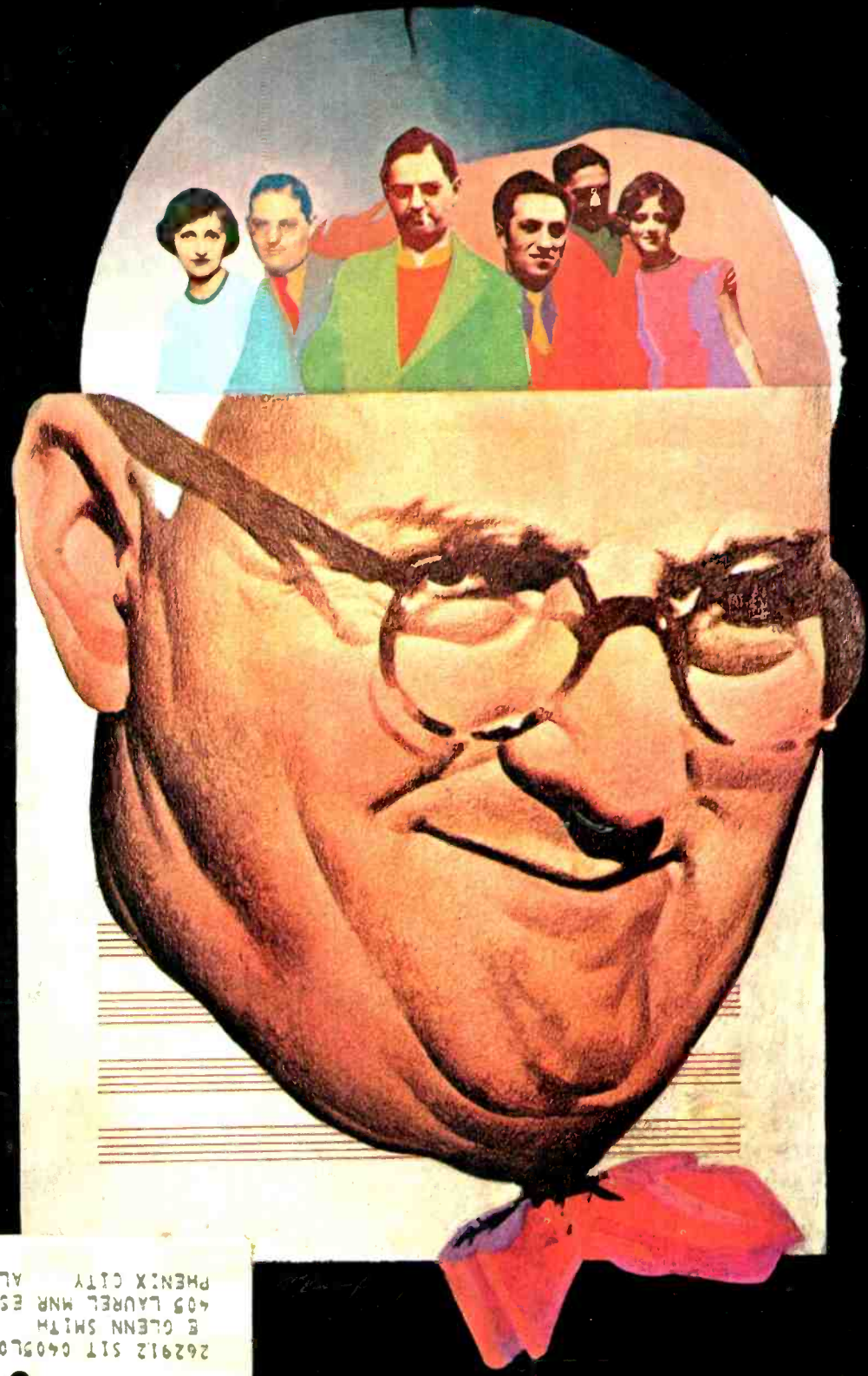


# Stereo Review

MAY 1974 • 75 CENTS

## IRA GERSHWIN: BEST WORDS FOR THE BEST MUSIC



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# receivers the world

Pioneer believes that any objective comparison of quality/performance/price between our new SX-1010, SX-939 and SX-838 AM-FM stereo receivers and any other fine receivers will overwhelmingly indicate Pioneer's outstanding superiority and value.

## The most powerful ever

Pioneer uses the most conservative power rating standard: continuous power output per channel, with both channels driven into 8 ohm loads, across the full audio spectrum from

20Hz to 20,000 Hz. Despite this conservatism, the SX-1010 far surpasses any unit ever produced with an unprecedented 100 + 100 watts RMS at incredibly low 0.1% distortion. Closely following are the SX-939 (70 + 70 watts RMS) and the SX-838 (50 + 50 watts RMS) both with less than 0.3% distortion. Dual power supplies driving direct-coupled circuitry maintain consistent high power output with positive stability. A fail-safe circuit protects speakers and circuitry against damage from overloading

## Outstanding specifications for flawless reception

FM reception poses no challenge to the exceptionally advanced circuitry of these fine instruments. Their FM tuner sections are designed with MOS FETs, ceramic filters and phase lock loop circuitry. The result is remarkable sensitivity, selectivity and capture ratio that brings in stations effortlessly, clearly and with maximum channel separation.

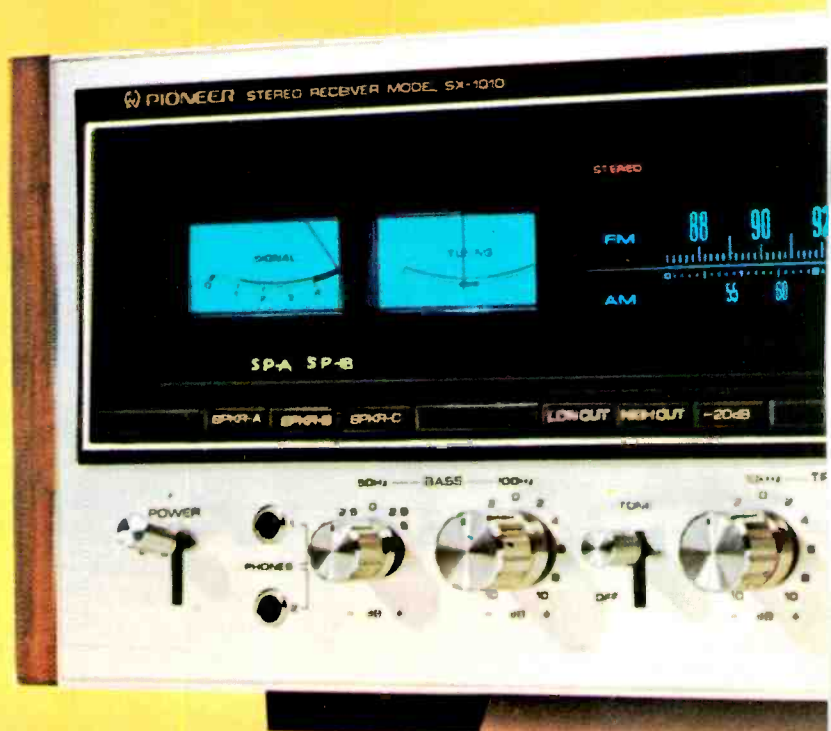
	SX-1010	SX-939	SX-838
FM Sensitivity (IHF) (the lower the better)	1.7uV	1.8uV	1.6uV
Selectivity (the higher the better)	90dB	80dB	80dB
Capture Ratio (the lower the better)	1dB	1dB	1dB
Signal/Noise Ratio (the higher the better)	72dB	70dB	70dB

## Total versatility plus innovations

Only your listening interests limit the capabilities of these extraordinary receivers. They have terminals for every conceivable accommodation: records, tape, microphones, heads — plus Dolby and 4-channel multiplex connectors. Completely unique on the SX-1010 and SX-939 is tape-to-tape duplication while listening simultaneously to another program source. The SX-838 innovates with its Recording

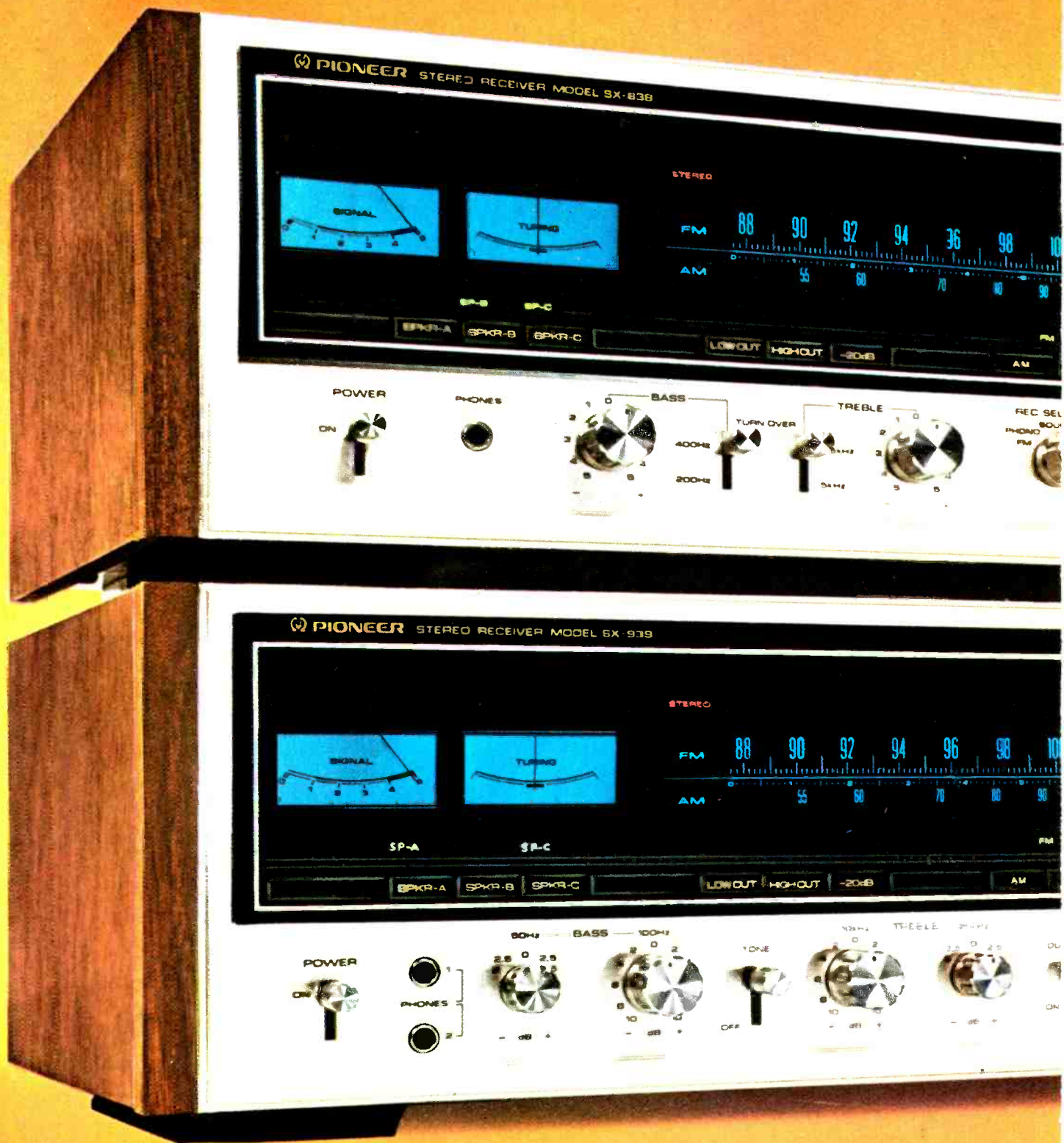


# There can be only one best.





# The finest stereo has ever known.







**3,025 possible tonal compensations with unique twin stepped tone controls (SX-1010, SX-939)**

Selector that permits FM recording while listening to records and vice versa. Up to three pairs of speakers may be connected to each model.

INPUTS	SX-1010	SX-939	SX-838
Tape monitor/4-ch. adaptor	3	2	2
Phono	2	2	2
Microphone	2	2	1
Auxiliary	1	1	1
Noise reduction	1	1	1
OUTPUTS			
Speakers	3	3	3
Tape Rec /4-ch. adaptor	3	2	2
Headsets	2	2	1
Noise reduction	1	1	1
4-channel MPX	1	1	1

### Master control system capability

Pioneer's engineers have surpassed themselves with a combination of control features never before found in a single receiver. All three units include: pushbutton function selection with illuminated readouts on the

ultra wide tuning dial, FM and audio muting, loudness contour, hi/low filters, dual tuning meters and a dial dimmer.

Never before used on a receiver are the twin stepped bass and treble tone controls found on the SX-1010 and SX-939. They offer over 3,000 tonal variations. A tone defeat switch provides flat response instantly throughout the audio spectrum. The SX-838 features switched turnover bass and treble controls for more precise tonal compensation for room acoustics and other program source characteristics.

In their respective price ranges, these are unquestionably the finest values in stereo receivers the world has ever known. Audition their uniqueness at your Pioneer dealer.

**Maximum input/output capability (SX-1010 shown)**

SX-1010 — \$699.95; SX-939 — \$599.95, SX-838 — \$499.95. Prices include walnut cabinets.

In addition to these new units, Pioneer offers three equally outstanding receiver values at more modest prices. SX-626 (\$339.95), SX-525 (\$259.95) and SX-424 (\$199.95), with walnut cabinets.

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British Industries Co. will henceforth be known as B·I·C INTERNATIONAL™ (pronounce it "bee eye see" please, not "bic") and will be identified by this logo. 

We hasten to add that while we believe it is good business to change our name, we don't intend to change our ways.

We will continue to be innovators in the component field. We will continue to emphasize honesty, fair dealing, and all those other business virtues that mean so much when you're laying out several hundred dollars for a piece of equipment.

So remember us. B·I·C INTERNATIONAL. The name stands for more today than ever in our history. And as the man said, "you ain't seen nothin' yet."



# Stereo Review

MAY 1974 • VOLUME 32 • NUMBER 5

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# Introducing the Fisher Auditorium speaker.

## The speaker based on a revolutionary new principle discovered in 1404 A.D.

The Fisher Auditorium speaker model ST-900 represents a major step backward in speaker design.

The details are now obscured, and the participants are largely forgotten. But early in the 15th century, Europe was introduced to a new method of sound production which would revolutionize the world of music for the next several centuries. Ironically, the effect of this new development is just being felt in the high fidelity industry.

The new development was the invention of the clavichord, the earliest musical ancestor of the modern grand piano. What made the clavichord so unique then, as now, was the over-sized sounding board upon which taut wires were plucked. With its large radiating surface, the sounding board made those wires "sing" with an inspiring richness and clarity.

From this brief, but significant footnote in history the engineers at Fisher resurrected a timeless principle of sound production: the larger the radiating surface, the clearer and cleaner the sound.



So, it is Fisher who now introduces you to the new Auditorium speaker; descendant of the clavichord, cousin to the piano.

The Auditorium ST-900 is constructed around a unique (and patented) acoustical polymer diaphragm. This unusual design feature permits us to place the entire speaker mechanism in a trim and slim cabinet only 2 7/8 inches deep. The diaphragm contains 280 square inches of radiating surface, two times more than a 12" woofer. Like a concert grand piano compared to a spinet, the

Auditorium ST-900 requires less energy (the audio signal) to push more sound into the listening area. Hence, you have a speaker of unusually high efficiency; one which doesn't require a blockbuster amplifier to fill a room with music.

In its technical specifications, our new Auditorium Speaker reads like a state-of-the-art lesson in speaker performance:

### The Fisher Auditorium Speaker model ST-900

Frequency Response (Pink noise source; 1/3-octave bands)	50-20,000Hz ± 3dB
Maximum Music Power	75 Watts
Minimum Music Power	6-8 Watts
Dispersion	360 degrees
Magnet Structure	2.64 pounds
Voice Coil Diameter	1 inch
Impedance	8 Ohms
Dimensions	2 3/4" x 2 3/4" x 2 7/8" deep
Weight	21 pounds

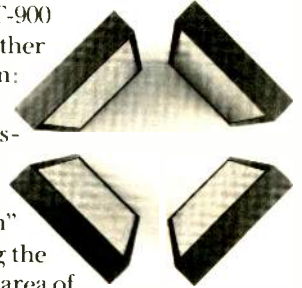
### A speaker for hard and soft music.

