manner used exclusively by the professional audio field and by quality testing labs. With this much power you hear clean, accurate sounds at all frequencies from even the lowest efficiency speakers. And you always have enough power in reserve to hear that extra-low bass.

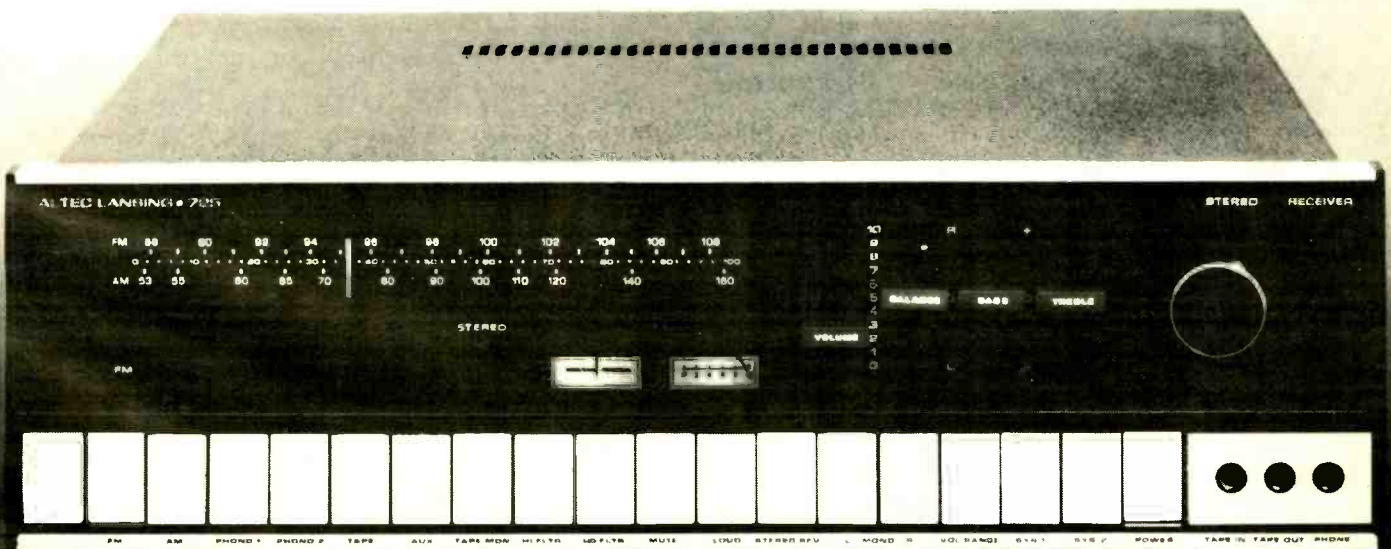
And it includes many extra features to make it the most versatile receiver on the market. The new Altec 725A receiver includes a long list of standard features like 2 separate tuning meters, spring-loaded speaker terminals, and 100 percent modular construction. In addition, it includes these "extras" for more versatility and convenience.

- Pushbutton controls for stereo reverse, mono L & R, low and high filter.
- Indicator lights on all functions—AM, FM, phono 1 & phono 2, tape, auxiliary, tape monitor and FM stereo.
- Tape recorder input & output on front panel.
- A heavy-duty fluted aluminum heat sink.
- Accessory jacks for the Altec Acoustavoicette Stereo Equalizer.

Built a little better.



Altec's new 725A AM/FM stereo receiver sells for \$699.00. It's built a little better than anything else you can buy. Hear it at your Altec dealers. Or, write for a new, complete 25-page catalog: Altec Lansing, 1515 S. Manchester Ave., Anaheim, CA 92803.



Altec's new 725A receiver. It's built a little better.

CIRCLE NO. 3 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Teac 4010SL Tape Recorder



● TEAC's new 4010SL is an improved version of the previous Model 4010 (the SL suffix stands for "superior sound/low noise"). The transport mechanism remains basically the same, but the electronics have been modified for improved noise and distortion characteristics. The Model 4010SL is a quarter-track machine designed to make most effective use of low-noise, high-output tapes as well as the standard tapes typified by 3M Type 111. To realize the potentially higher signal-to-noise ratios of low-noise, high-output tapes, it is necessary to use a higher record-bias level, and to record at a somewhat higher signal level than would normally be used with standard tapes. Teac has provided front-panel controls for this purpose—separate switches labeled BIAS and LEVEL, both having NORMAL and HIGH positions. In the HIGH settings, which are used with low-noise tapes, the bias is suitably increased, and the VU-meter sensitivity is dropped by 3 dB. Although this does not in any way affect the recorder's internal gain settings, it automatically provides for a 3-dB higher recording level when the meters read 0 VU.

The 4010SL is a two-speed (7½ and 3¾ ips), three-motor machine, with an electrically switched hysteresis-synchronous motor for capstan drive and two outer-rotor reel-drive motors. Playback direction can be manually reversed at any point by pressing the appropriate tape-direction button. Four tape heads are used: erase, record, and play for the forward direction, and playback only for the reverse direction.

The Teac 4010SL can play in either direction but records only with the normal left-to-right tape flow. Automatic reversing during playback can be triggered by sensing foil applied to the tape at the appropriate points. The transport is fully solenoid controlled through four light-touch pushbuttons at the lower left of the panel. Two of the buttons put the tape into motion at normal speed in either direction. Pressing the FAST button puts it into fast forward or rewind, depending on which of the tape-direction buttons has been activated. The STOP button halts the tape smoothly and swiftly, disengaging the record mode if it was in use.

The illuminated VU meters of the 4010SL are large, exceptionally easy to read, and well damped. The line inputs have concentric recording-level controls for individual channel adjustment, as do the microphone inputs. Line and microphone sources can be mixed. The microphone inputs are for medium- to low-impedance microphones (under 10,000 ohms), with the jacks located on the front panel next to the level controls. The MONITOR switch connects the line outputs (and the VU meters) either to the signal inputs of the machine or to the playback amplifiers, permitting an A-B check of recording quality. A front-panel headphone jack, driven from sepa-

rate amplifiers capable of driving 8-ohm phones, is also affected by the tape-monitor switch.

The recording controls include the aforementioned BIAS and LEVEL switches and separate buttons to put the left and right channels into the recording mode. These must be pressed when starting the transport in order to record. Red lights above the meters indicate the recording status of each channel. In the rear of the deck are the line inputs and outputs, a receptacle for an optional remote-control unit (Model RC-401), and the fused a.c. power-line input. Special effects, such as sound-on-sound, can be achieved by connecting appropriate jumper cables between the input and output jacks.

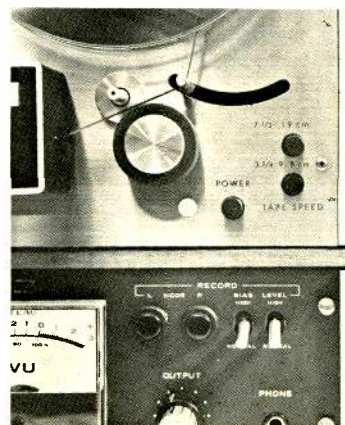
The transport mechanism is physically separate from the electronics portion of the 4010SL and is mounted above it. Reels up to 7 inches in diameter can be used. A button adjusts the tape tension for a tape thickness of 1 mil or over, or for thin ½-mil tape. The tape-threading path is in a straight line across the heads, looping around a tension arm, the automatic-reverse sensor post, and an automatic-shutoff feeler arm. At the top of the panel is a four-digit index counter with pushbutton reset. Pushbutton switches control the a.c. power and select either the 7½ or 3¾-ips operating speeds. Equalization is changed simultaneously with tape speed.

The Teac 4010SL is supplied in a walnut cabinet, and is suitable for either vertical or horizontal use. It measures 17¼ inches high, 17½ inches wide, and 9¾ inches deep, and weighs 48 pounds. Price: \$499.50.

● *Laboratory Measurements.* We made most of our measurements with 3M Type 203 tape (similar results were obtained with other, similar tapes). Performance at both speeds surpassed the manufacturer's specifications. The 7½-ips record-playback frequency response was ±2 dB from 24 to 21,000 Hz, dropping to -4 dB at 23,000 Hz. At 3¾ ips the response was ±2 dB from 30 to 12,000 Hz, falling off rapidly at higher frequencies. We also checked the frequency response with 3M Type 111 tape (with the bias switch set appropriately) and found it to be slightly, but not significantly, better—within ±1.5 dB from 30 to 23,500 Hz at the higher speed, and ±2 dB from 35 to more than 13,000 Hz at the lower speed. The playback frequency response, with Ampex test tapes, was within ±1.7 dB from 50 to 15,000 Hz at 7½ ips, and ±1 dB from 50 to 7,500 Hz (the range of the test tape) at the 3¾-ips speed.

Harmonic distortion (with the 3M 203 tape) was about 1 per cent at 0 VU, and did not reach the 3 per cent reference level until +6 VU (7½ ips) and +8 VU (3¾ ips). The signal-to-noise ratio at the 3 per cent distortion

(Continued on page 34)



The two front-panel switches that separately adjust the recording bias and the sensitivity of the VU meters are seen to the right of the record-interlock buttons.

Each of these stubborn Norwegian engineers thinks he designed the world's best tape recorder.

Will you help settle the argument?

Leif insists that the *only* tape deck to own is the Tandberg 6000X. And we can't quarrel with that. For \$499.80, it does more things better than decks that cost twice as much. And both *High Fidelity* and *Stereo Review* ranked the 6000X in a class by itself.

But when Per makes his case for the Tandberg 3000X, we can't dispute him, either. After all, if a home recordist doesn't need professional features like a limiter, stereo echo effects, and peak reading meters that show playback levels, why should he pay for them? Per swears that if he blindfolded Leif, he couldn't tell the sound of the 3000X from the 6000X. And it only costs \$349.90.

Then Gunnar starts a whole new fight. *He* says the most practical way to enjoy Tandberg sound is with the 4000X recorder. That way, you get all the quality of a Tandberg deck *plus* a built-in Tandberg amplifier and two Tandberg speakers. All for just \$459. And it's portable.

We say they're *all* right. *Every* Tandberg is the best Tandberg. And all the arguments in the world won't settle a thing.

Because the only person who can decide which Tandberg is the best for *you* is you. Settle the question with your Tandberg dealer.

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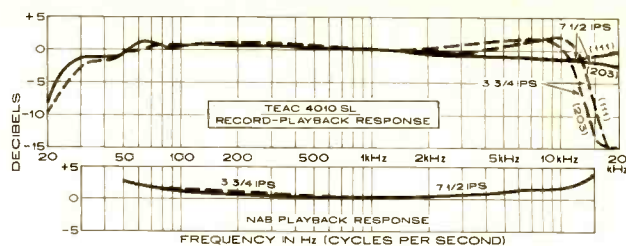
In Canada Tandberg distributed by Engineered Sound Systems, Toronto, and Clifco Electronics, Vancouver.

point for either speed was 57.5 dB. Using the standard 3M 111 tape, the reference distortion was reached at a 3-dB lower level, and the signal-to-noise ratio was also 3 to 4 dB lower. The noise level through the microphone inputs was about 4 dB higher than through the high-level line inputs.

A line input of 36 millivolts (NORMAL meter-switch position) or 56 millivolts (HIGH) produced a 0-VU meter reading. The corresponding microphone inputs were 0.11 and 0.14 millivolts, respectively. The maximum playback level from a signal recorded at 0 VU was 0.85 volt.

The tape speeds were exact, and 1,200 feet of tape was handled at fast speeds in 67.5 seconds in either direction. Wow was unmeasurably low—less than 0.01 per cent—and flutter was a very low 0.085 per cent at 3³/₄ ips and 0.05 per cent at 7¹/₂ ips.

● *Comment.* The Teac 4010SL is a delightfully smooth, easy machine to use. The transport controls have enough built-in time delay when switching modes, so that no matter how carelessly they are used, it is impossible to break or spill tape. One of the few common features omitted from the 4010SL is a “pause” control, but the transport starts up so rapidly that this is not likely to



cause any problems. When the automatic reverse is activated, the tape-drive mechanism is disengaged for a moment to permit the capstan to come up to speed in the opposite direction. This effectively eliminates off-speed effects from tape acceleration.

As to the 4010SL's sound, when recording FM broadcasts it was not possible to hear any difference between the input and output signals from the deck at either speed. With FM interstation hiss as a program, there was absolutely no audible change at 7¹/₂ ips, and only the slightest dulling of extreme highs at 3³/₄ ips. The 4010SL continues the high standards previously established by Teac, with all the special features needed to keep up with current developments in tape coatings.

For more information, circle 106 on reader service card

Rectilinear III Lowboy Speaker



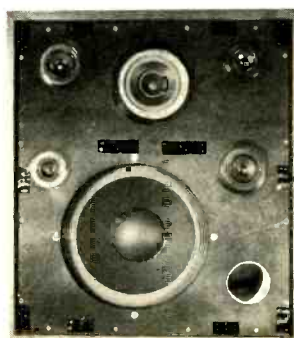
● SEVERAL years ago we tested a speaker—the Rectilinear III—from a then little-known manufacturer, Rectilinear Research Corporation. It was (and still is) a floor-standing three-way speaker system of medium size, having six drivers in all. It made a strong positive impression on us at the time because of its exceptionally smooth, transparent sound, with less coloration in any part of the audio spectrum than we were accustomed to hearing from other good dynamic speaker systems of that time. In fact, we could only liken its sound to that of a good full-range electrostatic speaker.

A number of people, here and abroad, have taken us to task for that comment and have strongly disagreed with it. Our intention was not to imply that the high-frequency performance of the Rectilinear III was sonically identical to that of an electrostatic speaker (for no dynamic speaker we have ever heard can claim to be that), but rather that it had much of the essential character and freedom from coloration that we associate with electrostatic systems. Over the years there have been changes in the components of the Rectilinear III, and many people, including ourselves, have wondered if today's Rectilin-

ear III is still the same speaker system that received our accolades in 1967.

Rectilinear has now repackaged the system in a low-boy cabinet, and we have tested this version using several techniques that were not available to us at the time of our original test. The Rectilinear III Lowboy is 28 inches high, 22 inches wide, and 12¹/₄ inches deep. It weighs about 65 pounds, and features a very attractive wooden fretwork grille. The 12-inch woofer operates in a ducted-port enclosure, with a 6-dB-per-octave crossover at 500 Hz to a 5-inch mid-range driver with a 2-inch “whizzer” cone. The mid-range speaker, which operates up to 3,000 Hz, is responsible for the bulk of the audible sound from the system. At 3,000 Hz there is another 6-dB-per-octave crossover to an array of four tweeters, arranged in a rectangle occupying the upper 60 per cent or so of the speaker board. All of them operate together, but the two 2¹/₂-inch tweeters are mostly effective below 11,000 Hz, while at higher frequencies all are operative. All the tweeters are cone drivers, of conventional appearance, and their levels are adjusted simultaneously by the control in the rear of the cabinet.

The six speakers are distributed on the front of the
(Continued on page 36)



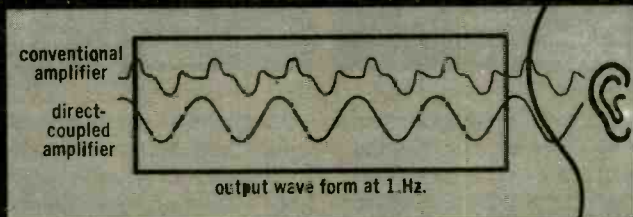
The Rectilinear III Lowboy design employs a ported enclosure with a 12-inch woofer, 5-inch mid-range, and four cone tweeters distributed over the front panel.

Our receivers have something you'll never hear. Our amplifiers.

Because our amplifiers don't have those circuits that can distort the sound. We took out the input transformer, the output transformer, and the output capacitor. Now the amplifier circuit is coupled directly to the speaker terminals. So you get less than 0.5% distortion. In all Panasonic FM/AM, FM stereo receivers.

We call this new system direct coupling. It improves transient response and damping. So cymbals go clash instead of pop. And a high C doesn't sound like a screech.

We offer you this more direct route in 4 different receivers. Starting with the SA-5500 and its 70 watts of music power (IHF). Plus features we put in our more expensive models. A high-filter switch. A loudness switch. Two



4-pole MOS FET transistors. To pull in stations you thought were out of reach. Even an FM muting switch to cut down on interstation noise. When you put all this in numbers, it means 1.8 μ V FM sensitivity and a frequency response of 20-50,000 Hz \pm 1dB.

The SA-5500 also makes tuning easier with a linear-dial scale to separate FM stations. A sensitive tuning meter to measure signal strength. And dual-tone controls for custom-blended sound.

If all this isn't enough, we have models with even more features and power. You can move up to 100 watts with the SA-5800. Or

take another step up, and get 150 watts of power on the SA-6200.

But if you want the most, there's the SA-6500. It has 200 watts of power. Plus features that the leading receivers in this price range can't match. Like a power bandwidth of 5-60,000 Hz. A crystal filter in the FM IF Amp. A Lumina-Band dial that lights up. Two 4-pole MOS FET transistors. And, of course, direct coupling. Besides all that, the SA-6500 gives you a low-filter control. Two tuning meters. And linear-sliding controls for bass, treble, volume and balance.

You can hear all our receivers at your franchised Panasonic Hi-Fi dealer. But it's not just what you hear that counts, it's what you don't hear.



SA-5500



SA-6200



SA-5800



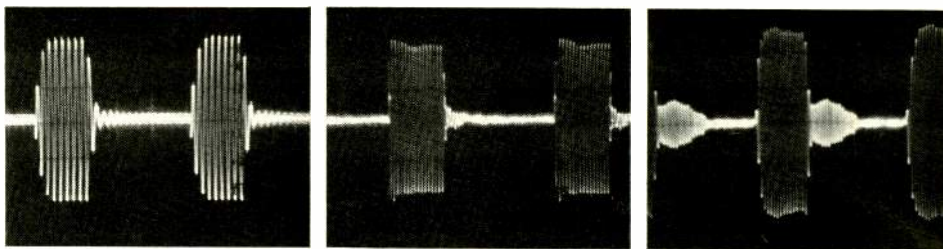
SA-6500

Panasonic
just slightly ahead of our time.

200 Park Ave., N.Y. 10017. For your nearest franchised Panasonic Hi-Fi dealer, call 800 631-1971. In N.J., 800 962-2803. We pay for the call.

CIRCLE NO. 40 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Tone-burst response of the Rectilinear III Lowboy was nearly perfect, with only the 10,000-Hz burst (far right) showing some irregularity due to interference between the four tweeters. Other frequencies shown are 60 (left) and 2,000 Hz (center).



unit in a configuration that is slightly different from that used in the upright Rectilinear III. The woofer is at the bottom, with the mid-range driver above it. On one side, the 2½-inch tweeter is at the top of the rectangle, while on the other side it is at the bottom. This is claimed to give improved dispersion of high frequencies. The Rectilinear III Lowboy, in oiled walnut, is priced at \$299.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** We measured the averaged frequency response of the Rectilinear III Lowboy with a multi-microphone array in a live room, with the level controls at maximum settings, at the center (NORMAL) settings, and at minimum. Flattest response was obtained with both controls at maximum. It was uniform within ± 4 dB from 100 to 15,000 Hz, with a rise of about 5 dB in the 60- to 70-Hz region, and a solid bass output down to 35 Hz or below. With NORMAL control settings, the output curve sloped off above 2,000 Hz, and was down about 3 dB at the higher frequencies. At minimum settings, the output fell to negligible levels above 1,700 Hz.

For comparison purposes, we measured the response of our original Rectilinear III system using our current test set-up. It was quite similar to the response of the new speaker, with controls set at maximum, but had 2 to 4 dB more output in the octaves between 500 and 1,000 Hz and between 2,000 and 4,000 Hz. There was also about 5 dB more output between 10,000 and 15,000 Hz. (While these are not major differences, they could be heard under certain conditions.)

The low-frequency harmonic distortion was quite low down to 40 Hz, where it measured only 2 per cent at a 10-watt drive level. It rose to 5 per cent at 36 Hz and 12 per cent at 30 Hz. At a 1-watt drive level it was lower, but could not be measured due to masking by ambient noise and hum levels. The impedance of the Rectilinear III Lowboy was exceptionally uniform—between 10

and 20 ohms over the full audio range except at 20,000 Hz, where it reached the rated impedance of 8 ohms.

Tone-burst response was very good—nearly perfect, in fact—at most frequencies. This was surprising, in view of the multiple drivers and the possibility of interference effects between them. However, interference was encountered only at about 10,000 Hz, where it was impossible to separate the contributions of the four tweeters.

● **Comment.** The simulated “live-vs.-recorded” listening test confirmed our original appraisal of the Rectilinear III. At the upper middle and high frequencies, the system did an essentially perfect job of duplicating our “live” music. At times, the mid-range seemed slightly less “full” than that of the original program, but the effect was quite subtle. We applied the same test to our original Rectilinear III (one of the first manufactured) with generally similar results, except that the mid-range was, if anything, slightly *too* full! Clearly, the response variations revealed by this test are minute—perhaps only 1 or 2 dB—since the 3-dB average difference between the two speakers in one or two octaves was able to swing the imbalance in the opposite direction. The dispersion of the Rectilinear III Lowboy was excellent, with no perceptible change in the highest frequencies over a ± 45 -degree angle, and a barely detectable dropoff at 60 degrees off axis. At the time of our original Rectilinear III test, dynamic speaker systems with this order of smoothness and lack of coloration were rare; today there are more, but still not very many. We have no way of knowing what permutations in internal design and sound quality the Rectilinear III has gone through between our original model and the one tested for this report. But the two samples we have tested are among the best-sounding and most “natural” speakers we have heard.

For more information, circle 107 on reader service card

Scott 433 Stereo FM Tuner



● THE new Scott 433 stereo FM tuner is the first consumer product we have tested that incorporates a frequency synthesizer. Digital frequency synthesizers have been used for many years to provide extremely accurate, stable frequency control for sophisticated radio communications systems. The synthesizer can generate any one of a large number of frequencies whose accuracy is determined by a stable quartz-crystal oscillator. The fre-

quency control of an FM tuner is uniquely adaptable to the synthesizer approach. The 88 to 108 MHz FM band contains 100 channels, uniformly spaced at 0.2 MHz intervals. With the advent of low-cost integrated circuits (IC's) specifically designed for this purpose, an economical digital frequency synthesizer for FM tuners has become practical.

The Scott 433 does not have a conventional tuning system—not even a knob. Broadcast stations are scanned and selected electronically, and the tuned frequencies are continuously displayed on four glowing numerical indicator tubes that read to the nearest tenth of a megahertz. There are four basic tuning modes:

1. *Manual scanning.* Pushing a bar on the front panel causes the tuner to sweep the FM band from top to bottom, with the speed of the sweep adjustable by a front-

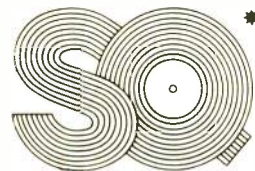
(Continued on page 38)

4 Channel
with

LAFAYETTE LR-440



and
built-in



Decoder Circuitry

Here is the receiver you have been waiting for . . . the deluxe 4-channel Lafayette LR-440. Now you can listen at home to the enveloping richness of thrilling 4-channel sound provided by the new SQ Quadraphonic records, as well as 4-channel 8-track tape cartridges, discrete reel-to-reel tapes, and 4-channel cassettes when available! In addition, you can hear your conventional stereo records, FM broadcasts and tapes in rich derived 4-dimensional sound with the exclusive Lafayette "composer" circuit.

The superb solid-state 4-channel amplifier delivers 200 watts of IHF music power, generous enough for life-like 4-channel sound, or to power two independent stereo systems with remote speakers using two different sound sources such as a tuner and record player. Full 4 and 2-channel controls permits customizing the sound you hear to your room(s) and taste. For those who prefer tape, there are convenient outputs on both front and rear panels. For quiet people, front panel headphone jacks allow stereo or 4-channel headphone listening at full volume without disturbing others.

The LR-440's FM tuner has 1.65 μ V IHF usable sensitivity for superb reception of weak stations without overloading on strong ones. The proven "Acritune" indicator provides instant precise visual tuning without fumbling even in the dark and the illuminated program selector lets you know which source you are listening to. An output jack is included for future adaptation of 4-channel FM multiplex broadcast with an external plug-in adapter when approved by the FCC.

See and hear the magnificent Lafayette LR-440 4-channel receiver at your nearest Lafayette location. At the same time you can choose from Lafayette's large selection of quality speaker systems.

Only \$369.95 plus \$8.65 import surcharge.

*TM Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.

Lafayette Radio Electronics
Dept. 11022, Box 10
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panel slider control. When it reaches the bottom of the band (88 MHz), it snaps back to 108 MHz and repeats the cycle as long as the bar is pressed. When the bar is released, the tuner locks onto the next 0.1-MHz interval, the frequency of which is displayed on four glowing numerical indicator tubes.

2. *Automatic station scanning.* Pushing the STATION button on the panel causes the tuner to start at the high-frequency end of the band and scan downward until a station is received. It then stops and un-mutes (if the interstation-noise muting is in use), and the station program is heard. To move to the next station, the SCAN bar is pressed momentarily.

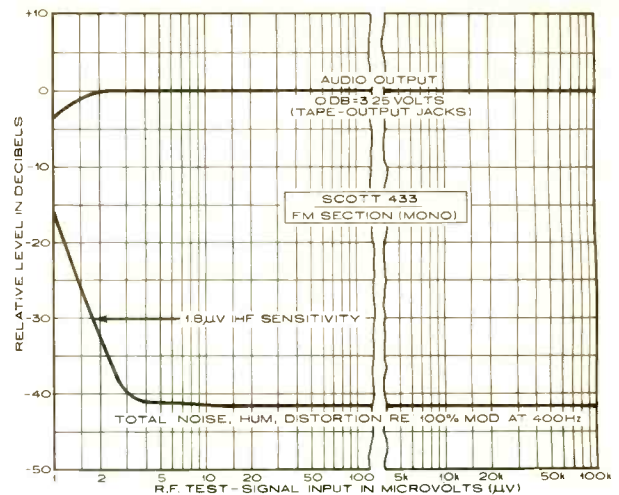
3. *Automatic stereo station scanning.* This is similar to the preceding mode, except that the tuner stops only on stereo transmissions. Actually, it pauses for an instant on each signal, but if no stereo pilot carrier is present it continues to the next one.

4. *Card programming.* The tuner is supplied with one hundred specially punched cards—one for each FM channel. Inserting any card into a slot on the front panel instantly tunes the 433 to that channel, regardless of the other control settings. There is a storage slot for about six cards below the programming slot. Each card is marked with the channel frequency, and has a space for writing in the call letters of the corresponding local station.

Additional front-panel controls include pushbuttons for power, mono/stereo mode, high-cut filter, and muting, as well as a tape-output jack. In the rear are three pairs of audio outputs, individual output-level controls for the two stereo channels, oscilloscope vertical and horizontal outputs for a multipath-distortion display, a detector-circuit output jack (for a possible future four-channel FM decoding system) and an a.c. outlet. Along with the digital frequency display, the front panel has illuminated readouts showing when the tuner is locked to a station, whether it is in stereo, and whether the card reader is in service. Two illuminated meters indicate relative signal strength and multipath distortion. When multipath is not present, both read identically; multipath distortion causes the left meter to read lower or to "kick" downward under modulation. Rotating the antenna will usually eliminate or reduce this effect. The price of the Scott 433 is \$549.90. A walnut cabinet is available for \$26.90.



The plug-in programming card inserts into a front-panel slot below and to the right of the digital-readout tuning indicator. A prepunched card is provided for each of the 100 FM channels.



● *Laboratory Measurements.* The 433 we tested was an early production model. Its IHF sensitivity was 1.8 microvolts—slightly better than rated. Limiting was complete between 3 and 4 microvolts, and the measured distortion was about 0.8 per cent (our generator's residual distortion is about 0.5 per cent). The stereo frequency response was +1, -2 dB from 30 to 13,500 Hz, and down 3.5 dB at 15,000 Hz. Channel separation was typically 25 to 26 dB at middle frequencies, and better than 20 dB from 40 to 10,500 Hz. The signal-to-noise ratio was 69 dB (a good figure), the capture ratio was 2.4 dB, AM rejection was 54 dB, and image rejection was 58 dB. The last figure was the only measurement to deviate significantly from the manufacturer's specification (75 dB), and may not be typical of the performance of regular production models.

● *Comment.* Considered strictly as a stereo FM tuner, the Scott 433 is a fine performer, highly sensitive and very clean-sounding. However, its price could not be justified solely on that basis. Its unique tuning system is the only truly distinctive feature of the 433.

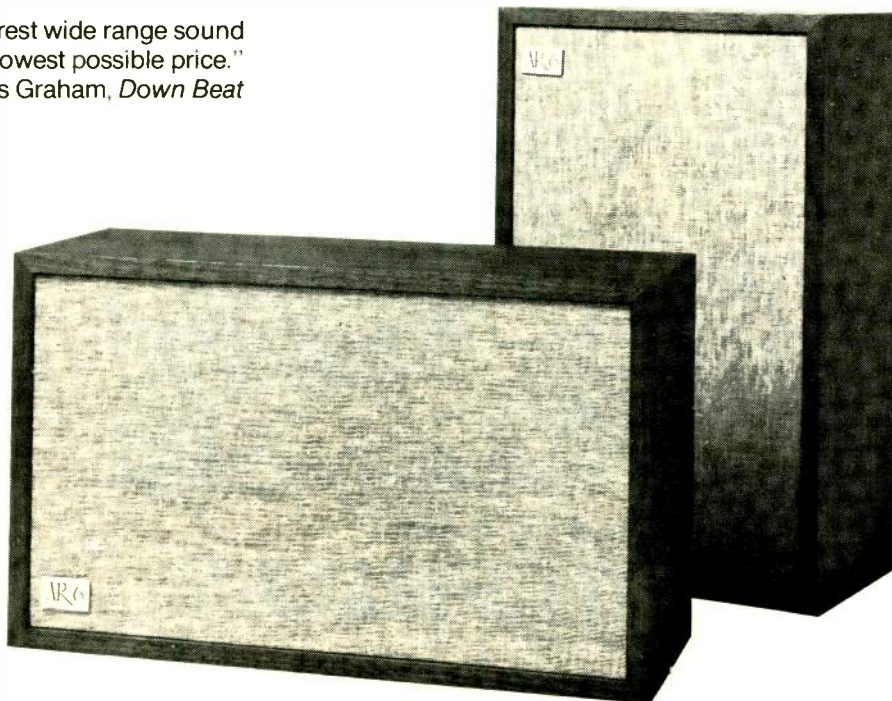
A little practice is required to become used to the manual scan mode, but one soon learns to stop before reaching the desired channel, then "zero" in on it with one or two short taps on the SCAN bar. Overshooting means going to the low-frequency end of the band and starting the scan again from the high end. On the other hand, there is never any need to rock a tuning control back and forth to center a meter pointer or maximize a meter reading. Overall, this tuning method is no more difficult than conventional systems—but it *is* different.

The "station" scan is handy when searching the band without a specific station in mind. However, in a populous area, it can be time-consuming, since the tuner will stop at every one of the perhaps forty or fifty stations it can receive. For most people, including ourselves, the Card Reader will probably prove the ideal way to tune the Scott 433. It is at least as rapid as any manual tuning system we know of, and far more accurate. We particularly enjoyed searching out weak signals (with the aid of an FM station directory) on channels that could not be positively identified on most conventional tuners. Only a couple of tuners we have tested had sufficient dial accuracy and resolution to pinpoint a specific channel; the Scott did it accurately and effortlessly. The 433 is more than just a conversation piece or another fine FM tuner, although it is indeed both of those. It is perhaps the forerunner of many tuners and receivers to come, as IC technology makes the frequency synthesizer even more practical from an economic standpoint.

For more information, circle 108 on reader service card

"AR has done it again . . .

the best quality and purest wide range sound available today, at the lowest possible price."
Charles Graham, *Down Beat*



"... a really terrific performer. The AR-6 has a clean, uncolored, well-balanced response that delivers some of the most natural musical sound yet heard from anything in its size/price class, and which indeed rivals that heard from some speakers costing significantly more."

High Fidelity

"... out-performed a number of considerably larger and far more expensive systems that we have tested in the same way . . . We don't know of many speakers with as good a balance in overall response, and nothing in its size or price class has as good a bass end."

Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, *Stereo Review*

"I am unable to get over the sheer quality represented by the AR-6. To put my wonderment in perspective, perhaps the most telling thing I could add is that I never expected to be saying of any speaker in this price range that it deserves only the finest possible associated components. The AR-6 *does*, and that says a great deal about this product."

Larry Zide, *The American Record Guide*

The price of the AR-6 is \$81 in oiled walnut, \$72 in unfinished pine. Five percent higher in West and Deep South.



Acoustic Research, Inc.

24 Thorndike Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141, Dept. SR-2

Please send complete specifications on the AR-6 to

Name _____

Address _____



The Larabee Report:
ELVIS IN PHILLY

...

WELL, if 1958 was anyone's favorite year, he can take heart: it lives on. To be specific, it lives on and thrives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Which is only natural, since that is also the home of American Bandstand and the Philly Dog, to name only two such American institutions. Which is my roundabout way of saying that Elvis Presley, one of the founding fathers of rock-and-roll music, came to Philadelphia on one leg of an eight-city tour, and the "City of Brotherly Love" was ready for him.

I traveled down as part of an RCA "junket" from New York, via chartered bus and catered box-supper. The concert was held in a Madison Square Garden-like coliseum with the stage at one end. My \$10 ticket was about two-thirds of the way back from the stage, and on the mezzanine. The only "sound system" was a giant speaker complex hung directly in front of the stage. The echo was tremendous. The show opened with a few numbers by the Sweet Inspirations, three black girls who travel and appear with Presley. The echo obliterated their act. Next was a standup comedian (?) who couldn't be heard well either, but the few phrases that filtered through revealed his jokes to be anti-hippie, anti-women's lib, anti-New York, etc., etc. If the crowd had been able to hear, they might have loved him.

By the time the intermission following these "warm-up" acts was over, the people in the stadium were getting restless. I'd say there were more women than men in the audience, but that's a guess. Perhaps they simply made their presence more obvious. The average costume was white plastic boots with satin hot pants (preferably black or purple) or the same boots with a skin-tight mini-skirt. Hair-do's were uniformly teased and bleached, with the French Twist predominant. Lips were red and eyes were turquoise. The gents wore white or black turtleneck sweaters with Madras plaid jackets. Many sported 1958 Elvis hairstyles—high and oily. Not a single black face in the sold-out house that I could see.

Elvis' backup group waited onstage for him—the Sweet Inspirations plus one, a men's quartet, a local twelve-piece brass orchestra, and a five-man "rock" band. The crowd was hushed, the house lights dimmed, and the ensemble on stage launched into *Also sprach Zarathustra* (which was, of course, made famous only a few months ago by the Grand Funk Railroad) for voice, horns, piano, and guitar. At the climax of this introduction, Elvis himself ran onto the stage and posed, Christ-like, until the last chord died away, which was a long time. He wore a white outfit, shirt open to the waist, collar turned up, tight pants, scattered jewels and studs,

complete with a short cape which he held open. The forty-five year-old lady across the aisle from me wept and screamed for joy.

The performance itself was short, highly polished, and gave the audience exactly what it wanted. There was indeed something for everyone—*Love Me Tender*, *Heartbreak Hotel*, *Blue Suede Shoes*, *Hound Dog*, *Are You Lonesome Tonight*, *You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'*, *Poke Salad Annie*, *The Impossible Dream*, *Johnnie B. Goode*, a brassy arrangement of *Bridge over Troubled Water*, and an even bigger-band version of the hymn *How Great Thou Art* (perhaps the crowd's favorite). He sang only one verse and chorus of each number, didn't talk to the people in the audience between songs, moved very fast, and finished each number with a nightclubby "doo-wah" ending. He was in great voice, and even at age thirty-three could probably be one of the best rock 'n' roll singers in the world, if he wanted to.

I remember that his style used to be called "rockabilly," which sounds to me like a sexy mixture of solid Southern country and solid soul/blues. He didn't put much of that potential into the show, but maybe that's not his thing now. Gone were the wild gyrations and obscene movements I'd heard so much about (I was about eight when *Hound Dog* first came out). Instead, a sort of gymnastic ballet accompanied the songs. His timing was excellent—he knew just when to take off his black scarf and throw it to the fans (he did this three times, with scarves furnished by his piano player). He did no encore, and the police announced that "Elvis has left the building" as soon as he had left the stage. No one seemed to mind. He had been on stage about forty minutes, had done most of the old favorites, and, at around \$10 a seat, had made himself and the Colonel a lot of money.

The bus trip was pleasant enough—boxed picnics from the Brasserie, plenty to drink and eat. Bob Adels sat behind me and slept. I chatted with RCA's Herb Helman and a man from *Billboard* on the way back. Herb told personal and funny Colonel Parker stories, and the *Billboard* man got very drunk. I told HH that I worked for Bill Anderson, and he raved about what a sharp editorial staff *SR* has (this after the *High Fidelity* girl beside him had gone to sleep). I also learned that RCA had just signed the Kinks. They were, as you no doubt remember, formerly with Warner Brothers, and HH seemed very excited about getting them. All in all, it was almost like gettin' back to Indiana. N.B.: Elvis has sold upwards of 450,000,000 records.

Susan Larabee

STEREO REVIEW



Introducing a **SONY®** turntable for the lazy perfectionist

If you're a perfectionist, you wince at the thought of stacking records, naked and defenseless, or dropping them onto each other. So you wind up with a single-play component turntable, and hold your breath to raise and lower the arm gently and perfectly.

If you're lazy, though, you resent having to dash across the room at 20-minute intervals to lift the stylus from the run-out groove. And you wind up with an automatic turntable. (Which perfectionists still call "changers.")

But if you're a lazy perfectionist, where can you turn?

To Sony, of course. And to our new PS-5520.

Just give its control lever a lazy little nudge, and things start happening — things to delight the perfectionist in all of us.

The hysteresis motor starts the 12-inch non-magnetic platter turning at precisely 33-1/3 or 45 rpm. (Belt drive keeps wow and

flutter below 0.1%, rumble down 42 dB.) The 12-inch, balanced arm settles precisely in the lead-in groove, its stylus centered by precise anti-skating, and its calibrated tracking force selectable from a maximum of three grams down to a mere fraction of a gram.

For manual operation, there's a cueing lift, of course.

But if you settle the arm down automatically, you can tell your conscience that you're only doing it because the PS-5520's automatic action is so gentle. Gentler,

even than you are when you

hold you breath and brace your elbow.