The ST-900 is perfectly at home with the hardest rock music. The reason is that it doesn't have a woofer. Big woofers can be unfaithful in reproducing the strong, but short-lived electronic and percussive elements of hard rock. Their bulky cones tend to "smear" those transients. A smaller woofer isn't the answer; it falls short on the low end.

The acoustical polymer diaphragm of the Auditorium speaker is low enough in mass to reproduce an undistorted transient. So a resounding clash of cymbals comes across as crisp and clear as the original. And with nearly two square feet of radiating surface, a polymer diaphragm is certainly hefty enough to move the large volume of air necessary to reproduce extreme lows at high sound pressure levels without distortion. The deep thrum of an electric bass is smooth and natural.

### The perfect speaker for two and four-channel sound.

Whether they're employed in stereo or four-channel mode, the Fisher Auditorium ST-900 overcomes another thorny problem: limited or exaggerated dispersion. Many conventional speakers "beam" sound, limiting the ideal listening area of any room to one small spot. Fully-reflective omnidirectional speakers are often accused of over-compensating to the other extreme. They bounce sound off of everything within reach, making a virtuoso violin solo stretch unrealistically from one end of the room to the other.



Auditorium speakers are omnidirectional, too. But only in the best sense of the word. They don't bounce or beam; they "emanate" sound from front and rear a full 360 degrees. The result is a speaker which recreates the ambient characteristics of the original sound source as faithfully, and more so, as conventional speakers costing several times more.

### Take a listen, learn a lesson.

In designing the Auditorium ST-900, Fisher engineers discarded several new theories in favor of an old one. The result is a speaker which offers the serious audio listener an opportunity to enjoy a fidelity of sound previously available only to people with unlimited budgets.

The Fisher Auditorium speaker sells for \$99.95. Compare it with other speakers you think you would like to own. Even speakers two and three times our price. You'll probably agree that it was worth taking one step backward in speaker design, to take two steps forward in high fidelity.

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## EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON



### DA CAPO, AMERICA

It is said that pessimism is a character trait, optimism a philosophy. There would seem to be some truth in the notion, for pessimism is the passive acceptance of things as they are (pretty awful) and optimism is an active search for proof (pretty scarce) that they can be better; you *need* a philosophy to persevere in that search, you need to have made up your mind ahead of time that the proof is there to find. And so, if I have a generally sanguine, philosophical-optimist attitude toward cur musical life, it is not because of a shortage of evidence that things are in their usual sorry state, but because there are reassuring signs that they are getting better. As the current comedic bromide has it, better as compared to what? Well, as compared to what they were only a short decade or so ago.

That divinely appointed gadfly who goes by the name of Anna Russell tells us that folk music is defined in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as "the uncouth utterance of the people." (Miss Russell's edition is perhaps a little older than mine; the 1946 essay on folk music is by Ralph Vaughan Williams, recommended for its uncommon civility and good sense.) The quotation is an all-too-apt example of the widespread but completely erroneous idea that when we speak of a people's "culture" we mean only its *high* culture. (There would, of course, be no difficulty in finding another quotation from the far side of the ideological spectrum that would tell us just the reverse—that there is no culture but *folk* culture.) But despite those who would appropriate the word's meaning and restrict its operations to the area of their private concerns, culture's juggernaut inevitability rolls over them all, with the result that high, middle, and low penetrate, flow, and otherwise shade into each other imperceptibly. This has been true for almost as long as the world has been round, but it has evidently amused certain whole cultures (ours among them) to pretend otherwise, to admire the flower while despising the plant (or vice versa). This pernicious elitism has had, in this country at least, some disastrous effects, particularly in music. The academy has become a cloistered retreat where those who ought to be our learned composers sing only to each other, the whole genre of "classical music" has become something very close to a dirty word, and record-industry die-hards lie spitefully entrenched behind the classical records they can't sell. So much for easy pessimism.

What this cockeyed optimist sees is a definite change in the weather: a whole gang of (mostly) young academics who have come out, taken a good look (and listen) around, sniffed the air, and gone to work uncovering our neglected musical beginnings (yes, *da capo*) to see if they will help to get our musical culture going again. No, there will be no neglected Beethovens brought to light, and no, the one we have will not be asked to roll over. But these engaging subversives have already, by infiltrating the studios of a few key record companies, persuaded us to listen again, with natural American sympathy rather than smug European condescension, to William Billings, Stephen Foster, Scott Joplin, George Gershwin, and Jelly Roll Morton, with others to come just as soon as a few more slow-on-the-uptake record companies have scrambled, with whatever grace they can muster, onto the bandwagon. Who knows whether it will work or not; all we know is that we must try. This music, these composers, are *what we are*; we have snobbishly denied them long enough. There will be those who will call all this merely another money-grubbing nostalgia kick. I have never been able to see much wrong with money, and I see even less wrong with nostalgia; I quarrel with no man's Eden, having one of my own. But it has occurred to me to wonder whether what we call a nostalgia "binge" may not be rather a return to normalcy, a healthy interest in and regard for the past and what it has to teach us. Have we not had enough of running headlong without plan through the present and into a future that is looking darker daily?



# The Technics SA-8000X demodulates or decodes any kind of 4-channel. Even some that haven't been invented yet.

The Technics SA-8000X is master of all 4-channel systems. With special talents in discrete. Like a built-in demodulator for CD-4 records. Plus jacks for up to three 4-channel tape sources. And jacks for future discrete 4-channel FM.



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Each of the 4 direct-coupled amplifiers delivers 16 watts of RMS power at 8Ω, all channels driven.\* (4x16w = 64w.) And because they can be strapped together, you get 42 watts RMS per channel at 8Ω, all channels driven,\* in the 2-channel mode. (2x42w = 84w.)

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by Panasonic







## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Pachelbel's Canon

● Mr. Goodfriend's learned analysis of Pachelbel's Canon in D (March) is interesting, but his conclusions are beside the point. He seems annoyed that "this fragment of ancient music" (a term, by the way, that might equally apply to Bach's Aria from the Magdalena Book which also became a pop hit) should be enjoyed by the Great Unwashed. (This despite the fact that your magazine has labored long to entice the acid-rock hounds into the symphony hall.)

Mr. Goodfriend suggests that the piece produces an ecstatic, quasi-religious experience encouraged by a short, repeated harmonic progression of eight notes in unvaried rhythm, etc. How tiresome, this dissecting of a butterfly's wing. Does anyone who enjoys this beautiful linking of notes care that (a) it's not in *Grove's Dictionary*, (b) the underground is buying it, (c) it is "hardly typical of its time," and (d) it is really "rather indeterminate," whatever that means? The poet Shelley never forgave Isaac Newton for explaining the existence of a rainbow. Fortunately, one doesn't have to forgive Mr. Goodfriend for anything.

J. H. WEBB  
Dayton, Ohio

*Mr. Goodfriend replies: While I'm not out to challenge Sir Isaac Newton as an explainer of mysteries, I most certainly will challenge Mr. Webb's fashionable aesthetic pose that anything beautiful must be left completely alone, not discussed, and certainly not "explained." I find it one of the transcendental idiocies of our time (or any other time, remembering Wordsworth's "meddling intellect") that we are not supposed to examine anything with a view to how or why it works because that will do irreparable damage to our appreciation of it—as if anybody ever liked Schubert's B-flat Sonata the less because he knew what a recapitulation was.*

*The fact that an "underground" public has discovered the Pachelbel piece I find both interesting and symptomatic of possible future directions in public taste. The fact that the Canon is not mentioned in Grove's I also find interesting on the basis that whatever it is that today's public finds attractive about the piece was either not noticed or not found to be of sufficient importance to be mentioned by the scholar who wrote the dictionary article. I*

*also most emphatically deny that I am annoyed that "this fragment of ancient music" (what can possibly be derogatory about that simple phrase?) has found a new public; in fact, I'm delighted. And I certainly think that it is worth examining the circumstances, as well as the piece itself, to see why it has emerged from the obscurity that has been its resting place for the last couple of hundred years. And with my eye firmly on that rather impressive time-span, I forgive Mr. Webb his youth.*

● By a happy coincidence, my copy of Pachelbel's "Canon" and the March issue of STEREO REVIEW arrived the very same day, giving me a rare opportunity to read James Goodfriend's comments about this work as I listened to the record.

"Pachelbel's Comet" is the title of Mr. Goodfriend's article, and an apt title it is. For, like Comet Kohoutek, Pachelbel's "Canon" was more exciting in print than in reality. I don't think this is the fault of the composition, but of the Musical Heritage Society and others who heaped excessive praise on it, giving rise to unrealistic expectations on my part. It could be that the "Canon" is a victim of a campaign to "hard sell" classical music in much the same way pop and rock music is sold.

FRANCIS PIVAR  
New Kensington, Pa.

### Hall of Obscurity

● I must thank J Marks for the very nice write-up of Joanne Vent (February). I think she's done a wonderful job on "The Black and White of It Is Blues." She was quite unfortunate with managers, and I think there should have been more promotion with the album. She did another album for A&M that was never released, and it too is quite good. I especially like *It's a Slow Train* and *For the Love of My Man*. Singing is Joanne's whole life, and she really puts her heart and soul into it. I can say this truthfully as I am her mother.

IRENE VENT  
San Diego, Calif.

● Addition to your "Hall of Obscurity": Perhaps the most under-appreciated band of all—Little Feat. And what about Ry Cooder, Kenny Rankin, . . . ?

GEORGE KOTZAS  
Toms River, N.J.

### Substandard Software

● Amazing—and slipshod—that Craig Stark could have surveyed the fidelity of commercial records and tapes without mentioning reel-to-reel pre-recorded tapes ("Perfecting Sound Reproduction," February), especially since the article was presumably aimed at those who care about milking the most out of their sound systems, and tape deck owners often do. That was bad enough, but ending the piece as if he had touched all bases, by saying, "All our sound-reproduction media, in short, can stand improvement . . ." was rubbing salt in the wound.

When are you going to fill this gap and let us reel-to-reel tape deck owners know whether we're pouring our money down the drain with little or nothing extra to hear for it?

BOB OLMSTEAD  
Maywood, Ill.

*Reel-to-reel enthusiasts are highly vocal, but their numbers are puny and their buying habits unreliable. The industry has repeatedly tried to market pre-recorded reel-to-reel tapes, and has repeatedly lost money in the process. The reason is not far to seek: tape-recorder owners do not buy tapes; they make them. Mr. Olmstead can measure his own virtue by comparing the number of pre-recorded tapes against the number of dubbings in his collection or checking out just how many of his dubs are indeed to be found in the pre-recorded catalog. As to who is responsible for this sorry situation, the argument is purely chicken-or-egg.*

### "Rock Poetry"

● I found William Anderson's March editorial distressing, only in that his attitude toward the poetic aspects of rock music reflects a dogmatic, blind conservatism unbecoming a publication of STEREO REVIEW's calibre. I fear that Mr. Anderson's understanding of poetry is limited—Dryden once said that the chief purpose of poetry is to delight. Hence, many can validly say rock is poetry. I find the lyrics of Leiber and Stoller as witty and whimsical and clever as Gilbert and Sullivan. I find the lyrics of Ray Davies as aurally pleasing as those of T. S. Eliot. Bob Dylan's imagery will be long remembered after Andrew Marvell is deleted from the Norton *Anthology*. One finds that every argument of an aesthetic nature has an equally valid opposing argument; therefore, beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder. Granted, time may be the true test of art's merit, but does that negate all new things? Rock is entering its third decade—was Mr. Anderson one of those that, in the Fifties, said rock is just a fad? One doesn't expect everyone to love rock, but honestly, credit where credit is due.

KENNETH KESSLER  
Bangor, Me.

*The Editor replies: I am indebted to Mr. Kessler for one of the most comical syllogisms since Socrates—"Poetry's purpose is to delight [or so, he says, says Dryden]; rock delights; therefore rock is poetry." Yes, and so are merry-go-rounds, comic strips, and the Brothers Marx, for they all delight too. Since this syllogism's conclusion is patently foolish, there must be something wrong with either its major or its minor premise; I will leave it to Mr. Kessler to puzzle out which, countering in the meanwhile with a little something perhaps closer to his point (even though it is not mine).*

(Continued on page 12)





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With that in mind, add up the features of the ELAC/Miracord 625 automatic turntable shown here, and see if you can guess the price.

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a definition not of poetry's purpose, but of what it is: it is, according to Coleridge, "the best words in their best order." (For me, even that is insufficient, since it covers such a statement as "Keep off the grass," which is not poetry.)

But neither a definition of poetry nor my opinion of rock (as Mr. Kessler will have it further on) happens to be the subject of my March editorial "Deceptive Packaging." Mr. Kessler is therefore guilty of *ignoratio elenchi* (the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion), an old sin against the science of logic that many husbands (and a few wives) will recognize as changing the subject in the hope of winning the argument. (Would that both the Latin language and Logic were compulsory subjects in our high schools!)

Music is everywhere in our culture, and one can get with extraordinary ease from any musical subject (rock lyrics, for example) to practically any other in the field of literature, politics, or even, as in this case, education. I chose the subject of "rock poetry" courses in order to demonstrate that some peculiar things are going on in our institutions of "higher" learning. "Rock poetry" is simply a subject in a vacuum, one that asks not only to be defined, but to be judged in terms of itself; it is intellectual social climbing, a case of the species usurping the office of the genus. Students who are permitted to graduate with such a false notion of the world of the mind have been handed a second-class education, a plastic discharge from an educational kindergarten rather than a bona fide sheepskin.

I would call Mr. Kessler's attention to a "sign of the times" reported in the February

25 issue of *Time* magazine: a half-million dollar suit is being brought against San Francisco's Board of Education in the interest of a young man who was permitted to graduate from one of that city's high schools with only fifth-grade competence in reading. It turns out that he found that to be a great handicap in the big world outside. Who will be the first to sue, say, UCLA when he discovers that the "rock poetry" course he got such a kick out of in his senior year has not prepared him but served to disqualify him for that publishing job he covets?

To get back to that other subject: the question of what is and what is not poetry is hardly a subjective or "aesthetic" matter with "an equally valid opposing argument" for each case; there are objective criteria, demonstrable facts that have been known in many cultures for centuries—in English, since the sixteenth (see *Saintsbury, History of English Prosody*). Mr. Kessler may well derive as much "aural pleasure" from Ray Davies as he does from T. S. Eliot. I am sorry about that, for even if he is getting the whole 100 per cent of what there is to be discovered in Ray Davies (and I am fond of the Kinks), then he is certainly missing at least 90 per cent of what there is in Eliot. More royalist than the king, he may even find the work of Leiber & Stoller as witty and whimsical and clever as that of G & S; I somehow doubt that even L & S, let alone a qualified and impartial jury, would agree. And Bob Dylan has already been memorialized—not in the Norton Anthology, but on the *Carol Burnett Show*. In a series of comic blackouts based on pop music, Harvey Korman sang the lines "How

many roads must a man walk down/Before they call him a man . . ." from *Blowin' in the Wind*—and then minced off, in his best Nurse Peterson style, down that ol' road. *Time* is cruel, and that very quickly, to popular culture; Dylan's "imagery" will therefore last no longer than, shall we say, Woody Guthrie's has. (For more on this subject of song lyrics and "poetry," see Edward Jablonski's article this month on Ira Gershwin, a man who knows the difference.)

#### Overlooked Guideline

● In Craig Stark's interesting article "A Few Guidelines to Help You Plan your own Home Recording Studio" (March 1974) he states: "Ribbon microphones, rare today, tend in most cases to be fragile but are capable of excellent performance."

This remark was probably true of the ribbon microphones of yesteryear. However, Dr. Stark's comment is certainly not accurate insofar as the currently available Beyer ribbon microphones are concerned. Ribbon microphones of twenty years ago were physically extremely large and featured comparatively low-output, long ribbons with resultant comparatively slow transient ability and a certain fragility. Still, they were widely used.

However, today's Beyer M160 ribbon microphone has two ribbons, each weighing 0.438 milligram and measuring 0.002 millimeter thick and less than 1/2 inch long. The result is extremely good transient ability, smooth and extended frequency response, high output (typically -56 dBm), unobtrusive size and light weight, uniformly tight polar pattern, and.

(Continued on page 14)



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For those who want additional refinements, there are two other PE models to choose from. The 3015 which has a rack-and-pinion counterbalance; anti-skating synchronized with tracking pressure; and a

dynamically balanced non-ferrous platter. Or the 3060 which features a gimbal-mounted tonearm; synchronous motor; two-scale anti-skating; and vertical tracking angle adjustment.