The Sony PS-5520 turntable. Complete

(less cartridges)

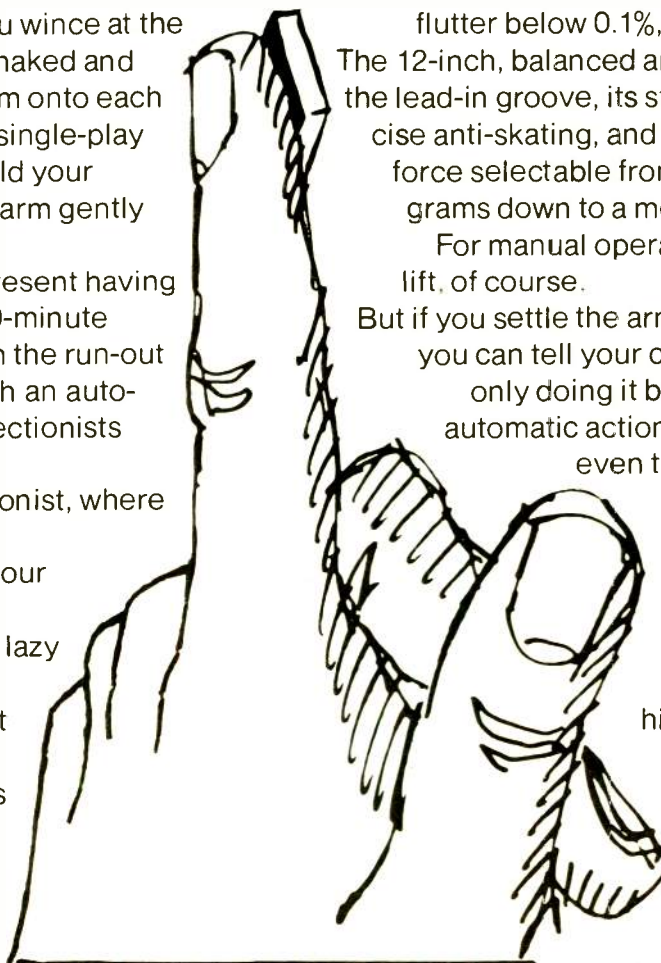
with walnut base and hinged dust-cover. See it at your Sony dealer.

Or write Sony Corporation of America,

47-47 Van Dam

Street, Long Island

City, New York 11101.



New **SONY®** PS-5520 Turntable



LONDON LETTER

THE CARPENTERS

Nice guys don't always finish last

By HENRY PLEASANTS

"YOUNG brother-sister hitmakers, whose gentle harmony, wholesome image and natural unpretentious personalities have crashed through to make them the nation's No. 1 recording team."

It reads like something from a press handout—which it is. But it is also both an accurate and an apt description of the Carpenters. Richard, twenty-four, and Karen, twenty-one, who have had four gold (a million sales) records in the past eighteen months, two 1970 Grammy awards for Best New Group and Best Vocal Duo, and an NBC-TV show of their own.

They were in London recently for a sold-out charity concert at the Royal Albert Hall and a fifty-minute BBC-TV Special before going on to similar outings in Berlin and Amsterdam. And the local musical world hardly knows what to make of them or of their accomplishment. Probably typical was pop critic Chris Welch's notice of their Albert Hall concert in *Melody Maker*:

"It was all sweetness and light; gentle harmonies, pretty songs, neat presentation, well-spoken young kids coming

up with clean-cut professionalism. It sounds ghastly . . . yet, it was nice to hear Karen Carpenter and her brother Richard just singing and playing with their backing band, without pretensions or hang-ups. . . ."

Real nice American kids—in 1971! Friendly people, outgoing, well-mannered, casually but tidily dressed, hard-working—and talented. No protest. No defiance. No porn. No blasphemy. No tripping.

And their music? Nice sound! Burt Bacharach's *Close to You* and Fred Karlin's *For All We Know*, sung softly over Richard's piano and Karen's drumming. The arrangements are all Richard's—imaginative, tasteful, wistful, ingenious. And the style? Listening to their newest album, "Carpenters," it occurred to me that it might be described as a blend of cool jazz, soft rock, Victorian palm garden, and cocktail lounge. Watching them at work, taping their hits for the BBC-TV special, encouraged this impression of an ingenuously eclecticism.

Richard's doodling at the piano between takes offered a clue. One minute

it's *Tea for Two* in the style of Oscar Peterson. The next minute it's Chopin's "Minute" Waltz—not quite in the style of Horowitz. Richard seems aware of the disparity, for in another instant he's practicing scales in tenths and arpeggio flourishes. Karen, meanwhile, is laying down a neat jazz drummer's paradiddle with her hand against her hip.

"We're not in any particular bag," Richard told me during a session break. "As a kid in New Haven, Connecticut, I grew up with my old man's records—Dixieland, Harry James, Red Nichols, Liberace, and Les Paul and Mary Ford. At Yale I studied classical piano and played jazz in the local clubs. Karen tried piano, but lost her heart to the drums.

"And even as professionals we've been into a bit of this and that. First there was the Carpenter Trio—that was in 1965, after the family had moved to Downey, near Los Angeles, and we were both going to Cal State. We won a contest in the Hollywood Bowl and were signed by RCA. But nothing came of it. Then our bass player left to join the Detroit Symphony, and we got together with some Cal State friends to form a pop group, Spectrum.

"We played some good spots—the Troubadour, Disneyland, and Whisky-A-Go-Go. But we were a soft rock group and hard rock was in. Pretty soon we were out. Karen had started singing by that time, and we began experimenting with multi-track vocals and overdubbing. Herb Alpert and A & M Records liked the sound—and here we are!"

It's curious—or possibly not—that it should have been Herb Alpert who sensed the potential of the Carpenters' sound. His Tijuana Brass has had a distinctive sound, too. The public loves it. The critics hate it. And now the Carpenters, too, are getting a taste of the medicine handed out by critics to performers, especially young performers, who please people and are well paid for the pleasure.

"It's a special kind of schmaltz, to be sure," said Noel Coppage of their new album in these pages in October, "and very commercial, doctored up just right for those too young, or too old, or too lazy to get inside the music of the new personal, quiet troubadours—Young, Kristofferson, Taylor, *et al.*, but who like to think they're 'up to date.' I say it's either spinach or Doris Day, and I say the hell with it!"

Well, nice guys, in our anti-heroic, pleasure-despising times, don't win good notices. Louis Armstrong, who gave a lot of pleasure and earned a lot of money, knew the answer. "I learned early in my career," he told an interviewer a couple of years ago, "not to play for critics and other musicians."

New Heathkit AR-1500 stereo receiver... the critics say it all:

"...the most powerful and sensitive receiver we have ever measured..." — JULIAN HIRSCH — *Stereo Review*

"...a stereo receiver easily worth twice the cost (or perhaps even more)..." — *Audio Magazine*

"Great new solid-state stereo receiver kit matches the demands of the most golden of golden ears..."

— *Radio Electronics*

Mr. Hirsch goes on to say:

"The FM tuner section of the AR-1500 was outstandingly sensitive. We measured the IHF sensitivity at 1.4 microvolts, and the limiting curve was the steepest we have ever measured... The FM frequency response was literally perfectly flat from 30 to 15,000 Hz... Image rejection was over 100 dB (our measurement limit)..."

"The AM tuner was a pleasant surprise... It sounded very much like the FM tuner, with distinct sibilants and a quiet background, and was easily the best-sounding AM tuner we have had the pleasure of using..."

"...all input levels can be matched and set for the most effective use of the loudness compensation. This valuable feature is rarely found on high-fidelity receivers and amplifiers..."

"The phono equalization was perfectly accurate (within our measuring tolerances)... The magnetic phono-input sensitivity was adjustable from 0.62 millivolt to about 4.5 millivolts, with a noise level of -66 dB, which is very low... When properly set up, it would be impossible to overload the phono inputs of the AR-1500 with any magnetic cartridge..."

"...it significantly bettered Heath's conservative specifications. Into 8-ohm loads, with both channels driven, the continuous power at clipping level was 81.5 watts per channel. Into 4 ohms it was 133 watts per channel, and even with 16-ohm loads the receiver delivered 46.5 watts per channel. Needless to say, the AR-1500 can drive any speaker we know of, and with power to spare..."

"At 1,000 Hz, harmonic distortion was well under 0.05 per cent from 1 to 75 watts per channel... The IM distortion was under 0.05 per cent at a level of a couple of watts or less, and gradually increased from 0.09 per cent at 10 watts to 0.16 per cent at 75 watts... The heavy power transformer is evidence that there was no skimping in the power supply of the AR-1500, and its performance at the low-frequency extremes clearly sets it apart from most receivers..."

"Virtually all the circuit boards plug into sockets, which are hinged so that boards can be swung out for testing or servicing without shutting off the receiver. An 'extender' cable permits any part of the receiver to be operated 'in the clear' — even the entire power-transistor and heat-sink assembly! The 245-page manual has extensive tests charts that show all voltage and resistance measurements in key circuits as they should appear on the receiver's built-in test meter..."

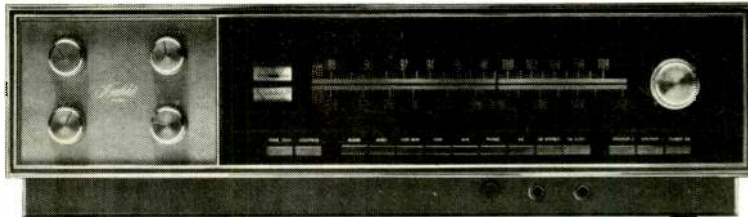
"With their well-known thoroughness, Heath has left little to the builder's imagination, and has assumed no electronic training or knowledge on his part. The separate packaging of all parts for each circuit board subassembly is a major boon..."

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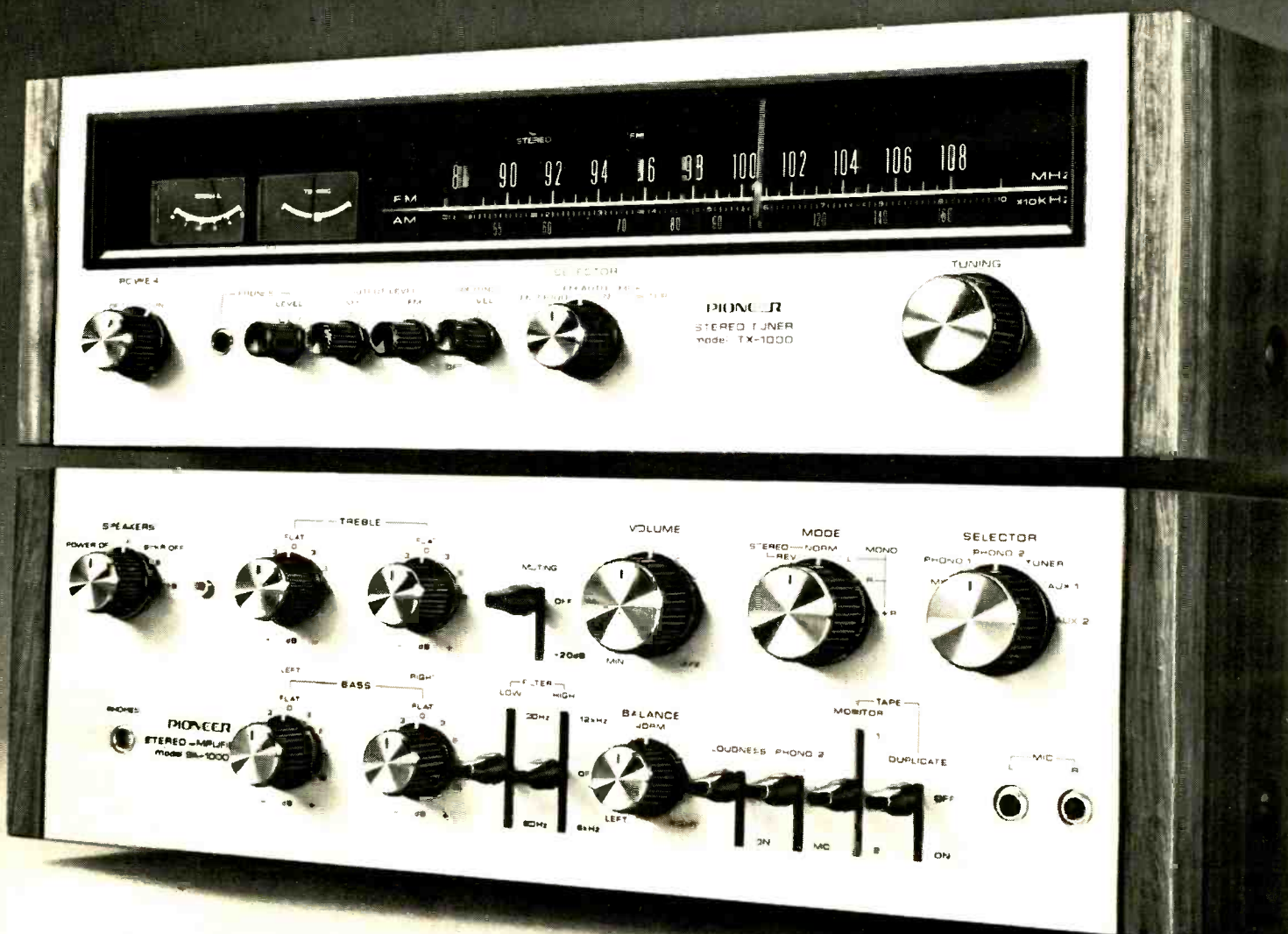
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Johannes Brahms' HAYDN VARIATIONS

THOUGH Brahms was well into his forties before he was ready to entrust a symphony to a waiting musical world, his first work in that form by no means represented his first score for orchestra. Aside from the several symphonies Brahms is thought to have composed and then destroyed, there were the two Serenades for Orchestra, the D Minor Piano Concerto, the *German Requiem*, and the Variations on a Theme by Haydn. The last work, written in 1873 when the composer was forty, came into being simultaneously as a score for two pianos and as an orchestral score. Neither version is a transcription of the other: rather, each represents a perfectly conceived and realized setting in its own medium. The orchestral Variations on a Theme by Haydn was Brahms' last such score before the appearance, four years later, of the First Symphony.

Late in 1870, C.F. Pohl, the devoted biographer of Haydn, discovered among that composer's papers an unpublished set of six divertimentos (*Feldpartiten*) for wind instruments; they were hailed as newly discovered works of the master, who had died sixty years earlier. The second movement of the last of them was a setting of the familiar Austrian folk hymn, the *Chorale St. Antonii*, scored for oboes, low brass, and horns in pairs. It was this chorale that Brahms used as the thematic basis for his Variations on a Theme by Haydn, even to the extent of stating the theme at the opening of the work in the exact instrumentation in which it is heard in the divertimento. Recent scholarship seems to have pretty well destroyed the theory that the divertimento was a work of Haydn's; H.C. Robbins Landon, the most renowned Haydn expert of our time, takes the view that it was written by Haydn's pupil Ignaz Pleyel. In any case, since the theme for Brahms' Variations derives from folk sources no matter who the composer of the divertimento was, Brahms' score might more accurately have been called "Variations on the Saint Anthony Chorale."

The formal structure of the composition consists of the Saint Anthony Chorale, eight variations on it, and a finale in the form of a passacaglia. This finale itself comprises a chain of eighteen varia-

tions, culminating in a triumphant restatement of the Chorale.

More than a dozen different recordings of Brahms' Haydn Variations are currently available, and their recording dates span the past three decades. The oldest of them is Wilhelm Furtwängler's with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (included in the Turnabout album 4346/7, with Furtwängler's reading of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony). A Berlin wartime recording made in 1942, this performance is one of the clearest surviving examples of Furtwängler's hypnotic powers on the podium. At the start of the work the audience sounds restless, and persistent loud coughing intrudes. Very soon, however, the force of Furtwängler's concentration envelops the auditorium, and for the remainder of the performance not another sound is heard from the audience. Given the circumstances of its origin, the recorded sound is still respectable. And there is that unique Furtwänglerian aura that conveys a remarkable tension and passion.

OF the available stereo recordings of the score, there is not really an out-and-out bad one among them, though none has the combination of virtues that makes Furtwängler's mono performance so outstanding. My favorites among them are Eugene Ormandy's (Columbia MS 7298), George Szell's (Columbia MS 6965), and Bruno Walter's (Odyssey Y 30851). Ormandy's is the most opulently played and recorded of the lot, and the conductor introduces a welcome variety as he moves from one variation to the next. Too, his coupling is unusual: both Szell's and Walter's discs have Brahms' *Tragic* and *Academic Festival Overtures* as companions to the Variations, but Ormandy's is backed by the same composer's Variations on a Theme by Handel in the orchestration by the English composer Edmund Rubbra. There will be those who cavil at an orchestral version of Brahms' great piano score, but Rubbra has gone about it tastefully and devotedly, and has added intelligently to the symphonic repertoire.

No reel-to-reel tape performance is listed as available, but Karajan's (DGG K 8928), which has just been deleted, might still be found in shops.



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THE MUSIC OF SCHUBERT

“There has probably never been another
melodist to match him in the history of music.”

By James Goodfriend, Music Editor



FRANZ PETER SCHUBERT died in 1828 at the age of thirty-one. That single biographical fact offers us both an important clue toward understanding his music and the possibility of misunderstanding it entirely. He was the shortest-lived of all the great composers. Had Mozart died at thirty-one (instead of at thirty-five) the world would be the poorer for the lack of *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *La Clemenza di Tito*, the three great last symphonies, the last two piano concertos, and the last three string quartets, not to mention the Requiem. Had Beethoven died at that age, neither *Fidelio* nor the *Missa Solemnis* would have come into existence, his First Symphony would have been also his last, the summit of his concerto writing would have been the Third Piano Concerto, there would have been no quartets after Op. 18, and the piano sonatas would have come to an abrupt end with the “Moonlight” and the “Pastoral.” One could go on, but the point is obvious: no composer today included among the great masters—not even Mendelssohn, much of whose best music was composed early in his life—would enjoy such prestige if his career had been cut off as early as Schubert’s was.

Awareness of the tragedy of that early end provoked Schubert’s friend, the dramatist Franz Grillparzer, to write the epitaph that adorns the Schubert monument: “The art of music here entombed a rich possession, but even far fairer hopes.” In truth, there is every reason to believe that, had the composer lived longer, music would have gained additional masterpieces. But would they have been “better” than some of the works he had already composed? This is the trap: in speculating about accomplishments that might have been, in speaking of “fairer hopes,” we fail to see the body of Schubert’s work as much more than a mere promise of things to come. And that is a totally impractical

and unrealistic view, because in the little time allotted to him the man composed like a demon, and the totality of his works spread out over a longer time span would grace the name of any composer double his age who was fortunate enough to claim them as his own. For, as Shakespeare once told us, “ripeness is all.” Schubert achieved his musical maturity, his “ripeness,” at different times with different media, with songs earliest of all, with instrumental works somewhat later. But he *did* achieve it, and he had, therefore, at least a few years in which to write the music of his manhood, the music that only he could have written.

So the fact that Schubert died at thirty-one does not tell us what a great composer he might have been. He already *was* a great composer. It does, however, tell us something about the style and spirit of his music: youthful. And it explains for us the occasional awkward moments, problems not yet completely solved, inconsistencies, and, to an extent, even the great number of incomplete works (could Schubert have known when he put them aside that he was never to pick them up again?). And it reminds us, when we comment on the crudities of some of the early works, that what we are talking about is the music of a still very young man of twenty who, rather incredibly, had written by then five symphonies, as many operas or operettas, three Masses, sixteen quartets, numerous sonatas, and close to four hundred songs.

SCHUBERT had a nickname among his friends, Kanevas, a name taken from the question he asked about every new acquaintance: “*Kann er was?*” (What can he do? or What’s he good at?). What was Schubert himself good at? To begin with, of course, he had an innate lyrical genius; there has probably never been another melodist to match him in the history of music. A great deal of what

he could or could not do is predicated on that. To the melodist the beginning of musical composition is the creation of a melody that is essentially complete in itself, that should, but for the pejorative shading of the word in America today, be called a "tune." There is a categorical difference between a tune and a fugue subject, or even a Beethoven-style sonata subject: the first, as noted, is a self-supporting entity; the second (and the third) is an outline of possibilities. Schubert's *Die Forelle*, for example, is a tune pure and simple, a complete work of art (with repetitions) in the two-and-one-half or so minutes it takes for its performance. The opening theme of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, however, is a mere motto of four notes, easily identifiable, but of no great musicality in itself. The theme of Bach's "Great" G Minor Fugue, similarly, is a scurrying figuration of no particular memorability without the fugue built on it. But, of course, we know what tremendous musical structures Bach and Beethoven created from these snippets. The melody of *Die Forelle* could not have taken the place of either snippet; it is simply too complete in itself. Virtually all one can do with such a melody, if one wants to take it further, is to write variations on it—which is exactly what Schubert did in the quintet named after the song.

It is for reasons that stem from the above that melodists (1) find their styles early, (2) mature relatively quickly, (3) are usually both prolific and uneven, and (4) are most at home in the shorter forms of music, while their longer works—if they write any—tend to be stringings together of shorter pieces, each, more or less, self-contained. But things are not that simple with Schubert. For one, he was more than just a great melodist, he was a great and innovative harmonist as well, and a master of musical motion. For the second, apart from *Lieder*, the Classical forms were his chosen medium, and the task he set himself was no less than the reconciliation of the lyrical style and the larger forms of music. Therein lies the major reason for the extraordinary length of many of his works in sonata form: the initial building blocks were so big that a movement based upon them had of necessity to be big also. The opening theme of the great B-flat Sonata, for example, is no figuration of ten or a dozen notes, but a full-fledged melody, *molto moderato*, of grandeur and sweep, a full nine measures long in its most atomic form.

Now, once having posited a beautiful melody, the first thing one wants to do with it is play it again, and Schubert does—with great frequency and minor variations. What keeps the typical movement, then, from becoming a mere rhapsod-

ic—and ultimately boring—outpouring is the dynamic and swift movement of the harmony. Schubert was a bold harmonist with certain particular predilections, and the drama that is vital to sonata form he achieves continually through exciting and unexpected shifts of key and harmonic color.

If one were to pick out the single most outstanding harmonic characteristic of Schubert's music, it would unquestionably be his constant interchange of the major and minor of the key in which he is writing. In other words, Schubert, in a work whose key signature is A Major, continually interpolates passages in A Minor, sometimes brief, sometimes extended. There are few works of his maturity in which one cannot hear such a change from major to minor, or from minor to major, in the first thirty seconds. In the G Major Quartet, for example, G Minor is there by the second measure. There are two aspects to this characteristic usage, one literary or coloristic, the second technical. They are, of course, linked.

FIRST the literary. Schubert, for better or for worse, felt the emotional connotations of the major and minor modes: for the former, joy, heroism, light, stability; for the latter, sadness, terror, darkness, instability. These are the customary associations (allowing for no real specificity in the words used but merely the emotional states related to them) of major and minor in the mainstream of Western culture. We all, to some extent, share them, and they are dispelled only by the experience of a broad spectrum of musics of different cultures that operate on different grounds. In his songs, Schubert uses major and minor to underline the emotional state given or implied in the words of the song. It is a perfectly obvious device to us today, but it was not so then. Historically it was a decisive break with the doctrine of one song, one passion, a doctrine that had virtually dominated song writing until then. The break made possible the composition of a kind of music that can portray rapidly shifting moods within a single song. Examples of this are so common in Schubert's songs that it is unnecessary to cite one here. Now, what is going on in the instrumental works is precisely the same thing, but minus the words. Not that there is some unspoken (or unsung) set of words attached to Schubert's instrumental works (as is sometimes the case with Bach's sacred instrumental works), but, rather, emotional states are created, dispelled, and modified through the alternation of major and minor in exactly the same way as if they *were* underlining a text. One hesitates to call it the emotionalization of harmony (for, to an extent, that had

been done before) but, particularly in the non-verbal works, that is precisely what it is.

Now, to the technical. The range of harmonies available to the composer who wishes to remain in a given major key comprises the chords built on the different degrees of the scale of that key. A composer may use chords other than these, but if he does he is either modulating to a new key or trying to make us think he is. The composer writing in a minor key has a similar but different group of harmonies available to him. Since Schubert operated with a continual interchange of major and minor, both sets of options are available to him at almost any moment for harmonic usage. This results in a greatly expanded harmonic vocabulary without the necessity for modulation, and it enables Schubert to shift harmonic gears much faster than, say, Beethoven, who was after long-range tonal constructions rather than short-range harmonic vocabulary.

We must add to this another Schubertian harmonic predilection, what is called the Neapolitan harmonic area. It would be of more trouble than value to define the Neapolitan area here, except to say that it brings another group of seemingly unrelated chords into the major-minor entity of Schubert's harmony. What this vast harmonic arsenal is used for is both the emotional underlining and dramatization of the melodies, and, in the large works in sonata form, the cementing of the form.

What Schubert expresses through these means, of course, is his personality, his own special view of the world. Much has been written about Beethoven's world view, but little about Schubert's. And yet he had a definite point of view, one that he expressed several times in his letters, that can be found in the texts he chose to set, and whose influence can be felt in his music, particularly in the way he sets certain lyrics.

"The beauty of things was born before eyes and sufficient to itself; the heartbreaking beauty Will remain when there is no heart to break for it."

No, Schubert did not set those lines, nor were they written by any poet of Schubert's time. They are, in fact, by a poet of our own time, the late Robinson Jeffers. And yet the philosophical position they express goes back to the Greeks, and Schubert shares it. The external world is the real one. Man is merely the "wanderer" in a world he never made and which he knows will survive him. He cannot influence the course of events; better to take the joys and sorrows as they come and find in them the richness and the wonder of life. Schubert's joy is with love; his sorrow is with loss in all its forms. And running through his music is a thread of musical anxiety, closely associated with a kind of transformation of dance or café music, almost neurotic in its intensity. It is very like similar streaks in Berg and Mahler, whose philosophical positions are probably very much the same, but are heightened emotionally by the heat of late Romanticism. In every way it is a totally different world view from Beethoven's. Though Schubert was nearly contemporaneous with Beethoven, his music is very much the other side of the coin.

EVEN the least experienced explorer of Schubert is probably already familiar with at least a few of his works: the "Unfinished" Symphony, *Die Forelle* (both song and quintet), *An Sylvia*, *Ständchen*, the music for *Rosamunde*. Nevertheless, to begin a real exploration of his music it would be best to begin with a work that is at once early, simple, brief, and basic. Johannes Brahms would certainly have recommended one of the little eight- or sixteen-measure dance tunes, for the study of those dances was his common directive to composers who came to him for advice. There are incredibly



The Kohlmarkt, an important commercial street in the center of Vienna, housed the offices of Artaria and Company, publishers of Beethoven's early works and some of Schubert's later ones. In contrast to Beethoven, Schubert was unfortunate in his dealings with publishers and quite frequently sold all rights to his compositions for far less than their commercial value even then.

beautiful things in some of them, and one can hear there in its most elemental form the material of many of Schubert's greatest works. But perhaps it would be better to begin with something that possesses another characteristic as well: that of being a masterpiece.

And so, an ideal point of departure is Schubert's first masterpiece, composed in 1814, the song *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (D. 118). The text is from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust* (the first part of which had appeared in 1808), and Schubert's song was its first musical setting. The words are those of Gretchen, who sits spinning at her wheel pining for Faust ("My peace is gone, my heart is heavy . . ."). The spinning wheel is never actually mentioned in the text, but Schubert brings it into musical existence in the piano part. The characteristic whirring figuration is set at the beginning and treated purely musically as an accompaniment figure until the words, "And ah! his kiss!" Schubert (as both Sir Donald Tovey and Sir Hubert Parry have pointed out) not only understood, at the age of seventeen, that that was the emotional and psychological climax of the song, but also realized that at that point the spinning wheel must stop, to begin again only with difficulty. Another point: above the whirring accompaniment, the vocal line is passionate and sensuous and it continually leads the harmony toward modulation and chromatic changes. But the spinning wheel figure brakes the harmonic movement, and just as one thinks a modulation is about to be made, the accompaniment dryly swings it back to where it was before. Thus there is continual tension between voice and piano. One hears this unconsciously; perhaps Schubert even wrote it unconsciously. And though some interpreters may miss it, it is what makes *Gretchen* a masterpiece, it is what differentiates the Schubertian *lied* from virtually all solo song written before it.

Schubert wrote about six hundred *Lieder*. Although their quality and significance varies, there are quite enough great ones to satisfy the most gluttonous appetite. And it is no wonder that Schubert's first masterpiece was a song, because the *Lied* as we understand it today was his development, quite as much as the string quartet was Haydn's. The *Lied* depends upon three things almost equally: the text, the singer, and the piano. It was the flowering of German Romantic poetry in the early years of the nineteenth century that first attracted Schubert. It was his own melodic gift and his understanding of the piano that enabled him to develop the *Lied* to a point of rich complexity and sophistication, which established song, for the first



SCHUBERT LIEDER: A PLACE TO START

IF ONE is to go out looking for Schubert, he will be found most easily and quickly in his songs. To say that those in the list below are irresistible is a statement an enthusiast will find as incontrovertible as a truism. For a Schubert novice, however, it may sound suspiciously like just more unsupported high-brow hyperbole. But it isn't so. The songs have long ago proved themselves. It is up to the individual to come to them.

Opus numbers in Schubert signify only the order in which his works were first published, and since so few were published in his lifetime (and even those sometimes years after they were written), the opus numbers are useless for anything more than distinguishing two works in the same media and key from one another. They are still commonly used with the piano works, a little less commonly with the chamber works. Instead we have the "D" numbers, which refer to the *Schubert Thematic Catalog* compiled by Otto Erich Deutsch. These numbers are given on the basis of chronological order of composition of the works and run to 998, the last thirty-three numbers of which are assigned to undatable works. The joyous *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* (D. 965), then, is Schubert's last composition.

- Gretchen am Spinnrade* (D. 118)
- Wanderers Nachtlied* (first setting, D. 224)
- Heidenröslein* (D. 257)
- Erkönig* (D. 328)
- An mein Clavier* (D. 342)
- Lied eines Schiffers an die Dioskuren* (D. 360)
- Am Bach im Frühling* (D. 361)
- Der Wanderer* (D. 493)
- Tod und das Mädchen* (D. 531)
- An die Musik* (D. 547)
- Die Forelle* (D. 550)
- Sei mir gegrüsst* (D. 741)
- Die Liebe hat gelogen* (D. 751)
- Nachtviolen* (D. 752)
- Musensohn* (D. 764)
- Wanderers Nachtlied* (second setting, D. 768)
- Auf dem Wasser zu singen* (D. 774)
- Du bist die Ruh* (D. 776)
- Auflösung* (D. 807)
- Nacht und Träume* (D. 827)
- Die junge Nonne* (D. 828)
- Der Wanderer an den Mond* (D. 870)
- Im Frühling* (D. 882)
- Das Lied im Grünen* (D. 917)
- Des Fischers Liebesglück* (D. 933)
- Schwanengesang* (D. 957, fourteen individual songs)
- Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* (D. 965)

time since the early years of the seventeenth century, as a *major* form of the musical art.

Schubert's most frequent method of writing an accompaniment is to find some dominant image in the poem and *imply* it in the piano part, while leaving the voice free to be dramatic or lyrical as needed. It is exactly this he does in *Gretchen*. In *Erlkönig* it is the horse's hooves that inspire the musical underpinning, in *Ständchen* the plucked guitar, in *Der Jüngling am Bache* the movement of the brook. In other songs the accompaniment is less directly representational and more a thing of pure mood. In *Ganymed* the "splendor of the morning" is so beautifully set by the piano's opening measures that the vocal line seems almost the lesser partner. From this description it should be clear that Schubert chose the poems he set not for their literary quality (though many of his texts *are* great poetry), but for the musical possibilities he saw in them. The two are hardly mutually exclusive, but they also have little to do with one another.

Though most of Schubert's songs are entities, there are two great exceptions: the song cycles *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Die Winterreise*. (*Schwanengesang* is not a cycle but a publisher's compilation.) Although almost any song from either of these cycles can make its effect when sung singly, the impact of the full cycle is far greater than any of its parts. Both are about unrequited love (perhaps Schubert's most-chosen subject), but *Winterreise* is something besides; it is an allegory of man's fate, Romantic, yes, but neither pathetic nor melodramatic. Schubert himself considered its songs the best he wrote. Both cycles, certainly, are very great masterpieces, and one can almost believe that it is for the experience of listening at home to works like these that phonographs were invented and printed texts with translations were developed.

Schubert's most neglected music, apart from his operas, is his choral music. Of the operas there is little to say; they are so neglected that it is next to impossible to hear enough of them to find out what is really wrong with them. Critics are unanimous in condemning the librettos as execrable. But surely Schubert, who attempted fifteen such works, must have lacked something if he could continually find such impossible librettos and set to work on them without further ado. Though he studied for a time with Salieri (who was a practical man of the theater, if no great composer), Schubert was probably innocent of the mechanics of stage drama. He might eventually have solved the problem had he lived.

The choral music is of two kinds: sacred and

secular. The former comprises seven Masses (one with German text) and some smaller works, including a German Requiem which Schubert allowed his brother to pass off as his own in the hopes of getting a better teaching position. The Masses are generally frowned on today on the grounds that Schubert's heart wasn't in them. Schubert was, certainly, no more than a lip-service Catholic, and obviously found the Mass as poetry less interesting than the works of his poet friends. Still, the early G Major Mass (D. 167) is utterly graceful and charming music, and the Mass in B-flat (D. 324) has some wonderful heaven-storming moments. The later works in A-flat (D. 678) and E-flat (D. 950) contain moments of unearthly beauty (for example, the *Sanctus* of the former), but there is something unyielding about them, a formality of utterance that seems to point up the lack of real connection between text and music.

No such problem is evident in the secular music. The most important work is the *Gesang der Geister über den Wassern* (*Song of the Spirits over the Water*) for male voices, violas, cellos, and bass, a piece rarely given the attention it deserves. Other works well worth getting to know are the *Nachtgesang im Walde* (D. 913) for male voices and horns; the choral *Ständchen* (D. 921, not the same as the solo song) for contralto solo, female voices, and piano; *Gott in der Natur* (D. 757) for female voices and obbligato piano; *Nachthelle* (D. 892) for tenor solo, male voices, and piano; and *Coronach* (D. 836, on the Walter Scott poem) for female voices and piano. Schubert had a natural gift for choral writing, and poetry could fire his imagination quite as highly in that medium as in solo song.

SCHUBERT'S second, more Classical, musical life exists in his instrumental music. In his songs and much of the choral music he is unquestionably a Romantic composer, but instrumental music finds him working in Classical forms without extra-musical titles (the Tragic Symphony is the lone exception), without extra-musical references, without programs. The impetus of the musical material itself is Romantic, but Schubert's self-imposed task was to reconcile it to Classical procedures. There are only a few instrumental works of his whose *formal* nature would have come as a surprise to, say, Haydn. The preludes, nocturnes, and polonaises of Chopin, the pianistic tone poems (complete with literary references) of Schumann are not really in evidence. Schubert's dances are just that—dances, not Romanticized dance forms. Only the *Impromptus*, the *Moments musicaux*, and the "Wanderer" Fantasy show an inclination

to dispose of the forms that preoccupied his Classical predecessors.

Probably the earliest Schubert composition we possess today is a fragment of a string quartet, written in 1810. From that time until he died he composed a large amount of chamber music (the Schubert family had its own quartet, and young Franz kept it supplied with new compositions). Predictably, however, Schubert's important chamber music is almost entirely that which he composed toward the end of his life. The major works are four quartets, in C Minor (D. 703, the "*Quartettsatz*"), A Minor (D. 804), D Minor (D. 810, called "Death and the Maiden" because the second movement consists of variations on that song), and G Major (D. 887); two trios with piano, in B-flat, Op. 99 (D. 898), and E-flat, Op. 100 (D. 929); two quintets, the famous "Trout" (D. 667), and the great String Quintet in C Major (D. 956); and an Octet in F (D. 803).

The formal structure of all these works is Classical; that is, the first movements and sometimes the last are in sonata form, the slow movement is placed second, and the third movement is a minuet or scherzo with trio. (The "Trout" and the Octet are divertimento-type pieces and therefore contain extra movements.) The formal problems that defeated Schubert in the early works are now largely resolved, sometimes with striking effect, as in the G Major Quartet, where the *fortissimo* major-minor opening of the exposition returns *pianissimo* minor-major in the recapitulation. But it is the content more than the form that overwhelms us in these works, Schubert's unbelievable ability to come up continually with sensuous melodies, striking harmonic movement, irresistible motion, exciting passagework, and exquisite—sometimes almost heartbreaking—variations on his themes (as in the slow movement of the D Minor Quartet).

Perhaps the single best introduction to the chamber works is the *Quartettsatz* (the title means only "quartet movement," for this is another of the incomplete works; Schubert wrote forty-one measures of an Andante to follow it and then stopped), for it has all the characteristics, including the violent changes of mood through major-minor alternation. Probably the greatest of the works is the C Major Quintet, in which the addition of a second cello heightens another Schubertian characteristic: the concern for sonority. In his symphonies Schubert was a competent orchestrator rather than an inspired one, but not enough has been said about his ability to extract the maximum range of tone color from his chamber groupings. Sound in itself was important to him and his genius for varying it

through chord spacings is evident in his writing for strings and, also, for piano.

Schubert also wrote four sonatas for violin and piano, three of them grouped together and unfortunately cursed by their publisher with the unauthorized title of "sonatinas"; a *Rondo Brillant*, the closest he ever came to the sort of piece a virtuoso would cotton to; and a Fantasy, which includes variations on the song *Sei mir gegrüsst*. All are worth getting to know, but the Sonata in A Major (D. 574, sometimes called the "Duo") is probably the finest of the group. Modernists may be interested to know that the Scherzo-Trio of that work begins with a perfect twelve-tone row (of course, it is something else too: a simple chromatic scale). And one must mention the sonata (D. 821) Schubert wrote for that short-lived hybrid instrument, the arpeggione, a work now always played on the cello. It is not the most sublime Schubert, but it is certainly one of the better Romantic pieces in the cello repertoire.

SCHUBERT'S orchestral works are limited to symphonies, overtures, two sets of dances, and theater music. Of the last, only the well-known *Rosamunde* music is important, and the overtures are also minor pieces. The symphonies, though nine in number (one was completed by Schubert only in sketch, and there are two others, not included among the nine, one existing in a piano sketch, the other the lost, so-called "Gastein" Symphony) are not comparable to Beethoven's nine. The reason is simple: six of them were written before the composer was twenty-one, whereas Beethoven's first did not appear until he was thirty. The important symphonies are the Eighth (D. 759, the "Unfinished") and the Ninth (D. 944), the former one of the most successful matings of broad lyrical material with the architectural necessities of symphonic form (and the source of possibly the best-known tune in all of classical music), the latter a giant among symphonies, worthy of standing with the greatest creations of the greatest masters. It is no wonder that the C Major Symphony was not understood by musicians of its time. It was very definitely a new music, one in which, to give a single example, the great melodist Schubert composed a finale in which melody plays little part. It is the sheer momentum of this finale that carries it, like some voyager to the stars, to its destination; the motion itself is the melody. Of the earlier symphonies, No. 5 in B-flat (D. 485) is an absolute charmer, and No. 2, also in B-flat (D. 125) is a rather winning piece to have been composed by an eighteen-year-old.



Moritz von Schwind's famous drawing from life of a "Schubert evening" at the home of Josef von Spaun shows Schubert at the piano, accompanying the singing of his first great interpreter, the baritone Johann Michael Vogl. The audience that surrounds the two is rapt but small in number, a personification of Schubert's success in the musical world.

This brings us to the keyboard music, with the songs and the chamber works among Schubert's most important media. There is a good amount of music for piano duet, of which the *Grand Duo* (D. 812), the *Divertissement à la hongroise* (D. 818), and a perfectly marvellous and exhilarating pair of little pieces, the two *Marches caractéristiques* (D. 886) are certainly worth getting to know. But it is the music for piano solo, particularly the sonatas, that show Schubert off for the great composer he was.

Until recently, it has been extraordinarily difficult to get a pianist interested in Schubert sonatas. The delightful miniatures of the *Moments musicaux* (D. 780), the glorious lyricism of the *Impromptus* (D. 899 and 935), and even the "*Wanderer*" Fantasy (D. 760) perhaps, but hardly ever the sonatas. Back in the days of 78's, Artur Schnabel, Myra Hess, and Lili Kraus were the only major pianists to record any of them (and then only six among them). The reasons are not hard to find. First of all, the sonatas, for the most part, are long—thirty to forty-five minutes in many cases. Second, they are basically anti-virtuosic in nature, meaning not that they are easy, but, quite the opposite, that they are exceedingly difficult and don't particularly sound it (whereas the nature of virtuosic music is to sound more difficult than it really is). The third thing against the sonatas is that none of them has a name, a nice poetic handle on which to focus public attention. One could do a study on the popularity of works with nicknames as opposed to the relative non-popularity of works without them—if the whole matter were not so obvious (and so ridiculous) already. To complicate matters, Schubert wrote three of his sonatas in A Minor and two in A Major; and even critics have been known to confuse one with another.

Yet many of the sonatas are great music on their own terms, owing little or nothing to either Beethoven or Mozart in their formal construction or their style of pianistic technique. One should know the magnificent sonorities of the Sonata in B-flat (D. 959), and the musical humor of its last movement; the graceful, youthful, and completely natural lyricism of the Sonata in A Major, Op. 120 (D. 664), almost a pianistic equivalent of the Symphony No. 5 in B-flat; two of the A Minor Sonatas, Op. 143 (D. 784) and Op. 42 (D. 845), both for their construction and for the kaleidoscope of moods they portray; the unfinished Sonata in C Major (D. 613) for the subtlety and range of its harmonic constructions; and the Sonata in D Major, Op. 53 (D. 850) for a slow movement of "heavenly length" (Schumann's phrase about another Schubert work) and its even more heavenly faceting and adornment of a simple, though lovely, melody.

Schubert gave us so much great and beautiful music that it is difficult to believe that his life was as short and unhappy as we know it was. In him we can see a prime example of the Romantic notion that the artist must suffer for his art. That artists *do* suffer is incontrovertible; that they *have to* is open to question. What is usually given to great artists to sustain them is the knowledge, at some point in their lives, of their own greatness. Schubert's personal shyness, his awe of Beethoven, his lack of conspicuous material success, his view of existence and reality all militated against this. Perhaps he never really knew how good he was. And yet the music is there. Trying to prove its greatness in words is like trying to prove the existence of God, but it endures time like the very mountains and lakes of the physical world whose permanence Schubert regarded with such awe.

THE INFIDELITY OF FM

If FM's promise of broadcast sound with high-fidelity quality has not been completely broken, it is at least quite seriously bent. Technical Editor Larry Klein calls attention to a few of the little-known reasons why.



IT IS AN incontrovertible fact that, for many Americans, the essential promise of FM—broadcast sound *with high fidelity*—is all too seldom realized in the home. In many cases, the sound quality available on the FM band is only marginally better than that provided by equivalent AM broadcasts. Stations are received, but none too clearly; distortion, noise, and severe limitations in both frequency response and dynamic range are the rule rather than the exception.

Why, at this late date in radio technology, should this be so? There are many interrelated reasons for the poor audio quality heard on FM. By and large the broadcast engineers aren't at fault. For every one of them who doesn't give a damn about the quality of the audio signal he is broadcasting there is another who is sincerely concerned. But this concerned individual may find his effective influence limited by the quality of the audio equipment he must work with, by a management that would spend money on many other things before it would upgrade that equipment, or perhaps even by his own lack of audio-frequency (as distinct from radio-frequency) know-how. In addition, there is a very important role, for better or for worse, played by the Federal Communications Commission not only in what we hear over FM, but in how we hear it.

The human ear has a dynamic range of about 120 dB, which means that it can perceive sounds that span a loudness ratio of a million to one. This 120-dB range, incidentally, is wider than any that can be recorded, reproduced, or broadcast by present-day electronic techniques. In practice, the loud-to-soft range of an electronic signal is limited on the soft end by the need to override the electrical noise inherent in the system, and on the loud

end by the necessity of avoiding overload (or, more accurately, overdrive) distortion in the circuit components that make up the signal path. Any attempt to transmit a dynamic range of even 60 dB will result in the softest passages' being buried in hum and hiss, no matter how good the equipment at the listening end. (Dolbyizing FM transmissions will help, but that delightful prospect is still some way off.) Some classical-music FM stations operated by (and for) audio purists do try for a "wide" dynamic range of at least 30 dB, which means there will be perhaps only 3 per cent modulation on quiet passages. But because of this low level of modulation, there will then be a severe limitation placed on the distance a given tuner and antenna can be from the transmitter and still receive a reasonably noise-free signal. In other words, steps taken by a station to increase its fidelity to the music's dynamic range result in a noisier signal for distant listeners. A station might be willing to sacrifice some of its area of coverage if it did not simultaneously lose listeners and hence advertisers. As far as the program-rating services are concerned, the one purist listener whose stereo system is permanently tuned to the sound of a low-modulation classical station counts exactly a tenth as much as the ten other listeners whose table-model radios are bringing them a dynamically compressed "easy listening" or "top-40" program format. It is, in other words, largely a game of numbers, of which the broadcast radius of the station is an important one. The mathematics of the marketplace are therefore inextricably intertwined with the question of fidelity in FM broadcasting.

THE Federal Communications Commission is that government body which sets the rules for all

forms of radio and TV broadcasting. With the intent of keeping the noise of FM broadcasts and FM reception at a reasonably low level, it has established a standard pre-emphasis equalization (less technically, a high-frequency boost) that is applied to the audio signal of all FM broadcasts (see Figure 1 below). The higher audio frequencies are boosted before they are fed into the transmitter. If you were to hear them at that point they would sound almost exactly as though you had turned your treble tone control all the way up. The audio signal is broadcast in this pre-emphasized state, but when it is received, your tuner's de-emphasis circuit cuts the highs back to their original level. The purpose of this high-frequency hanky-panky becomes clear when we learn that the high-frequency noise (hiss) that has intruded during the broadcast and reception processes is cut back 10 to 15 dB along with the pre-emphasized highs. The process is almost exactly analogous to the high-frequency pre-emphasis (or equalization) applied to an audio signal before it is engraved on an LP disc, the rules for this pre-emphasis having been set up by the Recording Industry Association of America rather than the FCC. (All home record playback systems have the RIAA playback equalization built in to restore the original high-frequency balance and simultaneously diminish whatever high-frequency noise has intruded during cutting, pressing, and playing of the record.)

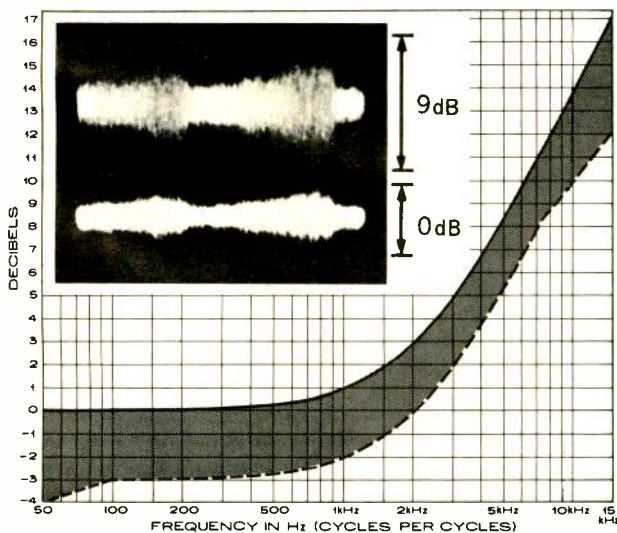
Every silver lining has its cloud, however, and the trouble with the pre-emphasis/de-emphasis method of eliminating hiss is high-frequency over-

load. The source of the overload is almost self-evident, and its cure results in yet another compromise of fidelity. Suppose the station is playing a record or tape which includes an extended riff on drums and cymbals. If the audio signal level is set to provide full (100 per cent) modulation for the lower audio frequencies (the drums), the transmitter's over-modulation warning light will inevitably be triggered as soon as there are strong high-frequency signals present (the cymbals). This is not surprising when you realize that the station's audio pre-emphasis circuit is boosting the highest frequencies perhaps 15 dB or so. As a result, the transmitted signal is frequency-modulated far in excess of what is allowed by the FCC as well as beyond what can be transmitted or received without distortion. Overmodulation "spillover" creates interference with adjacent stations and provokes punitive fines from the FCC, whose monitors are on the alert for just such abuse of the airwaves. So the cautious engineer will cut back on the overall audio level being fed to his transmitter, thereby risking signal-to-noise-ratio problems.

This dilemma of the FM broadcaster is best met by a type of sophisticated electronic device (such as CBS' FM Volumax) designed specifically to cope with pre-emphasis problems. These units respond continuously to the high-frequency signal level *before* the pre-emphasis stage. The audio-frequency response is kept flat for normal low-level program material, but as the volume level and high-frequency content of the program increase, an automatic and continuously variable treble-attenuation circuit comes into action. In effect, there is a varying cancellation of the pre-emphasis boost which, if used with discretion, can be aesthetically unobjectionable. The threshold of action for this device can be set so that it serves only as an overmodulation guard—as protection against audio "spills"—or it can be adjusted for medium or heavy treble-gain reduction or compression. The more compression, the less the dynamic range, but the greater the average audio level. When you tune across the FM dial, a low-power station with heavy compression could sound much louder than a high-power station that avoids limiting. It is an unhappy fact of audio life that, in the opinion of many broadcasters, limitation of dynamic range and the highest treble frequencies is a small price to pay for being the loudest FM broadcast station in the neighborhood.

Considering all factors, perhaps those FM broadcasters who are advocating the gradual phasing out of audio pre- and de-emphasis have a point. Many broadcast engineers are of the opinion that

Fig. 1. The FM pre-emphasis curve and the permissible limit of deviation from it are shown by the solid line and shaded area. The effect on a cymbal crash is shown in the scope photo. Using the normal peaks as the 0-dB reference, pre-emphasis results in a 9-dB boost. To transmit this signal without overmodulation, modulation level would have to be reduced to 35 percent.



Scope photo courtesy 'BS Labs

the new low-distortion, low-noise transmitters, combined with improvements in home receiver circuits, make pre-emphasis, if not unnecessary, at least a lot less important than it once was. It appears that a good compromise at this point in time would be to switch to the British standard, which uses a 50-microsecond boost/cut arrangement. This lower level of pre-transmission boost would somewhat ease the problems of the broadcasters without rendering current FM receivers obsolete. The slight loss of brightness heard when a 50-microsecond pre-emphasized broadcast is listened to on one of today's 75-microsecond de-emphasized FM sets would probably go unnoticed on most radios, and it could easily be compensated for with a little treble tone-control boost on component sets.

The use of the Dolby noise-reduction technique along with less (or no) pre-emphasis is another possibility. Dolby-encoded broadcasts boost the *low-level* or "soft" highs, as opposed to the current pre-emphasis technique, which boosts *both* the low-level and the high-level ("loud") high frequencies. Dolby broadcasts without pre-emphasis could maintain approximately the same signal-to-hiss ratio as the pre-emphasis/de-emphasis technique and at the same time eliminate the overload problem. However, current receivers with the standard de-emphasis built in would sound rather dull when playing a non-pre-emphasized flat-frequency FM broadcast.

Another solution to the boost/cut problem is the incorporation of a continuously variable de-emphasis control on the front panel of all new FM receivers and radios. The control, which would be quite inexpensive to add, would have markings for 75 microseconds (normal), 100 microseconds (which would help equalize Dolby broadcasts heard without a Dolby adapter and cut back hiss on noisy broadcasts), and 50 microseconds (to restore some of the highs lost through compression and adapt the tuner, when required, to the European de-emphasis standard). The control could also be set to eliminate the de-emphasis completely, thus anticipating a possible move in one direction or the other by the FCC—whose endorsement of such a control for all new FM sets would certainly ease any de-emphasis transition period. Some manufacturers with whom I have discussed the de-emphasis control have expressed interest, and it may well appear on the control panel of some of next year's components.

There are many other reasons why stations have superior or inferior audio quality, of course. Among the more important factors are the efficiency and the regularity of maintenance procedures,

WHAT THE FCC REQUIRES: MINIMUM BROADCASTING SPECS

- *Distortion:*

50–100 Hz	3.5 per cent
100–7,500 Hz	2.5 per cent
7,500–15,000 Hz	3.0 per cent

(all measurements made at 25, 50, and 100 per cent modulation)

- *Noise:*

FM noise, 50–15,000 Hz	60 dB below 100 per cent modulation at 400 Hz
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AM noise, 50–15,000 Hz	50 dB below 100 per cent modulation
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- *Stereo Separation:*

29.7 dB between 50 and 15,000 Hz

Distortion and noise are measured with de-emphasis; frequency response is measured without de-emphasis. Measurements are made on a signal taken off the air overall from microphone pre-amplifier input through the total system without limiting or compression.

the quality of the engineers who execute them, and the quality of the equipment they execute them upon. Since the FCC requires that each station make an audio "proof of performance" test each year and keep the results on file, one might imagine that the audio signal quality would meet some minimum standard. In a sense it does (see accompanying box), but the required measurements do *not* include the entire audio chain. For example, the frequency response (after pre-emphasis) of the station's equipment has to fall within the limits shown by the two curves in Figure 1. This allows the station to be down about 3 dB or so at 10,000 Hz (after de-emphasis) and still be within FCC specifications. However, there are no specifications at all for the frequency responses of the phono cartridges or the tape players used in broadcast. Thus, even if a station meets the FCC minimum audio specifications (which, incidentally, in most areas are far below what an audiophile would find acceptable in his own installation), there is no requirement that the tape and record-playing equipment conform to *any* standard for frequency response and distortion. It is pertinent that the audio standards that do exist were established in the Forties, and except for stereo updating, have since undergone only minor changes. This is one of the reasons why upgrading your FM tuner will not necessarily provide a cleaner, wider-range signal from

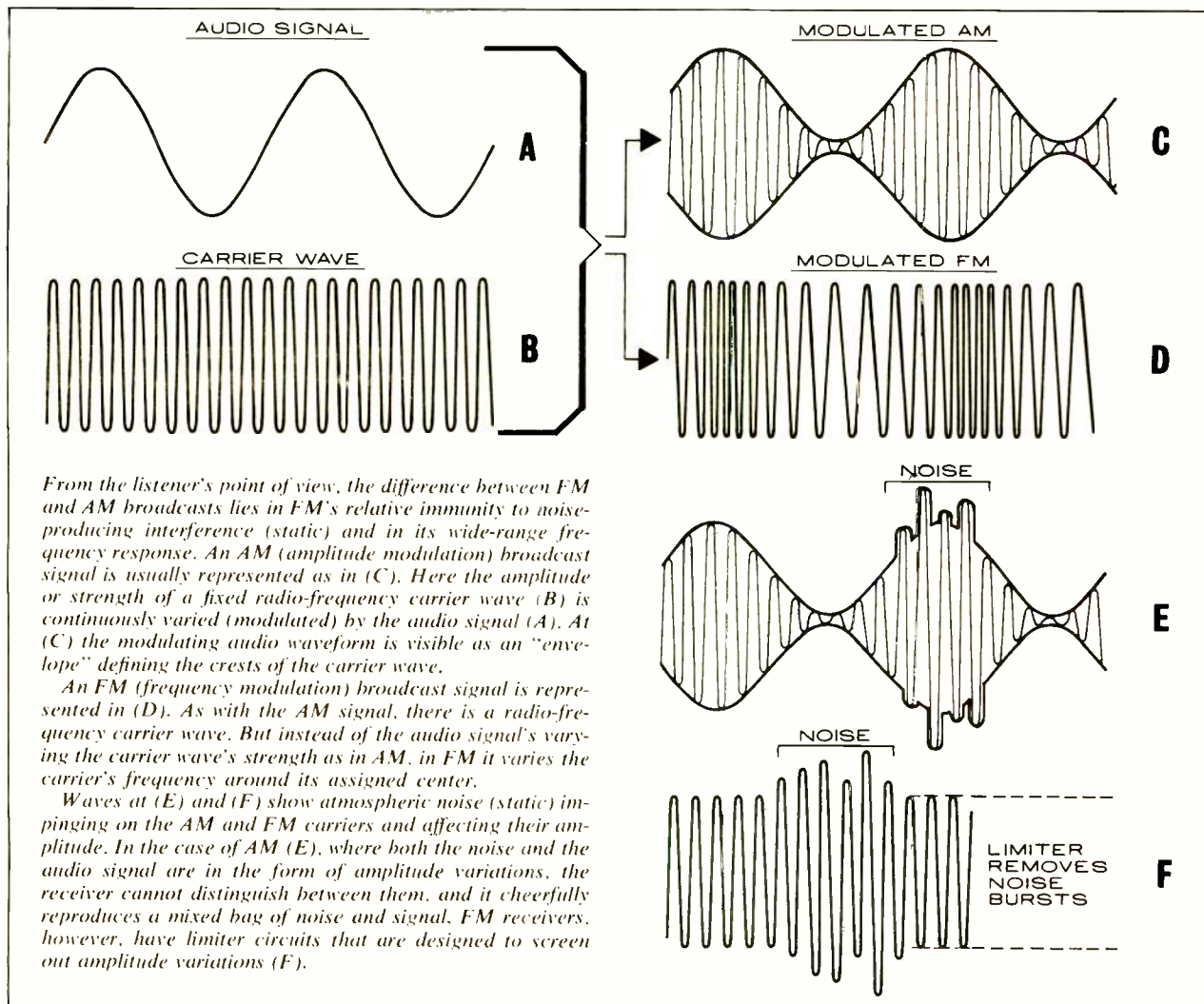
most stations. The relevant specifications of your tuner are probably far superior to those of the average broadcast station's audio equipment.

Sometimes a beautifully maintained and well-equipped station (and there are such) would sound better but for the fact that it uses a syndicated music-library service. Some of the music services have had the same duplication problems that trouble all suppliers of pre-recorded tape: hiss, distortion, and dropouts. In general, the station that dubs its own discs onto tape is likely to sound better than one that subscribes to a syndicated tape-music library.

Outside the very large metropolitan areas, the lines provided by telephone companies to link a station's studio with its FM transmitter (usually at a remote location) are a frequent cause of poor audio quality. Line hum and dialing clicks come through at odd times for no apparent reason. Phasing problems occur. In addition, high frequencies are attenuated by the telephone lines, and the

phone company has to route the audio through peaking amplifiers in an attempt—not always successful—to compensate. More and more stations are remedying the situation by installing microwave radio-transmission links between their studios and transmitters: the performance of these links is generally far superior to that delivered by the telephone lines.

What it all comes down to is this: if FM is to be all it could be, there must be changes. Those audio quality standards that exist must be raised, and where there are no standards, the FCC must establish them. It must also dis-establish some other regulations and practices that actually stand in the way of improving audio quality. All of which is not to say that there aren't some super-sounding stations scattered here and there throughout the country. But FM will not have fulfilled its implicit promise until true broadcast high fidelity becomes the overwhelming rule rather than the all-too-rare exception.



ELTON JOHN

*"I have a glass window in front of me,
and the hype rebounds right off it."*

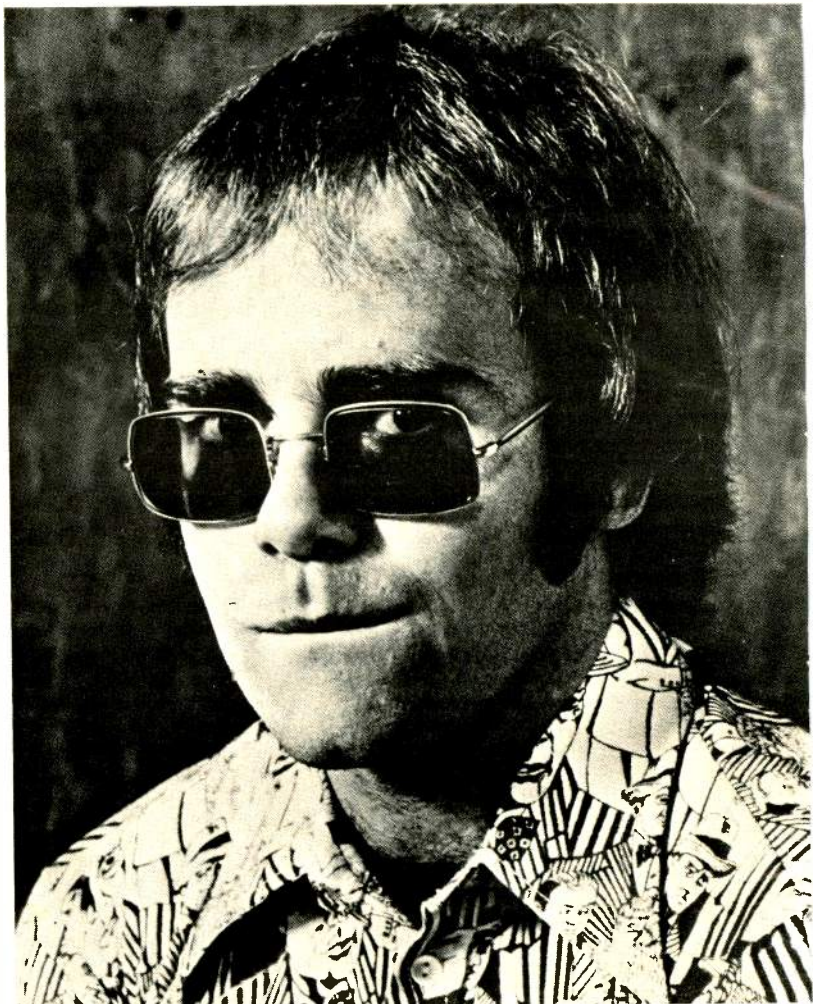
By Meridee Merzer

NOT TOO MANY years ago in England, there was a fat little organist named Reg Dwight who was tired of getting nowhere playing in a white-soul band. Why not become a hit composer, Reg thought, so he answered an advertisement for new composing talent that he saw in an English music paper. Through the ad, the fat little organist got matched up with a seventeen-year-old Lincolnshire printer's apprentice who wrote sensitive, if occasionally overblown, lyrics. So the organist and the printer's apprentice wangled a ten-pound-a-week job as composers, starved for a few years, and wrote and wrote.

Lo and behold, in late 1970, Reg, the fat little organist—who by this time had lost a lot of weight, had gained a lot of confidence, had switched over to playing piano, and now wore incredibly weird clothes—was proclaimed by critics across America as "the first rock superstar of the Seventies."

Reg Dwight was and is Elton John. And now, four gold records later ("Elton John," "Tumblewood Connection," "Friends," and "11-17-70"), Elton John still doesn't quite believe he's an international star. Starting his spring American tour, Elton was utterly awestruck when he realized ten thousand people had come to a concert to see him, just *him*.

But onstage that night, he was the same ridiculously brash Elton John, wearing clothes that could only be described as surreal early childhood, even satirically



perching a stuffed toy duck atop his grand piano. He simply can't—or won't—take his "stardom" seriously and remains unaffected, down-to-earth.

"People must be getting sick to death of reading about 'Elton John, Wonder Human Being,'" he said ironically. "I'm getting a bit cheesed off myself, so a little bit of criticism is good."

Elton John is the furthest thing from an overnight sensation. While attending the Royal Academy of Music part-time on a scholarship, the twenty-four-year-old pianist/singer/composer slogged out his rock apprenticeship with a white-soul band called Bluesology.

"I got very brought down with Bluesology, because I was just a nothing," Elton reflected. "The only reason I took the plunge and left the group was because I was so desperate and miserable, I just had to."

The teaming up with remarkably gifted lyricist Bernie Taupin really did occur through a newspaper ad. Reg, a Londoner, and Bernie, country-bred son of a cattle farmer, both answered the same ad and were placed in contact by Ray Williams, who became Elton's first manager.

"Ray said, 'I've got this guy in Lincolnshire,'" Elton recalled. "So he gave me Bernie's letter and some lyrics. I took them away and was quite impressed. I worked out our first songs to his lyrics before I even met Bernie. Eventually, I got in touch with him by devious methods, and we got a songwriting contract."

Their first songs didn't attain any success. In fact, their first publishing company fired them "because the songs were terrible," Bernie admitted. "We were very raw, so we spent our first two years writing crap."

Since their songs weren't making money, Reg started to play on other groups' recording sessions and on demo tapes. "I used to sing on all those records they sell in supermarkets, the cover versions," Elton laughed from behind ever-present sunglasses. "I had to do imitations of Stevie Wonder, people like that. We had a ball; we'd have a right laugh on the sessions."

Eventually, Bernie and Reg decided to stop writing the commercial pop songs they first attempted. Instead, they began to write progressive rock music—the unique blend of almost cinematically precise and emotion-charged lyrics, funky rock, and lush orchestrations that remains the John-Taupin team's trademark.

Unlike the stereotypical songwriting team sitting and struggling at the piano until they become kings of Tin Pan Alley or whatever, Elton and Bernie work separately. Their songs begin with Bernie's devising the lyrics.

"I write what I want to write, just plain and simple," Bernie explained. "Then I give the lyrics to him. When I write something, he can usually tell what I want it to sound like."

Elton admitted he works more by inspiration than by sweat of the brow: "I have to write when the spirit moves me. It could be when I'm in the bath, when I'm shopping—just something inside my head tells me I'm in the mood to write. Which isn't very often.

"Then I just sit down at the piano, and something always comes out. But if I sit down and think, 'Oh God, I've got to do this,' nothing, nothing ever comes out. And I don't have to talk to Bernie while I'm writing because we've got to know each other so well, we each know what the other is thinking."

The relationship between Elton John and Bernie Taupin is symbiotic in terms of personality, as well as creativity. Close friends, they think of themselves as total opposites. Elton said, "I get very moody. It's not often I have a tantrum, but when I do, the whole world hears about it—I throw things, just go berserk. But Bernie, he's the most placid person in the world."

Elton is the exhibitionist of the team: he does the performing bit, while Bernie prefers to watch, not perform, and walk around in comfortable clothes that look old when they're new. On their first American tour, they billed Elton's band as Elton John, piano and vocals; Dee Murray, bass; Nigel Olsson, drums; and Bernie Taupin, spectator.

"I don't mind not performing," Bernie said quietly, trying valiantly to remain inconspicuous backstage at a concert. "If I wasn't satisfied with the way my songs were done, maybe then I'd start performing. Still, if I played guitar or sang, it'd end up in a terrible clash, a disaster. So it's better one of us does one thing and one does the other." Still, the urge to perform must have gotten to Taupin. Elektra Records has announced the release of an album "Bernie Taupin" (EKS 74110), in which he doesn't sing or play, but reads poetry over a musical background. According to Elektra, Bernie is the author of the poetry and "is involved in the creation of the music, but is not the composer."

John-Taupin began to become successful when several of their songs, such as *Country Comforts*, *Your Song*, *Border Song*, and *Lady Samantha*, were recorded by

artists as diverse as Rod Stewart, Andy Williams, Aretha Franklin, and Three Dog Night.

Elton's first English solo album, "Empty Sky," had modest sales and good reviews in England. But it took the second LP, titled "Elton John," and an American tour to make him a star and John-Taupin a major songwriting team.

"I didn't want to go on the road after three years of not performing," Elton admitted. "I didn't think I'd go down well at all. I didn't think the public were ready for me, and I was basically lazy. But going on the road is the only way to sell when you're a songwriter, unless you've got a big hit."

The name Elton John wasn't adopted by Reg for the first few years of his collaborations with Bernie. The pianist hated his own name, which he confessed, grinning widely, was in full "Reginald Kenneth Dwight—it sounds like the guy who cleans the windows. With that name, I had a terrible inferiority complex, and to change my name helped me get away from it."

He got the "Elton" of his stage name from saxophonist Elton Dean of the Soft Machine; they worked together in Bluesology. "John" was stuck on because it was short.

ELTON, né Reginald, changed in appearance, too. As he lost weight, he began to dress in unbelievable outfits. Outfits like silver, star-studded boots, yellow coveralls or even hot pants, and the ultimate ornament: a battery-powered light affixed to his crotch, which he used to flash on and off during *Burn Down the Mission*, the lengthy, raving finale of his stage act.

"The clothes thing is very me, psychologically speaking," Elton commented. "I've always wanted to be like a Mick Jagger or something, to walk around in outrageous clothes, but I couldn't because I was fat. When I lost a lot of weight, that meant I could get into things. Since then, I've always been ostentatiously dressed. I really get a kick out of wearing funny clothes."

Despite the "funny clothes," the offstage Elton isn't flashy show-biz or even pop-star-ish. "No, the hype doesn't affect me at all," he said, deadpan. "I have a glass window in front of me, and the hype rebounds right off it.

"We can't take ourselves seriously. If you begin to believe your hypes, it'll kill you as a person. We do progress from album to album, but really we just like to write songs the way we like, and how they turn out is how they turn out."

With Elton and Bernie's combined musical influences—everything from soul and rock to classics and jazz—the results are eclectic, to say the least. "Some of our songs probably sound like a cross between Joni Mitchell and Frank Zappa—the mind boggles," Elton noted wryly.

Just as eclectic as the John-Taupin songs is the Elton John stage act. It's a musical version of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Elton begins with a restrained vocal and gently tinkling piano for *Your Song*. But by the evening's end, he's transformed into a demon-possessed, modern-day Jerry Lee Lewis, screaming, bashing out frenzied chords, even playing the piano with his feet.

But let Elton John put the seeming paradox into his own words: "My music can be very quiet. But I just like to get up there onstage and tear me hair out. I'm really, basically, just a rock 'n' roll freak."

THE FRAGMENTATION OF ROCK

Maybe rock's not really going anywhere because it's already been there, and right now we're just waiting to see what will take its place

By JOEL VANCE



TO THE question "Where is rock going?" the best answer right now may be "Out for a sandwich." Nobody really knows where rock is going; nobody has known for the last two years, maybe three.

It is sometimes assumed on the outside that the people responsible for bringing rock to records and to radio, TV, and concerts—the record companies, producers, arrangers, managers, and music publishers—dream up every new direction over lunch somewhere. That's an unsafe assumption. Al Schmidt, who co-produced most of the Jefferson Airplane albums, for instance, did not know, when I asked him in 1969 over a drink in a Chinese restaurant, where rock was going. He thought that an astonishing personality like Presley, or a multi-personality like the Beatles, was needed, so that everyone could run alongside and try to catch up. But he had no idea who or what it would be.

Gloria Stavers, editor of the magazine *16*, a remarkable lady who knows music, musicians, and the record industry, saw that rock was fragmenting even in late '68/early '69, and she boldly switched

her magazine's emphasis from music stars to television stars, from the Monkees to Jonathan Frid of *Dark Shadows*. Other teen fan books were not so quick to see, and many of them died. The Beatles had become too adult, the Monkees were on the way out, and how was an editor to know who to print stories about? By looking at the charts in the trade papers? The public was buying everything from Steppenwolf to Ravi Shankar to Frankie Laine. What could an editor do—run a picture story called "Be Ravi's Summer Love"?

The increasing fragmentation of rock weakened its thrust and ultimately its power. But at the same time it was exposing its audiences to a wonderful variety of music: folk-rock, raga-rock, baroque-rock, soft-rock, white-soul, and black-soul. The interest in the blues, for example, brought such a man as Slim Harpo to New York, for the first time in his life, to play at the old Scene. It was probably Slim's first gig before a white audience. I had heard his superbly raunchy *I'm a King Bee* in 1958, when I was probably the only white kid in Evanston, Illinois, who nightly listened to WGES, a sta-



tion that was black most of the day and night and Polish for four hours in the afternoon. Two years later, doing summer stock in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, I heard him on a cafe jukebox doing his classic *Rainin' in My Heart*. In 1968, when he came to New York, he was being booked by a guy who was a client of the PR office I worked for.

"I want yez should make Slim Harpo a household woid!" said the client.

"Who the hell is Slim Harpo?" said the boss.

"I know, sir!" said I, looking for a raise.

Slim came to the office one wet day soon after. There was grey snow everywhere and a bitter wind. One of the boys in his combo had a bad cold and Slim had been running around to drugstores buying Vicks things for him. We talked for a minute. He had a soft but deep voice. Don Paulsen, another account executive for the PR office (he had previously co-edited *Hit Parader*; in its great days it was the first serious rock paper), took some pictures. Slim's gig was a triumph, but afterward he went back to playing little towns down South and six months later he was dead of a heart attack.

He was a gentleman and a great bluesman. His records had inspired the Rolling Stones, and the late Brian Jones, who was a better harmonica player than many black men, learned his licks from Lazy Lester, Slim's harp man.

I mention Slim Harpo at such length because he is one example of the musical benefits that rock's fragmentation produced. But there are debits, too. The Fallen Angels, for example, a remarkable band from Washington, D.C., put out two astonishing albums for Roulette Records in 1967/68. But they never made it, even though they were far better than most American groups of the time. Captain Beefheart, for all his genius, has never really made it either. Paul Davis, a talented kid from Mississippi, almost got off the ground, but not quite.

But rock's often incredible variety was achieved at the cost, in many ways, of its early basic excitement. The other day I heard a single by one of the British groups of the '64/'66 period on the radio. I don't remember the group or the song, but I do remember having a great flashback to *those* days,

when every record that came in from London seemed more daring and more exciting than the last. You felt you were a living witness at the creation of something joyous and fine. Critic Leslie Fiedler once said, in an introduction to an edition of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, that you have to read those poems as though the year were still 1855, knowing what verse in general was then, realizing with delighted horror that "nothing less than the entire poetic tradition" was at stake, then going on to tell yourself, "Well, let the poetic tradition fry; this fellow is worth everything." That's the way it once was with rock, the way it is no longer, and the way it may never be again. The reasons?

1. *People have grown too used to excellence.* One of the things the British invasion brought us was a quality in song lyrics that had not been heard since Chuck Berry in his prime. They—and he—got away from the "hand-understand," "you-blue-true-do," and "above-love" syndromes. The Beatles, of course, excelled at it, first through Lennon and then through McCartney. At their worst, the new lyrics were combinations of self-conscious, artsy-craftsy proclamations of me-and-my-tortured-soul-in-Forest-Hills and the psychedelic drip. But at their best, they were (and still are) the New Poetry.

2. *The Beatles broke up.* Modern rock depended on the Beatles for artistic ideas, technique, and especially attitude. Their musical life style, which was a fusion of their separate personalities, was so rich and generous that armies of singers and rock bands were able to feed off it, and millions of people around the world could listen to it and get off on it. Among the things they introduced were classical string arrangements (*Yesterday*, *Eleanor Rigby*) and acid rock (*Tomorrow Never Knows* and most of "Sergeant Pepper"). They were the first rock group to use a sitar (*Norwegian Wood*), the first to use a gut-string, classical acoustic guitar (*And I Love Her*), the first to use what were instinctive classical compositional forms (*No Reply*), among the first to use a harmonica (*Love Me Do*) and to write "commissioned" songs for other artists (Rolling Stones, Cilla Black, Billy J. Kramer), the first to use weird minor-chord schemes (*I'll Be Back*), the first to glory in American rock oldies (*Roll Over Beethoven*, *Mr. Moonlight*, *Long Tall Sally*), thereby rejuvenating the careers of undeservedly forgotten American talents like Chuck Berry and the supreme Little Richard (he taught Paul how to whoop), the first to go into country music—courtesy of George and Ringo (*I Don't Want to Spoil the Party*, *Baby's in Black*)—and a

couple dozen other things. The Beatles either created them whole or were the first to remind the American public of what it had missed. As they drew into their seclusion of '69/'70, rock faltered. They were the Bach of rock. When the breakup became official, rock regretted it—while thinking it was strong enough to go on without them. In a way, it is; but in another, very important, way it isn't. Everybody needs a Daddy or a Momma; now we ain't got none.

3. *Too much of the audience is stoned all the damn time.* If you dismiss this reason, you are within your rights. It's a personal thing. Maybe some musicians *do* sound better if you're stoned while you're listening to them. But I have been to the late Fillmore many times, seen too many bad bands and mediocre singers given standing ovations by an audience of stonies who've been doping all day and polishing all night with Boone's Farm apple wine (in the last days of the Fillmore, you checked your brown paper bag at the door and wrote your name on it) to believe that the audience really knows or cares what it's applauding.

4. *There are too many really good musicians around.* (This does not contradict No. 3 above; think about it.) You can't know how brilliant anyone is, or get too excited about him, unless you're able to measure his brilliance against the lack of it in other groups and performers. Bill Haley in 1955 was revolutionary—as long as you could compare him with Gordon Jenkins and Kitty Kallen. Presley was as far away from Don Cornell as any teeny with her secret red underwear could possibly hope to get. The Beatles came in as a blessed, even sacrilegious, relief after Connie Francis and—who was it then, Neil Sedaka? These days we are introduced to a string of musicians who are technically or emotionally proficient—Al Kooper and Leon Russell, say—or writer-singers who are alternatives to Dylan and Baez—Kris Kristofferson and (shudder) Melanie. And there is the "sideman" problem: he who playeth on a record date with an Immortal becometh in his own right (or in the dispensation of *Rolling Stone*) a Star: David Bromberg, Billy Preston, and so on. Not that there is anything wrong with any of these people. The public has decided that it likes them, for one thing, and most of them are very good at what they do, for another. But it all comes down to the same thing in the end: with so many good or proficient singers and musicians around, what is there to get really excited about? What is really dangerous? Who kicks over the lamp? Who is the new Walt Whitman? Nobody.

To get back, then, to the unanswered question in

the first paragraph: Where, indeed, is rock going?