High Fidelity magazine reported the 3060's "performance and features . . . rival those found in other automatics costing the same or even higher." And Stereo Review placed the 3060 "in the top rank of automatic turntables."

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PETER GIDDINGS  
Revox Corporation  
Syosset, N.Y.

*Dr. Stark replies: As Mr. Giddings says, ribbon microphones were the backbone of the recording industry for many years, and even today some performers will use nothing else. And I have personally used the Beyer ribbons, with most gratifying results. While the reputation for fragility of ribbon microphones is of many years' standing, I had hoped the phrasing of my remarks ("in most cases") left room for exceptions, among which, on the basis of my knowledge at this time, I would certainly number the Beyer products.*

#### Where Good Jazz Comes From

● Many thanks to Chris Albertson for the nice review he gave to Clifford Brown's "The Beginning and the End" (February). I recorded these tapes in the Fifties, but no one was interested in them until well into the Sixties, when New York record man Fred Norsworthy started talking them up around the Sam Goody store. Don Schlitten bought the tapes, and now, in the Seventies, Columbia has released the disc.

A jazz-fan recordist can become almost paranoid waiting so long to have music this good finally accepted. Clifford, of course, was the one who made it great, but I am quite proud of the acclaim it has received. A good three-motor recorder at 15 ips, with a decent microphone, and a little care in watching the needle and placing the microphone made a difference, I suppose. Not everyone had such equipment in those days, and not everyone was fool enough to carry it around week after week as I did. It was worth it, though, and Clifford Brown made it really rewarding.

FRED MILES  
Philadelphia, Pa.

#### Electronic Girlie Magazine

● What is STEREO REVIEW becoming? An electronic girlie magazine with the many ads featuring women in slinky dresses and billowing bosoms (what "separation")? How about something for us ladies who are also good-music and good-sound-reproduction enthusiasts—"tat for tit," as it were?

MS. LESLIE ZEDDIES  
Oak Park, Ill.

*According to last count, our readers are over 95 per cent male.*

#### Michael Tippett

● Many thanks to Bernard Jacobson for his fine article on Sir Michael Tippett in your March issue. A few years ago, a fellow student at the University of Massachusetts suggested that I listen to a recording of Tippett's Second Symphony and discover a contemporary master. I did, and I did. On February 16 my interest in Tippett's music was both rewarded and strengthened by a first hearing of his Third Symphony. This awesome American premiere performance by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Heather Harper (soprano), under the direction of Colin Davis, may well be the beginning of a major awakening on this side of the Atlantic to the music of

this extraordinary composer. I hope so. Tippett deserves it—and so do we.

THOMAS F. PARKER  
Hartford, Conn.

*Colin Davis' recording of the Third Symphony with Miss Harper and the London Philharmonic Orchestra has just been released by Philips and will be reviewed next month.*

● The article on composer Michael Tippett (March) was welcome and altogether fine reading. However, the Music Editor's capsule accounting of Tippett is in error in saying the composer is in his seventieth year. He has jumped the gun by a year, for Tippett was born in 1905.

JAMES BROWNING  
New York, N.Y.

*Mr. Browning forgets that to be in one's seventieth year is not the same as being seventy years old. Mr. Tippett will be seventy on January 5, 1975, but he is now living through his seventieth year.*

#### Glitter Syndrome

● I'm awfully tired of reading letter after letter in this column from zealots defending the "sincere" side of rock music—mainly because they're always lumping Alice Cooper and David Bowie together in the same sentence with regard to the glitter/sensationalism syndrome. That's criminal, not to mention dense. Alice Cooper is wacky, perverse fun (yes, fun) and not much more. But Bowie is and always has been serious, from his recorded beginnings in 1968 to the present. Anyone even slightly familiar with his musical past will realize that this glitter scene he's in now is merely a medium, and one which has succeeded in attracting me, as well as thousands of other new fans, to the work of one of the most aware and engaging minds in the world today.

ROB MEURER  
Houston, Tex.

*Hmmm . . . see page 82.*

#### Non-Standard Operas

● I would like to congratulate George Jellinek on his "Essentials of an Opera Library" (December), which helped me a lot in deciding which opera recordings to buy. I would also like to ask Mr. Jellinek to write another article: "The Non-Puccini-Mozart-Wagner-Verdi Opera Library." There are many fine operas by other composers, but because of the preferences of many singers, especially sopranos, one keeps hearing the same thing over and over.

DEAYTON BRISBANE  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

#### Youth's Musical Follies

● In his review of "Music of the Thirties" (February), James Goodfriend mentions how Lawrence Tibbett used to sing "Ak-cen-Tchuwait thuh Pahz-uh-Tif, EE-lim . . ." and on and on into dreadfulness. I often cite his strange approach to "Gimmeland, lotsa land, understarryskies abuv (pause, breath), Don't FencaMe In" as evidence that this generation of kids has no claim to the origin of the bizarre. (I don't recall that Larry ever tackled "Fwee Iddy Fiddies Dat Fwam . . .," "Mairzy Doats," or that grand old folk aria "Doggie Inna Winda," but in several seasons on the Saturday Night Hit Parade, pre-Snoopy Lanson, he may very well have.)

All of which suggests that mankind needs another Society—a prime requirement of which would be that it never hold a meeting—to point out and savor the hilarious follies of our youth. Everybody's too damn sensitive and serious these days; we need to laugh more. Lord knows there's enough raw material!

E. D. HOAGLAN  
Omaha, Neb.

#### Rachmaninoff's Legacy

● Eric Salzman's review in the February issue, "The Complete Rachmaninoff," with the subtitle "Every note he ever recorded," is rather puzzling to me. I have in my record collection a recital compiled of recordings made by Rachmaninoff issued on a 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm disc, *Allegro-Royale* 1549. The recital includes mostly his own compositions, such as the *Élégie* and the *Melodie*, Op. 3, Nos. 1 and 3, and *Barcarolle* in G Minor, Op. 10, No. 3, which do not appear to be in the RCA collection.

LOUIS M. SCHWARTZ  
Parlin, N.J.

*The Allegro-Royale disc was made up of piano-roll material and was therefore not included in RCA's recorded legacy. Purists must decide for themselves whether piano rolls are "recording" or not.*

#### Autres Négligés

● I enjoyed Richard Freed's excellent article on neglected French music (February), and I was particularly happy that he did not limit his discussion to one aspect of French music, but included songs, opera, symphonic music, and chamber music.

I would like to add to Mr. Freed's list some of my own discoveries. André Caplet, a noted conductor and orchestrator for Debussy, was also a very gifted composer in his own right. He wrote a ballet, *The Masque of the Red Death*, after Poe, for string quartet and harp. This is now out of print, but some libraries do have it, and it is well worth hearing. There are also two Divertissements for Harp (Deutsche Grammophon 139419) and a Mass (a cappella, on MHS 1658).

D. E. Inghelbrecht is also in the conductor-composer category. His very fine Requiem can be heard on an import disc (Charlin AMS88) with Bernard Krusyn, baritone. Then there is Guillaume Lekeu, whose lovely unfinished piano quartet, a trio, and a few other pieces were at one time available on the Society for Forgotten Music, but all these seem to have been deleted, as has his Violin Sonata, which Menuhin recorded for RCA.

ROBERT E. LYONS  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

● Richard Freed has done a good job of publicizing some very deserving composers and their works in his article "One Hundred Years of Neglected French Music" (February). It is difficult to understand why most of our great American musicians have limited their repertoires so severely. Sometimes it is even hard to convince others that one can admire the music of Roussel for reasons that have nothing to do with trying to come up with something "fashionably obscure." Roussel's Third Symphony alone entitles him to be ranked with the great composers of the century.

ROBERT A. ELLIS  
Beloit, Wis.



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Whether listening to reference lacquers or checking metal "mothers" for quality, you'll find more Audio-Technica built cartridges in use than any other make.

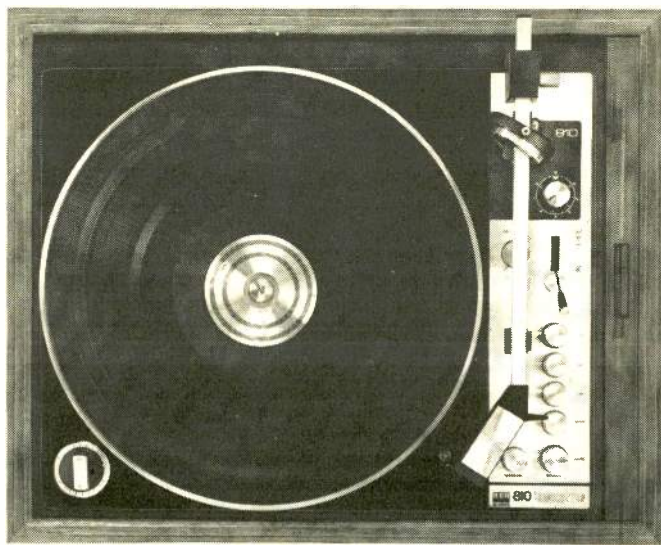


Illustrated: Model AT14S with Shibata stylus, \$75.00, mounted in AT-1009 Tone Arm, \$139.95.

AUDIO-TECHNICA U.S., INC., Dept. 54F, 1655 W. Market St., Fairlawn, Ohio 44313  
CIRCLE NO. 3 ON READER SERVICE CARD

The reason is simple: Our consistent performance is essential to their quality control standards. Whether your CD-4 cartridge is for home or studio...if you've built up a tolerance for nothing but the finest, come to us.

## BSR 810. For the record.



The BSR 810 starts as a record player, a machine to spin discs and generate music.

It's a pretty special machine, loaded with engineering advances, design innovations, and all kinds of fancy hardware that impresses even professional audio experts who don't impress easily. The 810 looks classy, runs smoothly, keeps quiet, and is probably more reliable than any other record changer you can buy.

The 810 is all of these things; it fills many complex needs for many kinds of people. But if you just want to play records, it's just fine. You shouldn't settle for anything less... and you just can't find anything more.



BSR (USA) LTD.,  
BLAUVELT, NEW YORK 10913

CIRCLE NO. 5 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# BOOKS RECEIVED

Compiled by  
LOUISE GOOCH BOUNDAS

● *Responses: Musical Essays and Reviews*, by David Cairns. Alfred A. Knopf, New York (1973). 266 pp., \$8.95.

Most of these essays and reviews by the British critic David Cairns, best known as the translator and editor of *The Memoirs of Hector Berlioz*, were first published in the *Spectator*, the *New Statesman*, the *Financial Times*, and the *Observer*. They deal with performers (Karajan, Jon Vickers, Elisabeth Schumann, and so forth), operas (*Les Troyens*, *Idomeneo*, *Fidelio*, and so forth), and miscellaneous other subjects (decorating Mozart's piano concertos, Wagner's *Ring* in English, *Volpone*, and so forth). Instructive and delightful to read.

● *100 Best Songs of the 20's and 30's*, with an introduction by Richard Rodgers. Harmony Books, New York (1973). 398 pp., \$15.

If fifteen dollars seems a high price for a songbook, in this case it is only fifteen cents apiece for one hundred certified hits from two extremely rich decades in the history of American popular songs. The songwriters represented include Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Harold Arlen, and many, many others. The book is spiral bound so that it will lie flat on your piano.

● *They're Playing Our Song*, by Max Wilk. Atheneum, New York (1973). 295 pp., \$10.

Irving Caesar: "You know all this stuff about how songs are written? Well, kid, if you're a born songwriter, you just *know* how to do it." Not exactly reassuring to anybody trying to *learn* to write songs, is it? The songs didn't really happen the way Hollywood would have it in all those old movies. But they did get written (thank the muses), we have them, and they're being sung more now than they have been for several years. Here are the circumstances that surrounded the composition of some of the American classics, how born songwriters from Kern to the Gershwins to Sondheim came to write them. Max Wilk's "collection of oral histories"—which he gathered from the writers themselves and from the people who knew them—makes good reading.

● *The Complete Entertainment Discography, from the Mid-1890s to 1942*, by Brian Rust. Arlington House, New Rochelle, N.Y. (1973). 677 pp., \$12.95.

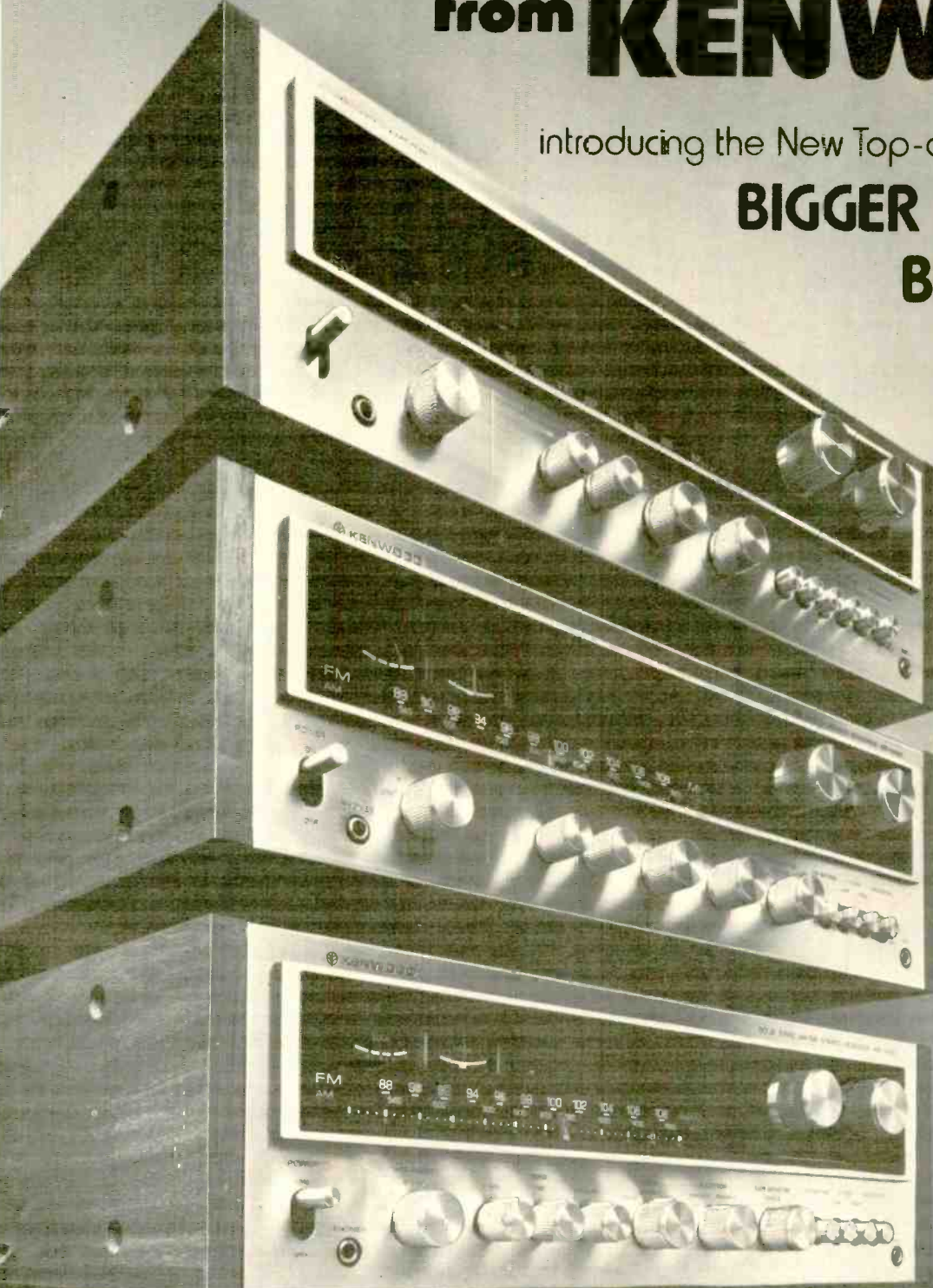
Almost five hundred entertainers, from Abbott and Costello to Maurice Yvain (look him up) are listed here along with short biographies and information about the recordings they made—titles, dates, labels, and disc numbers. The book does not include jazz and blues artists or commercial dance bands, but devotes itself instead to the stars and lesser luminaries of minstrel shows, vaudeville, film, radio, and the legitimate theater.