1. *Rock is going back to the country.* Well, it has *been* there for at least five years! Many of the black-soul records, and for a time a goodly number of white-soul records, were made in Memphis or Muscle Shoals or Atlanta, the main country recording centers. There were also plenty of little tiny backwoods studios in Louisiana and Alabama and Mississippi that produced good and famous records. Malaco, in Mississippi, hasn't had a real hit yet, but they are very good. They produced Paul Davis' records, which made the charts—sort of. The Muscle Shoals mob has cut an enormous number of hit records for Atlantic/Atco, including the formidable Aretha Franklin and Wilson Pickett. Atlantic, on a dollar-for-dollar basis, is the all-time soul label, beating even Motown, and in the white-rock area rivals Columbia, which is the label to rival. American Recording Studios in Memphis cut all the great Box Tops hits, mostly courtesy of writer-producer Dan Penn (*The Letter*, *Cry Like a Baby*), and also cut B. J. Thomas' *Hooked on a Feeling*, his biggest hit before *Raindrops*. They also made Elvis Presley's comeback through their production of the album "From Elvis in Memphis," which included *In the Ghetto* and *Suspicious Minds*. They also took Wayne Jackson's arrangement of *I'm Movin' On* note for note for Presley, lifting it from the Box Tops' "Nonstop" album. All power to Elvis for what *he* does, of course, but on this number Alex Chilton, then eighteen years old and lead singer for the Box Tops, did it better. Dan Penn didn't hurt, either.

In Atlanta, most of the recording activity is due to the Bill Lowery organization, which owns or sees to the music-publishing and record production of people like the Classics IV (*Traces*, *Spooky*), Joe South (*Games People Play*, *I Never Promised*

You a Rose Garden), and Billy Joe Royal (*Cherry Hill Park*, *Down in the Boondocks*). Lowery is a silver-haired, cigar-smoking, portly, genial, foxy Southern Grandpa, and if Colonel Tom Parker hadn't been around, Presley would have done well to latch onto Lowery.

These are all independent operations (in the music and record industry, independent operations account, at a minimum, for 60 per cent of the music you hear on records, jukeboxes, radio, and in concerts). As Motown once did Detroit, before they got fancy and moved to Los Angeles, Stax/Volt dominates—benevolently—Memphis. They have presented Otis Redding, Carla and Rufus Thomas, Booker T. & the MG's, Johnny Taylor, Eddie Floyd, and a lot of other good people. Deanie Parker, the house press agent for Stax, once told me, "Honey, I don't care where it comes from—Memphis, Detroit, Nashville, Atlanta, Mississippi—it's *all* the Southern sound." She was right.

But I digress. If "going back to the country" means that rock is going back to Battleboro, North Carolina—well, that too has been going on for years. Most of the "elder" (pushing thirty, that is) statesmen of rock were folkies in the folkie years stretching roughly from 1958 to 1964. They screamed as loud for Flatt & Scruggs as the Fillmorites screamed for Santana's watered-whiskey music with the lifted Latin beat (may true Latins like Ray Boretto, Pete Rodriguez, and the owners of the Palm Gardens receive their justice in Heaven).

2. *Jazz is coming back.* No, it isn't. Some jazz technique, brass arrangements, and ooby-dooby singing has come back in Blood, Sweat & Tears and Chicago, but jazz itself is not coming back. The "real" jazz musicians decided ten or fifteen years ago that their music was too precious to be shared with an audience, so they spit on everybody and went into the closet, blew long choruses on their tenor saxes, and thought of their boyhood friend who drowned in the municipal park lake in Pittsburgh. The audience for jazz, which was an eager and trusting one, finally said, "Well, if you don't love me, then I don't love you," and stopped listening, which was both moral and wise. By the time the "real" jazz musicians realized they had blown more than a long chorus, it was too late. There are a lot of fine talents out there, but they missed the boat. Too bad; Bix Beiderbecke wasn't too proud to play senior proms.

3. *Saloon singers (female) are coming back.* If by that is meant Bessie Smith at eighteen, or the Indiana U. cheerleader who was Bix's girlfriend and someone discovered her ten years later singing in a tavern all junked up, well, no again. If you

"... the Beatles' musical life style was so rich that armies of singers and rock bands were able to feed off it. . . ."



mean Janis Joplin, still no. She was a talent, but the only thing she was really indicative of was the capacity of rock stars, just like popular entertainers since time immemorial, for self-destruction, mostly because they lack love, *real* love, the I-want-to-put-a-ring-on-your-finger kind of love. The suicidal tradition, or, if you prefer, the early-death tradition, is something carried over into rock from jazz and before. Not only is the *musical* attitude of the musicians the same in both styles, the life style is the same. In working, living with, and observing musicians for the last seven years, I have found that they are not so intelligent as they are intuitive—or even shrewd and crafty. Like poets, painters, actors, and all other artists working within their particular art forms, they are fine observers. The talent of the artist is the ability to combine himself with what he has observed and to express it through his art. But if his observations of the people around him—whether they are intimate, casual, or merely on the street—are to be acute and accurate, he must isolate himself from his own feelings and he must expend enormous amounts of energy outside himself. Creation is a terribly lonely process, and that is *really* why a Jimi Hendrix or a Charlie Parker or a Bix Beiderbecke dies, whatever the clinical reasons (liquor, exhaustion, OD), and it is also why the saxophone tooter in the local hotel band lives to a ripe eighty-three and is still willing to play one more chorus of *Danny Boy* for a bibulous bunch from the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

To bring all this back to the track again: no, *nobody's* coming back. What is probably happening is that, once again, the fragmentation of rock has made it possible for the audience (concertgoers and record buyers) to see and hear a great *variety* of singers and musicians. Within that great variety there are bound to be a few saloon singers—even a few good ones—but it takes more than one thrush to make a season.

4. *There is something beyond classical rock—such as romantic rock and/or baroque rock.* Well . . . dang it . . . no! I mean, it's *already* happened, and at least two years ago. A group called the Classics IV (managed and produced under the auspices of our old silver-haired friend Bill Lowery in Atlanta) released an album in 1969 called "Traces," named after a single hit. It contained some of the finest tunes written since Cole Porter in his semi-prime: *Rainy Day*, *Traffic Jam*, *Something I'll Remember*, *Nobody Loves You But Me*. They were written mostly by two roly-poly down-home boys named Buddy Buie and J. B. Cobb, and they were sung by buck-toothed, husky-voiced Dennis Yost,

with studio musicians and strings overdubbed. It's a near-perfect album. If you want to go beyond that, there's the Moody Blues with their *Scientology*, Mellotron, and Moog. Besides, it all comes from that *original* goodie, the Beatles' *Yesterday*, which caused the Rolling Stones to do *As Tears Go By*, which caused everything else. And nothing wrong with that, except that it *has* been done. Elektra had an album called "The Baroque Beatles Book" which was funny and fine. Come to that, Peter Schickele can do a fine cantata by holding a pipe cleaner against a spinning bicycle wheel. Fun, yes. Trend, no.

FOUR (or more) 'no's and not one 'yes'? How do we rationalize this, Freddy? We don't—or it's better if we don't try. We're back to the same thing again: too many good musicians, an audience that has been raised on excellence and is ultimately bored with it, too many record labels spending too much money on too many people who spend too long in the studio to produce "extraordinary" albums which fail to satisfy because both audience and industry are so satiated that they've forgotten what extraordinary is, what it could be, or what it ought to be.

One of the many famous and good stories told about Fats Waller was of the time a lady with a floppy Hedda Hopper hat came up to him, gurgling in the depths of her wattles, and asked: "Oh, Mr. Waller, what is 'rhythm'?" Fats is supposed to have replied: "Lady, if you got to ask, you ain't got it." Maybe someone should step up to Fats' ghost right now and ask the question, "Mr. Waller, where is rock going?" Then Fats, with his good humor—which is, after all, the best, the most comforting, and the most convenient way of looking at the world—would say, "Why don't you ask 'em when they get back? They're just down at the corner gettin' a beer."

I wish they were. I hope they are. They'd come back giggly and relaxed. They'd make good music and be surrounded by pretty women and handsome men. And everybody would pair off. At four in the morning they'd all be shouting for the same taxi. The men would hand the ladies in and shout after the next one. And they'd all go off to another place—the same place, or their respective places. And everybody would wake up happy in the morning with no headaches. And the orange juice would be freshly squeezed.

Joel Vance is a seven-year veteran of the music business as a reporter, editor, and press agent. He is also, at the moment, a composer, guitarist, singer, writer—and out of breath.



STEPHEN BISHOP

“Ashkenazy and I made a rather notorious film for Norwegian TV.”

By Robert S. Clark

“Now I can have one of these!” Stephen Bishop exclaimed as he settled into a chair and took a small cigar from a balsawood box he had brought with him. “They’re Swiss—I smoke them constantly while I’m recording.” Because the young American pianist’s schedule permitted him only a two-hour stopover between airplane connections in New York, we had arranged to meet at a Kennedy International Airport terminal. I had been shown by an airline representative to a private “lounge,” one of those anonymous rooms whose haphazard array of down-at-heel sofas and chairs and vinyl-topped tables calls to mind the clearance corner in a cut-rate furniture showroom. But before Bishop had been in the room very long, his geniality and his rare combination of animation and self-possession had suffused it, making it seem almost comfortable.

As he went about unwrapping the cigar and lighting it, a ritual that obviously helped put him at ease, I was noticing the youthfulness of his appearance—it was a little difficult to believe that he was even the thirty-one years of age that his agent’s “fact sheet” had informed me he was. The cut of his dark blue pin-stripe suit reflected the sartorial ways of London—Savile Row, not Carnaby

Street—and so did the trim of his dark hair, which, as we talked, he kept shaking back from his brow with an impatient gesture of his head. Only his slightly bloodshot eyes betrayed the strain that is an inevitable concomitant of the international artist’s life in the jet age.

I asked him to start at the beginning. “I was born in San Pedro, near Los Angeles, in 1940. My father was a Croatian immigrant and my mother a first-generation Croatian-American. After early study and a move to San Francisco, I became a student of Lev Schorr—he was a pupil of Anna Essipova, who was in turn a pupil of Theodor Leschetizky. From Schorr I learned technique, of course, and got some insight into the late nineteenth-century Romantics, Bach, the French Impressionists, and Chopin.

“In 1959 I went to England to study with Myra Hess—I’ve lived there ever since. I studied with her about three years altogether, a year and a half to two years intensively. We worked on style—that’s a very loose word, of course, but specifically she taught me that a principal factor in style is getting just the kind of sound you want from the piano, the sound that’s right for the work you’re playing. Toscanini used to say, ‘In Rossini I

want a Rossini *forte*, in Beethoven I want a Beethoven *forte*.' I recall she and I once spent forty-five minutes getting the right sound for the beginning of Bach's fourth Partita. I also worked on repertoire with her: when I began studying with her I knew only one Beethoven sonata—Opus 109, of all things!" He laughed, and tapped a long ash neatly from his cigar into an ashtray. "I worked on Beethoven—sonatas *and* concertos—Schubert, Mozart, Brahms. As I look back, I see that in Chopin she was a bit wanting—she did not give sufficient attention to the virtuosic element. Oh, of course Chopin never wrote anything *just* virtuosic. I understood that, and took it into account, but still she would think I played something too brilliantly.

"What was she like as a teacher? She was. . . ." He paused to find the precise word. "She was always encouraging—and never dictatorial." The description did not please him, and he frowned a bit. "I dislike using negative phrases, her qualities were very positive. She got *excited* if the lesson was good.

"I made my London debut in Wigmore Hall in November of 1961, playing the Berg Sonata, Bach, and Beethoven's *Diabelli* Variations." He grinned sheepishly, as if amused at the audacity of this debut program. I said that the *Diabelli* Variations seemed to have played a special role in his career, and asked him why. "From the time I heard Serkin's recording—wonderful!—I was obsessed by the work. 'Revelation' is a word that's used too much, but that's what it was. Late at night in London the buses stop running, you know, and if I were with friends past that time I'd walk home and go over the whole of the *Diabelli* in my head. I've had similar experiences with the Bartók Second Concerto and the Beethoven Fourth. The Fourth is a marvel, but very difficult to play. In the other Beethoven concertos there is more drama, wrong notes can go flying all over the place and it doesn't much matter. But the Fourth is like Mozart: the piano writing is very exposed and it must be fluently and evenly executed. You must have a good conductor, too. In the other concertos you can carry a performance by yourself if you have an elephant for a conductor, but not the Fourth.

"Within a year and a half after my debut I played four more recitals—I positively bombarded London—and afterward I toured England and Europe. My repertoire was pretty standard—the German Romantics and Beethoven. Now I've gone beyond that—Bartók, Stravinsky. I play the concerto Richard Rodney Bennett wrote for me: I'm proud of it, why not say so? And over the past two years I've played all of the Mozart concertos with the Geraint Jones orchestra, two concertos an evening, one evening a month. A lot of the most difficult ones came up early in the series—there were some *desperate* midnight practicing sessions." He laughed, and shifted about in his chair as if the recollection made him a bit uneasy. "But it was the most rewarding experience ever—how could anything else come up to it?"

The "fact sheet" had told me that he had made his New York debut at Town Hall in March of 1967 with a program of Bach, Schubert, and Beethoven's Sonata Opus 110, and in November of 1968 had appeared with the New York Philharmonic and in an all-Beethoven recital at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. "The recital was the same night Horowitz was playing in Carnegie Hall. I wanted to go—I remember having a wild moment thinking I could find someone who looked like me to

play at the Museum! Two years ago I played for Horowitz, and he encouraged me to learn more virtuosic music. Soon after that I received an invitation to play the Liszt Second Concerto with István Kertész and the London Symphony, and I accepted. Before playing for Horowitz I would never have considered doing it. But I regard that sort of thing as an occasional excursion, not a direction I really want to move in."

I concluded from these remarks that he had little interest in the flashy pieces being exhumed by the so-called "Romantic revival." "Most of that music is such dreadful stuff," he concurred. "The whole thing's so silly—some second-rate composer will put a fugue into one of his concertos and the Romantic-revival people go mad for it. But often the fugue is just pathetic—like the rest of the piece."

I HAD been impressed by the imposing list of television films and appearances to his credit, ranging from "straight" performances—Beethoven's Third and Fourth Concertos with orchestras under Colin Davis and Erich Leinsdorf—to a taped "master class" on Bartók for Norwegian television. Did this imply he was fond of the medium? "Yes—if I have a musical producer for the taping session. Some of them are not—they ask you to play the program through three or four times while they get their cameras set, then *they're* ready and *you're* finished. Vladimir Ashkenazy and I made a rather notorious film for Norwegian TV. We were playing Mozart and Beethoven sonatas for four hands, and the first time through one of them, we messed up a tricky cross-hands passage and just collapsed with laughter—he laughed so hard he ended up sitting on the floor. A sweating producer came out and said, 'Here, we can't have this.' We composed ourselves and the cameras started again, but we could hardly concentrate on the music, we were fighting so hard to contain our laughter. We managed to get through the program without disrupting it again, but some of the close-ups show us really struggling not to laugh. No, you couldn't possibly mistake it for visible pleasure in the music—it's obviously just schoolboy giggles."

For a talented pianist with such a variety of experience already under his belt—for one who, on his thirtieth birthday, was playing a concert with as illustrious a musical aggregation as the Amsterdam Concertgebouw ("At a party afterward five hundred people sang 'Happy Birthday' to me in Dutch!")—the future seems wide open and its possibilities unlimited. "I don't know how I'll expand my repertoire—I'm not being coy, I really don't know. At the moment I'm working on Chopin a good deal—and I'm looking forward to some time off in the 1973-1974 season to do some exploring of repertoire." Certainly the recording studio will figure prominently in his life in the years to come: in addition to the half-dozen or so recordings that Philips has released in this country, Bishop has a small torrent awaiting release—chamber music by Mozart and Dvořák, concertos by Grieg, Schumann, Beethoven, Mozart, and the aforementioned Bennett work—and several items on the recording docket for the near future. And when you add to this a schedule of appearances that, over the next year alone, includes Amsterdam, Stockholm, Japan, Switzerland, Scotland, Germany, Australia, and the United States, it seems unlikely that he will soon be rid of those bloodshot eyes.

*Stereo Review's
Record of the Year Awards
for 1971*

*in recognition of significant
contributions to the arts of music
and recording
during the 1971 publishing year*



THIS IS the fifth consecutive year in which STEREO REVIEW presents to its readers a selection of the best records of the year. As in the past, the choices are the result of tabulating the opinions of our critics and editorial staff, and, also as in the past, the selections reflect our "recognition of great artistic achievement and genuine contribution to the recorded literature"—they are, in other words, in no way related to the commercial lives of the records. We continue to emphasize this because we feel it is important. Too many awards these days, in music and in other fields as well, are given, we feel, for the wrong reasons. It may seem to some that conspicuously successful salesmanship is deserving of an award for great humanitarianism or great artistic achievement; it does not seem so to us. There are so few recompenses today for merely doing a good thing well that we feel the strong obligation to add at least one to the total.

At the beginning of this past year we feared the worst for the classical record business in this country. Although the problems of recording classical music in the United States are still with us, the

sales of classical records seem to have improved a little. Several companies whose classical divisions were in dire straits only a year ago feel the support of a little cushion right now, and there has certainly been an indication that classical music in *some* form can be successfully presented to members of the self-styled rock generation. Perhaps unfortunately, many of the modest commercial successes enjoyed by classical record companies have come from reissued material rather than new recordings. But one cannot be negative about this. Recorded performances that were once acclaimed have not suffered any musical deterioration through years of inactivity. Even if the competition, in some cases, has become stronger, many of the reissues are still treasures. And if what is needed for the resuscitation of classical record divisions is an influx of *earned* money, selling such recorded performances to an audience that has not yet come to know them is certainly a mutually beneficial thing. Needless to say, it can also release a little money for the production of new and fine records. It is the new and the fine we honor on the next two pages.

—James Goodfriend, *Music Editor*

Record of the Year

SELECTED BY THE EDITORIAL STAFF AND CRITICS



BACH: *Concertos for Harpsichord and Orchestra, Complete* (Igor Kipnis, harpsichord; Neville Marriner, conductor). COLUMBIA M4 30540.



TIPPETT: *The Midsummer Marriage* (Colin Davis, conductor). PHILIPS 6703027.



JOPLIN: *Piano Rags* (Joshua Rifkin, piano). NONESUCH H 71248.



IVES: *Three Places in New England*; **RUGGLES:** *Sun-treader* (Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530048.



CARTER: *String Quartets Nos. 1 and 2* (Composers Quartet). NONESUCH H 71249.



HAYDN: *Symphonies Nos. 97 and 98* (George Szell, conductor). COLUMBIA M 30646.

Honorable mentions

BACH: *St. Matthew Passion* (Nikolaus Hamoncourt, conductor). TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9572/5.

BEACH BOYS: *Surf's Up*. REPRISE/BROTHER 6453.

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Trios* (Stern-Istomin-Rose Trio). COLUMBIA M5 30065.

BERIO: *Epifanie; Folk Songs* (Luciano Berio, conductor). RCA LSC 3189.

CHOPIN: *Sonatas Nos. 2 and 3; Fourteen Waltzes* (Antonio Barbosa, piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY S 2036.

CRUMB: *Ancient Voices of Children* (Arthur Weisberg, conductor). NONESUCH 71255.

DELIUS: *Appalachia; Brigg Fair* (Sir John Barbirolli, conductor). ANGEL S 36756.

LENA HORNE: *Nature's Baby*. BUDDAH BDS 5084.

CAROLE KING: *Tapestry*. Ode 7077009.

Awards for 1974

FOR THE READERS OF STEREO REVIEW



JONI MITCHELL: *Blue*. REPRIS MS 2038.



CAT STEVENS: *Tea for the Tillerman*. A & M SP 4280.



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON: *Me and Bobby McGee*. MONUMENT Z 30817.



JIMMY WEBB: *And so: On*. REPRIS 6448.



ELTON JOHN. UNI 93090.



CARLY SIMON. ELEKTRA EKS 74082.

ALICIA DE LARROCHA: *Spanish Piano Music of the Twentieth Century*. LONDON CS 6677.

BARRY MILES. POPPY PYS 40009.

MOTHERS OF INVENTION: *The Mothers, Fillmore East—June 1971*. REPRIS MS 2042.

MOZART: *Magic Flute* (Georg Solti, conductor). LONDON OSA 1397.

MOZART: *Violin and Piano Sonatas K. 454 and 481* (Henryk Szeryng, violin; Ingrid Haebler, piano) PHILIPS 6500055.

RANDY NEWMAN: *Twelve Songs*. REPRIS RS 6373.

PENDERECKI: *Utrenja—The Entombment of Christ* (Eugene Ormandy, conductor). RCA LSC 3180.

PISTON: *Symphony No. 2*; SCHUMAN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (Paul Zukofsky, violin in Schuman; Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530103.

SIBELIUS: *Kullervo—Symphonic Poem* (Paavo Berglund, conductor). ANGEL SB 3778.

BESSIE SMITH: *Any Woman's Blues; The World's Greatest Blues Singer*. COLUMBIA G 30126 and GP 33.

70, GIRLS, 70 (John Kander-Fred Ebb): *Original Broadway Cast*. COLUMBIA S 30589.

STORY THEATRE (Paul Sills): *Original City-Center Cast*. COLUMBIA SG 30415.

LILY TOMLIN: *This Is a Recording*. POLYDOR 244055.

IKE & TINA TURNER: *What You Hear Is What You Get*. UNITED ARTISTS UAS 9953.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Symphony No. 4* (André Previn, conductor). RCA LSC 3178.

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



CLASSICAL

MICHELANGELI'S DEBUSSY: A MAGNIFICENT ACHIEVEMENT

Deutsche Grammophon supplies a rare glimpse of one of our greatest pianists

PERHAPS it isn't enough for Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli to be *musically* among the most controversial of pianists. According to reports in the record trade magazines, his two new recordings for Deutsche Grammophon (Beethoven's Sonata No. 4, Op. 7, and Debussy's *Images*, sets I and II, and the *Children's Corner Suite*) were originally contracted to England's E.M.I. (Angel in this country), and there may very likely be some complicated legal hassling before anybody really knows who has what rights to which. Such legal complications can have the effect of at least temporarily removing the records in question from circulation, and that seems all the more reason for me to urge you to listen to them now.

It has been several years since we have had any new recordings from Michelangeli, and his total recorded output would not tax the shelves of the most limited record storage facilities. He is a strange and complex man, afflicted with a variety of neuroses, and sometimes embracing disdainful attitudes toward the music industry and the public that are quite as damaging to him as they are to us. But he is also one of the very greatest pianists of our time.

These two new recordings are typical of Michelangeli's peculiar genius. Predictably, the Debussy is the better of the two, so let's start with the Beethoven, leaving the better

wine for later. First of all, Michelangeli gives us a relatively slow-paced performance, and one that observes every repeat. In contrast to, say, the late Wilhelm Backhaus' recording, it simply does not sound very Beethovenian, for Backhaus assumes the existence of an accepted Beethoven idiom and plays the sonata with that in mind. The abruptness, the drama, the humor come through. Michelangeli plays the score—the notes, and the playing directions (indeed, he is more scrupulous about following specific directions than Backhaus)—but his interpretation of the tempo markings is such that he seems to be saying, "Yes, I know the movement will be difficult to sustain at this tempo, but I want to show you that I am a great enough interpreter to do so." He does, unquestionably.

The result, however, does not sound like a familiar sonata, but a new work that is familiar only in certain respects. In following the score with Michelangeli, one is all but struck dumb by the grace and elegance of his pianism; the perfect evenness of the running passages, the non-percussive, almost string-like quality with which he can play repeated notes, the dynamics gradated to the tiniest distinctions of loud and soft. It is an eerie feeling to hear it, for there is nothing impetuous, nothing jovial about it, nothing that one might expect of the young Beethoven. Instead, all is restrained elegance, the notes sounding as they do



ARTURO BENEDETTI MICHELANGELI
Categorically different from all the others

because the *score* says they must do so, rather than the composer or the performer. It must be the most note-perfect performance of a Beethoven sonata I have heard in years, but its expressivity (and it is peculiarly expressive, particularly in the slow movement) seems to be there almost in spite of itself.

The pianist's rendition of the Debussy *Images*, however, is a *totally* magnificent achievement. This is Debussy in his most objective mood (and these six pieces are certainly among the very greatest piano music he wrote) dealing with sound, motion, patterns, and colors, untouched by personal concerns, and that is the game Michelangeli is always most likely to win. The pieces need extraordinary technique; he has it. They need the ultimate in dynamic control; he has it. They truly require the illusion of the piano as an instrument without hammers; he can produce it. They will not stand sentimentalizing; he never sentimentalizes. They require a musical intuition sufficient to divine the particular strength that holds each piece together; he has it. Michelangeli fulfills every condition of the music perfectly (even Gieseking's performances were not consistently in this class), and the music itself emerges with all its colors and perfumes in perfect balance and—the quality that most interpreters of Debussy lack—with all its dynamic strength. You know you are listening to one of the great masterpieces of keyboard music. You also know you are hearing it as you have never heard it before.

If the *Children's Corner Suite* seems a notch beneath this paragon of performances, it is because the music contains sentimental and humorous elements that Michelangeli does not choose to indulge. But the same pianistic magic is there, the same perfect realization of objective sound patterns, the same absolute elegance of control. The man is a marvel, simply categorically different from all other pianists. You have missed something indeed if you haven't heard him.

The recording is probably the best Michelangeli has yet received. If it is not the best of all possible recordings, it is at least *his* best, and it is understood that he can be quite as difficult a man in the studio as anywhere else, with his own occasional strange ideas of what a piano should sound like in a recording. This time it sounds like a piano.

James Goodfriend

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata No. 4, in E-flat Major, Op. 7.* Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530197 \$6.98.

DEBUSSY: *Images, Sets I and II (Reflets dans l'eau;*

Hommage à Rameau; Mouvement; Cloches à travers les feuilles; Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut; Poissons d'or); Children's Corner Suite. Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530196 \$6.98.

AT LAST, A FIRST-RATE MEISTERSINGER

Angel's new recording under master conductor Herbert von Karajan is a welcome catalog addition

THE startling, if not universally lauded, skill with which Herbert von Karajan transformed *Die Walküre* into a work of crystalline clarity and understated dynamics a few years back for DGG is at work again in Angel's new version of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. The recording was made in Dresden, a city of long and affectionate association with this unique opera, and the Dresden State Orchestra serves as a marvelously pliant instrument for the conductor's purposes. Throughout, Karajan sustains an orchestral tone of exquisite refinement, with finely graded dynamics and lovingly accentuated details of instrumentation. His handling of the vocal ensembles is a special delight: the voices are in clear focus and, for once, the Herren Vogelgesang, Nachtigall, Zorn, and the rest emerge as individual characters. Perhaps some of the music's earthiness is sacrificed in this treatment, but the lyric moments attain true eloquence. A distinctive gracefulness surrounds the whole production—a quality I have seldom if ever associated with Wagner heretofore.

To achieve his aims in this production, Karajan had first to choose his group of singers carefully. The result is that no one bellows here, nor is the accursed bad habit of the "Bayreuth bark" tolerated. To say that we therefore have an actual cast of "master singers" at work may be overstating the case a bit, but all are inspired to their best efforts by this sometimes perplexing but decidedly brilliant master conductor.

In Helen Donath and René Kollo we have an Eva and a Walther who sound young and convincingly ardent. Neither has the vocal weight we are accustomed to hearing in these roles, and I am not convinced that they could manage their assignments in a sizable theater. But both are undeniably pleasing here, Miss Donath in particular—she manages the soaring phrases of "*O Sachs, mein Freund . . .*" (Act III, Scene 4) beautifully. The



*Meistersinger's
Eva (Helen Donath)
and Walther (René Kollo):
young and convincingly
ardent*

role of David, benefitting from a performance in which his music is uncut, is raised to an uncommonly important level by Peter Schreier's superior artist.

Among the other able participants I must single out Karl Ridderbusch for the poised dignity and mellow sonority of his Pogner, Zoltan Kelemen for his skillful Kothner, and Kurt Moll for his very fine Night Watchman. (This is only my second encounter—in small roles—with this singer, but I see in him a great future Telramund, Dutchman, and Sachs.)

Geraint Evans offers an intelligently drawn Beckmesser, one without excessive clowning—he is, after all, a member of the guild, and he has earned his membership through a certain amount of singing skill. Consequently, Evans is nothing if not logical in presenting a reasonably “good” contest song which, nonetheless, sinks when it must into a properly etched ineptitude. I have left Theo Adam for last because, though he is a perfectly adequate Sachs, he lacks some of the nobility of manner and the steadiness of tone that are necessary for a distinguished one. But banish memories of Schöffler and Berglund (to say nothing of Schorr!) and you will find him perfectly acceptable.

Although the engineering does not quite put the album in the way of being called a “breakthrough” or a “sonic spectacular,” the sound is well balanced (the singers are nicely to the fore) and pleasing as a whole, and Angel has given us a well-annotated and tastefully illustrated album to go with it. All in all, this production fills all the important requirements for a long-overdue first-rate recording of *Meistersinger*.
George Jellinek

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Theo Adam (bass), Hans Sachs; Karl Ridderbusch (bass), Pogner; René Kollo (tenor), Walther von Stolzing; Helen Donath (soprano), Eva; Ruth Hesse (mezzo-soprano), Magdalene; Peter Schreier (tenor), David; Kurt Moll (bass), Night Watchman; Zoltan Kelemen (baritone), Kothner; Geraint Evans (bass), Beckmesser; others. Dresden State Opera Chorus and Dresden State Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan cond. ANGEL SEL 3776 five discs \$29.90.

ENTERTAINMENT

GOOD NEWS: “BOBBY SHORT LOVES COLE PORTER”

Atlantic's new two-disc album of songs gives at least twenty-two good reasons why

ONE OF THE measures of one kind of sophistication in New York these days is the number of late-hour visits you pay each week to the elegant Cafe Carlyle. It is there that the singer-pianist nightbird called Bobby Short has his grand-piano perch, from which he plays and sings all the songs worth hearing more than once, sipping champagne the while into the small hours. Everybody who is (or wants to be) anybody comes to hear Bobby harvest his organically grown crop of Tin Pan Alley history, just as if the heavily polluted contemporary musical disaster area didn't exist. If you've never seen and heard him practice his own brand of ecological clean-up at that particular spot, the next best thing is Atlantic's new two-disc album

called "Bobby Short Loves Cole Porter." To me it is a major musical event, and I'll try to keep my voice down while I tell you about it.

All too often these days, when I take a new record off the turntable, I feel as though I have just been mugged. After enduring a number of such trashy assaults on my eardrums and nervous system, I find Bobby Short and Cole Porter are solace sublime. I have played this new collection of Porter gems over and over, each time finding new thrills, new surprises, newer and richer nuances of phrasing and interpretation. Bobby Short is a wise man among fools; he knows about us all, and his analytical scrutiny seems to go straight to the heart, with no detours. I have never heard him sing badly, and mediocrity is not in his dictionary. I have heard him sing *tired*, but on this disc there are none of the rough edges and hoarse late-night whispers that leads to. He sounds up and rested throughout, which is probably the result of the romance he is carrying on with his material.

And what gorgeous material it is!—twenty-two Cole Porter songs, a few of which are old friends, but most of which are brand-new to these ears, and I thought I'd heard them all. It is just possible that you have had it with Cole Porter songbooks, Cole Porter lyric sheets, Cole Porter biographies, and Cole Porter revues, but let Bobby Short change your mind. He is ingenious at finding little-known songs, dusting them off, airing them out, and breathing new life into them. There are even five unpublished Porter songs never heard before by anyone but the composer himself. I am at a loss to know why—perhaps they were unused remnants scissored off a movie score and left to mildew in some Hollywood backlot trunk. But their unveiling should not surprise those who have read Bobby's recently published autobiography, *Black and White Baby*—he knows where *all* the bodies are buried.

Meanwhile, back at the Carlyle, Bobby's long-time friends and associates, Beverly Peer and Dick Sheridan, work witchcraft at the bass and drums, and Bobby wrings new passion out of his piano. There are no electrified shock effects to distort the sound and lacerate the lyrics, just a well-tuned Steinway enhancing rather than competing with the words and the music. There are no drunks or pop-cult dilettantes arguing about *Jesus Christ Superstar*, either, just Bobby Short once again turning popular music into art.

With twenty-two songs spread lavishly over four sides of this two-disc set, it is impossible to go into the merits of each. Take my word for it: there's not a wasted moment, not a single wrong turn, not a

bad song in the lot. But if you must test before buying, try *Why Don't We Try Staying Home?*, a masterpiece of 1929 vintage (never before published) that might have been created for the highly dubious romance between Greta Garbo and Cecil Beaton recently celebrated in a highly dubious article in *McCall's*. Or perhaps the bittersweet *Why Shouldn't I*, which asks the question: "Miss Peggy Joyce says it's good, and every star out in far Hollywood seems to give it a try, so why shouldn't I?" The "it" is, of course, love, a subject on which Mr. Porter was an expert. In this grimy era it is a commodity as rare as uranium, and that is why we should all be grateful for such post-Christmas miracles as "Bobby Short Loves Cole Porter," a fine album that is a kind of love itself. *Rex Reed*

BOBBY SHORT: *Bobby Short Loves Cole Porter*. Bobby Short (vocals and piano); Beverly Peer (bass); and Richard Sheridan (drums). *Hot House Rose*; *By Candlelight*; *So Near and Yet So Far*; *At Long Last Love*; *How's Your Romance*; *Katie Went to Haiti*; *You Don't Know Poree*; *Rap Tap on Wood*; *Let's Fly Away*; *You've Got That Thing*; and a dozen others. ATLANTIC SD two discs 2-606 \$11.98.

BOBBY SHORT
Only superlatives in his dictionary



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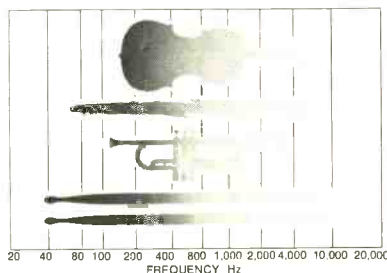
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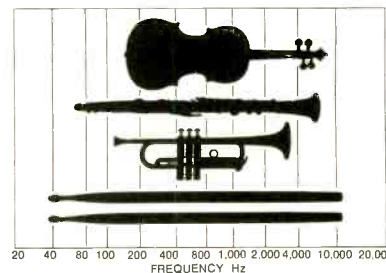
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CLASSICAL

Reviewed by DAVID HALL • BERNARD JACOBSON • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS
PAUL KRESH • ERIC SALZMAN • LESTER TRIMBLE

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ALBRIGHT: *Organbook; Juba.* William Albright (organ). *Pneuma.* Marilyn Mason (organ). COMPOSERS RECORDINGS INC. CRI SD 277 \$5.95.

Performance: **Splendid**
Recording: **Splendid**

Twentieth-century composers have not been kind to the organ. Probably because this gorgeous giant of an instrument is found almost exclusively in churches, where it performs its feats of cultural memory well within the conservative confines of religious services. But it has not been taken seriously as a medium for modern expression. Olivier Messiaen, of course, has added some really new things to the literature, but there have been few others. For my part, I have wondered for a long time—ever since electronic music became an important factor in modern composition—when composers would discover that the modern organ is, in fact, an electronic instrument *par excellence*, and put this realization to use. (One composer of my acquaintance had done so, in fact, a few years ago, but record companies could not be interested in it at that time.)

William Albright, an exceedingly distinguished young composer-organist-professor, has been more fortunate. This new CRI recording, the result of a grant from the American Academy/National Institute of Arts given in recognition of his achievement, opens the window upon a fascinating new world of sonic potentials.

The three works on this disc, all of them major, date from the years 1965, 1966, and 1967. The third one—*Organbook*—received the prize of the Queen Marie-José contest in 1968. It deals with static sound-situations in four contrasting movements, each very handsome and compelling, displaying beauti-

fully the strong creative gifts and unusually deep, mature convictions of this twenty-seven-year-old composer. It is a work I doubt could have been written before the sounds of electronic music became common parlance to most living composers. (The fact that Albright is associate director of the Electronic Music Studio at the University of Michigan is probably not irrelevant.) It often rides a delicate border between virtuoso organ music, such as that of Messiaen, and overt elec-

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BACH: *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D Minor (BWV 903); Capriccio, in B Major, on the Departure of his Beloved Brother (BWV 992); Fantasy and Fugue in A Minor (BWV 904); Suite in E Minor (BWV 996).* Gustav Leonhardt (harpsichord). TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9571 B \$5.95.

Performance: **Brilliant and idiomatic**
Recording: **Excellent**

Leonhardt is an artist of far greater dash, style, sensitivity, and general capacity to be interesting than Richter. The latter has always seemed to me to be vastly overrated as a Baroque interpreter, and Leonhardt's altogether more temperamental and idiomatic way with the Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue—the one piece common to these new releases—reinforces my judgment. Richter seems much of the time to be merely going through the notes—and he doesn't do even that in a consistently reliable way, as some rather unsteady rhythms in the fast movements of the Italian Concerto attest.

Turning to Leonhardt, I was immediately struck by the difference, which is largely one of feeling, but can be traced to this performer's clearer comprehension of the rhythmic rhetoric essential to good Baroque performance. His is a delightful recital, and I warmly recommend it. A pleasant touch of intimacy is added by the reading of the descriptive movement-headings before each section of the Capriccio—this, by the way, is the second time Leonhardt has recorded the piece for Telefunken, and you can safely choose between the two versions on the basis of couplings, which in the earlier case consisted of a group of pieces by Couperin, Frescobaldi, and Georg Böhm.

I would have preferred a lower and more realistic volume level for both recordings, but the Telefunken is the better of the two, since it loses less in immediacy when the controls are turned down. A musicological point: Telefunken's liner refers to the subtitle "*aufs Lautenwerk*" of the E Minor Suite (catalogued in the BWV as a work for lute), as stemming not from Bach, but rather from a later hand, which I have no reason to question. But even so, doesn't the phrase mean, not "on the lute," but on one of those lute-harpsichords we know Bach ordered for himself both in Cöthen and in Leipzig? Whichever is the right translation, Leonhardt's performance is fine, and I strongly urge you to hear it. B.J.



GUSTAV LEONHARDT
A feeling for Bach's rhythmic rhetoric

tronicism. A lovely and a fascinating set of pieces.

Juba and *Pneuma* are also fine works. I cannot say that Albright's inspiration is always maintained at the peak level of which he is capable. That would be asking a great deal of any composer, let alone a quite young one. But his peaks are very high, and the valleys are neither very deep nor very long. His is an exceptional talent, and this recorded organ music displays it beautifully. L.T.

BACH: *Italian Concerto in F Major (BWV 971); Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D Minor (BWV 903); Toccata and Fugue in G Minor (BWV 915); Pastorale in F Major (BWV 590); Fantasy in C Minor (BWV 906).* Karl Richter (harpsichord). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 035 \$6.98.

Performance: **Dull**
Recording: **Good**

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- Ⓒ = stereo cassette
- = quadrasonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadrasonic tape
- Ⓟ = eight-track quadrasonic tape
- Ⓕ = quadrasonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

(Continued on next page)

BACH: Six Motets (BWV 225-230). Heinrich Schütz Choir and Instrumental Ensemble of Heilbronn, Fritz Werner cond.; Eva Hölderlin-Liedecke (organ). **MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY** MHS 1164/5 two discs \$5.98 (plus 65¢ handling charge from Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Good (but read on . . .)**
Recording: **Good**

These are decent, sensible, musicianly performances, soundly recorded, that correctly use discreet instrumental support for music we now know may enjoy that amenity. But they have the misfortune to come up against the RCA Victrola set (VICS 6037), which is brighter in sound, a shade more idiomatic in singing and playing (by the Barmen-Gemarke Schola Cantorum and the Collegium Aureum), and just as inexpensive, and which also offers "Sei Lob und Preis" as an additional bargain. No contest. *B.J.*

BARBER: Sonata for Piano. CUMMING: Twenty-four Preludes. John Browning (piano). **DESTO** DC 7120 \$5.98.

Performance: **Stellar**
Recording: **Splendid**

Samuel Barber's Piano Sonata is one of those very rare birds—an *American* work that has found its way securely into the piano repertoire. With this performance by John Browning, Desto has added to its fine and burgeoning catalog a stellar item, in terms of the music, the playing, and the recorded sound. Browning's interpretation is splendidly thoughtful, imbued at every moment with personal conviction and insight. In brilliant passages his playing has a special kind of sparkle and personality, neither too brittle nor too soft, rife with fine gradations. Powerful passages have real muscle behind them; pensive sections come forth with sincerity and an interesting freshness of viewpoint. In short, this is one of the really top-drawer recordings of the Barber Sonata: a virtuoso performance, but one in which virtuosity serves the music, rather than the other way around.

Richard Cumming's Twenty-four Preludes are played with equal elegance and aplomb. Written expressly for Browning, they are apparently ensconced in his personal recital repertoire. One can imagine why—almost. They have, in general, a good deal of charm. Beginning with the fourth Prelude and continuing, intermittently, for some distance, this attribute (plus their adroit pianism) carries them along quite well. There are touches of other composers' styles—Satie, Bernstein, Gershwin, and Debussy among them. But this is not too bothersome. What really detracts from their effectiveness is the fact that, as the series proceeds, its charm begins to pall because of the music's fragility of substance. It's very difficult for a composer to be charming and substantial at the same time. Cumming has managed it, but in only a few instances. *L.T.*

BEEHOVEN: Irish Songs. Frank Patterson (tenor); Music Group of London (David Parkhouse, piano; Hugh Bean, violin; Eileen Croxford, cello). **PHILIPS** 6500 104 \$5.98.

Performance: **Pleasant**
Recording: **Excellent**

There are fifteen folk songs here from the

three sets (totaling fifty-seven songs in all) that Beethoven arranged on commission from the Scottish publisher and folk-song collector George Thomson. Walter Scott and Robert Burns are among the poets; other names less celebrated but undoubtedly known to specialists are William Smyth, Alexander Boswell, and Joanna Baillie. The songs include love ballads, drinking songs, soldier's songs, and a merry jig or two. They are all unfamiliar to me, except for *Sad and Luckless Was the Season*, which seems to be a melodic variant of *The Last Rose of Summer*.

Generally regarded as a commercial venture on Beethoven's part, these songs are not considered a significant part of his output. They are expertly set, tasteful, and most enjoyable, though I would not recommend listening to all fifteen in one sitting. Frank Patterson sings them with apparent affection, exemplary diction, and clean intonation. The



FRANK PATTERSON
Affection for Beethoven's Irish settings

accompanying trio is of virtuoso caliber, and the recording is gem-like in its transparency. *G.J.*

BEEHOVEN: King Stephan—Incidental Music, Op. 117; The Ruins of Athens—Incidental Music, Op. 113. Margit László (soprano); Sándor Nagy (baritone); Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus; Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra. Géza Oberfrank cond. **HUNGAROTON** LPX 11474 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Spacious**

Other than the magnificent score for Goethe's *Egmont*, the music for August von Kotzebue's *King Stephan, Hungary's First Benefactor* and *The Ruins of Athens* constitute the whole of Beethoven's important incidental music for the theater. Both the latter were composed for the same occasion—the 1812 opening of the German Theater in Pest—and were put on paper over a scant three-week period. The music is essentially ceremonial in character, with touches of Hungarian local color, especially in the *King Stephan* final chorus. *The Ruins of Athens* has the more substantial musical content, and the best of the choruses offer lyrical writing

on a par with that of the Op. 90 Piano Sonata. There is also a fine Sarastro-like aria.

Considering the circumstances of the work's commissioning and first performance, it is altogether appropriate for a Hungarian contingent to offer the first recording of the *King Stephan* music. It is almost complete (it lacks two numbers), as is *The Ruins of Athens* also. The Hungarian soloists, chorus, and orchestra do splendid work throughout both scores under Géza Oberfrank's highly competent direction. Especially fine are Sándor Nagy in the elaborate recitatives and the previously mentioned aria, and the male singers in the two opening choruses of *King Stephan*. The Hungarian dervishes in *The Ruins*, however, are not as fierce as Beecham's British breed in the abridged Angel performance.

The recorded sound has a large-theater ambiance wholly appropriate to this kind of music, especially in the choral episodes. All in all, this is a good disc for Beethoven buffs, although there may be some who will want to search the collectors' shops for the one and only complete recording of *The Ruins of Athens* (Concert Hall Society CHS 1158) dating from 1952. The program notes of the Hungaroton disc, though historically informative, tell us little about the music itself, and neither texts nor translations are included. *D.H.*

BEEHOVEN: Piano Concerto No. 1, in C Minor (see **MOZART: Piano Concerto No. 9**)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BRAHMS: Double Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra, in A Minor, Op. 102. **BEEHOVEN: Romances for Violin and Orchestra: No. 1, in G Major, Op. 40; No. 2, in F Major, Op. 50.** Henryk Szeryng (violin); Janos Starker (cello); Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink cond. **PHILIPS** 6500 137 \$5.98.

Performance: **Virile and probing**
Recording: **Excellent**

For its flow and lyrical surge, the monophonic Isaac Stern/Leonard Rose/Bruno Walter reading of the Brahms Double Concerto with the New York Philharmonic from the 1950's still remains my interpretive touchstone for this score. There have also been some distinguished recorded performances in the stereo medium, the Angel disc by Oistrakh, Rostropovich, and Szell coming first to mind.

Messrs. Szeryng, Starker, and Haitink, with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, belong in the same august company, delivering a splendidly rugged version of the music, one notable at the same time for its probing of inner detail (most especially in the finale) to a degree one associates with chamber music. No doubt a measure of credit for this impression goes to the recording engineers, who have allowed us to hear this kind of detail yet have preserved the ambiance of the concert hall in a most natural manner. The all-important leadership and coordination exercised by Bernard Haitink wraps everything up musically in the very highest style.

Though the two lovely Beethoven *Romances* seem somewhat anticlimactic after the bearish Brahms, it must be said that Szeryng, beautifully aided by Mr. Haitink, does these pieces to a gourmet turn. A fine record. *D.H.*

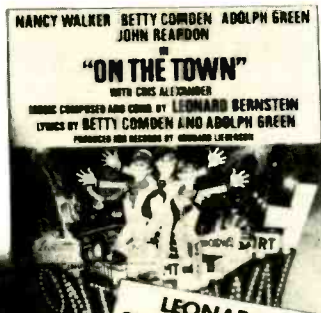
(Continued on page 80)

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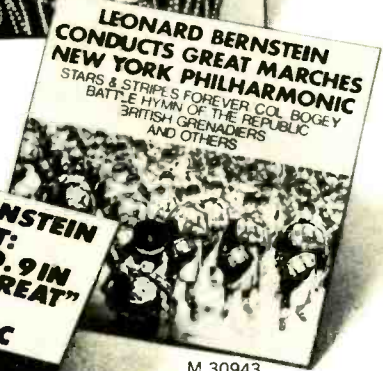
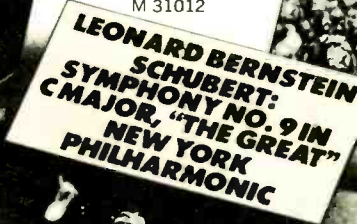


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BRAHMS: Piano Quartet No. 1, in G Minor, Op. 25. Emil Gilels (piano); members of the Amadeus Quartet. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 133 \$6.98.

Performance: **Schizophrenic**
Recording: **Good**

This is a schizophrenic performance: calm, detached, Olympian for the first two movements, and then full of beans for the last two. It is hard to find fault with particulars, but the overall sense of the first two movements is curiously remote and the dynamic and tempo intensity of side two cannot correct this imbalance. The recording is very good, but the review copy showed some lapses from DGG's usual high standard of quality control; check for overmodulation in the loud keyboard passages. *E.S.*

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 3, in D Minor (1888-1889 Version, Ed. Nowak). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm cond. LONDON CS 6717 \$5.98.

Performance: **Impressive**
Recording: **Likewise**

Considering that Karl Böhm in Dresden during the mid- and late Thirties pioneered (as did Eugen Jochum in Hamburg) first recordings of the Bruckner Fourth and Fifth symphonies—and in their original version—it really is surprising that up to now Böhm has not been represented on LP by a Bruckner performance, except for a short-lived 1952 Vox issue of the Seventh Symphony. For all the power and distinction of this first Böhm Bruckner performance in stereo, it is regret-

table that he chose to use the 1888-1889 revision with its drastically truncated finale. A movement-by-movement comparison with a fine imported Philips pressing of the uncut 1878 version, conducted by Bernard Haitink, leaves me convinced of the greater sense of cohesion and resolution in the edition used by Haitink.

The Böhm performance makes an interesting listening comparison with the excellent 1966 Carl Schuricht-Vienna Philharmonic reading on Seraphim (same edition and top value for the money!). Böhm takes a decidedly more deliberate view of the opening movement, and one becomes more aware of its kinship to the corresponding movement of the Beethoven Ninth, especially in the opening and closing pages. In the slow movement, Böhm makes the most of every opportunity for dramatic contrast, achieving most impressive results in the *pizzicato-ostinato* episode that leads to the main climax. Böhm keeps the scherzo moving at a good clip, faster than Schuricht, but without achieving quite the outdoorsy quality of Haitink. The finale, with its combination of dance and chorale elements, gets off to a high-powered start under Böhm's baton, and he keeps the tension up all the way, almost making this version of the movement acceptable, or at least driving home the illusion of a satisfying conclusion.

Böhm has the edge over Schuricht in my estimation, chiefly by virtue of London's more powerful and full-bodied recorded sound. But if price is a factor in prospective purchase, the Schuricht is quite satisfying in its own very musical fashion.

Bruckner, here on the verge of achieving

the apocalyptic manner of his later symphonies, was unable to give us an unalloyed masterpiece in the Third Symphony, even with fifteen years of intermittent revision. But to have on hand fine recorded performances of the two major revisions provides fascinating musical food for thought. I would call the Haitink disc of the 1878 version indispensable for any Brucknerian, but only in the imported Philips pressing (835217). *D.H.*

CUMMING: Twenty-four Piano Preludes (see BARBER)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DEBUSSY: String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 10. RAVEL: String Quartet in F. Juilliard Quartet. COLUMBIA M 30650 \$5.98.

Performance: **Brilliant**
Recording: **Splendid**

It is hard to believe that the Juilliard String Quartet has attained the venerable age of twenty-five years. Just maintaining itself that long, even with changing personnel, is an achievement few string quartets can match, musical temperaments and the stresses and strains of concert life being what they are. Robert Mann, the ensemble's first violinist, is, of course, the only "founding member" still in the ensemble. But Klaus Adam, the cellist, has been with the group for something like sixteen years. Having started young, and having made necessary replacements from among young Juilliard graduates, the Juilliard Quartet is still, in fact and in spirit, a young and exceedingly fresh ensemble.

These performances of the two great quartets by Debussy and Ravel give full evidence of this youthfulness, energy, and intelligence. Though time has brought mature control to the Juilliard's playing, it has sapped their vigor not at all. Both of these are sleek, polished, jet-propelled readings, with no sentimentality whatsoever, ones that exhibit the ultimate in precision. This is particularly appreciable in movements such as the second and third of the Debussy Quartet—the one marked *Scherzo: Assez vif et bien rythmé*, the other *Andantino doucement expressif*. In the scherzo, everything is brisk, classically clean, and unfailingly accurate in rhythmic articulation. In the third movement, where one sometimes hears expressivity bordering on Romanticism, the quartet instead follows the direction "*doucement*" and brings forth a kind of expression much more pensive and aloof. In its Olympian way, this is startlingly effective.

Essentially these performances might be called restrained, if that term does not seem contradictory in a context where so much passionate propulsion is in evidence. They are essentially cool, and listeners who expect Romantic readings may be a trifle taken aback. Nevertheless, the Juilliard's conception is thoroughly sound, and their fulfillment of it is both elegant and virtuosic. *L.T.*

DUSSEK: Harp Sonatas (Complete). Susan McDonald (harp). ORION ORS 7153 \$5.98.

Performance: **Ingratating**
Recording: **Very good**

The Bohemian-born composer and pianist Jan Ladislav Dussek (1760-1812) is credited with being the first keyboard performer to

(Continued on page 82)

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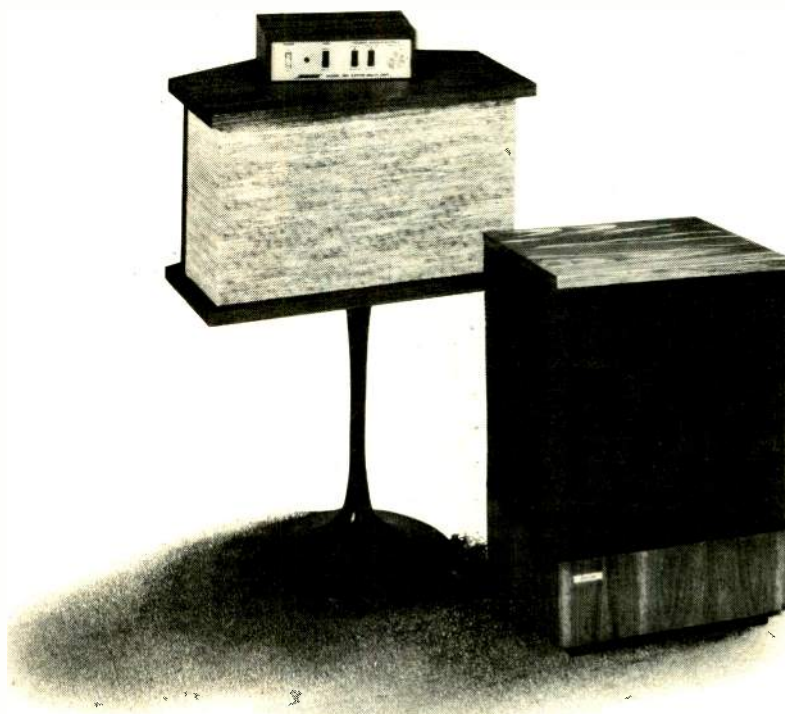
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place his instrument sideways on the stage so that audiences could better see his profile. He had an extremely varied career. After some time at Marie Antoinette's court, he fled France just before the Revolution to come to England, where he set himself up as an immensely popular teacher, performed with Haydn, and was associated with music publishing. His wife, Sophia Corri, whom he married in 1792, was not only a singer but also a harpist, and it was for her, presumably, that he composed the present sonatas. In style they very much predate the kind of Romantic music Dussek was to write later on, when he served as *Kapellmeister* to Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia (it was after the latter's death that the composer penned his touching *Harmonic Elegie*, one of his best pieces). The harp sonatas on the

whole adhere to the *galant* mold; they are meant to be charming and unprofound, and their depth of expression relates to the kind of popular folk-tune variations most composers were writing at that time. pieces such as *The Lass of Richmond Hill* (which serves as a movement in the present F major Sonata). *Rosline Castle*, *O Dear*, *What Can the Matter Be?* (a favorite Rondo), and *God Save the King*. It's pleasant, if not mind-boggling, stuff, and very charmingly rendered (minus the superfluous obbligato violin and bass parts of the original publications for some of the sonatas) by Susan McDonald. The harp sound is intimate and clear, although the pressing I had for review was not entirely faultless. I.K.

GADE: *Three Novelletten* (see GODARD)

GERSHWIN: *Piano Concerto in F; Rhapsody in Blue; Variations on "I Got Rhythm," for Piano and Orchestra*. Werner Haas (piano); Monte Carlo Opera Orchestra, Edo de Waart cond. PHILIPS 6500 118 \$5.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Very good**

Why did Gershwin succeed where so many others failed? Perhaps the mysterious quality is a certain naturalness, even ingenuousness, that makes *his* symphonic pop believable. This recording will testify to his universality: a German pianist, a Dutch conductor and label, and a French (Monacan) orchestra produce lively and quite reasonably stylish performances. The "I Got Rhythm" Variations, one of Gershwin's best pieces, is a nice bonus and the recording is excellent. E.S.

GODARD: *Piano Trio, in G Major, Op. 32*. GADE: *Three Novelletten from Op. 29*. SITT: *Piano Trio, in G Major, Op. 63, No. 1*. Goebel Trio. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1159 \$2.99 (plus 65c handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **After-dinner noodling**
Recording: **Good**

The Musical Heritage Society seems determined to bring more salon music into our lives, which may end up making them a bit more pleasant but not one whit less drowsy. An entire program of short piano pieces, like sweets from a musical chocolate box, was issued not long ago in this series and duly discussed in these pages (December 1971). On this newest record are longer pieces, and even more redolently than the bagatelles, they conjure up images of polished parquet, potted palms, and ladies like the Marx Brothers' Margaret Dumont wearing ostrich feathers and elaborate hairdos, gently whispering behind painted fans while the trio in evening dress plays on. And on.

Remember the *Berceuse* from *Jocelyn* by Godard? I don't know about you, but it was one of the staples in our music-appreciation course in public school. And a pretty bauble too. No less pretty is Godard's four-movement piano trio, written a century ago by a Frenchman who was nothing if not facile and who, after recovering from child prodigy-hood, went on to write any number of songs, string quartets, and sonatas, as well as six operas and symphonies you listened to while reading program notes that explained the action. The trio is inoffensive enough for any drawing-room, and the trick, I should imagine, is to hear it all the way through without stealing a single glance at your watch. I didn't quite make it.

Nor was my luck much better with the three Grieg-like *Novelletten* by the Danish composer Gade, or the Piano Trio by Sitt. Sitt—I like to think you didn't know until now—was born in Prague in 1850 and died in Leipzig in 1922, after a lifetime of teaching the violin and writing at least half a million or so chamber works containing not a note that would offend the ears of the most sensitive dowager. His Piano Trio in G Major goes by like water, as crystal clear and just about as intoxicating and flavorful. The playing throughout by the Goebel Trio is better than these scores deserve, and the recording is quite good. P.K.

(Continued on page 86)

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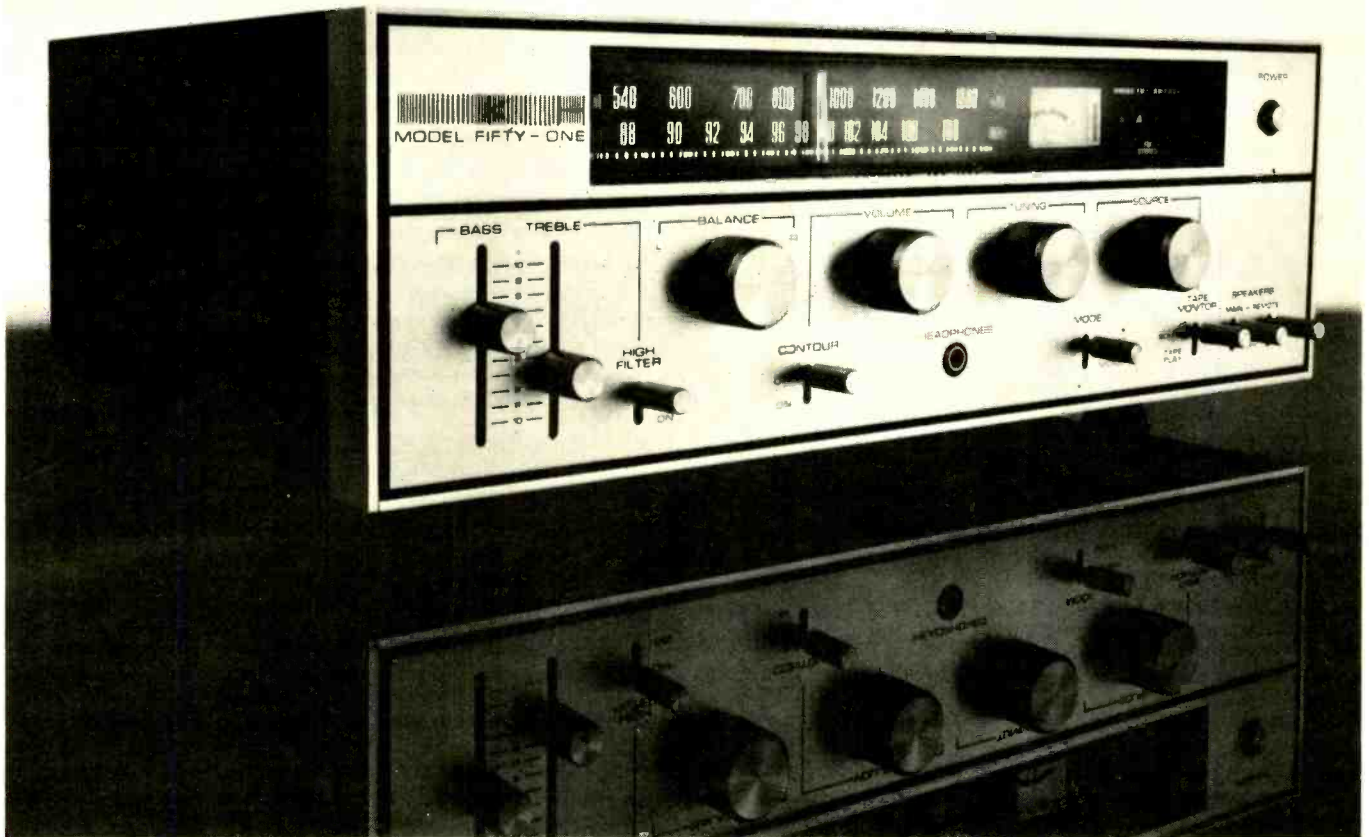
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HANDEL: *Hallelujah! Messiah: Hallelujah Chorus; For Unto Us a Child Is Born; Lift Up Your Heads; Pastoral Symphony; Amen Chorus. Judas Maccabaeus: See the Conquering Hero Comes; Hallelujah, Amen. Samson: Awake the Trumpet's Lofty Sound. Concerto, in F, for Organ and Strings: Allegro. Alexander's Feast: Revenge, Timotheus Cries. Water Music: Suite.* Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. RCA LSC 3226 \$5.98, © R8S 1198 \$6.95.

Performance: **Choral music without choruses**

Recording: **Very good**

In one of those aggressively whimsical yet informative imaginary interviews Charles B. Yulish likes to supply by way of liner notes for classical albums, George Frideric Handel is made to say on the back of this one that he is delighted that "the singers have been replaced by instruments. I have told you about the difficulties working with singers—multiply them working with a chorus!" Handel goes on to praise the rearrangements, for orchestral instruments alone, Eugene Ormandy used in preparing this "antiphonal spectacular." I suppose it is true that in his day Handel had plenty of trouble with vocalists, and did indeed once dangle an obstreperous soprano out a window, threatening to let her go unless she swore to cooperate. But it was disconcerting at first to hear the "Hallelujah Chorus" from *Messiah* without a single human voice. The Philadelphia's highly competent brass section takes over the vocal line, and a virile job they do of it, but it takes getting used to. Once over that not inconsiderable hurdle, I found myself warming to the mighty arrangements by Arthur Harris of excerpts from Handel's oratorios, and even more so as the "double orchestra" of winds, strings, and brasses gave out with a spectacular version of passages from the composer's *Concerto, in F, for Organ and Strings* as well as most of the *Water Music Suite*. I don't imagine it was a group quite as big as the Philadelphia that was on the barge behind King George's that summer day on the Thames when this sumptuous music had its premiere, but even in gigantic dress the delightful airs still float effortlessly. In all, a successful if disturbingly unorthodox venture that probably would indeed have pleased old Handel, who was never above appropriating his own old tunes and displaying them in new settings. Ormandy's orchestra has never played more glowingly, and the recorded sound is magnificent. P.K.

HAYDN: *Quartet in D Minor, Op. 76, No. 2 ("Quinten"); Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 76, No. 4. Eius Quartet.* MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1143 \$2.99 (plus 65¢ handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Highly commendable**
Recording: **Excellent**

The Op. 76 quartets, six in number, date from 1797, the same year as *The Creation* and a few years after Haydn's last visit to London. A motif of descending fifths in the first movement provided the second of the set with its nickname; likewise, the expansive mood of the opening to the fourth quartet is responsible for that work's being dubbed "Sunrise" (though not so called on the present recording). (Continued on page 88)

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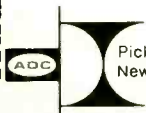
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ent jacket). Both quartets are superb works, and they receive splendid, precise performances on this disc. The Eidus Quartet, incidentally, consists of Arnold Eidus and Lamar Alsop (violins), David Mankovitz (viola), and George Ricci (cello). I urge the Musical Heritage Society, which has provided first-class sonics here, to have the group finish the set. *I.K.*

KALINNIKOV: *Symphony No. 1, in G Minor.* Moscow Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra. Kiril Kondrashin cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40173 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Good**

Vassily Kalinnikov (1866-1901), a slightly older contemporary of Rachmaninoff, died of tuberculosis too young to realize his full creative potential. But his two symphonies, composed in 1895 and 1898, respectively, are staples of the concert repertoire in Russia. Indeed, the G Minor enjoyed considerable popularity in this country during the Twenties and Thirties. If the Second Symphony (recorded on Melodiya-Angel SR 40132) is the more sophisticated in the handling of its materials, it is the G Minor that has all the good tunes. A major masterpiece it is not, but it does make pleasant listening in a diluted Borodin style. Kiril Kondrashin gives the music a sensitive yet zestful performance, aided by recorded sound that is both warm in ambiance and ample in body. *D.H.*

LADERMAN: *Magic Prison.* Adale O'Brien, Jon Jory (speakers); Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester cond. **KEYES: *Abysses, Bridges, Chasms, for Ten Rock-Jazz Soloists and Orchestra.*** Philharmonic Bridge: Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester cond. LOUISVILLE FIRST EDITION RECORDS LS 712 \$5.95.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Good**

Magic Prison is a dialogue (or rather two simultaneous monologues) arranged from the correspondence of Emily Dickinson by the poet Archibald MacLeish, Ezra Laderman did not "set" the lines but simply added punctuation: spoken lines alternate with musical interjections. The music is pleasant enough, but it is hard to understand in what way it complements the words or provides needed commentary. Since the texts are delivered in an only moderately effective manner, the totality is not impressive.

Nelson Keyes' *Abysses, Bridges, Chasms* is one of those rock-jazz-symphonic summit meetings which are taking place with great frequency nowadays. The rock part of the deal is mostly honorific—you have to have rock nowadays to attract youth-culture to the symphony hall, right? This is a particularly smooth example of the jazz-at-symphony-hall genre, marred by a rather weak rock-beat finale. Keyes, a composer whose name was previously unknown to me, slickly merges a great many disparate elements until he comes a cropper at the finish line. The Philharmonic Bridge presumably consists of the "ten rock-jazz soloists." There are certainly some excellent musicians among them, and everybody has a grand time except, possibly, the over-expectant listener. *E.S.*

MAROS: *Euphonies 1, 2 & 3; Five Studies for Orchestra.* Orchestra of the Hungarian

Radio and Television, György Lehel cond. QUALITON LPX 11362 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Very good**

Although the contemporary style of the Polish school has had world-wide attention since the early Sixties, similar activity in other Eastern European countries has been less well known. In general, the other Eastern-bloc countries, with their state-supported musical institutions run by academics, have been slower to permit the performance and diffusion of anything except traditional symphonic and "folk"-inspired material. It is no accident that the best-known non-Polish representative of the new Eastern music, the Hungarian György Ligeti, has created all his mature works in Vienna. (The other important creator of this kind of music, Yannis Xenakis, is a Greek long resident in Paris.)

Therefore, it comes as something of a sur-



KIRIL KONDRASHIN
Zest for Kalinnikov's fine tunes

prise to find an important and not even young Hungarian composer working at home in a cluster-and-density style right through the last decade. Rudolf Maros is a Kodály pupil now in his middle fifties. By 1960, the date of the Five Studies recorded here, there is an apparent transition from a post-Bartókian idiom to a new type of composition in cluster blocks and timbral changes. This transition is not quite as radical as that of Penderecki or Ligeti, and even the later *Euphonies* (1963-65) adhere to a basically dramatic curve of rise, climax, and fall. Only *Euphony No. 3* manages a consistent, fairly substantial time scale; the other works are essentially collections of shorter, characteristic movements. Nevertheless this is quite fully realized music in a completely contemporary idiom. In spite of obvious limitations, Maros' music has character and distinction, and it is well played and recorded here. *E.S.*

MOZART: *Le nozze di Figaro.* Ingvar Wixell (baritone), Count Almaviva; Jessye Norman (soprano), Countess Almaviva; Mirella Freni (soprano), Susanna; Wladimiro Ganzarolli (bass), Figaro; Yvonne Minton (mezzo-soprano), Cherubino; Maria Casula (mezzo-soprano), Marcellina; Clifford Grant (bass),
(Continued on page 90)

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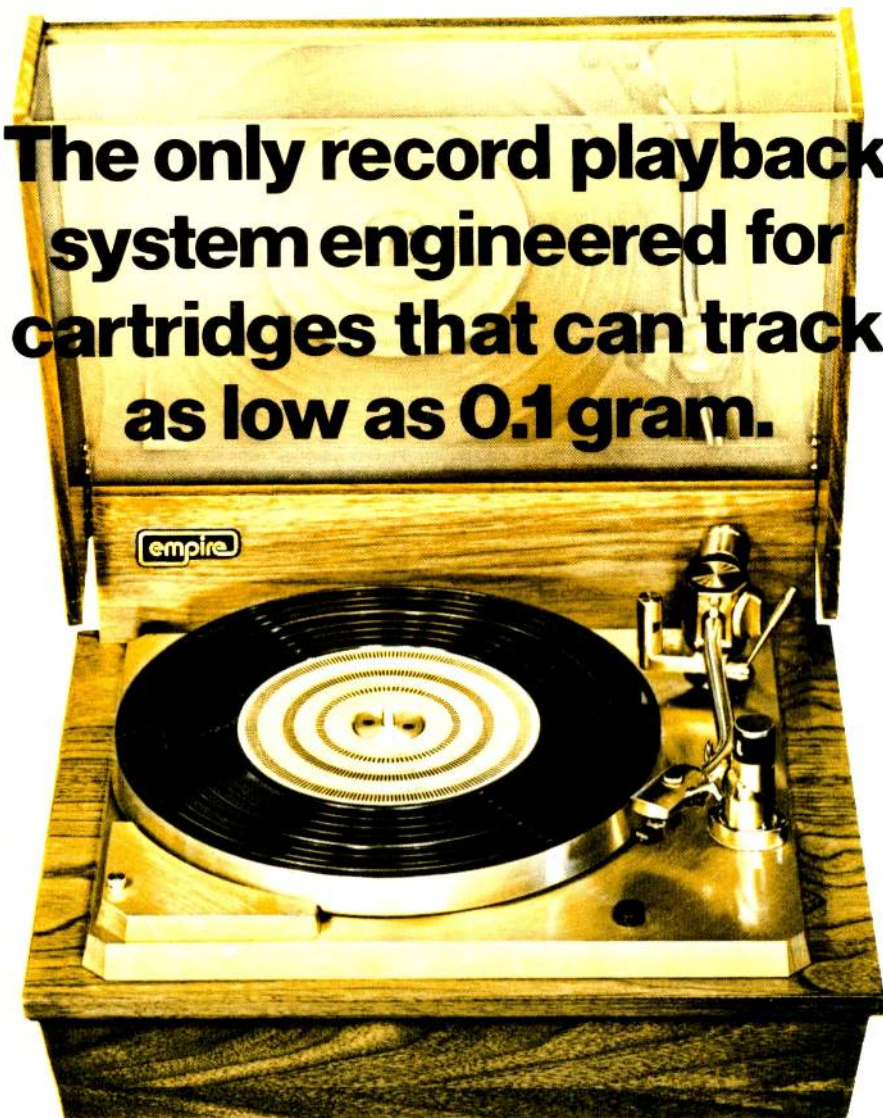
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Bartolo; Robert Tear (tenor). Basilio; Lillian Watson (soprano), Barbarina; Paul Hudson (bass). Antonio; others. B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. Colin Davis cond. PHILIPS 6707 014 four discs \$23.92.

Performance: **Lacks warmth**
Recording: **Good**

The concept of an "ensemble opera"—a group of able and committed singers well equipped for their tasks, molded by a strong and knowing conductor into a precision team—is often suggested both as a desirable ideal and as a welcome antidote to the familiar excesses of star orientation. Well, this lofty concept appears to be the foundation upon which this new *Nozze di Figaro* was built by Philips under the direction of Colin Davis. The results, unfortunately, do not live up to expectations.

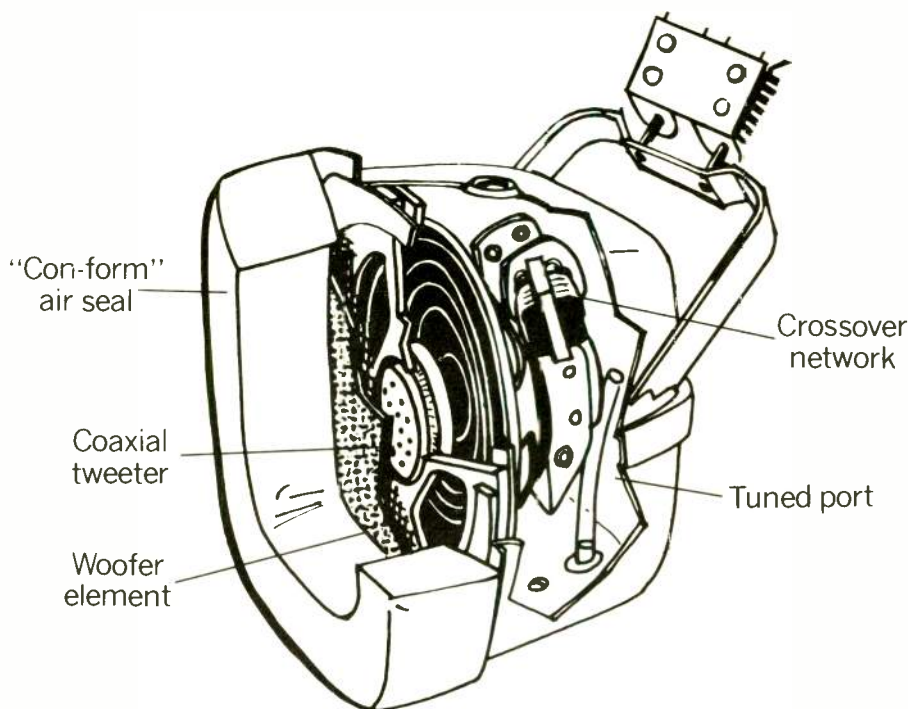
This is an ensemble performance, and the conductor is definitely its dominant element. Unfortunately, Colin Davis does not seem to have evolved a consistent or unified view of this opera. In his informative liner notes, Erik Smith rightly states that the performance takes special care in emphasizing the words, and particular attention is given to the recitatives. Considering that there are many non-Italians in the cast, this aim has indeed been realized in a laudable manner under the coach, Ubaldo Gardini. The fastidious supervision of the recitatives, however, has not been carried into the arias and ensembles with equal dedication. These are frequently led in a rigid, unyielding manner, with insufficient warmth and insufficient attention to meaningful phrasing—and to words! Under the circumstances, one is left with the impression that the conductor has not extracted the best vocal performances from his singers.

This is all the more frustrating, since there are moments (the duet "*Crudel, perché finora*" in Act III, for one) when Davis demonstrates a feeling for the right atmosphere and for fittingly expressive pacing (as a matter of fact, he handles Susanna's "*Deh vieni*," if anything, too expansively). But in such other episodes as the relentlessly un-charming "*Non so più cosa son*" and the extended finale of the second act, the singers simply cannot phrase expressively at the tempo demanded by the conductor. Essentially, what we have here is a symphonic conception, resting on a well-drilled orchestra of rich tone and well-balanced textures. Every once in a while, the singers are made to fit into this symphonic framework remarkably well; more often they are not.

About the singers relatively little need be said. They are all musicianly performers, ranging from adequate to good, but there is no magnetic personality among them, and *Nozze di Figaro* is the kind of a score which sooner or later exposes their various limitations. In her recording debut on this side of the Atlantic, the young American soprano Jessye Norman displays a voice of real beauty and quality, but her "*Dove sono*" is not always pure in intonation, and it is choppy phrased. Mirella Freni is not up to her best here, and I am surprised that Davis tolerated her frequent slides into pitch. Neither of the other principals provokes major objections from me, but they do nothing much to win me, either.

The opera is presented with all "standard" performance cuts laudably restored. An interesting change of scene sequences occurs
(Continued on page 92)

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Christoph Eschenbach's COMPLETE MOZART SONATAS on DGG

By Bernard Jacobson



CHRISTOPH ESCHENBACH'S performances of the complete Mozart piano sonatas for Deutsche Grammophon are of immense distinction. How much I like them is another question, and one I find some difficulty in answering.

The young Eschenbach is a more polished pianist than anyone else who has recorded substantial numbers of Mozart sonatas. His fingerwork has all the crispness and clarity of Glenn Gould's, enhanced by excellent judgment in the matter of pedaling, and undistorted by Gould's mania for inordinately fast tempos. (Some of Eschenbach's finales, in particular, I felt to be a shade too fast for comfort, but they are never ridiculous like Gould's.) His phrasing is unfailingly sensitive and musicianly, and I particularly like his willingness to wait out the full value of rests and held notes, instead of hastening on as if afraid the listener might lose the thread. He uses commendably clean texts, and abides by them with some scrupulousness. Incidentally, this set includes the two little sonatas, K. 46d and 46e, written when Mozart was twelve, as well as the eighteen sonatas of the standard canon. Though no masterpieces, the early works add usefully to the detail of our historical perspective.

It is only by the very highest standards of comparison that something seems to be missing from Eschenbach's view of this absorbing and persistently underrated body of music. The standards I mean are those of Ivan Moravec in the great C Minor Fantasy and Sonata, of Peter Serkin in the F Major Sonata, K. 533/494, of Alfred Brendel in the A Minor Sonata, and of Walter Gieseking in the best few among the performances gathered in the three Seraphim sets. The muscular power of Moravec's left hand, the inspired spontaneity of the younger Serkin (which admittedly shades over into mere eccentricity in his curious account of the C Minor work), the chunky integrity of Brendel and of Gieseking in his finest moments—these are the qualities lacking here.