# **BIG NEWS** from **KENWOOD**

introducing the New Top-of-the-Line Receivers

**BIGGER Performance**  
**BIGGER Power**  
**BIGGER Size**



**KR-5400**  
STEREO RECEIVER  
35 RMS Watts per  
Channel (8 Ohms,  
20-20k Hz) ■ Direct  
Coupling ■ Dual Tape  
System ■ Phase-Lock-  
Loop MPX

**KR-6400**  
STEREO RECEIVER  
45 RMS Watts per  
Channel (8 Ohms,  
20-20k Hz) ■ Direct  
Coupling ■ Tape-Through  
Circuit ■ Phase-Lock-  
Loop MPX

**KR-7400**  
STEREO RECEIVER  
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Channel (8 Ohms,  
20-20k Hz) ■ Direct  
Coupling ■ Tape-Through  
Circuit ■ Phase-Lock-  
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For Bigger-Than-Ever Stereo Enjoyment, write for  
All the Big News on the new KENWOOD Receivers.



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CIRCLE NO. 17 ON READER SERVICE CARD





**A totally new  
transport drive system**

**has produced  
the first cassette deck with  
record and playback  
wow and flutter  
of less than 0.07%!**

**Measurably better than  
any other cassette deck  
in the world.**



# THE TEAC 450

## No other cassette deck can touch it.



TEAC can now announce a Dolbyized\* cassette deck with record and playback wow and flutter of *less than 0.07%*! This WRMS measurement assures you a steady, flutter-free sound previously unheard of in cassette decks.

The heart of this accomplishment is TEAC's new transport drive system—a system with all new parts and exceptional critical tolerances. It features a newly designed capstan with a critical tolerance of 0.15 microns—a perfect roundness that smoothens and steadies the tape flow. A new slip clutch has been critically machined to give perfect balance of tension between take-up reel and capstan. A hysteresis synchronous outer-rotor motor has the *outside* revolving for greater inertia. A 93-mm flywheel has twice the mass of any other TEAC flywheel, dramatically increasing stability of the transport drive element which pulls the tape.

Thus, the TEAC 450 gives you reel-to-reel quality with cassette deck convenience.

What else does it give you? The first dual-function Dolby\* system. Automatic timer circuit. Bias and equalization switches. Two mic inputs and two line inputs with slide control mixing. And more. The 450 is an example of TEAC technological leadership and incredible quality control.

A beautiful example.



# TEAC®

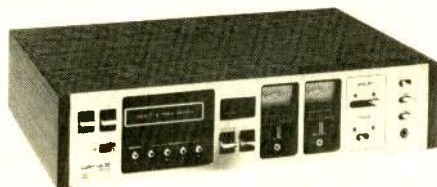
The leader. Always has been.

\*Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.  
TEAC Corporation of America Headquarters: 7733 Telegraph Road,  
Montebello, California 90640. TEAC offices in principal cities in the  
United States, Canada, Europe, Mexico and Japan. A-2A

# NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN  
HIGH-FIDELITY  
EQUIPMENT

## Wollensak Model 8075 Dolby Eight-Track Tape Deck



● A STEREO record-playback deck for eight-track cartridges said to rival the performance of the best cassette decks is being marketed by the Wollensak division of the 3M Company. The new machine, designated the Model 8075, has

built-in Dolby noise-reduction circuits (switchable to decode external Dolbyized programs such as FM broadcasts) and a tape-equalization selector with positions for standard cartridges and for Scotch "Special High Performance" cartridges that 3M is currently introducing. With standard tape, the deck's frequency response is 30 to 12,000 Hz  $\pm 3$  dB. The new high-performance tape extends response to 15,000 Hz with the same tolerances. At 4,000 Hz and above, the signal-to-noise ratio exceeds 60 dB with Dolby, 50 dB without. Wow and flutter are 0.1 per cent (weighted). A recording level of 0 VU results in less than 1 per cent distortion with a 1,000-Hz signal.

The control facilities of the Model 8075 include slider-type recording-level adjustments for each channel. There are fast-wind, eject, pause, and track-selector levers, plus switching to facilitate continuous play of a cartridge or automatic ejection after one cycle, and the aforementioned Dolby and equalization switching. A resettable digital counter indicates elapsed time in minutes and seconds. Microphone jacks are provided on the front panel. The fast-forward speed can cycle through a 40-minute eight-track cartridge in 3 minutes. Dimensions of the Model 8075 are  $19\frac{3}{4} \times 5 \times 10\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Price: \$299.95, which includes an integral wood cabinet.

*Circle 115 on reader service card*

## Yamaha CR-1000 AM/Stereo FM Receiver



● THE top unit in Yamaha's newly restyled receiver line is the Model CR-1000, rated at 70 watts per channel continuous power, both channels driven into 8 ohms across the full 20- to 20,000-Hz range. Harmonic and intermodulation distortion, specified for all audio circuits of the amplifier including the phono preamplifier, do not exceed 0.1 per cent at any level up to rated output. Signal-to-noise ratios are 80 and 90 dB for the phono and high-level inputs, respective-

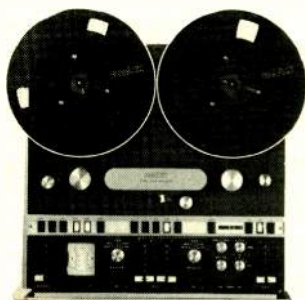
ly. IHF sensitivity for the FM section is 1.7 microvolts (55 dB of quieting is achieved at 5 microvolts), with a capture ratio of 1 dB, 80 dB alternate-channel selectivity, and stereo separation of 35 dB from 50 to 10,000 Hz. Image, i.f., and spurious-response rejection are all 110 dB.

The Yamaha CR-1000 has a number of unusual electrical and control features. Loudness compensation is continuously variable at the front panel, permitting user adjustment of the compensation to suit the actual listening levels. The threshold of the FM interstation-noise muting circuit is also continuously variable. Grasping the tuning knob automatically deactivates the FM automatic-frequency-control circuit to permit greater tuning accuracy; releasing the knob switches the circuit back in. One of the two magnetic-phono inputs has switchable input impedance (30,000, 50,000, or 100,000 ohms); the preampli-

fier employs FET's at the input, and it is specified as conforming to the RIAA equalization characteristic within  $\pm 0.2$  dB. The bass and treble controls, like the balance and loudness controls, are slider-type adjustments, with a choice of two switch-selectable inflection points for each as well as a DEFEAT position. The high- and low-cut filters have 12-dB-per-octave slopes and a choice of two cut-off frequencies. There is a front-panel microphone input that feeds a separate high-gain amplifier with its own volume control, permitting input mixing. The receiver has the necessary jacks and tape-monitor switching for two three-head stereo tape decks, with dubbing possible from either deck to the other. Two pairs of speakers are accommodated. Dimensions of the Yamaha CR-1000 are  $20 \times 6\frac{3}{4} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Price: \$799.95. The price includes the wood cabinet shown.

*Circle 116 on reader service card*

## Revox A700 Stereo Tape Deck



● THE highly sophisticated Model A700 has joined the various versions of the A77 in Revox's line of semiprofessional consumer tape decks. While sharing a number of design features with the A77 series, the new machine has a number of mechanical and electrical innova-

tions. Except for the switching of power to the reel motors, mechanical relays have been dispensed with in favor of digital electronics. This permits the inclusion of some new automatic transport features such as continuous play/record (at the end of the reel the tape is re-wound and repeated automatically) and "instant repeat" (depressing a pushbutton puts the transport into high-speed rewind; releasing the button returns the machine to normal forward operation at the selected tape speed). There is also a pause control. Electromechanical sensors for tape motion and tension continuously regulate the power to the reel motors and monitor switching commands to the transport to prevent tape damage. The capstan motor is similar to the direct-drive design used in the A77, but it

uses a more sophisticated digital servo design. Speed is referenced to a quartz crystal which provides three electronically regulated tape speeds—15,  $7\frac{1}{2}$ , and  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips.

The electronic section of the A700 has mixing and sound-on-sound facilities (via slider-type level controls) for four input channels. A master recording-level slider acts on all four inputs after initial balancing with the individual controls. The four microphone inputs are of the balanced configuration, with switching for high- or low-output, low-impedance microphones. In addition, most of the functions of a stereo preamplifier are provided, with volume controls for each of the two output channels, mode and input selectors (positions for magnetic

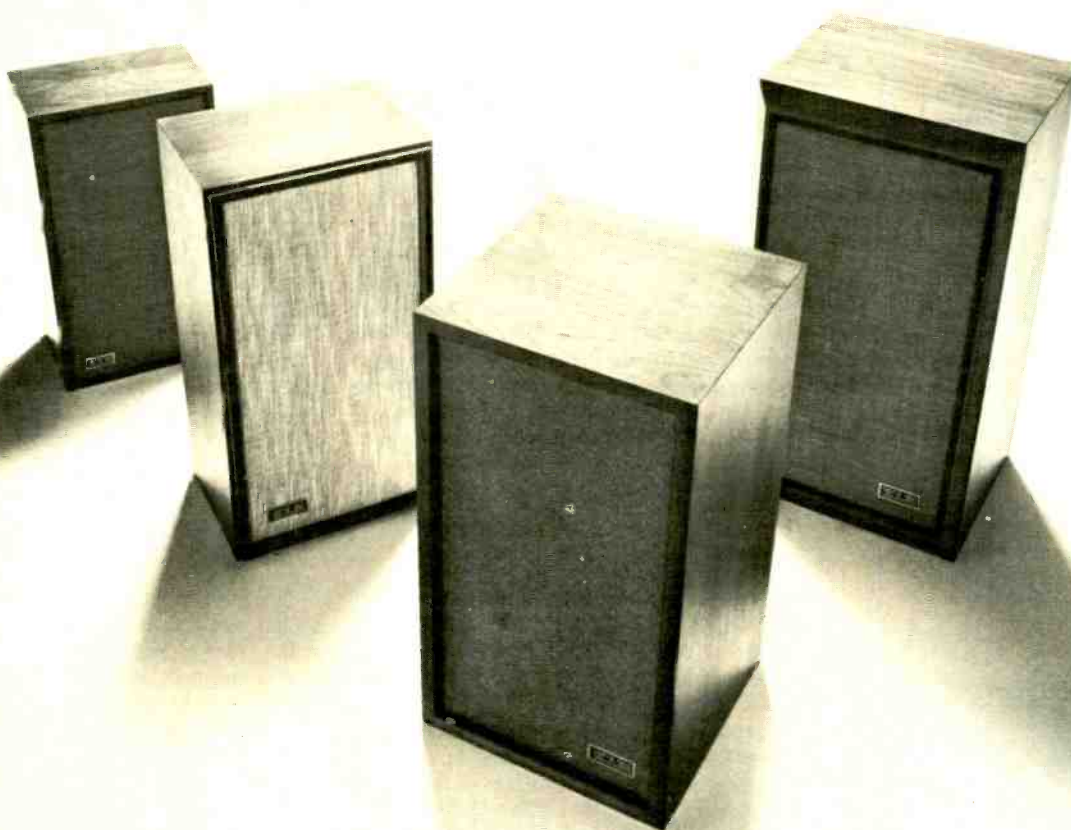
*(Continued on page 22)*



The classics from KLH. Four bookshelf loudspeakers of such extraordinary quality that each has set the standard of excellence in its price range. Pictured to the far left, our popular little Thirty-Two (\$55.00<sup>†</sup>). Next, one of the best selling loudspeakers in the country, the Seventeen (\$79.95<sup>†</sup>). Up front, everybody's favorite, the Six (\$139.95<sup>†</sup>). And finally, our most spectacular bookshelf model, the Five (\$199.95<sup>†</sup>). If you really want to know what KLH is all about, we suggest you listen to any one or all of these fine

loudspeakers. And when you do, also look for our other bestsellers—the KLH stereo receivers. The Model Fifty-Five (\$219.95<sup>†</sup>); the Model Fifty-Two (\$319.95<sup>†</sup>); and our newest receiver, the stereophonic/quadrasonic Model Fifty-Four (\$525.00<sup>†</sup>). KLH—the best thing to happen to bookshelves since books.

For more information, visit your KLH dealer or write to KLH Research and Development Corp., 30 Cross Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.



## What's a bookshelf without the classics?



KLH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.  
30 Cross St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139

<sup>†</sup>Suggested retail prices—slightly higher in the South and West.

# NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN  
HIGH-FIDELITY  
EQUIPMENT

phono, tuner, and auxiliary sources included), bass and treble controls, and tape-monitor switching. The resettable index counter is calibrated in elapsed time (minutes and seconds) for the 7½-ips tape speed. The two stereo headphone jacks are usable with high- and low-impedance phones.

Specifications of the A700, with 3M Type 207 tape or the equivalent, include frequency responses of 30 to 22,000 Hz (15 ips), 30 to 20,000 Hz (7½ ips), and 30 to 16,000 Hz (3¾ ips), all +2, -3 dB. Signal-to-noise ratios for the three speeds exceed 65, 66, and 63 dB, respec-

tively, and wow and flutter are under 0.06, 0.08, and 0.1 per cent. For a 0-VU recording level at 1,000 Hz, playback distortion is under 0.6 per cent for the 15- and 7½-ips speeds, and under 1 per cent for 3¾ ips. Distortion is under 2 per cent at +6 VU for the two higher speeds. The recording-level meters conform to VU specifications; they are augmented by peak-indicator lights that are triggered by levels of +6 VU or more.

The A700 is now available in a half-track stereo version; a quarter-track model will be offered in the near future. The transport is a three-head design

(erase, record, playback), with room for an optional fourth head for slide synchronization or other functions. Reel diameters as large as 10½ inches and as small as 1½ inches are accommodated; these two reel sizes can be used together since tape tension is regulated automatically by the sensor mechanisms. With 10½-inch reels in place, the A700 measures approximately 21¼ x 20½ x 8⅞ inches overall. Price: \$1,695. A number of remote-control facilities, including continuously variable speed adjustment, will be available shortly.

*Circle 117 on reader service card*

## Schober TR-3D Stereo Amplifier Kit



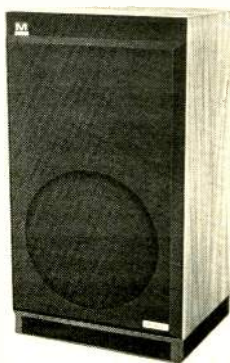
● KNOWN primarily for its electronic musical instruments and accessories, the Schober Organ Corp. also manufactures several products of audiophile interest, the latest of which is the Model TR-3D amplifier kit. The TR-3D is reported to be the only available audio amplifier in-

corporating push-pull circuit configurations throughout—not just in the output stage. To 8-ohm loads the amplifier delivers 70 watts per channel continuous, both channels driven, with harmonic distortion (including hum and noise) of 0.1 per cent or less at any audible frequency. Intermodulation distortion, which varies slightly with the setting of front-panel sensitivity controls, is between 0.19 and 0.07 per cent at full rated output, and between 0.08 and 0.05 per cent at lower power levels. The signal-to-noise ratio is 85 dB. An input of anywhere from 0.15 to 1 volt, depending on the sensitivity-control setting, drives the amplifier to full power with 8-ohm loads. Front-panel volume controls for each channel are

also provided; input impedance varies from 33,000 to 100,000 ohms depending on the controls' settings. Protective devices, including a circuit breaker resettable at the front panel, interrupt the amplifier's operation under conditions of excessive current or heating. The TR-3D is unconditionally stable with any load or combination of loads; the damping factor is rated 28 at 1,000 Hz, infinite at 20 Hz. The unit is 8 inches high, 5½ inches wide, and 11⅞ inches deep. Price of the kit: \$169.50. A single-channel version, the Model TR-3M, is also offered at \$123.50. This can be converted at any time to two-channel operation with the TCK-3 conversion kit (\$51.50).

*Circle 118 on reader service card*

## Ultralinear Model 1000 Speaker System



● SOLAR AUDIO PRODUCTS has introduced the Ultralinear line of speaker systems, headed by the Model 1000, a two-way design employing a pair of 3½-inch cone tweeters for high-frequency reproduction. The tweeters, which take over from the 10-inch woofer at a crossover frequency of 2,600 Hz, incorporate structural differences intended to make their frequency-response and dispersion characteristics mutually complementary. A special feature of the woofer, called an "Inertial Equalizer" disc by Solar, is a flat Neoprene structure that covers 40 per cent of the cone's radiating area. This is said to control the acoustic behavior of the cone.

The cabinet of the Ultralinear 1000 is sealed, with a removable sculpted foam grille. Accessible behind the grille are a continuously variable high-frequency level control and the reset button for a circuit breaker that protects the drivers from amplifier overloads. The frequency response of the system is 35 to 22,000 Hz, with a power-handling capability of 60 watts continuous; at least 25 watts continuous is the minimum recommended amplifier-power requirement. The system's nominal impedance is 8 ohms. The cabinet, measuring 27 x 14½ x 12 inches including integral base, has a walnut-grain finish. Price: \$149.95.