What you may deduce from the tone of that succession of adjectives and nouns is that Eschenbach's playing is perhaps just a little too soft-edged for Mozart's music, which is admittedly exquisite but must also be strong and direct. And the source of the deficiency may be traced, I think,

to what Klaus Geitel refers to in the accompanying booklet as Eschenbach's "restraint . . . in the control of dynamics." Restraint is admirable in its place, but I think Eschenbach carries it too far. Granted, by the end of any *forte* phrase, he always makes it clear that he has noticed the contrast with the preceding *piano* phrase—but too often the beginning of the new dynamic is glossed over. Eschenbach seems to want to make his effects imperceptibly, and though the phenomenal technical control with which he carries out that aim must be admired, the aim itself is essentially a nineteenth-century one that is out of place in Mozart.

FOR all that, the playing is so beautiful and subtle and poised and observant that I think I would give this set first place among the complete or near-complete versions, not excluding Gieseking's, which only fitfully recalls the true quality of that superb musician. The recording is ideally clear, spacious, and comfortable—though I am surprised that no one involved in the sessions noticed the tendency of the piano's second D above middle C to clang in *fortissimo* passages.

The pianist, you may like to know, is fairly generous in the matter of repeats. He observes all exposition repeats, and also takes second-part repeats in K. 282, K. 310, K. 457, K. 545, and the last movement of K. 280. On the other hand, I was disappointed by the omission of second repeats in the variations of K. 331. To be consistent here, Eschenbach ought surely to have cut the second-part repeat in the final (Allegro) variation, which is written out in full only in order to accommodate a modification in the last measure. But then the fact that he did not dare to do so would seem to support my view that *all* the second repeats are really essential. Furthermore, I do feel that at least part of the purpose of repeats is to accommodate creative variation on the performer's part, and I regret that Eschenbach hardly even attempts anything of this kind, and then only in the sphere of slightly modified dynamics.

MOZART: *Piano Sonatas (complete)*. Christoph Eschenbach (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2720 031 seven discs \$31.50.

in the third act, and the annotator makes a plausible justification for it. There *are* good things in this performance. But when all is said and done, it is simply not very inspiring.

G.J.

MOZART: *Piano Concerto No. 9, in E-flat Major (K. 271)*. BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 1, in C-Major, Op. 15*. Walter Gieseking (piano), Berlin State Opera Orchestra, Hans Rosbaud cond. PARNASSUS 7 \$6.00 (postpaid from Parnassus Records, P.O. Box 281, Phoenicia, N.Y. 12464).

Performance: **Beethoven excellent**
Recording: **c. 1936**

The Beethoven First Piano Concerto, oddly posted as side two of this latest Parnassus reissue, is the item of interest. The early Mozart Concerto is spun off by Gieseking with the greatest dexterity, but little depth or feeling for the style. The small orchestra sounds not like a reduction for authenticity, but like a scratchy pick-up ensemble (apparently they couldn't even afford a second oboe!). The Beethoven is something else. It is not a profound work, but all its qualities of strength and showmanship in Beethoven's best *Empire* style come through extremely well. Leslie Gerber's notes rightly point to the importance of the recorded legacy of Rosbaud, one of the major conductors of his generation who was just barely beginning to be appreciated in this country at his death (the rumor was that he was slated to get the Chicago Symphony, but didn't live long enough). If the Mozart doesn't show him in a very good light, the Beethoven is masterly. The recordings are fair for their age; they are well enough remastered, but I find a treble cut is essential to beat the noise.

The program notes, in the form of a fairly extensive insert, include a complete Rosbaud discography. E.S.

MOZART: *Requiem, in D Minor (K. 626)*. Edith Mathis (soprano); Julia Hamari (alto); Wieslaw Ochman (tenor); Karl Ridderbusch (bass). Konzertvereinigung Wiener Staatsoper; Hans Haselböck (organ); Vienna Philharmonic, Karl Böhm cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 143 \$6.98.

Performance: **Good, but not exciting**
Recording: **Excellent**

If record critics gave grades for effort and good intentions, I'd give this one an "A". There's no mistaking the seriousness of purpose and the dignity of impulse behind Karl Böhm's reading of this monument. However (this is perhaps a subjective thing with me), the kinds of effort and seriousness which put themselves on view as major elements of an interpretation tend, ultimately, to drive me up the wall. In this case, Böhm has so frequently been careful to keep moderate or slow tempos just a hair's breadth below their flowing point that one sits in respectful but uncomfortable stasis, wishing that things would just, for Heaven's sake, *move ahead!* Perhaps he had to do this to achieve the degree of choral and orchestral precision he wanted. The soloists and vocal forces from the Vienna State Opera are good, but hardly virtuosic. And he certainly did achieve, for the most part, a clean, clear performance. But the sense of studied heaviness and even occasional pedantry robs the Requiem of a measurable amount of its normal mystery and

(Continued on page 94)

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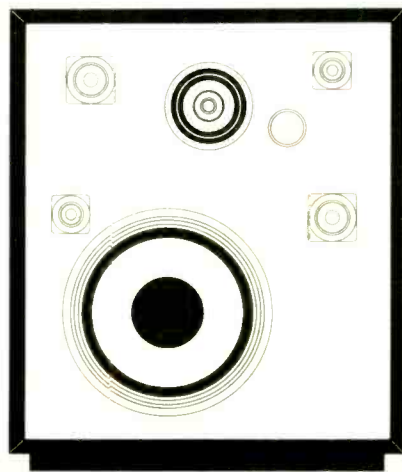
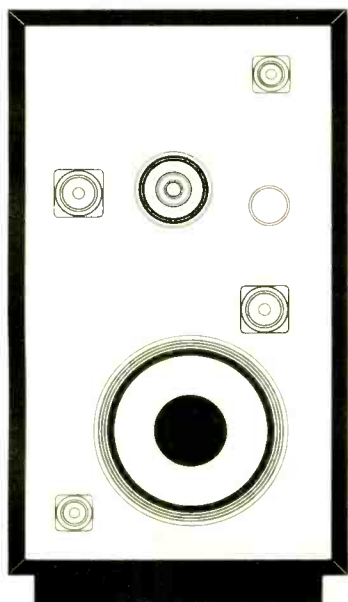
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dramatic impact. This is a pity. On the level of honorable workmanship, Böhm cannot be faulted. There *are* things to admire here, particularly in the second half of the recording. Taken as a whole, though, I cannot very much commend a performance which lets me feel, for the first time in my life, that the music Mozart wrote for the *Tuba Mirum* is vulgar! Should I blame this, too, on Böhm? *L.T.*

OGDON: *Concerto No. 1, for Piano and Orchestra.* **SHOSTAKOVICH:** *Concerto No. 2, for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 102.* John Ogdon (piano); Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Lawrence Foster cond. ANGEL S 36805 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Brilliant**

You read it right: the John Ogdon First Piano Concerto coupled with the Shostakovich Second Piano Concerto! Mr. Ogdon is a great bear of a pianist and this is a great bear of a piano concerto: big, lumbering, impressive in its way, but clumsy and, if you'll pardon the expression, overbearing. I won't try to enumerate the influences and reminiscences here; think of as many of the noisier and jazzier composers and pieces of the last seventy-five years as you can, add a lot of "wrong" notes and a generally heavy, colorful, and somewhat creepy orchestration, and you'll get the general idea.

The Shostakovich is one of those noisy, nose-thumbing modern concertos; I like it even less than Ogdon's work. But both pieces are magnificently performed, and Ogdon has an excellent collaborator in the

person of the gifted American conductor Lawrence Foster. The recording is brilliant in the proper meaning of that term, but, as with a number of Angel's recent releases, the ambient-noise level seems to be high. *E.S.*

OHANA: *Syllabaire pour Phèdre.* Mady Mesplé (Coloratura Soprano); Jacqueline Danjou (Phèdre); Jean Marais (Thésée); soloists, chorus and Ars Nova Ensemble of the O.R.T.F., Marius Constant cond. **Signes.** Monique Rollin (chromatic and 1/3rd tone citharas); Michel Debost (flute); Ars Nova Ensemble of the O.R.T.F., Marius Constant cond. **MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1087 \$2.99** (plus 65¢ handling charge, from the Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Very good**

It is astonishing how classical mythology continues to fascinate French or Francophile artists. Maurice Ohana, born in 1914 in Casablanca of Spanish parents, has lived and worked in Paris for many years and is indubitably "école de Paris." *Syllabaire pour Phèdre*—"Spelling-book for Phèdre" is the translation given here, although "Primer for Phèdre" would have been more idiomatic—is a chamber opera based on a poem of Raphael Cluzel after Euripides. As is often the case in works of this sort—see the Stravinsky/Cocteau *Oedipus*, which also provides author and composer with a takeoff point—it is assumed that you know the story beforehand. The role of the artists is to comment and reinterpret. This is an existentialist *Phèdre*: the characters of the drama are acted upon in a state of perfect isolation and alienation, while the implacable chorus throws out words, letters, interjections, shouts, and babbles in a manner that suggests an impersonal terror without the possibility of redemption.

Okay, that's the way it is, Maurice baby. I agree. But you didn't have to shout so loud. There are in fact many impressive things about the work: the use of singing and speaking voices with the chorus, alteration of choral sounds on tape, and the use of microtones and nonpitched effects between voices and instruments. Altogether it is a striking, if depressing, work.

Signes is an instrumental work with instrumentation similar to *Phèdre's*. As in the chamber opera, Ohana makes very striking use of the cithara—which may or may not correspond to the Greek instrument of the same name—particularly in microtonal combinations with the flute. The work has character and manages to "say something" without any of the spiritual heavy breathing that mars the chamber opera. The performances are excellent and well recorded. A little undolbyzied hiss and no texts of any kind. *E.S.*

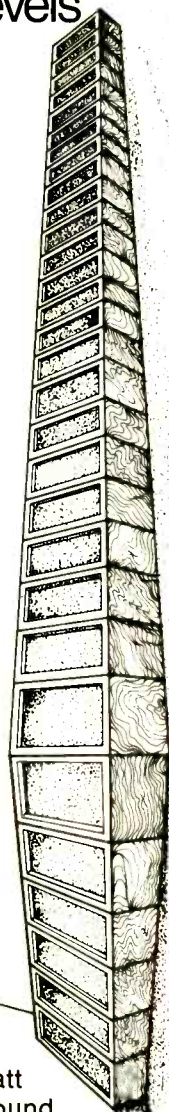
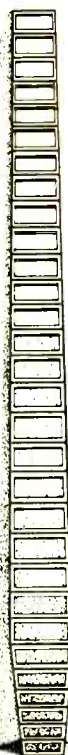
RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RAVEL: *Daphnis et Chloé—Suite No. 2; Rapsodie espagnole; Pavane pour une Infante defunte; Alborada del Gracioso.* Cleveland Orchestra, Pierre Boulez cond. COLUMBIA M 30651 \$5.98, Ⓜ MA 30651 \$6.98, Ⓞ MT 30651 \$6.98.

Performance: **Finest Daphnis ever**
Recording: **Excellent**

Pierre Boulez has achieved something truly remarkable in his interpretation of the famil-

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iar *Daphnis et Chloé* Suite No. 2: a performance in which every detail, large and small, contributes so consciously to the substance and strength of the piece, in which every climax, major and minor, is so meticulously scaled, that the momentary effect and the overall effect are both overwhelming. I've listened to this record a great many times—partly for pleasure, and partly to confirm my initial, almost incredulous impression, that this is absolutely the finest performance of *Daphnis et Chloé* I've ever heard.

Boulez has brought many aspects of his remarkable musicianship to bear on this interpretation. First of all, it is French. But, beyond that, he has made the orchestra play so perfectly in tune that this facet of the performance, rather than being a thing to be taken for granted (as the absence of out-of-tune playing), becomes a *positive* factor which one's ears physically enjoy. The perfection of intonation becomes an extra source of sensuous delight, for Ravel's delicious harmonies ring *true*, and are even more beautiful for being perfect. Boulez's sense of balance between the various choirs of the orchestra, and between individual contrapuntal lines, is as exquisite as is his ear for pitch. Here again, one experiences a justness of acoustical experience which adds to the musical impact—remarkably so when the choir comes through in exactly the way Ravel must have intended it—as a discreet, sensuously forceful application of Renoir-like color.

In the performances on this disc, Boulez chooses rather deliberate tempos. They are a shade slower than usual, and this adds to one's sense that the conductor has control of every element—and, also, that he *wants* control of each and every nuance. Unusually thoughtful performances are the result, and "thoughtful" is a term one does not usually apply to interpretations of Ravel.

In the *Daphnis et Chloé* Suite, all this is to the good. I'm not sure Boulez's approach works equally well in the *Rapsodie espagnole*. There, one often feels that the conductor is forcing a more sober kind of drama onto the music than it can sustain. After all, the *Rapsodie* is a *pièce d'occasion* (on an instrumentally, though not musically, large scale), whereas *Daphnis et Chloé* might be called Ravel's *Rite of Spring*. To do too much overt sculpting of line and inflating of lightweight melodic detail in the *Rapsodie* can only lead to moments of self-consciousness, unconvincing artifice—even a bit of pretentiousness. Because I was so impressed with Boulez's deeply cultured, individualistic success in the *Daphnis et Chloé* Suite, I was fascinated and surprised to observe that his approach didn't work as well on the lighter music.

But do buy this record. You won't be sorry.
L.T.

RAVEL: *String Quartet* (see DEBUSSY)

ROSENBERG: *Symphony No. 2* (see WIRÉN)

ROSKOVSKY: *Vesperae Bachanales*. Anna Kajabová-Peňášková (soprano); L'uba Baricová (alto); Jiří Zahradníček (tenor); Jozef Raninec (bass); Slovak Madrigal Ensemble and Chamber Orchestra, Ladislav Holásek cond. SUPRAPHON 1 12 0787 \$6.98.

Performance **Dull**
Recording: **Very good**

Father Pantaleon, the Slovakian composer of the *Vesperae Bachanales*, was born Josef Roškovský in 1734, and took orders as a Franciscan choirmaster and organist. It is believed that the present work, which is a parody of the First Vespers on the Holidays of the Apostles, was written either at the monastery of Bratislava or that of Trnava sometime between 1765 and 1781. The text is a eulogy of Bacchus, with the sacred Latin turned into mild jests on the pleasures of drinking (*Super flumina Babylonis sedimus et ploravimus . . . : Caesar eleison! . . . : Bacchus vobiscum!*). If your Latin is working and that tickles you (but, *caveat*—the jacket includes Latin text minus translation), you are warned that the music itself, which is scored for solo voices, choir, and small ensemble, is exceedingly eclectic and ranges in

style from Carissimi-like dialogue to *galant* arias of no particular profile. Equally dull is the performance. Were one to listen to the music without being aware of the text, one might assume it to be a rather poorly sung (voices without any distinguishing characteristics except an overload of tremolo) eighteenth-century religious nonentity. Perhaps the wobble in the solo voices is intended to add to the flavor (drunken monks and all that), but unfortunately there is nothing funny about the execution. Maybe everybody concerned should have taken a few stiff belts before the recording session. The sonic reproduction, at any rate, is easily the best thing about the whole endeavor. I.K.

SCHUMANN: *Märchenerzählungen for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano, Op. 132; Märchenbild-*

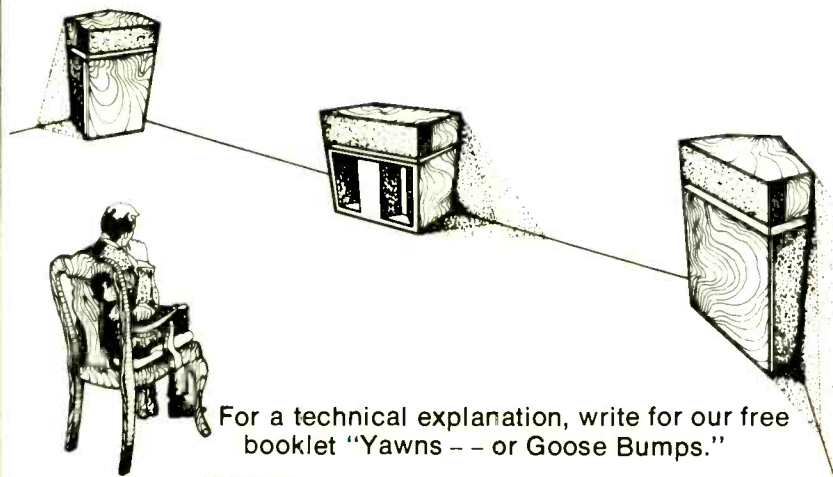
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er for Viola and Piano, Op. 113; Four Marches, Op. 76; Fantasiestück, Op. 12, No. 9; Fantasiestücke for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 73. Harris Goldsmith (piano); Nobuko Imai (viola); Harold Wright (clarinet). RCA VICTROLA VICS 1621 \$2.98.

Performance: **Stylistically ideal**
Recording: **Good**

One of the items I cherish from the unhappily defunct Crossroads catalog is the Harold Wright-Harris Goldsmith disc of the Brahms clarinet sonatas. Mr. Wright is now first-chair clarinetist of the Boston Symphony, but evidently has found time to collaborate with Mr. Goldsmith and the gifted Japanese-born violist Nobuko Imai in this fascinating Schumann collection.

Not all of Mr. Goldsmith's enthusiastic writing on the record sleeve can persuade me that either the "Fairy-Tale" or "Fairyland" sequences are top-drawer Schumann—not even when given the expert performances they are here. The slow movements in each have the most abiding impact, most especially the deeply poignant conclusion of Op. 113; the other movements seem inferior. The Four Marches, Op. 76, were written by Schumann in the heat of excitement over the revolutionary uprisings in Dresden in 1849, but aside from ingenious handling of what could be rhythmically monotonous, the substance of these pieces seems to me fairly thin. The reflective "Camp Scene," No. 3, is an exception.

With the Op. 12, No. 9 *Fantasiestück* (displaced from the eight pieces of Op. 12 when Schumann decided to change their or-

der) and the three Op. 73 *Fantasiestücke*, we have the genuine vintage product with all the ardor and charm that we associate with the composer. Goldsmith's solo performance whets my appetite for more recordings by him in this all-too-seldom satisfyingly performed repertoire, while the teamwork between Wright and Goldsmith in Op. 73 could hardly be better. The recording throughout is suitably warm and intimate. *D.H.*

SCHUMANN: Symphonies: No. 1, in B-flat Major, Op. 38 ("Spring"); No. 2, in C Major, Op. 61; No. 3, in E-flat Major, Op. 97 ("Rhenish"); No. 4, in D Minor, Op. 120. Cleveland Orchestra. George Szell cond. ODYSSEY Y3 30844 three discs \$8.76.

Performance: **Tightly knit**
Recording: **Good**

It is good to have the Szell-Cleveland readings of the Schumann symphonies back in circulation, following their disappearance with the demise of Epic as a classical-music label. It is even better to have them resurrected at budget price, there being no competition in this category where these works are concerned. You really can't lose, for Szell was one of the most knowledgeable interpreters around when it came to the Schumann orchestral repertoire. One might prefer more expansive treatments of the "Spring" (Bernstein) or C Major symphonies, but, taken as an integral version, Szell's is the set I can live with most happily. The Fourth is the clincher: I know of no recorded performance of any Schumann symphony that combines Romantic ardor and heaven-storming dyna-

mism as effectively as this one. This performance is also the best-recorded of a generally very well-recorded lot. In short, orchids to Columbia for bringing these performances back at a low price. *D.H.*

SHOSTAKOVICH: Concerto No. 2, for Piano and Orchestra (see OGDON)

SITT: Piano Trio (see GODARD)

WAGNER: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (see Best of the Month, page 73)

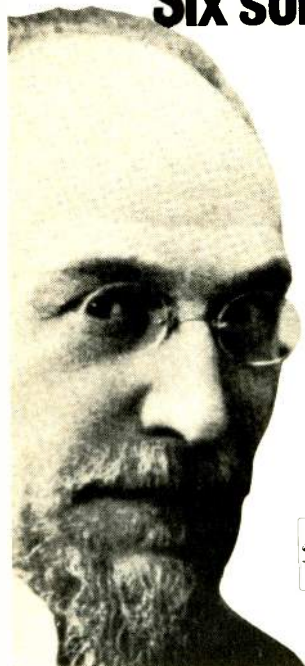
WIRÉN: Symphony No. 4, Op. 27. Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Sixten Ehrling cond. **ROSENBERG: Symphony No. 2 (Sinfonia Grave).** Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra. Herbert Blomstedt cond. TURNABOUT TV-S 34436 \$2.98.

Performance: **Authentic**
Recording: **Fair**

Dag Wirén (b. 1903) is an outstanding craftsman among living Swedish composers, and his delightful String Serenade has won deserved international popularity. His Fourth Symphony (1952) is made of sterner stuff, being a tightly woven *Sturm und Drang* piece built out of the metamorphosis of its opening material. It struck me as highly effective when issued by Westminster in the same recorded performance in 1958. The music still holds up very well on rehearing, though the 1956 recording does show its age somewhat.

Hilding Rosenberg, the father-figure
(Continued on page 98)

Six sonic circles in the shape of a pince-nez.

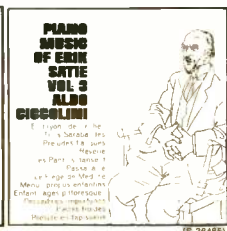


Erik Satie. Confirmed eccentric. A key figure in the turn-of-the-century Paris avant-garde. Rebel. And prolific composer. Hundreds of whimsical and quirky titled short songs, dances and piano pieces were born of his eccentricities and a lifelong determination to render obsolete that bigger and louder is truer and better.

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Today, a specialist in the repertoire, the Naples-born pianist has recorded more than 150 of the piano miniatures. All are contained in Angel Records' Complete Piano Works of Erik Satie, Vols. 1-6.

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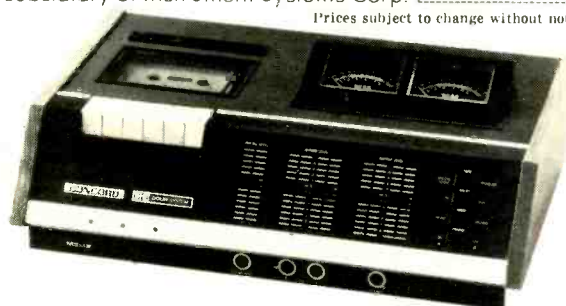
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among Sweden's contemporary composers (b. 1892), is more problematic than Wirén, if only because he has written such a vast quantity of work in such a wide variety of styles: monumental oratorio-symphonies based on *The Revelation of St. John* and Thomas Mann's *Joseph and His Brothers*, string quartets in serial style, ballets in a quasi-jazz idiom (*Orpheus in Town*), and leanly neo-Classic string orchestra pieces such as the Concerto for String Orchestra.

Conceived and first written down in the late 1920's, but not worked into final shape until 1935, Rosenberg's Second Symphony, like Wirén's Fourth, is a three-movement *Sturm und Drang* opus with strongly contrasted lyrical and motoric elements. The middle movement combines the function of slow movement and scherzo, while the finale

recalls both the violence and tranquility of the preceding movements, and then moves to a grandiose summation.

The recording, done in the somewhat unresonant acoustic of the Stockholm Konserthus in 1964, has plenty of body but lacks the necessary overtones that add brilliance to the whole. I found my Swedish Society Discofil pressing somewhat better in this respect—and also higher in recording level—than the Turnabout issue. Needless to say, the work of both conductors, Sixten Ehrling and Herbert Blomstedt, is exemplary from the interpretive standpoint. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

WOLF: *Mörrike-Lieder*. *Elfenlied*; *Die Geister am Mummelsee*; *Nixe Binsefuss*; *Er ist's*;

Begegnung; *Das verlassene Mägdlein*; *Lebe wohl*; *Lied vom Winde*; *Schlafendes Jesuskind*; *In der Frühe*; *Gebet*; *Selbstgeständnis*; *Bei einer Trauung*; *An eine Aeolsharfe*; *Nimmersatte Liebe*; *Rat einer Alten*; *Auf eine Christblume I & II*; *Eine Stündlein wohl vor Tag*; *Der Knabe und das Immllein*. Elly Ameling (soprano); Dalton Baldwin (piano). PHILIPS 6500 128 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**

Recording: **Excellent**

With their varied range, sophisticated tone, and conciseness of expression, the poems of Eduard Mörike (1804–1875) were tailor-made for Hugo Wolf's precisely wrought musical settings. Wolf, who could work with feverish productivity, wrote fifty-three Mörike settings in the single year 1888, and twenty of them are included in this recital.

Though I have always found Elly Ameling a pleasing interpreter, she has at times seemed somewhat aloof and emotionally restrained. Happily, no such reservations apply here. She responds to the wide temperamental range of these songs with the assurance of a seasoned interpreter. There is poise and dignity in her treatment of religious expression, and the passion in such songs as *Lebe wohl* or *Er ist's* is very convincingly communicated. And she responds to the humor in *Begegnung* (my favorite of the lot) and *Rat einer Alten* with equal aptitude, and to the wisdom of *Nimmersatte Liebe* (one of Wolf's own favorites) with a sophistication that is devoid of coyness. Her rapport with Dalton Baldwin is exemplary, and the pianist disposes of his often virtuosic assignments with brilliant aplomb. I find this an exceptionally successful recital. *G.J.*

COLLECTIONS

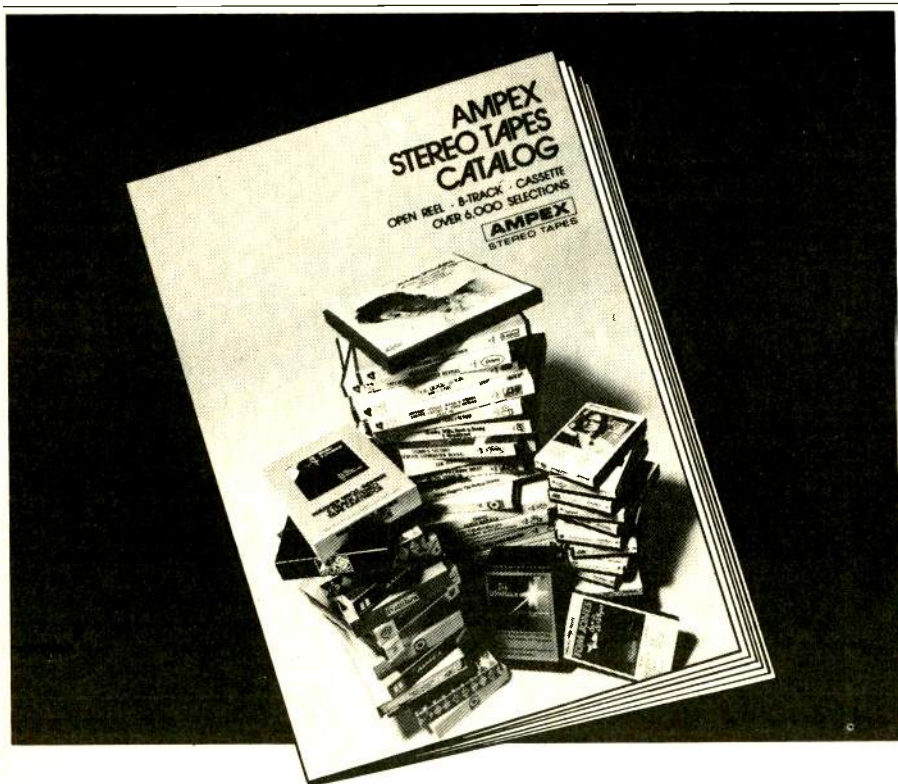
AVANT-GARDE MUSIC FROM SPAIN, Volume 1. Benguerel: *Concerto for Two Flutes and Strings*. Jean-Pierre Rampal and Salvador Gratacós (flutes); string orchestra. Klaus Bernbacher cond. Josep Soler: *Sonatina for Flute and Chamber Ensemble*. Salvador Gratacós (flute); chamber ensemble. Enrico García Asensio cond. Mestres-Quadreny: *Musica per A Anna*. Anna Ricci (mezzo-soprano); Parrenin String Quartet. Homs: *Octet de Vent*. Chamber Orchestra. Konstantin Simonovitch cond. CANDIDE CE 31047 \$3.98.

Performances: **Fair to good**

Recordings: **Okay**

Candide seems to be issuing a great many Volume Ones in its "Avant Garde Music From . . ." category. This reminds me of a composer friend who used to start composing by inscribing at the top of empty sheets of score paper: Symphony No. 1.

Actually there is more than one doubt about the labels here. This is not by any stretch of the imagination a record of avant-garde music, Spanish or otherwise; only the ingenious *Musica per A Anna* for mezzo-soprano and string quartet by Josep Mestres-Quadreny could be described as, in any real sense, far-out. And, far from representing Spanish music in general, this record presents a particular group of Catalan composers, mostly of a conservative cast. There is a distinctive and strong avant-garde movement in Spain, with composers of international stature, and it is misleading to suggest that this is what the purchaser will get here.



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What he will discover, in addition to the aforementioned Mestres-Quadreny, is a charming little tonal Sonatina by Josep Soler—a composer who lives up to his famous name quite well, and in something of his predecessor's spirit—and two chromatic symphonic pieces which, in spite of (or perhaps even because of) their use of twelve-tone elements, are quite traditional.

The performances range from fair to good; the recordings seem faithful. As already suggested, the presentation leaves something to be desired—Konstantin Simonovitch's name does not end with an "x"! *E.S.*

ARTURO BENEDETTI MICHELANGELI: *Two Piano Rectials* (see Best of the Month, page 72)

BEVERLY SILLS: *Welcome to Vienna. Lehár: The Merry Widow: Vilia. Giuditta: Meine Lippen, sie küssen so heiss. Der Zarewitsch: Einer wird kommen. Korngold: Die tote Stadt: Marietta's Lied. Johann Strauss: Voices of Spring; A Night in Venice; Overture; Thunder and Lightning Polka. Heuberger: Der Opernball: Im Chambre separée. Siczynski: Wien, Wien, nur du allein.* Beverly Sills (soprano); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Julius Rudel cond. ABC/ATS 20009 \$5.98, □ ATQD 24002 (Sansui-encoded) \$6.98. Ⓟ M8 20009 \$6.98. Ⓛ M8 24002 \$6.98. Ⓢ M5 20009 \$6.98. Ⓢ M5 24002 \$6.98.

Performance: **Expert, at times brilliant**
Recording: **Excellent**

Without matching the superlative control born of stylistic authenticity that marks the singing of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf or Hilde Gueden in the Viennese repertoire, Beverly Sills shows a distinct affinity for the idiom. True spontaneity is an element for which artistic dedication can be no substitute, but there is a great deal of artistry here, and it produces pleasing results. Even the most determined Viennese *Lokalpatriot* should find Miss Sills quite enchanting in the Heuberger-Giuditta-Zarewitsch-Siczynski sequence on side two. She is less successful in the Vilia Song and in *Voices of Spring*, where her pronounced vibrato and improper attacks damage the intonation. And while the lovely aria from *Die tote Stadt* is most welcome, it, too, suffers from these vocal shortcomings. Julius Rudel provides considerate accompaniments and conducts the two orchestral pieces zestfully. The orchestra is excellent, and is sumptuously recorded (but with somewhat exaggerated dynamics in the *Night in Venice Overture*). Incidentally, as the information in the heading indicates, this is a four-channel recording; my review is based upon listening to it in stereo only. This label, however, should have its liner notes more carefully proofread: the errors and misspellings are horrendous. *G.J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

STAATSMUSIK DER RENAISSANCE. Compere: *Quis numerare queat—Da pacem.* Isaac: *Sancti Spiritus—Imperii proceres.* Des Pres: *Absolve, quaesumus, Domine; Cœurs desolez par toute nation; Carmen gallicum Ludovici XI regis Francorum—Guillaume se va chauffer.* Di Lurano: *Quercus iuncta columna est (Frottola).* Mouton: *Quis dabit oculis nostris; Exultet coniubilando Deo—Gloria Christo canamus.* Bruhier: *Viv-*

ite foelices. Anonymous: *Proh dolor—Pie Jhesu; Julia dic experta meas vires.* Moderne (publisher): *Pavane, "La Bataille."* Willaert: *Victor, io, salve—Quis curare neget.* Gascoigne: *Bone Jesu dulcissime.* Sermsy: *Quosque non reverteris pax.* Zwingli: *Herr, nun heb den wagen selb.* Jachet von Mantua: *O, Angele Dei.* Corteccia: *Ingredere felicissimis.* Appenzeller: *Plangite, Pierides, Epitaphium D. Erasmi Roterdami.* Courtois: *Venite populi.* Barbion: *Gallis hostibus in fugam coactis.* Clemens non Papa: *O quam moesta dies—Haec lugenda dies.* Lasso: *Heroum soboles.* Capella Antiqua München, Konrad Ruhland cond. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9561/2B two discs \$11.90.

Performance: **Superior**
Recording: **Superior**

This is an exceptionally well-planned anthology of Renaissance "state" music—perhaps "ceremonial" or "occasional" might be a more apt epithet, but, at least for the majority of pieces contained here, the music is intrinsically connected with state functions of one kind or another. For example, the program, which, incidentally, is arranged chronologically, begins with a five-voice, three section motet by Loyset Compère that celebrates the establishment of peace between Ferrara, Milan, the Papacy, and Venice at Bagnolo on August 7, 1484. There are works that were written for important conferences (the meetings of Pope Leo X and King Francis I, with motets by both Jean Mouton and Antoine Bruhier), weddings (a *frottola* by Filippo di Lurano for the niece of Pope Julius II), funerals (Josquin's "*Absolve, quaesumus.*

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Domine" for the death of Philip the Handsome, son of Emperor Maximilian; a superb motet for Maximilian himself, "*Proh dolor*," by an anonymous composer; and Benedictus Appenzeller's motet on the death of Erasmus), and battles (Willaert's victory motet "*Victor, io, salve*," after the French lost to the Italians at the battle of Pavia on February 24, 1525). Another conflict piece of some interest, occasioned by the battle between the Swiss Roman Catholic and the reformed cantons, is "*Herr, nun heb den wagen selb*" (Lord, now lift the cart Yourself), attributed to none other than Huldrych Zwingli. On the lighter side, there is a brief and amusing novelty, Josquin's "*Guillaume se va chauffer*" (William wants to warm himself), written for the participation of the musically unskilled Louis XI of France, in which all the king has to do is to sing one note throughout.

It is not only an interesting and ambitious program but one that, within its generally restrained emotional involvement—a Renaissance ideal—carries surprising impact. The performances, which involve a variety of old instruments, are exceptional from all standpoints, and the recorded sound is first-rate. Another word of praise should go to the presentation, which includes an illustrated brochure, complete texts and translations, and an excellent commentary by Dr. A. Dunning. I.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JENNIE TOUREL: *At Alice Tully Hall*. Stradella: *Per Pieta*. Monsigny: *La Sagesse est un trésor* (from "*Rose et Colas*"). **Beethoven:**

Carmelite Hall



JENNIE TOUREL

An extraordinary and heartfelt musician

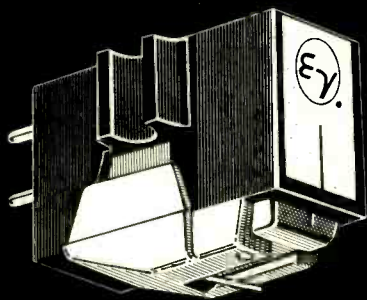
An die Hoffnung; Ich liebe dich. Debussy: *Trois Chansons de Bilitis*. Liszt: *Mignon's Lied; Vergiftet sind meine Lieder; Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh!*; "*Comment*" *disaient-ils*. Glinka: *Doubt; Vain Temptation*. Tchaikovsky: *None but the Lonely Heart*. Dargomizsky: *Romance*. Massenet: *Elegy*. Berlioz: *Absence*. Offenbach: *Laughing Song* (from *La Périchole*). Hahn: *Si mes vers*. Liszt: *O, quand je dors*. Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano); James Levine (piano); Gary Karr (string

bass). DESTO DC 7118 9 two discs \$11.96.

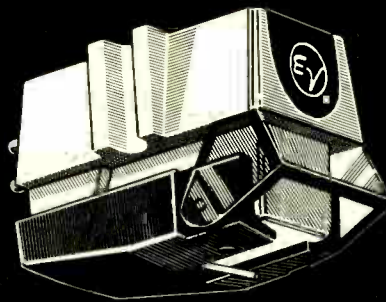
Performance: **Superb**
Recording: **Very good documentary**

Jennie Tourel has been, for more years than a gentleman would want to say, one of the finest and most adored of all mezzo-sopranos. On April 19, 1970, she gave a recital at Alice Tully Hall in New York, and we can all be thankful that it was recorded. In a way, this is a historical document, history-on-the-wing, for if it shows Tourel at a later stage in her career than many recordings in the catalog, some of which date back probably twenty years. It also shows her to be still the extraordinary and heartfelt musician she has always been, still in command of so many of her voice's huge and gorgeous resources that it is a joy to hear her sing. The bloom of the voice is still there. It may not be so easy for her to produce as it once was, nor so drenchingly constant. But it is there, and one rejoices in hearing it.

This recording encompasses a whole recital, complete with audience response. Tourel's brief words to the listeners here and there, and a quality of recording which undoubtedly stems from the situation—it is rougher and less perfected than a "studio" recording. But it captures the sound of Tourel's voice excellently, and embodies the ambience and excitement of the recital. I wish somebody had turned down the volume for the applause, which is tumultuous and produces some rather ear-testing stretches of "white noise." Other than that, I can only applaud this album and be glad I have it in my library. L.T.