*Circle 119 on reader service card*

## Nortronics Tape Brochures

● THREE new tape-recorder-maintenance publications are being offered by the Recorder Care Division of the Nortronics Company. The first is the Nortronics *Recorder Care Manual*, fifth edition, a thirty-two-page illustrated handbook that covers such topics as the principles of magnetic recording, tape

heads, splicing, and recorder maintenance. There is also a tape bibliography for further reference. The second publication, *Recorder Care Test Tapes*, is an eight-page brochure explaining the purpose and use of test tapes and describing the Nortronics test and alignment tapes available for open-reel, cassette, and eight-track equipment. Finally, *Recorder Care Kits* describes the current

line of Nortronics products for cleaning and maintenance of all types of tape equipment, including video tape recorders. All three publications are available free of charge from Nortronics dealers, a list of which can be obtained by writing: Nortronics Company, Inc., Recorder Care Div., Dept. SR, 8101 Tenth Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minn. 55427.



# The new Micro-Acoustics QDC-1 Stereo Phono Cartridge:

## It will make any well recorded LP sound exactly like its master tape.



Recently at a trade show in Chicago, we invited audiophiles to compare a master tape with a stereo disc cut from the tape. The tape and the disc were played through the same electronics and the same loudspeakers. The only difference was that a tape deck was used to play the 15 IPS master and a turntable with our QDC-1 Stereo Cartridge was used to play the commercial pressing. Without fail, listeners *could not* hear a difference between the disc and the master.

Actually it's not as incredible as it sounds.

People in the record business have known for a long time that a well recorded stereo disc is potentially every bit as good as its master tape. We make the Series 300 Micro-Point Recording Stylus — an ultra precision cutting tool used in record mastering. (Over two-hundred million records a year are manufactured from masters cut with our Micro-Point Styli.) And it has been our experience that there's no problem in getting the music onto the record; the problem is in retrieving it.

### **The cartridge is the culprit**

Until the advent of the QDC-1, there really wasn't a cartridge on the market that could make a stereo record sound as good as its master tape. So cartridge manufacturers didn't have to deal with an absolute standard of measurement for their product. They sold their cartridges very much like loudspeakers, using subjective criteria. In the end, the customer had to choose between the "sound"

of one cartridge or another. The fact is that a cartridge shouldn't have any *sound* of its own. Ideally it should just be a direct link between the record groove and the preamp input. And that's precisely what the new QDC-1 is — an ultra precision component that will radically change the way all cartridges are judged. Now a cartridge's performance can be measured against a completely reliable *objective* standard.

Stated simply: Does a cartridge make a well recorded disc sound identical to its master tape? Or doesn't it?

Ours does.

### **Hearing is believing**

The new Micro-Acoustics QDC-1 (Pat. Pend.) is available in spherical, elliptical and Quadra-Point™/CD-4 configurations. Prices range from \$100 to \$120. Frankly, we're not selling to every dealer and not every dealer we sell is doing our master tape/disc demonstration. But if it's been a long time since you were really excited by something new in stereo, we urge you to look for local ads announcing demonstrations in your area. In the meantime, why not take a stereo LP of your own to your Micro-Acoustics dealer and let him show you what our cartridge can do for *your* records. We think you'll be startled by the difference.

For technical information and a dealer list, write to Micro-Acoustics Corp., 8 Westchester Plaza, Elmsford, New York, 10523.



**MICRO-ACOUSTICS CORPORATION,  
ELMSFORD, NEW YORK 10523**

# AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



ly excludes chatting and simple friendly conversation. All communication should be short, direct, and to the point. Telling someone to bring home a loaf of bread is permissible; a discussion of the best bakeries in the neighborhood is not. In addition, in a recent booklet the FCC states that CB should *not* be used when other forms of communication, such as the telephone, are available. In short, the FCC's position is that anyone interested in using the radio waves for hobby purposes should get an amateur radio license and stay off the CB band. All of these rules and regulations are spelled out in a booklet (SS Bulletin 1001a, February 1972) issued by the Federal Communications Commission with each Citizens Band license. It could well be that your neighbor is not aware of these restrictions, or that he knowingly ignores them. In any case, a call to your local FCC office might help the situation.

## All-in-One Stereos

**Q.** *Would you please send me any information you might have on companies that make compact three-in-one stereos containing the following: AM/FM radio, phonograph, and cassette player.*

DAVID MARCUS  
West Covina, Cal.

**A.** We have no such listing available, mostly because the companies that make such products do not generally fall within our area of concern: that is, high-fidelity equipment. Unless you have some special reason for wanting an all-in-one, I feel that such a system is not a good idea for two main reasons, one having to do with servicing, the other with upgrading. Suppose, for example, that the phono cartridge or something else in the record-player mechanism becomes defective. Unless you feel technically competent to extract the record player from the rest of the ensemble, you'll have to return the entire unit to the shop for repair, thus losing the services of your cassette player and radio. In addition, if one day you want to upgrade to a more sensitive FM tuner, a record player with less rumble, a cassette player with better frequency response, or some other improvement in performance, you'll have to trade in the entire assembly rather than simply replace the components piece by piece as you could with a conventional stereo system. And if you think about it, I'm sure that you'll find that you've gained little or nothing (in shelf-space or anything else) by going to an all-in-one unit rather than separates.

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

## Dolbyized Highs

**Q.** *I don't understand why you keep plugging the Dolby system in your column. The prerecorded cassettes I have been buying lately, which are marked (sometimes in very small print) as being mastered to the Dolby B standard, have highs only when the Dolby circuit is switched off. As soon as I switch in my deck's Dolby circuit the highs disappear. I think I would rather have the highs and the hiss than neither.*

S. STEVENS  
New Brunswick, N.J.

**A.** I have had the same experience, but I interpret it differently. Most of the cassette duplicators in the United States, for one reason or another (mostly lack of care and/or inadequate equipment), don't record the higher frequencies on their prerecorded cassette products. Since the Dolby encoding process boosts the low-level high frequencies, when you play Dolbyized tapes without decoding them they sound somewhat brighter than non-Dolbyized tapes. However, when you flip the Dolby decoding switch, the extra boost is removed—as it should be—and you are left with a tape that is reasonably hiss-free but lacks the highs that were lost in the duplication process. It is obvious then that the problem lies *not* with the Dolby encoding or decoding per se, but rather with the duplicators who, by and large, are doing such a rotten job.

## CB Audio Interference

**Q.** *My husband and I have run into a problem with interference from a Citizens Band radio on our stereo system, which so far has stumped our audio dealer. A Citizens Band operator lives next door to us, and we receive all his outgoing transmissions through our right speaker, regardless of our preamplifier's function-selector setting. We have tried shielded cable, grounding of the amplifier, and a few other suggested techniques, but nothing seems to help. The CB radio operator informs us that*

*he is licensed and is operating under the power limit approved by the FCC, and so is under no obligation to stop transmitting even though our privacy and enjoyment are infringed upon. Needless to say we are extremely distressed that we are not able to enjoy our stereo system, for which we spent a sizable amount of money. Can you help?*

MICHELE NOONAN  
Denver, Colo.

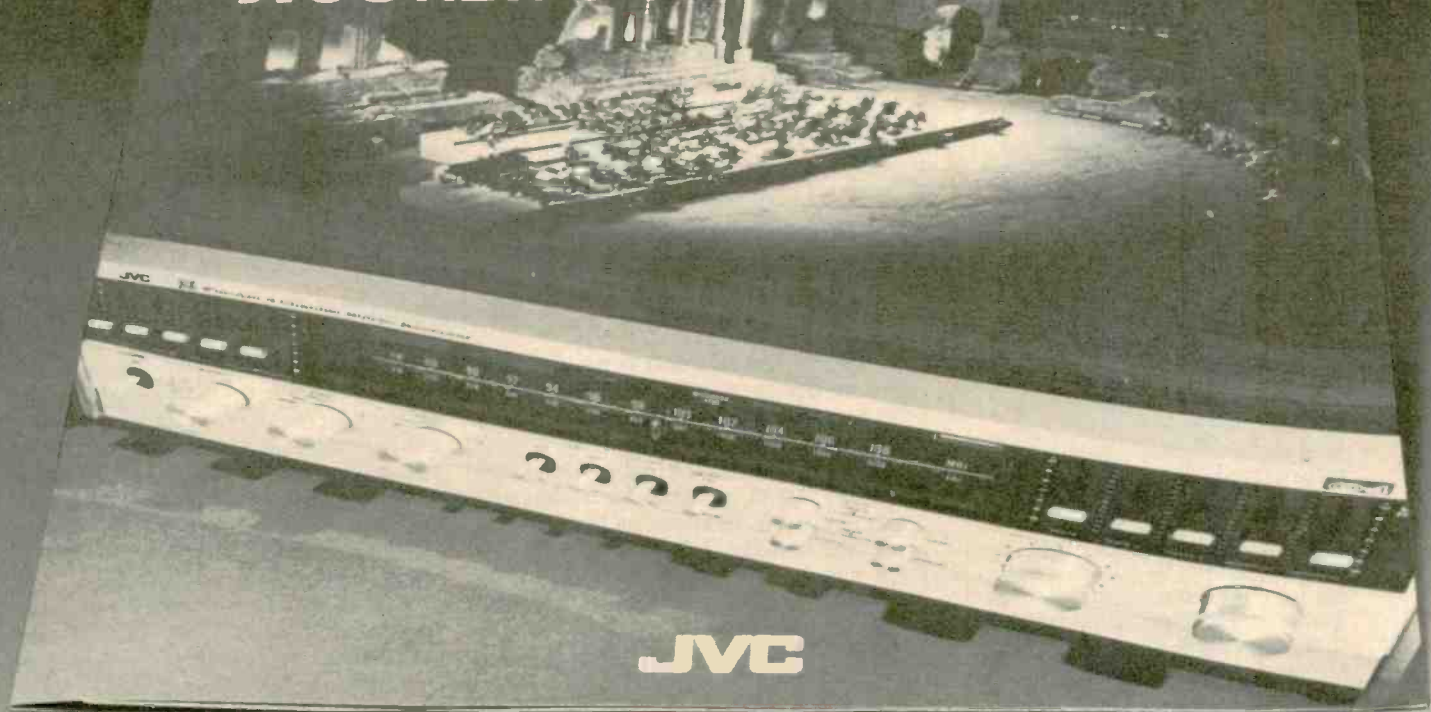
**A.** It will probably be of little comfort to assure you that you are not alone with your particular problem, since, unfortunately, there is no general solution for it. First of all, I would suggest that you write a letter to the service department of the manufacturer of your preamplifier. They may be able to suggest to the local warranty station a modification that will lower your equipment's sensitivity to radio-frequency signals. Often, the installation of ferrite beads, which some equipment manufacturers will supply, will help enormously—assuming that the electrically (and physically) correct spot to install them is specified. The FCC also has a bulletin available on radio-frequency (r. f.) interference (check your telephone directory for your local FCC office).

In the November 1972 issue we published an article telling (as much as it is possible to) how to eliminate r. f. interference in your audio system; it is an exhaustive treatment of the subject, and we will be happy to send reprints to anyone who sends 25¢ and a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to: STEREO REVIEW, Dept. RF1, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.

There are other aspects of the question that you might investigate. The fact that your CB neighbor may be observing the power requirements of his CB license does not mean that he is also following the rest of the rules. For example, the Citizens Band was established by the FCC not for hobby use, but rather for "necessary communication." "Necessary," as defined by the FCC, specifical-



**CD-4**  
**The Originators of CD-4 present....**  
**JVC'S NEW 4-CHANNEL RECEIVERS**

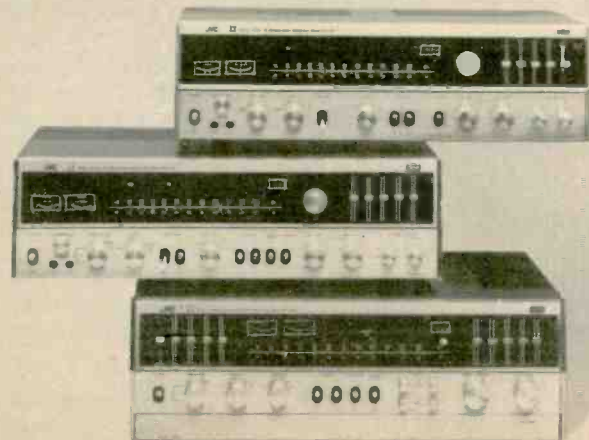


# *be discrete*

Going quad — you'll want to know everything there is to know about 4-channel and our discrete 4-channel system, CD-4. For the ultimate in quad, JVC introduces 3 receivers designed for all of today's 4-channel sources . . . plus advanced engineering features for future 4-channel innovations, like discrete 4-channel broadcasting.

The new JVC receivers — 4VR-5436, 46 and 56 feature a built-in discrete CD-4 demodulator plus matrix decoder circuits with an automatic switching computer (4VR-5446 & 56) so you can play a mixed stack of CD-4 and matrix discs without making any adjustments. Each CD-4 receiver is equipped with JVC's patented Sound Effect Amplifiers that break the sonic spectrum into 5 bands so you exercise tonal control and complete freedom over sound in all crucial frequency ranges to compensate for room acoustics and individual tastes. Then there's JVC's Balanced Transformer Less Circuitry that links up the amps so that all four are used when playing 2-channel stereo for double the rms output power.

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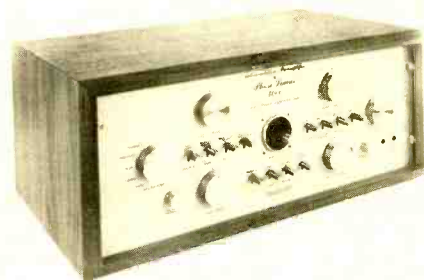
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## AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES



### GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS—9

● **D.C.** (direct current) is an electrical current that runs in one direction only—for example, the current derived from a dry cell or storage battery. The opposite of d.c., alternating current (a.c.), cannot be used "as is" in audio circuits because a.c. already is, in effect, an "audio" signal: the familiar and aggravating 60-cycle hum. The power-supply section in amplifiers, tuners, and receivers converts the alternating current from the wall socket into the usable d.c. form.

● **Decoder**, a term that can designate a number of audio circuits to an engineer, is primarily known to today's consumer as the name for a device—either a circuit built into an amplifier or receiver or a separate component—that converts *encoded* two-channel source material into four-channel programs. Decoders exist for the CBS SQ and Sansui QS matrix systems, as well as for synthesizing a four-channel effect from two-channel program sources that were never intended for such processing: most decoders are capable of performing all three functions to a certain extent. As separate components, the majority of decoders are *active* devices (that is, they must be plugged into an electrical outlet) that are placed in the audio signal path somewhere before the four power amplifiers required to drive the four speakers. However, there is also a simple *passive* decoder—the so-called Dynaquad device—that is designed to be inserted between amplifier and speakers. It needs only a two-channel amplifier for its four-from-two synthesization, since the division of the two channels into four occurs right at the speaker terminals. The *demodulator* (see below) for the CD-4 system is also a decoder.

● **Demodulator**, besides referring to a type of electronic circuit common in radio use, is also the name for the "decoder" used in the CD-4 four-channel disc system. A CD-4 demodulator actually performs more functions than the name

suggests. Besides converting the frequency-modulated 30,000-Hz carriers on the disc to audio-frequency signals, the demodulator also processes the extracted signals with a noise-reduction system, and finally combines them with the so-called "base-band" (or normal stereo) information from the disc to produce the front and rear channels.

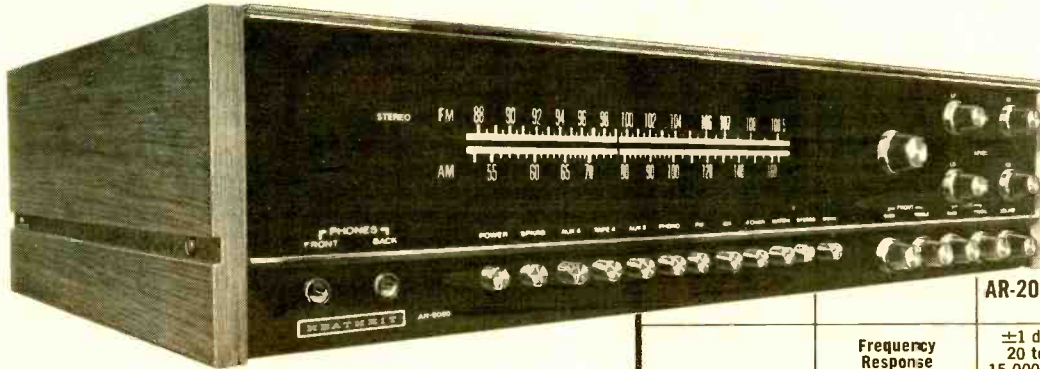
In its basic operation a CD-4 demodulator is highly reminiscent of an FM multiplex (*i.e.*, stereo) tuner. Virtually all consumer demodulators have controls that must be adjusted (with the test record supplied) to provide adequate carrier-signal strength from the phono cartridge, and to ensure proper level relationships when the carrier information is combined with the base band. A front-panel light indicates the presence of a CD-4 carrier.

● **Difference signal** is the term for what is obtained when two (or more) stereo channels are electronically subtracted from each other by inverting the phase of one. Algebraically, this is usually expressed as L-R (left channel minus right channel); L+R is the *sum* signal. Until recently, the best-known application for difference signals in audio has been the mono-compatible "multiplex" system of stereo FM broadcasting.

When four-channel stereo was introduced, a method of synthesizing a four-channel *effect* from two-channel material was suggested (by David Hafler in this country) employing difference-signal techniques. The theory was that subtracting the left and right channels (eliminating their common information) produced a third channel with a significant (if accidental) content of reverberant sound or of other information useful in simulating four channels. This difference-signal channel is usually derived and routed to rear speakers through a simple speaker matrix (the Hafler "Dynaquad" system) or a more complicated electronic adapter often built into four-channel receivers.



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	Capture Ratio	2 dB			
	Channel Separation	40 dB typical			
<b>AM TUNER (Mono)</b>	Sensitivity	100 μV per meter			
	Selectivity	40 dB (altern. chan.)			
<b>AMPLIFIER SECTION</b>	Total Music Power (IHF) all channels driven	100 watts (8 ohms); 120 watts (4 ohms)			
	Music Power (IHF) output per channel with all channels driven	25W (8 ohms) 30W (4 ohms)			
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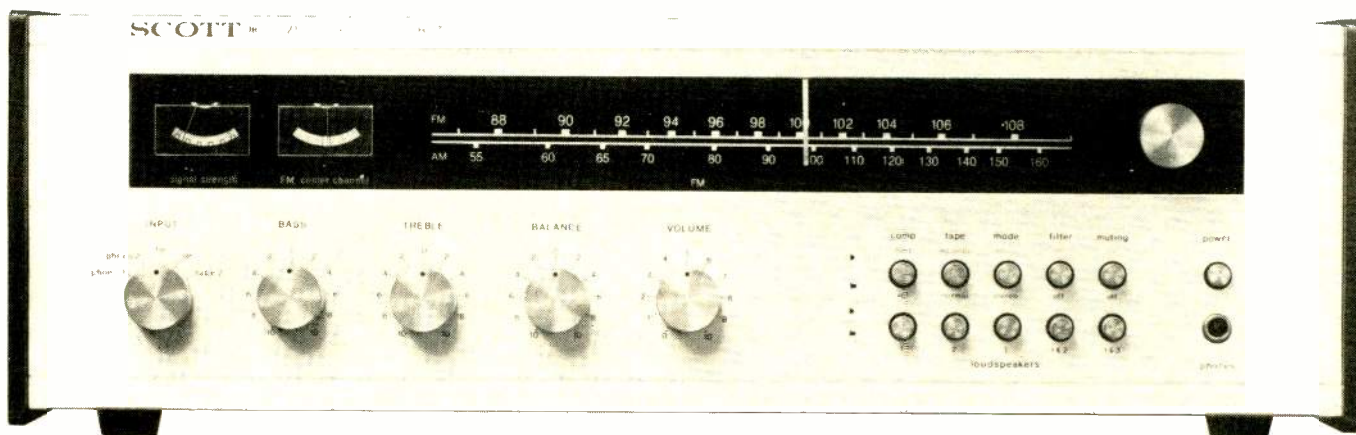
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HF-284

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# TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **THE CONSUMERS UNION LOUDSPEAKER RATINGS:** I read with interest the report on "expensive loudspeakers" (a number of those costing from \$200 to \$315 were tested) in the February 1974 issue of *Consumer Reports*. Although I have no argument with most of Consumers Union's test procedures, or even—for the most part—with their specific findings, the report clearly reveals some of the basic differences in philosophy between an audiophile-oriented service such as Hirsch-Houck Labs and a broad consumer-oriented organization such as Consumers Union.

Let us first consider the similarities between CU's approach and ours, for these outweigh the differences. Like us, they have concluded that a loudspeaker's total radiated power response is closely related to its sound in a typical listening room. (Power response can be defined as the sum total of the energy radiated by a speaker, in all directions, throughout the audible frequency range.) They measure a speaker's total power output in an anechoic room, using a large number of microphone pickup points at different angles to the speaker, and have a computer programmed to print out the integrated power response. We do much the same thing, in a "live" room, using much less elaborate (no computer!) equipment. Although I have not seen the actual response data obtained by CU in any of their tests, I am confident that our measurements of the same speaker would come quite close to theirs.

CU also used a simulated live-vs.-recorded comparison to judge a speaker's ability to duplicate the sound of another musical source. Except for simply *listening* to a speaker (which is unfortunately too subjective a procedure for anyone who does not have absolute knowledge of what the original program should sound like in *his* room), this is probably the only type of test that has a meaningful correlation with the overall quality (or "accuracy") of a loudspeaker.

Curves and other measurements, though significant to a speaker-system designer, have no real value to the lay reader—or even to the most enthusiastic audiophile—without sheaves of explanatory material.

Formerly, CU's test format was essentially identical to ours, but they have recently changed it slightly to "simplify" the procedure. As I have pointed out on occasion, the placement of the microphone in the anechoic chamber when it picks up the sound of the reference speaker (to produce the live-vs.-recorded comparison tape) must be determined empirically to provide a close

a speaker, its transient response and directional properties remain what they were, for better or for worse. The differences in directionality alone will usually cause the speaker under test to sound somewhat different from the reference speaker—unless these differences happen to be slight—even if their measured frequency responses are identical. CU claims that this procedure is merely a simplification, which it may well be, but I don't see it as an *improvement* over their former technique.

Now, however, we come to a fundamental and probably irreconcilable difference between the CU and H-H Labs test methods. Having made their tests, CU feels compelled to reduce the information thus obtained to a *single number* that tells the reader how "accurate" the speaker is. I understand their desire for such a magic "figure of merit"—how I wish I could come up with one! Aside from its obvious advantages for reader interpretation, it would eliminate questions of human taste, skill, and general fallibility from the evaluation process.

To arrive at these accuracy percentages, CU again puts its computer to work, converting the power-response data from *decibels* to *sones* (a measure of subjective loudness). The variation in sones across the frequency range from 110 to 14,000 Hz is then translated into an accuracy rating—100 per cent for a "perfect" speaker, 90 per cent for a very good one, and so forth. At a time when many workers in the field are investigating such matters as time delay and phase distortion and are claiming to have established a good correlation between these factors and the "accuracy" of a speaker, it is distressing to find CU reducing the entire matter to a computer manipulation of a power-response measurement. If only it were that simple!

However, even if the evaluation is to be restricted to frequency/power response, I question CU's assertion that their omission of the frequency range

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## TESTED THIS MONTH

●  
**Dual 701 Record Player**  
**Realistic STA-150 Receiver**  
**Scintrex Model 98 Headphones**  
**Pioneer QX-949 Receiver**

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match to the way the speaker will later sound in a listening room. This is a weakness, or at least a potential one, of the technique. CU now equalizes a high-quality loudspeaker system to produce a flat response (within 1 dB) as measured in the listening area, and dispenses with the anechoic chamber recording. The test is thus reduced to an A-B comparison between a reference loudspeaker equalized to be "ideal" (the quotes are mine) and the unit being evaluated.

To me, the flaw in their reasoning lies in the assumption that equalizing a loudspeaker to produce a flat response in a certain portion of a room somehow makes it "ideal." My own experience is quite different. No matter how carefully one equalizes the frequency response of

below 110 Hz from the accuracy computation (because room characteristics and speaker placement can have a profound and unpredictable effect at these frequencies) "poses no serious problems since that [110 to 14,000 Hz] is the range of prime importance for reproducing music accurately." I suspect that CU stresses this range because they can make measurements there with some assurance that the data will apply in other acoustic environments. The fact that none of us can make low-bass measurements in a certain way, or in a given room, and then predict the performance in a different (and unknown) listening environment is a serious problem to H-H Labs, to CU, and to everyone else who tries to rate loudspeakers.

For other reasons, our own live-vs.-recorded test cuts off at 200 Hz, and some speakers that appear to have outstanding accuracy in this test prove to be "duds" when later evaluated with full-range program material. Thin bass, distorted bass, muddy or tubby bass, peaked or boomy bass—any of these could be a property of a speaker system whose mid-range and high-frequency

reproduction is nonetheless highly accurate. Overall, could such a speaker be called "accurate"? Not by my standards.

I may be criticizing CU's tests unjustly, since my knowledge of them is limited to what has been published in *Consumer Reports*. I agree that among those speakers covered in their latest report (of those I have tested or heard), most are likely to satisfy the average reader of *Consumer Reports*, possibly even the average reader of *STEREO REVIEW*. However, I do not understand how such a diverse group of speakers can fall within the accuracy-rating range of 82 to 90 per cent (within which CU says that accuracy differences are not likely to be detected by ear). Among them are speakers which sound so dramatically different from each other that I cannot conceive of *anyone* judging them to be equally accurate. In other words, one or more of them has to be "wrong."

I have a few additional disagreements with CU's approach which space does not permit me to discuss here, but let me sum up my general view: I am in favor of any and all test procedures that can shed some light on the problem of rating loud-

speaker performance. I have no vested emotional or other interest that favors any particular test technique, although I do have a critical "show me" attitude toward some of the more esoteric evaluative procedures currently in use. I think, however, that it is downright silly to assign numbers for accuracy ratings, especially as guides for a buying public that is unable to appreciate the flaws in the system. I speak with some experience here, having tried for some time to assign "A, B, C" accuracy ratings in speaker testing. But I have abandoned even these relatively crude distinctions, since they are largely arbitrary and subject to misinterpretation. Even so, the decisions were mine, and not those of a computer! Without being conceited, I would venture to say that my personal judgment of a speaker's accuracy (backed up by such measurements as I am able to perform) is more meaningful to *STEREO REVIEW* readers than one made by a computer—especially a computer whose decisions are apparently largely based on only *one* of the many factors involved in a loudspeaker system's performance.

## EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

### Dual 701 Record Player



● THE Dual Model 701 semi-automatic single-play turntable is similar to Dual's Model 1229 automatic turntable in styling and overall appearance. The 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch tubular tone arm, like that of the Model 1229, has low-friction gimbal bearings and a slide-in plastic cartridge holder. The counterweight of the Model 701 is unique, however, consisting of two concentric mass elements that are elastically isolated from each other as well as from the arm. They serve as mechanical filters to help damp resonances that may affect tone-arm performance. The counterweight is adjusted to zero-balance the arm after the cartridge is installed.

The tracking-force dial is calibrated from 0 to 1.5 grams at intervals of 0.1 gram, and from 1.5 to 3 grams at intervals of 0.25 gram. The anti-skating adjustment dial, located on the motor-board, is calibrated over the same range, with separate scales for conical and elliptical styli (the latter require slightly more anti-skating compensation for the same tracking force).

To the left of the 12-inch platter is a window for viewing the stroboscope markings, which are on the underside of the platter and are internally illuminated by a neon lamp. Each of the two control levers (one for start/stop, the other for 33- or 45-rpm speed selection) has a

small concentric knob on top for individual vernier adjustment of each of the two speeds. The cueing lift lever, to the right of the arm, raises and lowers the pickup with damped motion in both directions.

Despite external similarities, the Dual 701 is radically different from the 1229. For one thing, it is a single-play, automatic/manual unit. Operating the START lever turns on the motor, indexes the arm over the lead-in groove, and lowers it gently to the record. At the end of play, the arm returns to the rest and the motor shuts off. The indexing is automatically set for 12-inch records when the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm speed is selected, and for 7-inch records with the 45-rpm speed. Alternatively, manual operation for any disc diameter is possible: simply lift the arm from its rest, thus starting the motor.

The real differences between the Model 701 and other Dual record players become apparent when the 6-pound, 10-ounce outer platter is lifted off. Instead of the usual drive shaft and idler wheel or belt system, there is only a smaller "inner turntable" visible. This is actually part of the rotor assembly of the 701's d.c. motor; it requires no speed-

(Continued on page 32)



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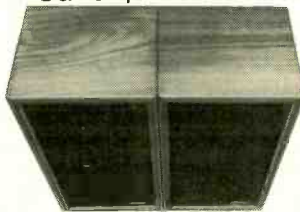
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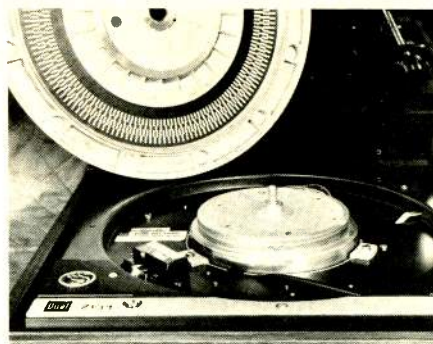
reduction arrangement, but rotates directly at the turntable operating speed. The motor is controlled by a transistorized servo amplifier through Hall-effect devices (these are semiconductors whose resistance varies with the magnetic field impinging on them). Since the low-speed motor is essentially vibration-free, it can be mounted directly on the chassis. The Dual Model 701 is supplied on a walnut base and comes complete with plastic dust cover. Price: \$399.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The wow of the Dual Model 701 was essentially at the residual level of our test record—about 0.03 per cent. Flutter, also very low at 0.07 per cent, consisted mostly of higher-frequency components (around 200 Hz) which are less audible than the lower flutter frequencies typical of most turntables. The speed could be adjusted +5.5 and -7.6 per cent about the rated value. Once set, it varied less than 0.4 per cent over an extreme a.c. line-voltage shift of from 90 to 140 volts. The turntable came up to speed in 2 to 3 seconds, and the total time that elapsed from moving the START lever to the beginning of play was about 6 or 7 seconds.

Rumble was -41 dB including both vertical and lateral components, and -45 in the lateral plane only. With RRL relative audibility weighting, it was an impressive -66 dB, by a wide margin the lowest we have measured to date. This reflects the very low operating speed of the motor, whose vibration frequencies are confined to the sub-audible range.

The tone-arm tracking error was less than 0.25 degree per inch of radius over the entire record-groove area. The tracking-force dial calibration was accurate within 0.1 gram over most of its range. At the 1-gram setting where we operated the Model 701, the error was less than 0.05 gram. Although we used an elliptical stylus (the Shure V-15 Type III) in our tests, the anti-skating calibration of the red scale (supposedly for conical styli) proved to be correct. When we used the white (elliptical) scale, it was necessary to set the anti-skating dial about 0.25 gram higher than the indicated reading for optimum results. These "errors" are insignificant in practical use.

Although we do not measure tone-arm mass per se, we did evaluate its effects using a severely warped record which has proved to be unplayable on most record players. In this aspect of its performance, the Model 701 (with Shure's V-15 Type III cartridge installed) was neither better nor worse than the vast majority of players using conventional pivoted tone arms. The capacitance of the tone-arm wiring, from the cartridge terminals to the phono jacks beneath the turntable base, was only 27 picofarads. With low-capacitance connecting cables installed (such as are supplied with CD-4 adapters), the total capacitance came to only 77 picofarads—an acceptable value for any CD-4 cartridge. Although suitable low-capacitance cables for CD-4 use were not supplied with our test unit, they are available from Dual.

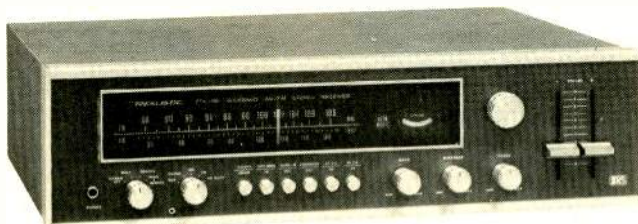


The direct-drive motor of the 701 has essentially just one moving part—the rotor (with the record spindle) visible directly above.