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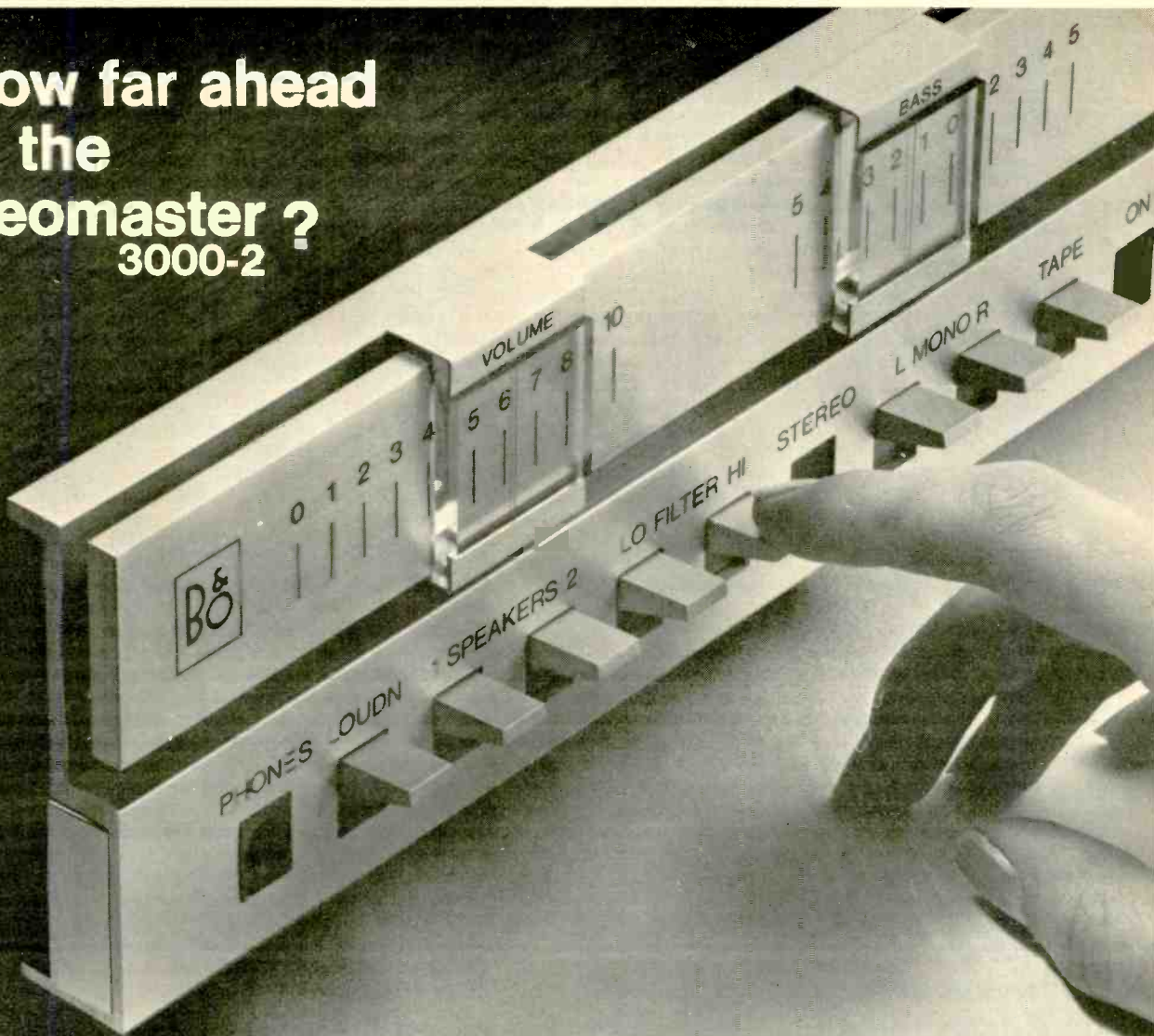
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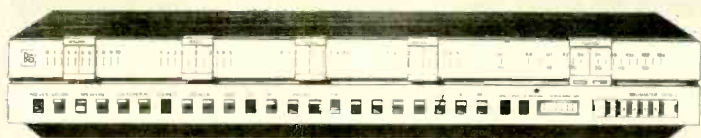
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ENTERTAINMENT

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Reviewed by NOEL COPPAGE • DON HECKMAN • PAUL KRESH
REX REED • PETER REILLY

ALLMAN BROTHERS: *The Allman Brothers Band at Fillmore East*. Allman Brothers (vocals and instrumentals). *Statesboro Blues; Done Somebody Wrong; Stormy Monday; You Don't Love Me*; and three others. CAPRICORN SD 2 802 two discs \$6.98. Ⓟ M82 802 \$6.98. Ⓞ M52 802 \$6.98.

Performance: **Endless rocking**
Recording: **Excellent**

Here's a good example of one of the things that went wrong with rock in the late Sixties: verbosity, and too bloody much time taken up by musicians who have too little to say.

The Allman Brothers recorded this set at the Fillmore East in March, 1971. The band is, in the vernacular of the music business, a good road group, a fine back-up ensemble. That is, they take care of business in a crisply efficient manner. Not much that over-excites, not much that gleams with the star-glow of the Stones or the Doors, but nothing unpleasant, either. The Allman Brothers work in the tradition of traveling Southern blues bands, playing a music that moves vaguely, but comfortably, between rock, blues, and jazz.

Heard "live" in the special ambiance of the Fillmore's final months (they were the last group to play the hall when it closed in the summer of 1971), the extraordinary length of the pieces can be tolerated, maybe even enjoyed. But locked into four disc sides, the pieces sound tediously overblown. Improvisational ideas worthy of a few seconds are elaborated upon for minutes, and the basic simplicity of the musical structures undermines whatever lasting interest the players build. Exaggerated musical self-interest of this sort has helped cause the deterioration of the rock market, I suspect. Thin talent can only be stretched so far before it breaks. *D.H.*

AUDIENCE: *The House on the Hill*. Audience (vocals); instrumental accompaniment.

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓟ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- Ⓞ = stereo cassette
- Ⓞ = quadrasonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadrasonic tape
- Ⓟ = eight-track quadrasonic tape
- Ⓞ = quadrasonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

Indian Summer; Jackdaw; Raviolo; It Brings a Tear; You're Not Smilin'; and four others. ELEKTRA EKS 74100 \$4.98. Ⓟ ET 84100 \$6.98. Ⓞ TC 54100 \$6.98.

Performance: **Ugh!**
Recording: **Good**

"Friends say we oughta marry. I smile and shake my head/A wife'll make ya happy, ooah . . . make ya dead." wails this group off-key on a song called *Indian Summer*. Followed by several choruses of "oh, ah-ah-oh." Accompaniment like mice running



THE BLUES PROJECT

Professional un-hyped rock-and-roll

through the walls. Then an endless stream of "aahaah uh-uh-uh" grunted by some weirdo who sounds like he's having an appendectomy. And if you haven't heard *The House on the Hill*, say your prayers fast. It's about a big spooky house with a king rat wearing a black cap who turns into a maiden who lures men to the house, charms them, then eats them alive. The effect is like a visit to a morgue. Deciphering the lyrics of this revolting group is like identifying plague corpses in a Ken Russell movie. You'd be better off sticking your fingers into a wall outlet. *R.R.*

THE BLUES PROJECT: *Lazarus*. The Blues Project (vocals and instrumentals); miscellaneous other accompanists. *It's Alright; Personal Mercy; Black Night; Vision of Flowers; Yellow Cab*; and five others. CAPITOL ST 782 \$5.98.

Performance: **New York blues**
Recording: **Very good**

Six years ago the Blues Project was one of the seminal New York rock bands, and the starting point for such now well-known performers as Al Kooper and Steve Katz. The group is now a trio, with guitarist Danny Kalb and drummer Roy Blumenfeld from the original Project joined by ex-Seatrain bassist Don Kretmar. The "Blues" in the band's name is literal; they spend most of their performance time working over one or another blues form, in every tempo and rhythm imaginable. For most white bands that would be the kiss of death, but Kalb is such a sturdy, inventive guitarist, and Blumenfeld such a solidly jazz-based drummer that they can bring remarkable variety to their music.

For the purposes of the recording, a great deal of multi-tracking and over-dubbing has been done, most of it, for my tastes, unnecessary. In fact, compared to the dry, hard-rocking music the band plays "live," the recording sounds thick and overproduced. Even with that reservation, however, and with the suggestion that Danny Kalb is far from the best rock singer I've ever heard, I think the Blues Project is worth hearing. Good, professional, un-hyped rock-and-roll has become a rarity these days, so we'd better hold on to what we've got. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

FLEETWOOD MAC: *Future Games*. Fleetwood Mac (vocals and instrumentals). *Woman of a Thousand Years; Morning Rain; What a Shame; Future Games; Sands of Time; Sometimes; Lay it All Down; Show Me a Smile*. REPRISE 6465 \$4.98. Ⓟ M 86465 \$6.98. Ⓞ M 56465 \$6.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

This group has been so much the victim of its own versatility that I daresay many rock cultists, awakened in the middle of the night and sat down in front of a radio, couldn't pick Fleetwood Mac out of a sonic line-up. Well, there are things to listen for: the group likes teamwork—all five of its members play well enough so that no star must emerge to fill up the sound (which may or may not have had something to do with the departure of guitarist Peter Green). And the group likes to avoid gimmicks—it doesn't need to create effects through distortion or cover anything up with sheer volume. The Mac is, I think, the very model of a progressive rock group, fairly distant from the old rhythm-and-blues roots and able to play all the modern shades of rock, but still interested *only* in rock.

The consistency of this album is quite something. The only really weak cut is the

SEALS & CROFTS

Children of the Global Village

By ERIC SALZMAN



SEALS AND CROFTS stopped by the Free Music Store not long ago. FMS is a very special informal music-making scene at WBAI, the listener-supported Pacifica radio station in New York. The audience at FMS mostly sits on the floor, and communication between performer and audience is very personal and direct. The specialties are such things as avant-garde music, chamber music, Baroque, Renaissance, and Eastern music. Seals and Crofts fit into this format very well; their extraordinary combination of naïveté and sophistication is very much to the taste of young people these days. Most of the people who showed up never got in at all, and those who did ended up dancing (not in the aisles, because there are none, but just up and down) to Jimmy Seals' country fiddling. But how do you figure musicians who go from the Baha'i religion to the Beatles to blues to funk to fiddling and never lose the thread?

As readers of this publication are no doubt aware, Seals and Crofts are a couple of West-Coast musicians—originally from Texas—who, after knocking around the recording and tour scene for years, suddenly emerged with a whole new identity as gentle eclectic down-home minstrels of Baha'i. This is their third album, as eclectic as its predecessors, a mixture of new and old, East and West, country and classical, mystical love and earthly love, but somehow always simple, sweet, honest, sincere, and believable.

Jimmy Seals, from Sidney, Texas, was a country-fiddle child prodigy and, later, a jazz saxophonist. Dash Crofts, from Cisco, Texas (yup!), was actually trained as a classical musician—he studied classical piano and drums. They met and played together in junior-high school and, after gravitating to Los Angeles in 1958, were key members of a one-hit-single rock group called the Champs (*Tequila* was their one-and-only, but it carried them through seven years of one-nighters). In the mid-Sixties the Champs finally folded, and S&C became part of another group, the Dawnbreakers, which lasted not very many dawns before break-up.

Up to this point, their story resembles that of hundreds of other musicians going nowhere. Then, through their manager, they discovered the Baha'i beliefs and, somehow, a new identity. Dash Crofts

switched to electric mandolin and, working with only bass-player Bobby Lichtig, the distinctive sound of Seals and Crofts was created. A vastly overproduced first album had, in spite of its Beatles-like interpretations of Baha'i themes, a great deal of charm. In their second album, brilliantly produced by John Simon, they really came into their own.

All of the earlier motifs are present in their new Warner Brothers album called "Year of Sunday." The religious ideas come in the form of a Baha'i cantata which gives its name to the album—we all live, it seems, not in a Yellow Submarine but in a Year of Sunday. Seals and Crofts are getting ready for the apocalypse in the most joyous, homely, brotherly manner. *Sudan Village* picks up some of the same themes in a literally African style. The "go in" motif appears also in *Springfield Mill*, which lacks only Jimmy Seals' country fiddling (he's a great fiddler and really ought to be given a chance to cut loose on one of these albums). There are some Beatles-like songs of sunshine and social significance, a couple of naïve, old-fashioned love lyrics, and even a rock song. Dream-like oriental riffs float in and out like incense through the pop-folk-country atmosphere.

Somehow all of this still emerges as pure Seals and Crofts. They are the troubadours of the Global Village, and their very eclecticism and naïveté is an essential element of their style. At the Free Music Store Jimmy Seals was talking about how, increasingly, their audiences are not just young but include large numbers of children. The quality of child-like innocence and belief is not the least part of their appeal, and the songs, the singing, the playing, and the production on this album bring out their best qualities in the simplest and most direct manner imaginable. Need I add that it is highly recommended?

SEALS & CROFTS: *Year of Sunday*. Jimmy Seals and Dash Crofts (vocals and instrumentals). *When I Need Them: 'Cause You Love; Antoinette; High on a Mountain; Year of Sunday; Paper Airplanes; Irish Linen; Springfield Mill; Ancient of the Old; Sudan Village.* WARNER BROTHERS BS 2568 \$5.98, Ⓜ M 82568 \$6.95, Ⓢ M 52568 \$6.95.

brief, aimless jam *What a Shame*, for which all five members of the group are listed as composers (remember a camel is a horse designed by a committee). The only general problem—for me, at least—is a slight coolness toward the material. On a song with the potential of, say, Bob Welch's *Lay it All Down*, the band seems unable to project with either voice or instruments the intensity of feeling that the Stones get from *Wild Horses*, my current example of how a rock band ought to work. Nevertheless, such cuts as *Sometimes* and *Woman of a Thousand Years* are so strong you don't expect to find them both on the same album. Fleetwood Mac is a strong and honest group, and as versatile as ever. N.C.

FLYING BURRITO BROS.: *Hot Burrito*. Chris Hillman (vocals, bass, mandolin, guitar); Sneaky Pete Kleinow (pedal steel); Bernie Leadon (guitar, banjo, dobro); Rick Roberts (vocals, guitar); Michael Clarke (drums); Gram Parsons (vocals, piano); Chris Ethridge (vocals, bass); various sidemen. *To Ramona; Wild Horses; Four Days of Rain; My Uncle; Dark End of the Street; Lazy Day;* and five others. A & M SP 8070 \$4.98.

Performance: **Pleasant**
Recording: **Good**

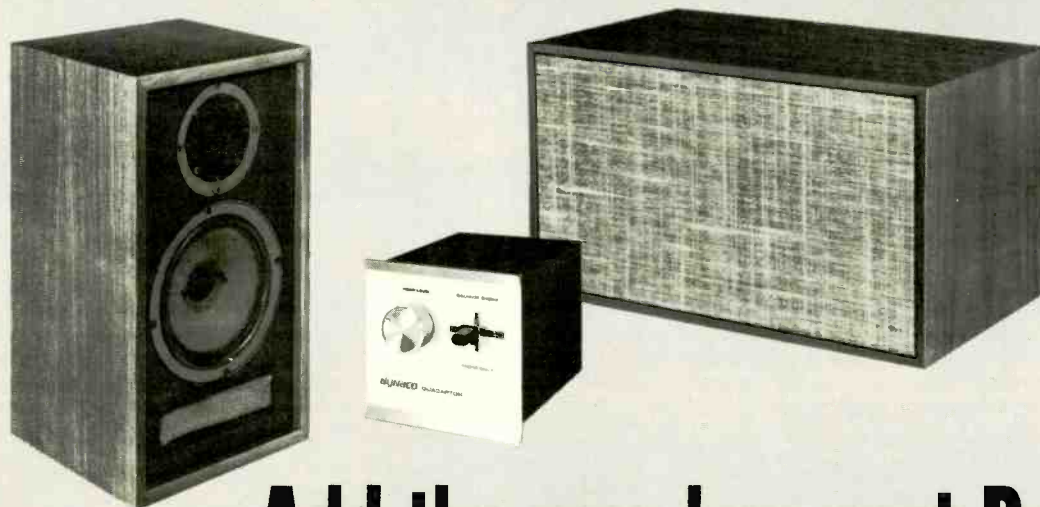
This is a retrospective album of Burrito recordings since their formation in 1968. The liner notes claim that the Burritos combine country-rock with counter-culture lyrics, but if so, such music isn't on this album. The Burritos are a very good tight band, with a solid rhythm section, good solo work—particularly Bernie Leadon's dobro (which, because of studio dial-twisting on *To Ramona*, sounds something like an electric sitar)—and pleasant, straightforward ensemble vocals. But it's doubtful that they're a major group or broke such major ground as the label's liner notes claim.

Of their own material, *Four Days of Rain* is written and performed well, but the pop Happenings doing a pop Tokens tune like *Cold, Cold Feeling* produces the same nostalgic glow—not enough to start you crying but enough to make you go to the window and look at the girls on the street below. *My Uncle* is an anti-war song that could have been funny (the lyrics start out that way) or could have been serious—it winds up being neither. *Lazy Day* comes directly from Chuck Berry and the Rolling Stones' adaptation of him. The Burritos' best feature is their ability to take other people's tunes and, without goosing the arrangements or messing with the original tempo, produce versions that aren't *that* different from the original but are somehow better. Dylan's *To Ramona* and Keith Richard and Mick Jagger's *Wild Horses* are very, very good as the Burritos do them. You get Dylan's message without Dylan's don't-give-a-damn delivery and you get the tenderness of *Wild Horses* without having to guess what lyrics are lost to Jagger's singing. You can listen to both tunes as *tunes* without having to deal with the effect of listening to a superstar, which sometimes makes judgment difficult.

The Burritos are a good band; they make good music; that's where they begin and end. Can't hurt. Joel Vance

GRAND FUNK RAILROAD: *E Pluribus Funk*. Mark Farner (guitar, organ, harmonica). (Continued on page 108)

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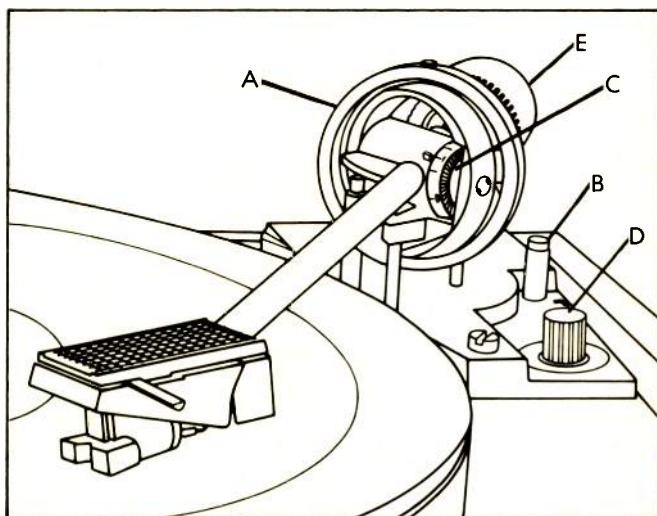
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ca. vocals); Mel Schacher (bass); Don Brewer (drums, vocals). *Footstompin' Music; Upsetter; No Lies*; and three others. GRAND FUNK RAILROAD SW 853 \$5.98, Ⓢ 8XT 853 \$6.98, Ⓢ 4XT 853 \$6.98.

Performance: **Predictable**
Recording: **Muddy**

The hysteria (negative) that followed the appearance of Presley, the Beatles, and rock-and-roll in general is endlessly, if correctly, pointed to by rock critics as the Establishment's paranoia, while the hysteria (positive) that welcomed rock and its saints is seen as healthful, cleansing, uplifting, and all that. GFR reverses the process: they create a positive hysteria among "the people," "youth," "us"—all the titles and tribes that rock critics claim to represent—and they create a negative hysteria among the critics themselves.

Neither GFR nor the critics' reaction to them are worth all the hysteria. The group is competent and monotonous; they sound like an average small-town rock trio on a good night. They're sincere in what they do, and they think they do it well. With \$6,000,000 in orders from record distributors even before this LP was released, they've got some kind of right to think so. Terry Knight, their discoverer, producer, and mentor, may claim more for them than they actually are (it's hard not to) but Terry Knight (remember Terry Knight & The Pack and their five hits in a row in the mid-Sixties?) got as thorough an emotional gutting by the record industry as a person can get. His old label Cameo (remember the Cameo/Parkway stock scandals?) kept him under contract, refused to let him record, and froze royalties, due him. Maybe GFR is Knight's revenge—on the music industry, on listeners, on bands, on music in general. Based on what he went through, he can hardly be blamed. He is wealthy and powerful now, and the industry pays court to him. When he's alone, I hope he has a good, bitter laugh about it. He deserves to come out of this whole affair with something that money can't buy. *Joel Vance*

B. B. KING: *Better Than Ever*, B. B. King (guitar and vocals); various accompanists. *I've Got a Right to Love My Baby; Partin' Time; I Feel Like a Million; If I Lost You: Good Man Gone Bad; I'll Survive*; and five others. KENT KST 561 \$4.98.

Performance: **Out-of-date King**
Recording: **Varies—generally good**

This is a King reissue, apparently. Kent hasn't chosen to provide dates and places, but from the sound, the tracks probably are eight or nine years old. B.B.'s voice is lighter and thinner in texture, but his guitar playing sounds pretty much the way it does today. Which tends to confirm my belief that King's days as an inventive blues man—as opposed to an *interpretive* performer—are, by his own choice, behind him. Too bad. He's too gifted an artist to settle for the kind of playing he did on these out-dated tracks. *D.H.*

THE LETTERMEN: *Love Book*. The Lettermen (vocals); orchestra. *Wedding Song; Theme From "Love Story"; If I'm Leavin'; Maybe Tomorrow; Love*; and four others. CAPITOL ST 836 \$5.98.

Performance: **Commercial**
Recording: **Glossy**

I hear that, in the original script of *Love Sto-*

ry, Ali MacGraw didn't die of a mysterious disease at all, but committed suicide to escape the tidal wave of spun sugar that Francis Lai had written for the score. I had the same impulse myself as I listened to Jim Pike of the Lettermen huff, puff, and gulp through his version of the theme from it. Listening to it can give your musical sensibilities more cavities than anything since Chaplin's score for *Limelight*.

The Lettermen are getting on a bit, and their new album shows it. I'd guess it's aimed at the moms and dads who finally accepted the Beatles on the basis of *Yesterday* or *Michelle*, because all the arrangements and performances here smack of rip-offs of those early hits. The arrangements actually sound like Percy Faith trying to get with it, and the performances are wearily roughish. They all gang up on Lennon's *Love*, but I don't think even Yoko could bring herself to approve of the result. There is also something here titled *Love Means (You Never Have to*



SERGIO MENDES & BRAZIL '77
Jet-propelled troubadours

Say You're Sorry). Can you bear it? Erich Segal, the thinking man's Rod McKuen, must ultimately be held responsible for all this. Take him away, J. Edgar! *P.R.*

LIGHTHOUSE: *One Fine Morning*. Lighthouse (vocals and instrumentals). *Love of a Woman; Little Kind Words; Old Man; Sing, Sing, Sing; 1849*; and five others. EVOLUTION S 3007 \$4.98, Ⓢ 8117-3007 \$6.95, Ⓢ 5117-3007 \$6.95.

Performance: **Canadian rock with horns**
Recording: **Excellent**

Lighthouse, a Canadian group organized by drummer Skip Prokop several years ago, is the slickest of the rock horn bands. (In fact, they have not only horns, but viola and cello as well.) Slick, that is, in the glossiness of their playing and the bright, sometimes plastic shine of their material.

The group has improved enormously since their early days with RCA, when they were obviously viewed as that company's entry in the Blood, Sweat & Tears/Chicago/etc. jazz-rock sweepstakes. Although they still sound too much like a compromise version of those groups (the opening phrase of Lighthouse's hit single, *One Fine Morning*, is quite similar to Chicago's 25 or 6 to 4), the group seems to be slowly finding a style of its own, one

STEREO REVIEW

that makes extensive use of the most original aspect of their instrumentation, the stringed instruments.

The problem, for Lighthouse as well as the other horned rock groups, lies in finding a style that is both musically accurate and emotionally appealing. Almost any assembly of anonymous studio musicians could play the arrangements of the rock-horn groups vastly better technically than the young musicians in the groups. But doing it with a feeling of artistic identity, of *specific* artistic identity, is something else again. Lighthouse hasn't reached that point yet, and the similarity of vocalist Bob McBride's voice to that of David Clayton-Thomas of BS&T doesn't benefit McBride or Lighthouse.

Better material would help. Prokop is a superb drummer, but his songs dip too deeply into the free-floating stream of rock-music generalities. The group shouldn't hesitate to try their hand at pieces from better qualified pop composers—say, Carole King or Randy Newman. And a little less sheen would help too. *D.H.*

LONNIE MACK: *The Hills of Indiana*. Lonnie Mack (vocals, guitars); Don Nix (vocals, saxophone); various other musicians. *Asphalt Outlaw Hero; Florida; Lay it Down; The Hills of Indiana; Uncle Pen; Bicycle Annie; A Fine Way to Go; Rings*; and four others. ELEKTRA EKS 74102 \$4.98, Ⓜ M 84102 \$6.95. © M 54102 \$6.95.

Performance: **Disappointing**
Recording: **Very good**

Apparently it's farther from Indiana to Memphis, which tune by that title Lonnie Mack recorded as a flamboyant guitarist a few years back, than the map indicates. His work on the electric guitar in this album is sparse, and his work with the acoustic guitar is undistinguished. The album features his vocals and the songs he, Don Nix, and others have written. The voice is all right, rather appealing in its unschooled enthusiasm, but the Mack-Nix songs tend to be inane, and the others (*A Fine Way to Go*, by Carole King, for example) don't exactly suit his vocal style. The album is also overproduced, Norbert Putnam's arrangements growing too voluptuous on almost every song. Generally, you have Lonnie Mack singing about the virtues of the simple things while he is involved in unnecessarily complex things musically. If that doesn't bother you, there's the fact that Nix, not Mack, sings (grunts, rather) the lead for the four-and-a-half long minutes it takes to slog through *Three Angels*, with Mack groaning harmony. If that doesn't bother you, Kenneth Buttrey's name is misspelled on the jacket. And if that doesn't bother you, there's the fact that Indiana is notorious for being flat. *N.C.*

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SERGIO MENDES AND BRASIL 77: *Pais Tropical*. Orchestra. Sergio Mendes arr. and cond. *Pais Tropical; So Many People; Morro Velho; Zanzibar; Tonga; Gone Forever; Asa Branca; I Know You; After Midnight*. A & M SP 4315 \$4.98, Ⓜ 8T 4315 \$6.98, © CS 4315 \$6.98.

Performance: **Lovely**
Recording: **Excellent**

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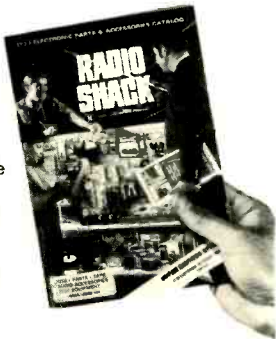
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new collection of baubles: the usual tropical calypso flavors are ever-present, but a Bach-arachian lilt has been added. A lonely hound-dog harmonica stirs between the hustle of close-harmony bossa-nova to give *Gone Forever* a full-blown ecstatic touch; a soft sweep of guitar clusters weeps plaintively behind Gracinha Leporace's lusty vocal on the haunting *Morro Velho*; Tom Scott's bluntly erotic tenor sax cuts through the bluesy rock of *After Midnight*. The arrangements are better now that Mendes has added orchestrations by the multi-talented Dave Grusin to the organization's mix. I've always admired this group's very workmanlike artistry, and they are weaving better musical fabric here than usual. **R.R.**

SHUGGIE OTIS: *Freedom Flight*. Shuggie Otis (guitar and vocals); miscellaneous other accompanying musicians. *Ice Cold Day-dream*; *Strawberry Letter*; *Sweet Thing*; *Me and My Woman*; *Someone's Always Singing*; *Purple*; *Freedom Flight*. EPIC E 30752 \$4.98.

Performance: **Young bluesman takes off**
Recording: **Very good**

Young Shuggie Otis is finding himself. His first recordings were notable primarily for the novelty of a sixteen-year old playing stunning blues guitar. (The fact that his father is blues great Johnny Otis wasn't exactly a detriment to the development of Shuggie's talent.) Now he seems to be emerging with a personality of his own—one that is compounded, understandably, of the most influential sounds in the world around him. His singing reminds me of early Jimi Hendrix, but his guitar work is far closer to jazz than Hendrix ever got. Most of the album's second side, in fact, is devoted to an extended improvisational piece called *Freedom Flight* that suggests Otis has been listening carefully to recent Miles Davis.

Shuggie is hardly what one would call a heavy yet, but he is certainly moving in positive directions. **D.H.**

BRIDGET ST. JOHN: *Songs for the Gentleman*. Bridget St. John (vocals); various musicians. *A Day Away*; *City-Crazy*; *Early Morning Song*; *Back to Stay*; *Seagull Sunday*; *You'd Been There*; *Song for the Laird of Connaught Hall—Part Two*; *Making Losing Better*; and four others. ELEKTRA/DANDELION EKS 74104 \$4.98, Ⓜ M 84104 \$6.95, Ⓢ M 54104 \$6.95.

Performance: **Petite**
Recording: **Excellent**

The idea here is to pack the Baroque ensemble into a pop songbag, with Bridget St. John's spidery vocals backed—tastefully, for the most part—by cellos, flutes, bassoons, and a viola, but mostly, in the end, a guitar. The problems are with the songbag. Simple lyrics are difficult to write, and Miss St. John's attempts to say in endless poetic ways "I'm sorry you're gone" or "I'm glad you're here" are mostly flops. Too often the lyrics sound like what Shaw or Mencken or some famous grouch branded "lady prose." Her melodies dawdle and droop and usually aren't sufficiently melodic. Still, one wants to give her every chance, for she seems almost to have it at times; in *Making Losing Better*, she writes, "He cries, 'Ah, I am hollow.'/She says, 'That's something I know;/And all we can do is swallow the echoes/And wait for the aching to go.'" Though her singing style

is restrained almost to the point of whispering, her vocal control is not the best, and it lets her down a bit on *Back to Stay* by John Martyn (and keep an eye out for him), a beautiful example of the kind of little love song Miss St. John is trying to write. It's a moody album, aiming at a very personal one-to-one contact with the listener, but coming off a bit too effete and petite. **N.C.**

BOZ SCAGGS: *Boz Scaggs & Band*. Boz Scaggs (vocals, guitar); various musicians. *Monkey Time*; *Here to Stay*; *Why Why*; *Your Place*; and six others. COLUMBIA C 30796 \$4.98.

Performance: **Bland**
Recording: **Mix it again, Sam**

Nobody does anything wrong on this album, but nobody does anything terribly right, either. Scaggs wrote or collaborated on all the tunes here, which is part of the problem: neither the lyrics nor the melodies are better



THE SIEGEL-SCHWALL BAND
Joyous, swinging blues

than average. Scaggs' vocal style dodges around, as do the arrangements on the album. Part of the time he sounds as if he's trying to sing black; the rest of the time he sounds as if he's trying to sing like (and write like) John Sebastian—and post-Spoonful Sebastian at that. Reeds, brass, flutes, flugel-horns, vibraphones, and timbales make appearances, plus the mandatory lead rock guitar playing mandatory lead-guitar rock solos over the band.

There's a nice, derivative brass-and-reed-section riff on *Monkey Time*; and some okay drumming on *Here to Stay*, but that's about it. For reasons known only to Boz, the album was made partly in London, partly in New York, and partly in San Francisco, which may be why it lacks continuity, among other things. It also means that it is going to have to do pretty well to pay off its production costs before Boz sees any royalties. Ah, well. Maybe I'm missing the whole point of the album. In the early 1960's, girls used to go home and play Johnny Mathis albums when they wanted to be moony. Maybe girls these days play Boz Scaggs albums when they

want to feel funky. Or whatever it is girls feel these days.
Joel Vance

LALO SCHIFRIN: *Rock Requiem*. Lalo Schifrin (piano); Alexander Saint Charles (solo voice); Mike Curb Congregation; instrumental ensemble, Lalo Schifrin cond. VERVE V6 8801 \$5.98.

Performance: **Rock 'n' religion—again**
Recording: **Very good**

Well, what can you say about a work from an extremely busy, much-recorded Hollywood composer that is subtitled "For the Dead in the Southeast Asia War"? How about "rip-off"? Okay, so maybe I'm being a little rough on Schifrin. The outlines of commercial exploitation are rarely well-defined, and who can really say what was in Schifrin's mind? The fact is, of course, that rock religious works are a dime a dozen, and most are motivated by the predictable avarice.

The only real question to consider is whether Schifrin's Requiem works. And the ambivalent answer—so often the case with Schifrin—is that the piece includes effective craft and virtually non-existent creativity. Schifrin knows every trick in the orchestrator's book of magic—he's even invented a few—and he whips through them with the facility of a Beverly Hills warlock. The results, however, are as ephemeral as pulling a rabbit out of a hat: plenty of illusion and very little substance. D.H.

NEIL SEDAKA: *Emergence*. Neil Sedaka (vocals); orchestra. *Gone with the Morning; Superbird; Silent Movies; Little Song; Rosemary Blue; God Bless Joanna*; and six others. KIRSHNER KES 111 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Very good**

Sedaka, who dates back to the Pleistocene Age of rock, has always had considerable talent as a writer of lightweight but often charming songs aimed at pre-teens. In this album he tries for a more mature approach. In collaboration with Howard Greenfield, who did the lyrics, he has produced an album that might be a good demonstration record for his gifts as a melodist, but is little else. Unfortunately, Greenfield's lyrics too often strain to "say something," as in *Cardboard California* ("Nothin' is real in cardboard California/Just wakin' up brings you down") or *What Have They Done to the Moon* ("That world of fantasy/Just stopped and ceased to be/The day they traveled to the stars"). These two examples give you some idea of their depth. However, at times, in something like *Silent Movies*, a fairly satisfying ripoff of Trénet's classic *Mon vieux Ciné*, or *Little Song*, Greenfield and Sedaka can be highly persuasive.

As for Sedaka's voice, it sounds exactly as it always did, which is to say high, reedy, asexual, and adenoidal. He does more harm to his own melodies by singing them than anyone since Irving Berlin. The record has been slickly and glossily produced, with excellent commercial arrangements by Lee Holdridge. Sedaka still shows talent as a composer, but you have to wade through an awful lot of bad singing here to discover it. P.R.

THE SHIRELLES: *Happy and in Love*. The Shirelles (vocals); orchestra. *No Sugar Tonight; Take Me; Boy, You're Too Young;*

It's Gonna Take a Miracle; and six others. RCA LSP 4581 \$5.98, Ⓟ P8S 1803 \$6.95. © PK 1803 \$6.95.

Performance: **Good-humored**
Recording: **Commercial**

The Shirelles are back—not that anyone was very curious about where they'd been. One of the earliest rock groups, they had a fair amount of success with a string of commercial tunes. Always a likable group, but easily forgettable too, they return with their original cast—Shirley, Micki, and Beverly—and also try to resuscitate one of their old hits, *Dedicated to the One I Love*. It has been fancied up in a new and not very original arrangement, to suit, I suppose, the Shirelles' "new" sound. That sound is a pious blend of the Supremes and the Ikettes without the virtues of either. The uneasiness doesn't abate anywhere in the album. Contributing to the gloom is the production, which has a closed-studio sound and a horde of syrupy violins somewhere out in left field. One thing the Shirelles do seem to have retained is their humor, something, I think, that they are going to need if they release any more albums like this. P.R.

BOBBY SHORT: *Loves Cole Porter* (see Best of the Month, page 74)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE SIEGEL-SCHWALL BAND. Corky Siegel (piano, harmonica, vocals). Jim Schwall (guitar, vocals), Rollow Radford (bass, vocals), Shelley Plotkin (drums). *Wish I Was on a Country Road; Devil; Leavin'; Corrina; I Won't Hold My Breath; Next to You; Hush Hush*. WOODEN NICKEL WNS 1002 \$5.98, Ⓟ P8WN 1002 \$6.98, © PKWN 1002 \$6.98.

Performance: **Glorious**
Recording: **Not perfect, but good**

Go get this album quick; it's great. Most white blues bands play with a masochistic sense that nothing they're ever going to play will be half as good as Little Walter on a bad night. Some white blues players absorb so much of the life-style of their black idols that they ruin themselves physically and emotionally, and by the time they get around to playing music, it *does* sound like Little Walter on a bad night. Plus most of them don't swing.

The Siegel-Schwall band, a Chicago outfit, has been around for a few years, and they have fallen into none of the above traps. They play blues joyously, and have a hell of a good time. They swing and their arrangements are fresh, not only on blues standards but on their own tunes. Corky Siegel's astounding harmonica solo, which opens the band's version of Jimmy Reed's *Hush Hush*, is alone worth the price of the album. It is one of the best harp solos ever recorded by anybody. Drummer Shelly Plotkin (who is white) has perfect blues discipline—steady, unadorned drumming. He and bassist Rollow Radford (who is black) have arranged *Corrina* and made it wonderful. The tune has been done to death by everybody from Dylan to Cab Calloway. Radford's easy vocal makes it a classic all over again.

Jim Schwall is an adept guitarist and moves confidently through several blues styles, white and black, Elmore James to Michael Bloomfield, and shares in the vocal
(Continued on page 113)

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GRETA AND YULYA

Two new discs for connoisseurs of the fine art of cabaret singing

By ROBERT CONNOLLY

SOME years back, Greta Keller called on her old friend Marlene Dietrich, who had just embarked on her cabaret-singing career, to congratulate her and to ask who had taught her to sing. "You did," replied Dietrich, pointing to a pile of records in the corner, "and no one else." In my opinion, Keller was then, and remains, the mistress of them all, the finest cabaret singer in the world. I forget who it was who wrote, accurately enough, that "what the masses *thought* existed in Dietrich is actually *there* in Keller." She has been recording since around 1929, and more than fifty million of her records have been sold. And the voice today is as warm and lovely as ever—no, *warmer*. There may be a shade less flexibility than before, but this is compensated for by an ever-increasing authority and artistry. The only other singer who comes to mind who has been singing that long and whose voice has remained intact is Kate Smith—and similarities stop right there.

There may be those who have not heard Greta Keller because they disliked the chichi aura surrounding some of the spots she plays and the audiences which frequent them, and assumed that she was mannered and precious, or a voiceless wonder, or just too special a taste. Far from it. The voice is rich and the style straightforward. Her only handicaps seem to be taste, intelligence, and integrity. She was recently turned down by the Dick Cavett show as "just not interesting enough" by that program's twenty-four-year-old "talent co-ordinator." One shudders to think who was chosen instead—and who chose the co-ordinator. Keller is an artist who applies to a pop song the same care and intelligence that a classical singer does to a lied. And perhaps this is the problem. Most pop-music listeners, of course, are simply not willing to listen that carefully. Greta Keller was never destined to be a household word, agreed. But the fact that she is not more widely known and appreciated—well, it's our loss, that's all.

A new Decca release entitled "With All My Love" is an imported British reissue of thirteen American songs and one French, dating from 1937 and a bit earlier. The voice is caressing, the style timeless, the

accompaniment sweetly redolent of another era—the kind you hear on old Richard Tauber records. The sound is faded and scratchy, despite the claim in the liner notes that "every endeavour has been made . . ." etc. On most of today's reissues, some of recordings far older than these, the sound is bright, forward, and relatively noiseless. But perhaps instead of being put off by this, you will look on it as adding to the nostalgic quality.

These songs, though well above average, are nevertheless not quite worthy of the Keller talents. Greta really turned Americans on when she introduced us to lovely *European* songs from Paris and Vienna, as well as to neglected gems of Coward and Porter. A few of these would have been welcome here. The cover features an elegant if not overly flattering photo of Miss Keller today. But these are performances of the Thirties; wouldn't a photo of her from the same period have been a little more in keeping?

In the early Sixties, while singing at the Waldorf-Keller in New York, Greta Keller became friendly with a Russian girl, also a singer, known professionally as Yulya. She had been a successful singer in Moscow when, in 1944, she fell in love with a young American diplomat, Thomas P. Whitney. They were married. Then began a struggle to get her out of Russia, won only after Stalin's death in 1953. Settled in New York, Yulya resumed her musical career, and made a number of now-legendary recordings for Monitor of Russian folk and popular songs and songs of her own composition. Greta Keller was impressed by Yulya and her music, and added some of her songs to her repertoire. A short while later, Yulya died of cancer at a tragically early age. She left her songs to Greta, who promised herself to make them better known to the world one day.