● **Comment.** The measured performance of the Dual Model 701 speaks for itself. It would indeed be difficult to improve on this unit, most of whose technical performance characteristics surpass, to a greater or lesser degree, those of any other integrated record player we have tested. Its operation is as simple and foolproof as could be desired, and its silence during operation is as impressive as its performance specifications. We never heard a spurious click, buzz, whirr, or hum, either mechanically from the record player or electrically from the speakers, during play. Obviously, the price of the Dual Model 701 removes it from consideration as "Everyman's record player," but for those who appreciate a superior product and are willing to pay for it, this unit merits the most serious consideration.

Circle 50 on reader service card

## Realistic STA-150 AM/Stereo FM Receiver



● **RADIO SHACK's** Realistic Model STA-150 stereo receiver is rated at 32.5 watts per channel continuous power output with 8-ohm loads, and the FM section is claimed to have 1.6 microvolts ( $\mu$ V) IHF sensitivity and 45 dB of stereo separation at 1,000 Hz. The large slide-rule tuning dial, illuminated in blue-green, has FM scale calibrations at 0.5-MHz intervals as well as an AM broadcast-band scale. The dial pointer lights up in pale yellow when the AM or FM tuner is in use, and it changes to red when a stereo FM broadcast is received.

To the right of the dial is an illuminated relative-signal-strength tuning meter and a large knob that operates the smooth flywheel tuning mechanism.

Below the dial area is a headphone jack and a row of knobs, including a speaker-selector/power switch (which can activate either, both, or neither of two pairs of speakers) and an input selector with positions for AUX, PHONO, AM, FM, and FM MUTE. The usual bass and treble tone controls are augmented by a third mid-range control. Each tone control operates on both channels simul-

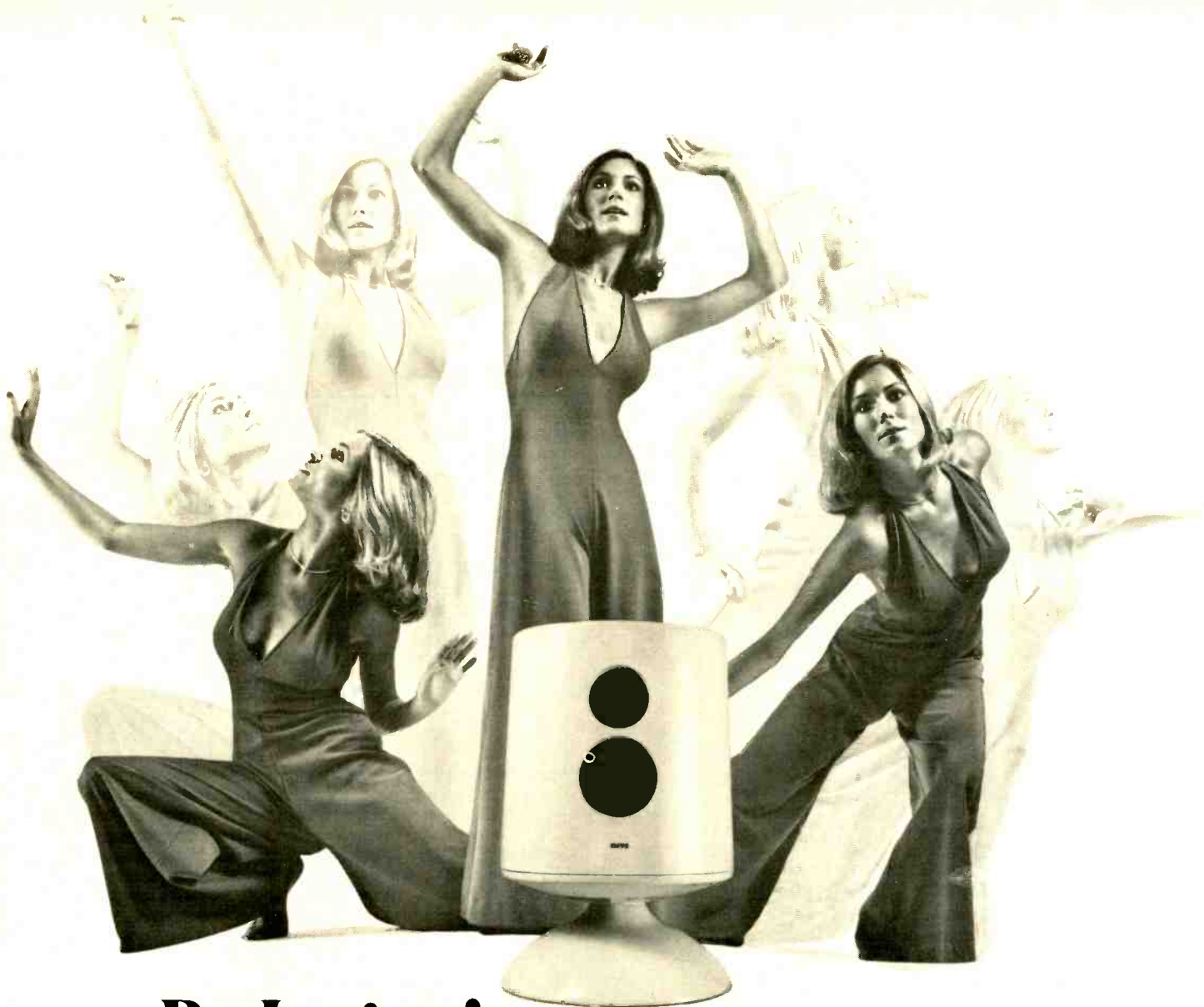
taneously. Pushbuttons select stereo/mono operation, tape monitoring, loudness compensation, and the low- and high-cut filters.

Judged by its appearance and specifications, the Realistic STA-150 would appear to be a typical, good-quality stereo receiver in the medium-price range. However, it has several unusual design and performance features. Its circuitry makes extensive use of IC's, four of them in the FM i.f. section, two in the multiplex and muting circuits, and one performing all the active functions of the AM tuner. The FM tuner "front end" has two stages of FET r.f. amplification.

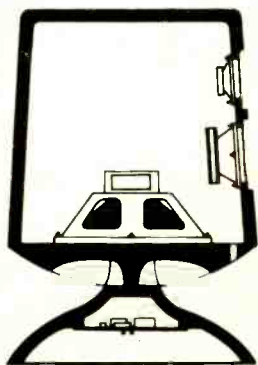
A front-panel pushbutton labeled AUTO-MAGIC activates a novel and useful feature of the STA-150. When AUTO-MAGIC is in use, the FM tuner is controlled by an AFC (automatic frequency control) system that locks it to the frequency of the received signal. An illumi-

(Continued on page 34)





# By Jupiter! the sound comes at you from all directions.



Empire's unique Jupiter cylinder produces the kind of sound no conventional box speaker can deliver. Our all-around sound is simply phenomenal — it radiates in all directions: front, rear, left and right.

The Jupiter's perfect three-way system\* uses Empire's heavy 12 inch down facing woofer for bass you can feel as well as hear, a powerful midrange for crisp, clear alto and

voice tones, and a lightweight ultrasonic tweeter with wide angle dispersion. The power of the Jupiter 6500 speaker is awesome — it can deliver an impressive performance without overload, burnout or strain.

Best of all, the virtually indestructible Jupiter enclosure is made of a new space-age acoustic material with a marproof surface, making it ideal for today's casual living.

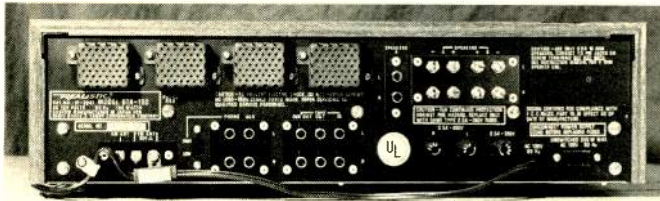
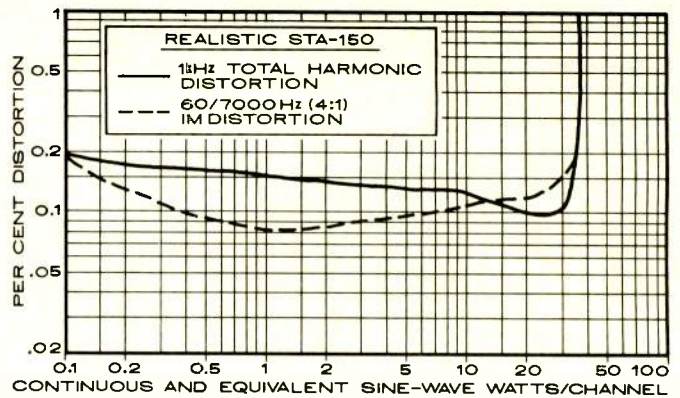
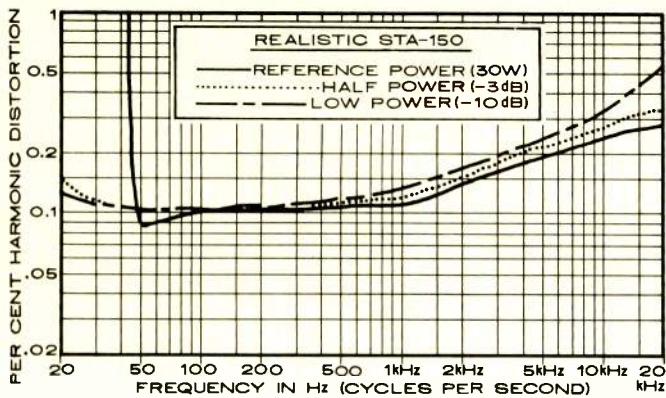
\*Jupiter speakers are completely weatherproofed for indoor or outdoor listening.

Empire's new Jupiter 6500 Speaker list price \$149.95. Available at better hi-fi dealers. For your free "Empire Guide to Sound Design" write:  
EMPIRE SCIENTIFIC CORP.,  
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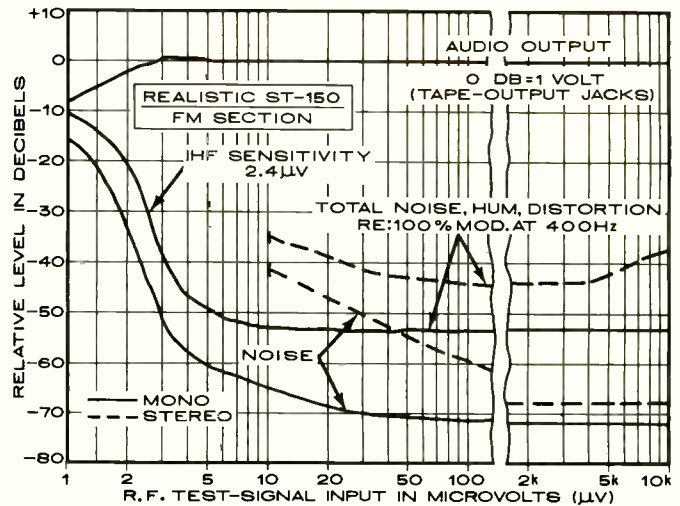


CIRCLE NO. 90 ON READER SERVICE CARD



The rear panel of the Realistic STA-150 is simple and straightforward. Note the coupler clamp (lower left) that converts the a.c. line cord to an FM antenna, and the phono-jack speaker terminals.

In the graph of FM performance, the levels of both random noise and noise plus distortion are compared with the audio-output level as signal strength increases. Both mono and stereo are shown.



nated AUTO-MAGIC indicator appears on the dial face, and the tuning meter is lit in the same color as the dial scales. When the tuning knob is touched, the AFC system is electrically disabled, and the tuning meter illumination changes to white. After a station is tuned in, releasing the knob results immediately in the reactivation of the AFC, which is indicated by the change in color of the meter illumination. This automatic feature simplifies tuning in a signal close in frequency to a much stronger station by preventing the stronger signal from "capturing" the tuner's AFC system. If AFC is not desired, pushing the AUTO-MAGIC button disables the circuit and extinguishes the identifying words on the dial face.

The STA-150 has two vertical slider potentiometers for individual adjustment of the volume in each channel. Both are operated simultaneously for overall volume setting, and a slight displacement of one of the sliders provides a channel-balancing function. In the rear of the STA-150 are the various inputs and outputs, with thumbscrew binding posts for the speaker connections (one pair of binding posts is paralleled with standard phono jacks), output-transistor and line fuses, and a single unswitched a.c. outlet. In addition to the usual tape-recording inputs and outputs, there is a second set of tape "dubbing" outputs to provide

signals for a second tape deck. This feature can be used for making tape copies from the first recorder or for making two tapes simultaneously. The playback from the second recorder must be connected to the receiver's AUX inputs. There is a phono-sensitivity switch for high- and low-output cartridges. The nonadjustable AM ferrite-rod antenna is inside the receiver. A capacitive coupler permits using the a.c. line cord as an FM antenna in strong signal areas. The front panel of the Realistic STA-150 receiver is finished in gray, with contrasting bright aluminum knobs. A wooden walnut cabinet is included. Price: \$349.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The audio amplifiers of the STA-150 clipped at 34.5 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads, 47.5 watts into 4 ohms, and 23.2 watts into 16 ohms. These measurements were made at 1,000 Hz, with both channels driven. The 1,900-Hz total harmonic distortion (THD) was 0.2 per cent at 0.1 watt, falling to 0.1 per cent at outputs of 20 to 30 watts, and reaching 0.24 per cent at 35 watts. The intermodulation (IM) distortion followed a similar pattern, dropping from 0.2 per cent at 0.1 watt to less than 0.15 per cent at outputs between 1 and 30 watts, and rising to 0.175 per cent at 35 watts.

With 30 watts per channel as a reference full-power output, the THD was

below 0.3 per cent from just under 50 Hz to 20,000 Hz. However, at half power and less, the THD was under 0.15 per cent all the way down to 20 Hz, reaching a maximum of about 0.5 per cent at 20,000 Hz.

The audio amplifiers could be driven to a 10-watt output with inputs of 90 millivolts (mV) on AUX, 2.5 mV on PHONO HIGH, or 1.25 mV on PHONO LOW. The noise level was unusually low: -80 dB on the AUX inputs and -74 dB through the phono inputs. This results, in part, from the fact that each slider volume control is actually a dual control that operates both before and after the tone-control amplifier stages, which are important sources of noise in an amplifier. The phono dynamic range was very good, with overload occurring at 140 mV (HIGH) or 70 mV (LOW).

The loudness compensation boosted only the low frequencies, and the filters had 6-dB-per-octave slopes with the -3-dB points at 100 and 4,500 Hz. The bass and treble tone controls had good characteristics, with the sliding inflection point of the former providing boost or cut at frequencies below 300 Hz (100 Hz at intermediate settings) with no effect on middle or high frequencies. The mid-range tone control had a broad characteristic centered at 2,000 Hz, but it affected most frequencies from 200 to

(Continued on page 36)



# Technology must be confirmed by performance.

## Here are the judgments of the most respected critics and reviewers on the BOSE 901®

"I urge that you listen for yourself. I think you will have to agree that Bose has, in a single giant step, produced one of the finest speaker systems ever made."

AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE

". . . If your response to it is like ours, you'll be reluctant to turn it off and go to bed."

Norman Eisenberg,  
HIGH FIDELITY

". . . I must say that I have never heard a speaker system in my own home which could surpass, or even equal, the Bose 901 for overall 'realism' of sound."

Hirsch-Houk Laboratories  
STEREO REVIEW

"The Bose have replaced forever our bulky studio speakers with compact, handsome units. The only trouble is -- our studio is beginning to look like a living room!"

DOWNBEAT

"To hear a thunderous "low C" organ pedal . . . , or a clean, weighty impact of a bass drum is truly impressive . . . . There is no doubt that the much abused and overworked term "break-through" applies to the Bose 901 and its bold new concepts."

Bert Whyte  
AUDIO

"But these speakers provide a quality which is not to be matched."

STEREO & HI FI TIMES

"The 901 is very possibly the only speaker to date to actually pour forth in true concert hall fashion."

HI-FI BUYER'S GUIDE

"After a time trial measured in months rather than weeks, this one can definitely proclaim Bose is best, big or small, high or low."

Irving Kolodin  
SATURDAY REVIEW

Now the Bose 901 Series II Direct/Reflecting® Speaker does everything its predecessor did, and more. We invite you to compare it with any conventional speaker, and hear the difference for yourself.

For information on the BOSE 901 SERIES II, 501 SERIES II Direct/Reflecting® speakers, and other BOSE products, circle your reader service card or write us at Dept. S3.