With a new Monitor release, "Love Is a Daydream," she has kept her promise. The record contains twelve songs, both music and English lyrics by Yulya. Now, I am always suspicious of a whole album of new songs—how many of them can be good?—but here the level is high indeed. They stand up well after repeated hearings, and

the melodies of some of them (*I Made Me a Dream, There's a Time to be Sunkissed*), are actually good enough to be standards. I should have known; if Greta Keller thought so highly of them. . . . Most of them are low-key, pleasantly melancholy, and very old-worldish, and are done full justice by Keller's skillful and obviously heartfelt interpretations, as well as by the artful, unobtrusive arrangements by Gershon Kingsley. Yulya would have been pleased. The cover features a stock shot of a young couple embracing, an obvious (and misguided) attempt to help the record's sales by getting some of the mood-music trade. This record will doubtless appeal primarily to fans of Keller and Yulya; wouldn't it have been more appropriate to put them on the cover?

I ADVISE you to acquire these albums quickly, because Keller records invariably have a short catalog life, and must then be sought out in collectors' shops. The quintessential Keller, however, is to be found elsewhere, in a more sophisticated and more Continental repertoire, and preferably with a piano or small group rather than a full orchestra. "This is My Vienna" (Dolphin 8), as good as any—and perhaps the best—of her records, and "Greta Keller" (London 5926) are officially deleted but can still be found. And stores carrying imports can probably supply "Zur Blauen Stunde" (Elite PLPE 30048), "I Remember Vienna" (two volumes, Fiesta 1272 and 1312), "Greta Keller" (Telefunken HT-P 500), and "Greta Keller 38-his auf Widerruf" (Amadeo AVRS 9257 ST).

GRETA KELLER: *With All My Love*. Greta Keller (vocals); various orchestras. *Once in a While; You're a Sweetheart; The Lamp Is Low; For All We Know; What a Life;* and nine others. DECCA/ECLIPSE Ⓜ ECM 2049 \$3.98.

GRETA KELLER: *Love Is a Daydream, and Other Songs by Yulya*. Greta Keller (vocals); orchestra, Gershon Kingsley arr. and cond. *Love Is a Daydream; For Every Love There's a Melody; Nightingale; To Part Means . . . ; Avenue of Love;* and seven others. MONITOR MFS 725 \$4.98.

work. Four of the tracks were cut "live" at the Quiet Knight, a club in Chicago that books the best local and out-of-town acts. Judging from the sound of the audience and the way the band responds to them, it must be a good place to work.

Corky Siegel is also a fine, jolly keyboard man. On *I Won't Hold My Breath* he plays a light-fingered break which brings in Schwall's happy guitar; to close the tune Siegel plays a light-fingered coda which says in a friendly way, "Well, I guess that settles that." All this—and you can dance to them, too.

Joel Vance

STRING CHEESE. String Cheese (vocals and instrumentals); various other accompaniments. *For Now; Crystal; We Share; Medley, Here Am I, Empty Streets*; and five others. **WOODEN NICKEL 5/WNS 1001 \$5.98. ⑧ P8WN 1001 \$6.95.**

Performance: **Ripping off the Airplane**
Recording: **Very good**

Whew! I don't know what's going on here, but String Cheese sounds as though it's trying out for a job as a Jefferson Airplane double. The vocals, the fiddle playing, the choice of tunes, and the harmonic progressions are virtual rip-offs of the Airplane. Since the group comes from San Francisco, the recording has been engineered by the brother of the Airplane's producer, and the distributing company is RCA, one has to assume that the similarities are not all that coincidental. But who would willingly make a career as an artificial *Doppelgänger*?
D.H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CARLA THOMAS: "*Love Means. . .*" Carla Thomas (vocals); orchestra. *Didn't We; Cherish; What Is Love?; I Wake Up Wanting You*; and five others. **STAX STS 2044 \$4.98. ⑧ ST 82044 \$6.95, ⑨ STC 2044 \$6.95.**

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Excellent**

The title of this disc is, obviously and depressingly, yet another by-product of that infamous advertising slogan. But it is the only depressing thing about this album. Carla Thomas is really a very good singer, with echoes of Aretha Franklin, Sarah Vaughan, and even Billie Holiday in her style, but with a voice of pure honey. And, wonder of wonders, she is ballad singer with the good sense to concentrate on just that, instead of contorting herself to fit current music-biz stereotypes. When she lets go on something like *I Wake Up Wanting You*, you realize what a spell good voices can cast, and so effortlessly. Her *Didn't We* is an all-too-rare case of the right singer for the right song.

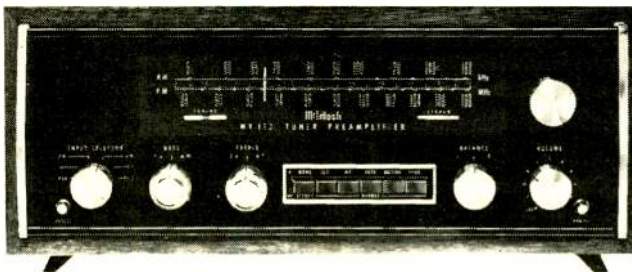
Satisfying as the album is, it bears too many traces of the influences on Miss Thomas. But with a voice of her caliber, it shouldn't take her long to get together in a style of her own. Then all Miss Thomas will need is a single hit, and she'll be on her way.
P.R.

TRAFFIC: *Welcome to the Canteen.* Steve Winwood (vocals, organ, electric piano, guitar); Rick Grech (bass); Dave Mason (vocals, guitars); Jim Gordon (drums); Jim Capaldi (vocals, tambourine, percussion); Chris Wood (woodwinds, piano, organ); "Reebop" Kwaku Baah (congas, timbalas, bongos). *Medicated Goo; Sad and Deep as*

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You; 40,000 Headmen; Shouldn't Have Took More Than You Gave; Dear Mr. Fantasy; Gimme Some Lovin'. UNITED ARTISTS UAS 5550 \$5.98, ⓑ U8323 \$6.98, ⓒ K0323 \$6.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Good**

Traffic was probably named Traffic because the word went well with jam, which Traffic certainly could and can. Here, the original Traffic plus three prove it for ten-and-a-half minutes with *Dear Mr. Fantasy*. Then, the point made, they start sounding dogmatic and redundant on *Gimme Some Lovin'*, written by Steve Winwood when he was with the Spencer Davis Group. Dave Mason, who played sitar and bass for Traffic, is still no B. B. King with the guitar, which shows up when *Gimme* goes begging for some subtle ornamentation. The vocals are okay. I never could see raving about Winwood's voice—it's his organ playing I think deserves raves.

Traffic, the first time it was formed, included Winwood, Mason, Jim Capaldi on drums, and Chris Wood on woodwinds. For this "live" recording, those four play with Jim Gordon, one of the best rock drummers (used to back the Mamas and the Papas, among others); Rick Grech, bass player with Family and then, along with Winwood, with Blind Faith; and "Reebop" Kwaku Baah, a not-so-exotic percussionist.

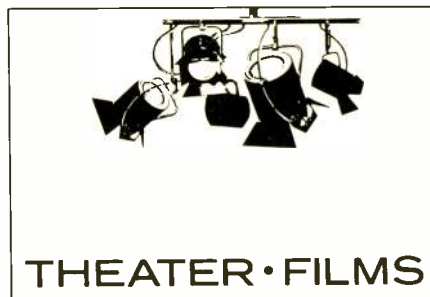
There are some terrific elements here: the balance of acoustic guitars and Wood's flute, the long blues lines of Winwood's organ, the extraordinary drumming of Gordon. The songs are better than average, although a bit on the used side. All in all, it's probably as good an album as these musicians could make. *N. C.*

MASON WILLIAMS: Sharepickers. Mason Williams (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *Here I Am Again; Poor Little Robin; Godsend; Train Ride in G;* and six others. WARNER BROS. WB 1941 \$4.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Good**

Abrasive and ingratiating, gifted but often content with superficiality, a man of comic and deep perception yet at times a sophist. Who else but Mason Williams? There are always moments in listening to him when I think that if I only lean a bit closer I'll find out what he's really talking about. Often he seems to me to be playing word games that have all the style of an un-precious Gertrude Stein. One of my favorites pops up here. "There's no use being serious at the circus, especially us, circa right now." Now that may not set you rocking with mirth, but to someone like me who has spent a considerable amount of time lately being hectored at about pollution, war, and various other social problems, it's the welcome kind of intelligent nonsense that could only come from a civilized man. This album, in which he performs much of his own material and some of Rick Cunha's, is another one of his Chinese boxes. One thing opens into another, and the quality constantly varies. Definite pluses are his own *Here I Am Again* and an instrumental, *Largo De Luxe*. Minuses would have to include Cunha's *Little Robin* and *Linda Crest Lament*, a song Williams wrote with Nancy Ames. As I say, it's a mixed bag. But very much Williams' own bag. He's still a puzzling artist, and still a hugely interesting one. *P. R.*

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THEATER • FILMS

NO, NO, NANETTE (Mandel-Harbach-Caesar-Youmans); **SUNNY** (Harbach-Hammerstein II-Kern). Original-cast recordings. Maidie Andrews, George Grossmith, Irene Brown, Binnie Hale, Seymour Beard, and others (singers in *Nanette*). Jack Hobbs, Nicholas Adams, Binnie Hale, Jack Buchanan, Elsie Randolph, and others (singers in *Sunny*). STANYAN SR 10035 \$5.98.

Performance: **Nostalgia ad absurdum**
Recording: **Old but audible**

An original "original-cast" album of *No, No, Nanette* and *Sunny*? Surely, I thought, the whole thing would turn out to be a gag! Well, it didn't. Something of a disappointment, perhaps, but the real article is what Stanyan Records has delivered. *No, No, Nanette* is taken from the London production which played at the Palace Theatre in 1925, with an all-English cast and a thoroughly English approach to the tunes that turns the breezy, easy-going score by Vincent Youmans into a somewhat turgid affair more reminiscent of an Ivor Novello operetta than an American musical comedy. The recording is about as good as can be expected, and it is fascinating to hear the true original arrangements (more than a little touched up for the current revival) in their own period instrumental costumes—simpler strings, bland saxophones, and a thing like an egg-whisk dusting the timpani. The voices are largely insipid, although dreadfully cultivated: Binnie Hale's *Nanette* is a snooty little soprano and Seymour Beard's Tom Trainor a reedy-sounding stuffed shirt, and George Grossmith as Billy Early never comes across as though he really wants to "be happy" the way he claims. There is no tap-dancing from Maidie Andrews, whose Sue Smith is certainly a pallid affair compared to dear old Ruby Keeler's. The curse of the English music-hall tradition is on the whole enterprise; the tea in *Tea for Two* may be the genuine product but it's tepid.

There's plenty of tap-dancing on the other side of the record, in *Sunny*, made up of excerpts from the 1926 production at the London Hippodrome. Jerome Kern's score, pre-*Roberta* and pre-*Show Boat*, was a matter more of promise than fulfillment, and one waits a bit restlessly through such vague tunes as *I Might Grow Fond of You* and *I've Looked for Trouble* for the big showstoppers. They are of course, the title song, *Let's Say Goodnight Till It's Morning*, and that haunting melody *Who?*, which hardly sounds dated at all, even in its threadbare old British evening clothes. Miss Hale, the *Nanette* of side one, makes the same sort of screechy little snob out of *Sunny*, but the comic stunts by Jack Buchanan and Elsie Randolph are superb. Recording technology evidently made a lot of progress from 1925 to 1926, for the sound is far superior on the *Sunny* side. *P. K.*

STEREO REVIEW

JAZZ



DAVE BRUBECK: *Brubeck/Mulligan/Cincinnati*. Dave Brubeck (piano and compositions); Gerry Mulligan (baritone saxophone); Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (Erich Kunzel cond.); Jack Six (bass); Alan Dawson (drums). *Happy Anniversary; The Duke; Blessed Are the Poor; Forty Days; Elements*. DECCA DL 710181 \$5.98.

Performance: **Jazz meets symphony (ho ho)**
Recording: **Very good**

Does anyone really care about this kind of music? Third Stream was never anything more than a plasticized bastard offspring of jazz and classical music, and whatever validity it may have had in the late Fifties in the hands of such composers as John Lewis, Gunther Schuller, and Jimmy Giuffrè was dissipated long ago. Brubeck writes competently for orchestra, and one of these works, *The Duke*, already has a reputation as a genuine jazz classic. But aside from Gerry Mulligan's lusty improvisations on baritone sax, and a few nicely delicate moments from Brubeck, the whole affair is tediously overblown. *D.H.*

CHRIS CONNOR: *Sketches*. Chris Connor (vocals); orchestra. *Make It with You; Buy and Sell; Hi De Ho; Snowbird; Ten Cents a Dance; Time and Love*; and eight others. STANYAN 10029 (by mail from Stanyan Records, Box 2783, Hollywood, Cal. 90028) \$5.98.

Performance: **Unique**
Recording: **Good**

This disc marks a return to recording by one of the best of jazz stylists. Chris Connor reached her peak of popularity and influence in the late Fifties when, unfortunately, she calcified into a cult figure. Obsessive devotion is naturally flattering to any artist, but it can also be drastically limiting: style congeals into mannerism and the baroque becomes the rococo. For the average listener, a little rococo goes a very long way. And so it seems to be with Miss Connor. If you liked her before, you'll like her now. If you'd always wondered what the fuss was about, this album won't convert you.

Everything is here that has always distinguished her work: impressive musicianship, a distinctive, moody voice, and—notable for a jazz singer—a respect for lyric communicativeness. The voice itself now often sounds worn, breathless, and at times not under adequate control. Her repertoire is slickly present-day: songs by Lennon-McCartney, Carole King, and, appropriately enough, Laura Nyro, who has become a cult figure of a similar kind. But it is in the Rodgers and Hart *Ten Cents a Dance* that Miss Connor achieves her greatest success, spinning out superbly that bittersweet blend of emotion,

purple mood, and personal emptiness that the song calls for. It is the best performance of this song that I've heard since the classic original by Ruth Etting. But one stunning interpretation among many others not so stunning isn't a very high score. In her other material she communicates the same lack of joy and the same sentimental play-it-again-Sam back-room melancholy so fashionable in the days when people still went to night clubs. Today, it sounds as dated (or as charming, depending on taste) as the sound of a gypsy violin drifting from a *chambre séparée*.

Miss Connor is still a fine artist, and, in many ways, a unique one. For her fans this album will be pure delight. For myself, it remains an expert reprise of a style that too often defeats itself by its own complexity, beamed from an era and state of mind that never interested me much. *P.R.*

DWIKE MITCHELL AND WILLIE RUFF: *Strayhorn*. Dwiki Mitchell (piano); Willie Ruff (bass and French horn). *Take the 'A' Train; Passion Flower; Suite for the Duo*; and four others. MAINSTREAM MRL 335 \$4.98.

Performance: **Piano-French horn jazz**
Recording: **Very good**

A nice idea: the French horn (doubling string bass) and piano duo of Dwiki Mitchell and Willie Ruff have been playing together for so long that they have a virtually intuitive musical interaction. It's the kind of deep, long-term artistic interaction that characterized the Ellington band—Billy Strayhorn's principal composing outlet—and, therefore, is a particularly appropriate voice for a retrospective program of Strayhorn music.

Most of the songs are familiar. The duo plays them with affection and understanding. If there's not much to brag about in the way of improvisational inventiveness, that's okay, because the Strayhorn songs are fascinating enough in themselves.

The most curious item is an apparently unknown Strayhorn work written for Mitchell and Ruff called *Suite for the Duo*. Strayhorn obviously was fascinated by Willie Ruff's French horn, and devoted most of the work to a series of clarion calls. The open spots are filled in with piano improvisations. Interesting, and one can understand the duo's desire to record it, but the real meat of the matter for this disc is the Strayhorn catalog of songs. *D.H.*

SWING, VOLUME ONE—Original swing-band recordings. *Swing Is Here; I'm Gonna Clap My Hands; I Hope Gabriel Likes My Music; Mutiny in the Parlor* (Gene Krupa's Swing Band). *It's Sad but True; There'll Be Some Changes Made; Beautiful Eyes; Blitzkrieg Baby* (Lester Young's Orchestra, with Una Mae Carlisle, vocals). *Honeysuckle Rose; Blues* (Jam Session at Victor: Bunny Berigan, Tommy Dorsey, Fats Waller, Dick McDonough, George Wettling). *Romping; The Blues My Baby Gave to Me; Minor Jive* (Frankie Newton and Orchestra); and two others. RCA Ⓜ LPV 578 \$5.98.

Performance: **Paying rent**
Recording: **Good**

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thology, and almost too much of Jelly Roll Morton and Fats Waller. Reissues of this type are cheap to produce, and even if they don't sell amazingly well, they still make money. RCA has an immense catalog, much of which is musically and historically valuable. They are continuing to issue the Vintage series, but this time around they're doing it with gate-fold covers, complete with boutique-style paintings and a clever-hip reproduction of the old Victor label of the 1920's on the LP (an idea they may have appropriated from the Jefferson Airplane's "Worst Of . . ." album).

The liner notes by Dan Morgenstern are thorough and enthusiastic. He makes three central points: "swing" was "streamlined" jazz, it favored "fast tempi," and it was the last form of jazz to be really popular with the masses. All this is true, and lamentable. The music here is something like rock today. Technical execution is very good, and blues tunes and supersonic-tempo tunes are played with equal facility. But there is very little true feeling. Frankie Newton, as Morgenstern points out, was a fine jazz trumpeter, and he is backed here by Fats Waller on three cuts. But Fats playing behind trumpeter Jabbo Smith a decade earlier was a lot jazzier. Three of the tracks are of a band organized and composed for by Mezz Mezzrow, the first great con-man of jazz. Two other sessions were produced by jazz critics. There are a few moments of fire; they belong mostly to the rhythm sections, with James P. Johnson at the piano and Al Casey on guitar.

Bunny Berigan is heard on two cuts. According to the liner notes, he was soulful because he played with a burr-tone, which meant by inference that he was lacking technical training, which the black players were supposed to lack, which therefore made him—and them—soulful. Nuts! Black players in the Thirties may not have had any formal training, but their Twenties mentors did. In New Orleans, there were, for example, two schools of clarinet playing, based on whether your black teacher followed the Italian or French approach to tone. Alphonse Picou, Johnny Dodds, and Jimmie Noone are three examples. It's way past time to set the historical record straight, because it demeans these musicians.

And the hell with Mezz Mezzrow, while we're at it. Eddie Condon believed as passionately in jazz as Mezzrow claimed he did (later Mezz went to France, where he conned the French) and it was Condon who organized the first integrated jazz recording date in 1929 (on which Mezzrow plays abysmal solos while everyone else is cooking), and it was Condon who organized one of Fats Waller's best recording dates.

The blurb on the back cover of this LP says: "to any young person newly exploring the legacy of jazz and blues . . . [the Vintage series] will be a welcome introduction to the roots of today's contemporary music." This is true, but not about this album. RCA should issue the Eddie Condon's Footwarmers sides, and the Hoagy Carmichael sides with Bix (and the Goldkette sides). They should repackaging Don Redman and King Oliver and the classic Morton Red Hot Pepper sides. Then they would be performing a public service. Through this album, all that RCA will do is to convince people that the flawless and/or sloppy technique and lack of feeling of too many current groups has an "honorable" precedent. *Joel Vance*

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MELVIN VAN PEEBLES: *Brer Soul*. Melvin Van Peebles (reader); instrumental accompaniment. *Lilly Done the Zampoughi Everytime I Pulled Her Coattail; Mirror Mirror on the Wall; The Coolest Place in Town; The Dozens;* and five others. A & M SP 4161 \$4.98.

Performances: **Soul poetry**

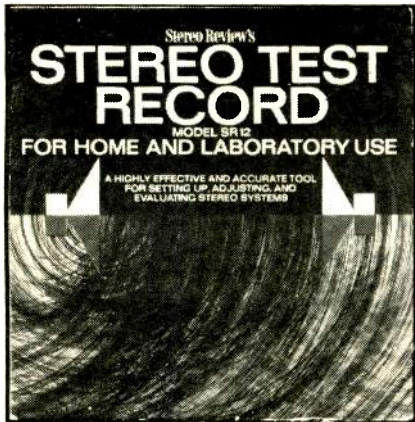
Recordings: **Very good**

I suspect that it's not possible for a white reviewer to criticize Van Peebles' work meaningfully. Review it, yes—perhaps even respect or admire it as one man's reflection on life in the black urban community. But Van Peebles' very special language, with its private metaphors and out-culture secret language, is too far outside the white view for this critic, at least, to do more than offer personal comments.

Which, no doubt, is what Van Peebles prefers. He is first of all a poet, and a very good one. Pushed to make a comparison, I would view him as a contemporary Langston Hughes, with the same responsive ear for the verbal twists and turns, the outrageous puns and unexpected double entendres characteristic of the rich new dialect that blacks have been developing in the cities. And, also like Hughes, Van Peebles' natural environment is one which is surrounded by blues and jazz. He performs his works in both these recordings with blues-rock-jazz accompaniment by groups led by percussionist Warren Smith. Van Peebles rasps, whines, shouts, coos, and demands, ranging freely over topics that cover everything from corrupt cops to city prisons, from doing the dozens (see what I mean?) to the joys of sex with exuberant young ladies.

It is, for me, a brilliant performance—and I say that with the full realization that much of the extraordinary subtlety of Van Peebles' language undoubtedly escapes me. The recent conversion of material from "Ain't Supposed to Die a Natural Death" into a New York theatrical revue underlines the effectiveness of these pieces, and confirms the arrival of a major new, and highly versatile, dramatic talent. *D.H.*





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COPLAND: *Fanfare for the Common Man; A Lincoln Portrait; Appalachian Spring—Suite*. Henry Fonda (reader); London Symphony Orchestra, Aaron Copland cond. COLUMBIA © MT 30649 \$6.98, © MA 30649 \$6.98.

Performance: **Composer's readings**
Recording: **Variable**
Playing Time: **44'**

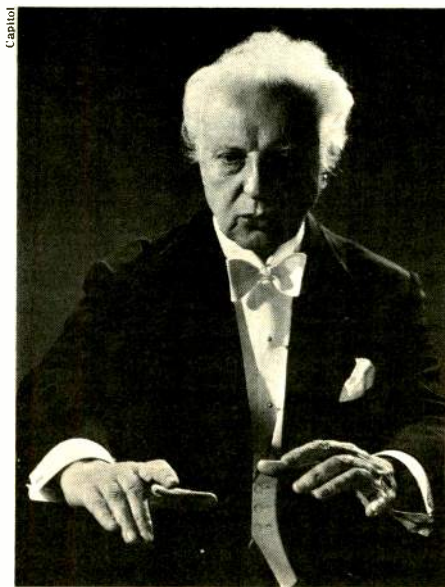
This is Copland's second time around conducting his masterly *Appalachian Spring* score for records—the first was in 1960 for RCA with the Boston Symphony Orchestra—and in the interim, he has gained substantially in conductorial know-how. As with the earlier performance, this one is notable for its attention to inner voices and subtleties of rhythmic pattern, but more of the inherent tenderness of the music comes through here than in the more rough-hewn Boston reading. For me, this is the definitive recorded performance of *Appalachian Spring* in its concert version.

Not as much can be said for either music or performance of the *Fanfare for the Common Man* and *A Lincoln Portrait*, and the blame, in this writer's opinion, mostly stems from over-reverberant and consequently ill-defined recorded sound. Percussion presence in the *Fanfare* is sadly lacking, and the subsidiary violin figuration that generates much of the climactic excitement in the fast central episode of *A Lincoln Portrait* is badly blurred. Actor Henry Fonda reads Lincoln's words with fitting simplicity, but the close-up acoustic surrounding his voice (tracked separately from the recording sessions for the music, one assumes) is ill-matched to the vast reverberation surrounding the orchestra—the whole thing sounding utterly unnatural and downright disturbing to my ears. Adlai Stevenson's reading of the Lincoln texts on the Ormandy-Philadelphia disc (also Co-

lumbia) remains for me the most eloquent, and the recorded sound there—if a bit dry—is clean and honest.

This is the first of Columbia's Dolbyized tapes to come my way, and represents a decided improvement for the firm in noise level. Regrettably, my review cassette contained no program notes—a less-than-square deal at a \$6.98 price. D.H.

PROKOFIEV: *Piano Concerto No. 5, in G Major, Op. 55; Piano Sonata No. 8, in B-flat Major, Op. 84; Visions Fugitives, Op. 22,*



LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI
A collection of his finest moments

Nos. 3, 6, 9. Sviatoslav Richter (piano); Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Witold Rowicki cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON © 3300021 \$6.98.

Performance: **A-1**
Recording: **Mostly good**
Playing Time: **55'**

This particular packaging of Prokofiev works is one of the more interesting in the catalog, not only because of Richter's superb pianism, but because it offers an almost complete compendium of the Prokofiev style, from the glinting vignettes of the youthful *Visions Fugitives* through the *style mécanique* represented in the early pages of the Fifth Piano Concerto to the full-blown lyrical manner heard in the Concerto's slow movement and in the first two movements of the Sonata.

The recording of the Concerto dates from 1955 and still sounds fine, with the Warsaw Philharmonic providing spirited accompaniment throughout the mercurial and kaleidoscopically varied work. The solo tracks, dating from 1962, are somewhere drier in sound, and the *Visions Fugitives* performance is evidently taken from a public recital. D.H.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 4, in C Minor ("Tragic"); Symphony No. 5, in B-flat Major.* Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, István Kertész cond. LONDON © M 10242 \$6.95.

Performance: **Driving**
Recording: **Adequate**
Playing Time: **52' 20"**

Neither of these symphonies is new to the cassette catalog, Schubert's Fourth Symphony having been available for a couple of years in an imported Philips performance by Wolfgang Sawallisch and the Fifth in versions by Klemperer on Angel and Sawallisch on another imported Philips cassette. I find Kertész a bit inflexible and overdriven here; he seems to want to romanticize Schubert, and to minimize the composer's lyricism while overemphasizing the powerful and Beethovenesque qualities. Were the recorded sound smoother, this viewpoint might come off, but unfortunately the reproduction (in spite of Dolby processing) lacks true transparency. The sonic result, with the conductor's driven interpretations, is wearing on the ear. I.K.

COLLECTIONS

THE BEST OF STOKOWSKI. Vivaldi: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D Minor, Op. 3, No. 11.* Bach: *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (arr. Stokowski).* Mozart: *Serenade No. 10, in B-flat Major, for Thirteen Wind Instruments: Five Movements (K. 361).* Thomson: *The Plow that Broke the Plains: Suite from the Film.* Stravinsky: *L'Histoire du soldat: Suite.* Symphony of the Air, American Symphony Orchestra Members, others, Leopold Stokowski cond. VANGUARD © 5707/8 \$6.95.

Performance: **Good to superb**
Recording: **Uneven processing**
Playing Time: **82' 51"**

No one can complain of short playing time on this cassette counterpart of Vanguard's "two-fers" disc series, nor for that matter of the quality of the Stokowski performances represented. Virgil Thomson's masterly score for Pare Lorentz's 1936 film on the Great

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- ⓐ = stereo cassette
- Ⓛ = quadrasonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadrasonic tape
- ⓑ = eight-track quadrasonic tape
- Ⓒ = quadrasonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

Plains Dust Bowl is the prize of the lot, and Stokowski's 1961 performance with the Symphony of the Air (formerly the NBC Symphony) is one of his very finest. The 1966 Mozart Serenade reading is intensely vital and displays wonderful wind playing from the American Symphony Orchestra contingent. The first minuet and theme-and-variations movement are omitted in this package, but can be heard in the complete Stokowski recording of the Serenade, still available on Vanguard 71158. The expertly played Stravinsky *Histoire du soldat* suite is excerpted from the complete 1967 issue, which offers both French and English narration. The Bach and Vivaldi items date from 1968, and, aside from rather excessive concluding retards, are tasteful and vital readings, graced by the excellent continuo playing of Igor Kipnis.

So far so good, *but*—the Ampex tape processing on my review cassette was distressingly uneven, marred by traces of print-through, audible flutter at the opening of *The Plow that Broke the Plains* and the *Adagio* of the Mozart Serenade, and scattered dropouts and considerable mid-range harmonic distortion. If one can get a properly processed cassette of this Stokowski package, he has top value. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ROBERT MERRILL: *Robert Merrill and the Prima Donnas.* Robert Merrill (baritone); Renata Tebaldi. Joan Sutherland and Leontyne Price (sopranos); various orchestras. Verdi: *Aida: Ciel! mio padre; Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor: Appressati, Lucia; Ponchielli: La Gioconda: Ora posso morir; Puccini: Il Tabarro: Come è difficile esser felici; Verdi: La Traviata: Pura siccome un angelo.* LONDON © M 31176 \$6.95. Ⓜ M 69176 \$6.95.

Performance: **All peaks, no valleys**
Recording: **Superior**
Playing Time: **48' 40"**

If you'd like an idea of how far the art of the cassette has progressed in recent months, try this little item on your equipment. Your conscientious reporter has listened to this spectacular program of Italian opera duets drawn from the London catalog on Dolbyized and again on non-Dolbyized equipment with the treble down, and has been knocked for a loop both times. First, there's the singing itself: Merrill's glorious baritone, transcending all technical difficulties to make every one of his roles in these exacting operatic passages sound like a pushover, Miss Price at her full-throated best in an impassioned stretch from *Aida*. Joan Sutherland on strong with all sails flying in passages from *Lucia* and *La Traviata* (as lusty a Violetta as ever died of consumption), and Tebaldi in emotional moments with Merrill chosen from Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* and Puccini's *Il Tabarro*, breaking your heart as she chants of how difficult it is for a girl to be happy. In fact, if there is any trouble with such highlight programs as this one, it's precisely all that emotionalism. The characters are never heard working themselves up for the big moments; for nearly an hour Mr. Merrill and his various consorts are heard on the very heights of hard-breathing agitation. It's all rather exhausting. Then too, the various orchestras come through rather unevenly; in this respect the sound was somewhat short-changed in London's earlier stereo opera albums. The Dolby system

shows up such inadequacies as surely as it relieves the vocal passages of those "boxed in" sounds that have made so many music-lovers feel tepid about cassettes—the bad is made apparent by the new system along with the good. But it's mostly good where it counts on this one. *P.K.*

ENTERTAINMENT

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JOSÉ FELICIANO: *Encore!* José Feliciano (vocals and guitar); orchestral accompaniment. *Hi-Heel Sneakers; California Dreamin'; Nature Boy; Destiny; Malagueña; Life Is That Way;* and six others. RCA © PK 1729 \$6.95. Ⓜ P8S 1729 \$6.95.

Performance: **Fiery and fulfilling**
Recording: **Very good**
Playing Time: **45' 16"**

Warm is the word for José Feliciano. His



JOSÉ FELICIANO
Lighting those musical fires again

voice, and the passion he coaxes from that guitar of his, are like a fire to bask by on a winter's night. This is a long and generous program of the favorites that skyrocketed him to fame, but it is never tiresome. He can pluck out an old chestnut like *Nature Boy* and turn it into a primitive portrait that blazes unabashedly with musical color. Sometimes, as in *California Dreamin'*, he breaks into his native Spanish in the midst of a performance, and it seems the most natural thing in the world. His version of *Malagueña* is probably more hot-blooded than Ernesto Lecuona himself ever intended when he composed it, but all Feliciano's variations and embellishments are entirely appropriate to the spirit of the work, and exciting to hear.

Feliciano does not really need an orchestra to back him, but he is fortunate in the arrangements for groups of strings, woodwinds, and brass supplied in this program, and the purely instrumental interludes of *Wichita Lineman* and *Pegao* provide welcome periods of relief and contrast. Some of the numbers were recorded "live," and the enthusiasm of the singer's audiences heightens the atmosphere and brings out the best in him—those squeals and arabesques that are his

hallmark audibly turning on his listeners, who not only applaud him when a number is over but whistle and cheer and seem scarcely able to contain themselves. The cassette ends with a Feliciano version of *Light My Fire* that crackles with such ferocious energy that you feel like doing a bit of whistling and cheering yourself. *P.K.*

LAMB: *Cross Between.* Lamb (vocals and instrumentals). *Flying; Now's Not the Time; Cross Between; Sleep-Walkers; Reach High; Ku; While Waiting; Flotation; Milo and the Travelers.* WARNER BROTHERS © M 51920 \$6.95. Ⓜ M 81920 \$6.95.

Performance: **Eclectic**
Recording: **Very good**
Playing Time: **39' 28"**

The main interest here is the strange, vibrating voice of the girl singer (I heard somewhere her name is Barbara Mauritz, but of course there's no information on the cassette box) and the complex amalgam of styles the group represents instrumentally, drawing on country, folk, conventional rock, blues, and jazz and having a snootful of classical gas in its acoustic guitars. It's a strange, uneven recording (Lamb's second such), and how you take it depends rather heavily on what kind of mood you're in. In the middle of the day, it doesn't do much for me, but late at night, its moodiness works well.

I'm troubled even then by a few recognizable thefts of other people's melodies or snatches of melody, which raises suspicions about the less familiar strains (odd, though, that I never agonized over Bob Dylan's re-write jobs of folk melodies).

Anyway, this is an interesting, complicated recording and shouldn't be passed off lightly. If you have any curiosity about what lies outside the corral that fences in countless Xerox-copy rock groups, you just might find the grass is greener out there where Lamb is. *N.C.*

HUGO MONTENEGRO: *People . . . One to One.* Hugo Montenegro and His Orchestra and Chorus. *El Condor Pasa; A Hazy Shade of Winter; Bridge over Troubled Water; Another Day; If; Make It with You; It Don't Matter to Me;* and five others. RCA © PK 1752 \$6.95.

Performance: **Overarranged and overwrought**
Recording: **Excellent**
Playing Time: **39' 35"**

Hugo Montenegro, his chorus, and his orchestra play *à la mode* what would probably make good background music if it didn't spend so much time fingering its tie, clearing its musical throat, and in general attracting unseemly attention to itself. Take their version of *El Condor Pasa*, as laden with atmosphere as a Los Angeles restaurant, festooned with every sort of Spanish doodad by way of special effects, and as heavy as a three-day-old warmed-over tamale. Or take, if you will, *Hazy Shade of Winter*, which is not content simply to rely on frosty instrumental phrases but must bring in sleigh bells and a wind machine. To make sure he's completely up-to-date, Montenegro summons up what sound like Moog effects, adds a zither obbligato in *Joy to the World*, and constructs a *Bridge over Troubled Water* that creaks ponderously. It's enough to make you long for a little self-abnegating Muzak. *P.K.*

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TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



WATCHING FOR HEAD WEAR

A PART FROM routine cleaning and demagnetizing, most of us don't give our tape recorders' heads a second thought. This is a mistake, however, for continuing high performance demands that the heads be checked periodically both for signs of excessive wear and for changes in proper alignment. Since head adjustment or replacement requires expensive alignment tapes, instruments, and adequate know-how, this must usually be left to the professional technician, but there are some initial checks the home user can make to decide whether a visit to the shop is advisable. This month I'll talk about wear and next month about alignment.

Since tape can be considered (among other things) as an extremely fine grade of sandpaper, it's not surprising that in time it begins to cut into the face of the heads along its path of travel. As this happens, two physical effects take place simultaneously. First, the rounded contour of the head face becomes flattened, and unless pressure pads are used, the pressure that holds the tape against the all-important "head gap" is reduced. The "gap," a vertical space between the pole pieces, is sometimes so narrow that it requires magnification even to see it, but it is there that the record, play, and erase functions of the head take place. If the tape does not press firmly against the head gap—and millionths of an inch are critical here!—a serious loss of high-frequency response will result.

The second effect of wear is even more serious. After much tape has flowed across its face, the head develops actual grooves at the edges of the tape path. These make tape-to-head contact intermittent, causing not only loss of high frequencies, but an increased incidence of "drop-outs"—those momentary complete losses of signal that seem particularly to afflict the left channels of quarter-track stereo recorders. Further, recording tape itself is not of *absolutely* constant width; NAB standards permit it to vary ± 0.002 inch. When a section of slightly over-wide tape hits the channel worn into the head face, its sharp edges try to cut the tape down to "proper" size. When this happens the tape edges can be permanently damaged.

Whether your recorder's heads will last one year or ten depends on too many variables to predict in advance. The newly-developed glass "ferrite" heads are claimed to be almost impervious to wear for the lifetime of the machine. This is a wonderful development if it does not have unfortunate side effects such as increased scrape flutter. For most of us, however, with our softer metal tape heads, wear will continue to be a real factor to watch for. Professionals often send their tape heads out to be re-lapped (repolished) at the first visible signs of flattening, but this would be uneconomical for the home user. For us, the best test—and I'd perform it every couple of months—is literally a rule of thumb. If you can catch the edge of a fingernail on the developing wear grooves on the head face, replacement is in order. If you play enough tape to wear out a set of heads, new heads are a sensible investment in safeguarding your listening pleasure.

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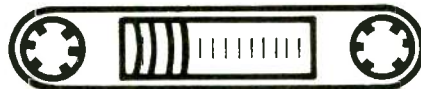
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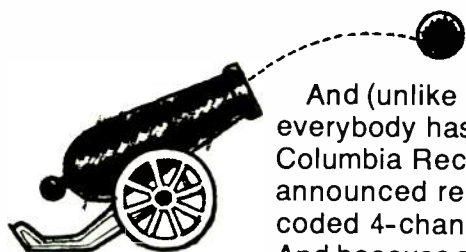
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A report in the 4-channel war of the matrixes: **The war is over!**



And (unlike real wars) everybody has won. Columbia Records has announced release of encoded 4-channel records. And because support from major record companies

is essential to 4-channel, we welcome them. Columbia now joins the many pioneering record manufacturers who've already produced thousands of 4-channel discs.

We must admit that at first we were concerned. Because while most of the original matrixes were basically compatible, these new SQ discs were different. Which could have led to a battle of the matrixes and even more confusion in the marketplace.

But we knew our matrixing system was best, so what to do about this promised flood of seemingly incompatible discs? The answer: a new "universal" E-V decoder now in production. Not only does this improved decoder handle our STEREO-4™ (and all similarly-encoded material) but we've added sophisticated circuitry to decode SQ records accurately. It even does some things decoders built solely for the SQ format don't, like more correctly controlling the position of a front-center soloist.

So, now the E-V Decoder is the only one for all matrix 4-channel programs. And now —

more than ever — matrixing (encoding four channels of sound into two) continues to grow as the method to get 4-channel sound on records, FM, and tape to the listener... now and in the foreseeable future.

What about our "old" EVX-4 Decoder? Well, despite the algebra, it actually decodes SQ records remarkably well. It just doesn't offer complete rear directionality from these different discs. But unless it is directly compared with our improved decoding this has proved a minor issue for many listeners.

In addition we doubt that independent record companies will give up the advantages of STEREO-4 encoding in favor of the SQ system. Because the "new" decoder is more complex — hence more expensive — we'll continue to sell both models. One of them is for you!

But having now created the "universal" decoder we're not resting on our laurels. We're going on to refine it in future models with such features as gain riding to make it by far the best circuit in the industry.

So, hopefully, order is restored. Record companies can get on with software in increasing numbers using any matrixing system they prefer... while you begin to really enjoy the fruits of all our labors.

Peace.

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