**BOSE**  
**901**  
**SERIES II**  
THE MOUNTAIN, FRAMINGHAM, MA. 01701

15,000 Hz to some degree. Its maximum range of  $\pm 5$  dB permitted a useful amount of correction without risking excessive response variation. The RIAA phono equalization was very accurate—within  $\pm 0.25$  dB over the full 20- to 20,000-Hz range. Phono-cartridge inductance affected the phono response in a typical manner, with a loss (using a high-inductance cartridge) of 1.5 dB at 10,000 Hz and from 2.5 to 4 dB at 20,000 Hz.

Although the FM tuner section had an HF (mono) sensitivity of 2.4 microvolts ( $\mu\text{V}$ ), it achieved a 50-dB signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) at only  $2.8 \mu\text{V}$ , with 1.25 per cent THD. The ultimate distortion, at a 1,000- $\mu\text{V}$  input, was 0.24 per cent with a noise level of  $-72$  dB. The stereo-switching threshold (and the muting threshold) was  $10 \mu\text{V}$ . In stereo, a 50-dB S/N was reached at  $28 \mu\text{V}$ , with only 0.9

per cent THD. At 1,000  $\mu\text{V}$ , the stereo THD was 0.6 per cent with a noise level of  $-68$  dB.

In stereo-FM operation, the frequency response was flat within 0.5 dB from 30 to 7,000 Hz, and down only 1.4 dB at 15,000 Hz. Effective filtering reduced the 19-kHz pilot-carrier leakage to  $-67$  dB. Channel separation, which reached a high maximum of 44 dB in the mid-frequency range, exceeded 30 dB from 70 to 15,000 Hz, and was still as much as 22.5 dB at 30 Hz.

In its other characteristics, the FM section of the STA-150 was equally good, with a 1.3-dB capture ratio, 61-dB AM rejection, 86-dB image rejection, and 63.5-dB alternate-channel selectivity. The AM section performed adequately, with the expected limited frequency response (down 6 dB at 100 and 2,700 Hz).

● *Comment.* As its features and performance clearly show, the Realistic STA-150 is a solid entry in the medium-price class of stereo receivers. We also found it to be very easy and pleasant to use. The AUTO-MAGIC system worked perfectly, the muting was free of noise and transient effects, and the dual-slider volume controls proved to be much more practical in use than the equivalent system of concentric rotary controls used in some receivers. We were pleased to find the FM dial calibrations as accurate as the width of the pointer would allow (within 100 kHz of the indicated frequency). The change of pointer color to red when receiving stereo is a more easily observed indication than the usual light or STEREO legend elsewhere on the dial face. All in all, a fine, well-thought-out job of design.

Circle 106 on reader service card

## Scintrex Model 98 Stereo Headphones



● *The Scintrex Model 98 stereo headphones feature a novel dual-cavity acoustic design in which the rear of the driver is fully isolated from the outside environment, but its rear radiation is admitted to the ear-cup cavity through a system of internal ports. The ports and the area surrounding the front of the driver are damped by plastic foam, which is also used behind the driver. This system is intended to sonically enlarge the cup volume at low frequencies while keeping the volume small at high frequencies.*

The frequency response of the Scintrex Model 98 is designed to provide what might be called a built-in Fletcher-Munson loudness-compensation characteristic: both the bass and the treble are somewhat accentuated relative to the mid-range response. The glycerin-filled earseals provide exceptionally high attenuation of external sound (claimed to

be 40 dB at 1,000 Hz), as well as extended low-frequency response.

The Model 98 has a 14-foot coiled cord, with a strain relief where it enters the earcup. The headphone specifications include: 6.5 milliwatts sensitivity to achieve a 100-dB sound-pressure level (SPL), 50 milliwatts maximum input (corresponding to a 110-dB SPL), and distortion of 1 per cent at 1,000 Hz at an unspecified SPL. The headset weighs 16 ounces. Price: \$34.95.

● *Laboratory Measurements.* The Scintrex Model 98 phones were tested using a Koss-designed test-measurement coupler that we have been using for all our headphone evaluations. The volume of the cavity presented to the earpiece by the coupler (and, of course, the possibly different volume of the individual user's ear cavity) can have a critical effect on the measured—or audible—frequency response of the phone. Therefore, one cannot necessarily expect to measure the “objective” response of a headphone when using a test coupler not specifically designed to take into account its *physical* characteristics. This is not unlike the situation with regard to testing loudspeakers in different acoustic environments.

As it happened, our measured response of the Scintrex Model 98 proved to be very good, and followed the general contours of a curve run by Scintrex on the same headset, using their coupler and test equipment. The response was within  $\pm 3.5$  dB from 20 to 5,300 Hz, with the average levels in the 400- to 1,500-Hz area being about 5 dB below those of the lower frequencies. Above

5,000 Hz, the output increased to about +10 dB in the 7,000- to 10,000-Hz range (relative to the averaged lower frequency level), and remained strong all the way to 20,000 Hz. The Scintrex curve showed a stronger output between 50 and 100 Hz than ours, but the two curves were otherwise quite similar in shape.

An input of 2.8 volts at 1,000 Hz produced a 100-dB SPL, and the rated maximum of 110 dB required about 9 volts of drive. (This is well within the capability of any amplifier rated at 10 watts or more into 8 ohms.) The total harmonic distortion at 1,000 Hz was 1 per cent at a 90-dB SPL, reaching 10 per cent at a 110-dB output level. The sound isolation of the liquid-filled ear cushions was excellent (this has been a characteristic of the other Scintrex/Sharpe phones we have tested in the past). An external random-noise signal was reduced by 23 dB. The impedance of each earpiece was a uniform 300 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz. There is no compatibility problem with the standard headphone jacks found on current amplifiers and receivers.

● *Comment.* The subjective character of the Scintrex Model 98 was completely consistent with its measured performance. There was a slight but noticeable brightness, complemented by a powerful bass response. At the same time, there was no mid-range deficiency, and the overall sound, despite a distinct “punch,” was well balanced.

Circle 107 on reader service card

(Continued on page 38)





## anatomy of the total performers

If you take apart one of TDK's new Dynamic-series cassettes, you might think it looks pretty simple. Five screws. Two hubs. A length of tape. Two rollers. Two cassette shell halves. A few other parts. What's so complicated about that?

Plenty! Unlike open reel tape, a tape cassette becomes an integral part of your recorder. Not just electromagnetically, but also mechanically. So in addition to good sound reproduction capabilities, a cassette must be an absolutely precise mechanism.

It took years of research, development and testing to produce the present-day TDK cassette. The result is a unique combination of superior electromagnetic characteristics and mechanical precision that make TDK cassettes completely compatible with any cassette recorder. And it permits them to deliver total sound reproduction and mechanical performance unequalled by any other cassette you can buy today.

Take the tape, for example. TDK cassette tapes are coated with exclusive formulations of ferric oxide powders in special binders, using proprietary TDK methods which result in the most desirable electromagnetic characteristics. Not just full-range frequency response and high-end sensitivity, but the proper balance of all the other characteristics essential to the faithful reproduction of "real-life" sound. Like high MOL (Maximum output level). Broad dynamic range. Wide bias tolerance. High signal-to-noise ratio. Low modulation and bias noise. Low print-through. Good erasability.

The housing is precision-molded of high-impact styrene. The transport mechanism uses tapered and flanged rollers with stainless steel pins, all-felt pressure pad, silicone-impregnated liners, and two-point hub clamps. Features first introduced by TDK. And all parts are manufactured to extremely fine tolerances to assure trouble-free operation and to

resist jamming, stretching, warping and tangling.

What does all this mean to you? Just that when you record on one of TDK's new Dynamic-series "total performer" cassettes, you can be sure of getting everything! All the highs and lows. All the important harmonics, overtones and transient phenomena. All the natural richness, fullness and warmth of the original performance. Plus reliable, trouble-free mechanical operation.

So look for TDK's total performers at quality sound shops everywhere. For sound you feel as well as hear, discover the dynamic world of TDK!

the new dynamic world of

**TDK**

TDK ELECTRONICS CORP.  
755 Eastgate Boulevard, Garden City, New York 11530

## Pioneer QX-949 AM/FM Four-Channel Receiver



● PIONEER's finest four-channel receiver, the QX-949, has an impressive combination of performance specifications and operating versatility. The QX-949 has built-in decoding circuits for all the major types of four-channel records—SQ, RM, and CD-4—plus an AM tuner and a high-performance FM tuner. It is a powerful receiver, rated at 40 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads, all channels driven, from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with less than 0.3 per cent harmonic or intermodulation (IM) distortion. For two-channel use, the power output of the front-channel amplifiers can be boosted by inverting a plug in the rear of the receiver. This removes the power-supply voltage from the rear-channel amplifiers and thereby supplies the front amplifiers with a higher d. c. operating voltage. (Note that this is *not* the "strapping" system used in many four-channel amplifiers to obtain higher power in stereo service.)

Pioneer has incorporated an imposing array of control functions on the front panel of the QX-949. The large slide-rule dial has AM and linearly spaced FM calibrations, the latter being at 200-kHz intervals. To the right of the dial is a dual tuning-meter assembly (zero-center and relative-signal-strength indications) and a large tuning knob. Above the dial scales, illuminated words in several colors clearly identify the receiver's operating mode (2 CH, 4 CH, CD-4, RM, SQ, AM, FM, PHONO, AUX, STEREO), and a small red light is activated by the 30-kHz carrier of a CD-4 record.

Along the bottom of the panel are nine control knobs. The VOLUME control is flanked by small left and right CD-4 separation controls (for adjusting the front-rear separation on each side). The CD-4 carrier-level adjustment is located under the receiver. Bass and treble tone controls, which have step detents, are duplicated for the front and rear channels. The MODE switch selects 2 CH, CD-4, RM, and SQ operation. The CD-4 setting also serves two other distinctly different functions. With a four-channel discrete source (such as a tape cartridge player) connected to the AUX inputs, the CD-4 setting provides discrete four-channel amplification within the receiver. Also, when playing stereo records or stereo FM or mono programs, the CD-4 mode drives the front and rear speakers on each side with the same signal. The FUNCTION switch selects the input

source (AM, FM MONO, FM AUTO, PHONO 1, PHONO 2, AUX). There are also front and rear headphone jacks and pushbuttons for low- and high-cut filters.

Just below the dial scale is a row of fourteen pushbutton switches. These include the POWER switch, separate controls for two pairs of front speakers and two pairs of rear speakers, the MPX NOISE FILTER and LOUDNESS circuits, and the FM MUTING switch. The extensive tape-monitoring facilities of the QX-949—for a two-channel tape deck, two four-channel decks, and an external Dolby noise-reduction adapter—are controlled by four pushbuttons. The jacks for the Dolby adapter are in quadruplicate for four-channel Dolby noise reduction; they can also be used for a fourth (four-channel) tape recorder. The output of the two-channel recorder can be dubbed onto any of the others, and dubbing between the four-channel recorders is possible.

To the left of the dial area is Pioneer's unique four-channel level display, which resembles a cathode-ray-tube screen about three inches in diameter. An illuminated X-shaped display occupies the center of the screen, with the length of each arm varying according to the signal level in the corresponding channel. Although this superficially resembles a four-channel "scope" display (such as Pioneer's own SD-1100), it is actually a cleverly designed incandescent filament system. Around the display are four small channel-balance knobs, each located in the appropriate quadrant. Two of the buttons below the dial scale increase the display's sensitivity by 10 and 20 dB (a total of 30 dB when both are pressed).

As may be imagined, the rear apron of the QX-949 is well filled by the many input and output terminals. Insulated spring clips are used for the speaker connections, and there is a pivoted AM ferrite-rod antenna in addition to inputs for both 300-ohm and 75-ohm FM antennas. A 4 CH MPX output is provided for some possible future discrete four-channel FM system demodulator, and a slide switch changes the time constant of the FM de-emphasis network from the 75 microseconds used in this country to the 50-microsecond standard used in Europe. A hinged cover protects the 2 CH/4 CH POWER BOOSTING plug, whose position is visible through a window in the cover. There are two unswitched

a.c. outlets and one that is switched. The Pioneer QX-949 is supplied in a wooden walnut-finish cabinet, and it measures 22 inches wide, 17<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches deep, and 6<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches high. The weight is about 49 pounds. A CD-4 adjustment record is included. Price: \$749.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The audio amplifiers clipped at 49 watts per channel with all four channels driven into 8-ohm loads at 1,000 Hz. Our subsequent tests were made with only the two front channels driven, but with the unit set up in the four-channel mode. This had only a slight effect on the maximum power. With 4-ohm loads, the power at clipping was 72.5 watts per channel, and with 16 ohms it was 33 watts. In 2 CH POWER BOOST mode, the receiver delivered 72 watts per channel to 8-ohm loads.

We chose 50 watts per channel as a full-power reference level, although it is higher than Pioneer's own ratings. At 20 Hz, the total harmonic distortion (THD) was 0.3 per cent at full power, and from 30 to 7,000 Hz it was a very low 0.03 per cent, reaching only 0.06 per cent at 20,000 Hz. At lower power levels, the THD was less than 0.04 per cent and typically under 0.02 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz. The THD at 1,000 Hz, which was 0.085 per cent at a 0.1-watt output, fell to less than 0.02 per cent between 2 and 40 watts, and rose to 0.1 per cent at 50 watts. The IM distortion was under 0.1 per cent from 50 milliwatts to about 2 watts, and it rose to 0.25 per cent between 15 and 40 watts output.

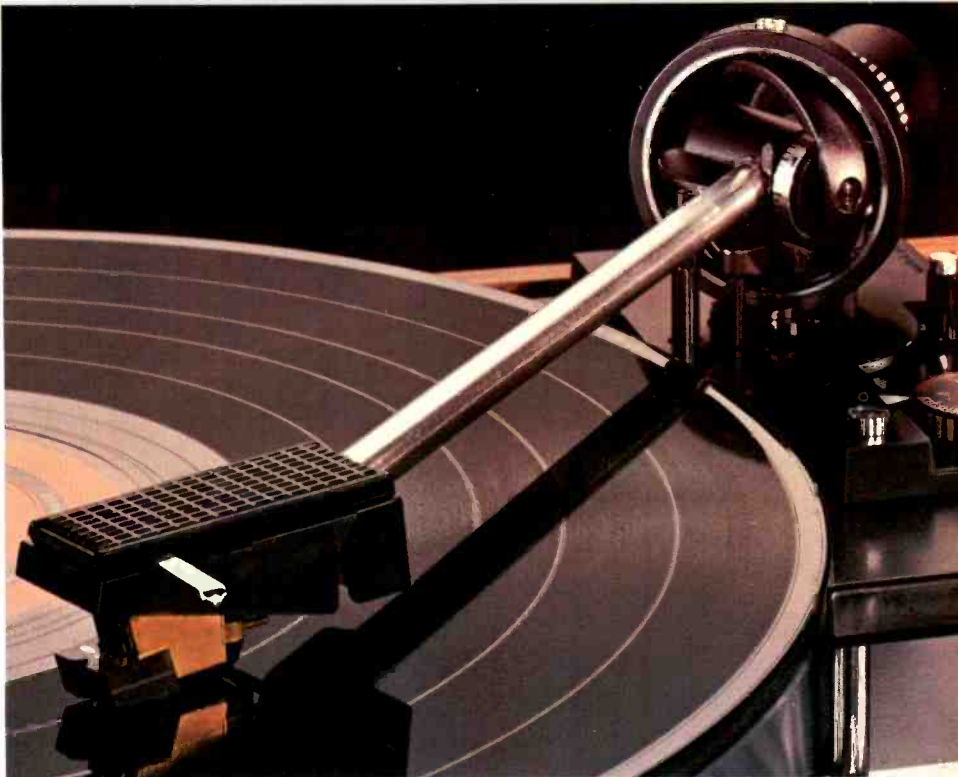
The input required for a 10-watt output, with the channel-balance controls set to their mid positions (about -7 dB) was 175 millivolts (mV) at the AUX inputs and 0.94 mV at the phono inputs. The respective noise levels were very low: -80.5 dB and -73.5 dB. The phono gain is controlled by the CD-4 separation controls, which also affect the phono overload level. At mid settings the inputs overloaded at a very safe 85 mV, and at maximum (which was not required with either of the CD-4 cartridges we used in our listening tests) at a rather low 22 mV.

The bass tone-control curves had a sliding characteristic, moving from below 100 Hz to about 500 Hz, and the treble characteristic "hinged" at about 3,000 Hz. The loudness compensation boosted lows moderately and highs very slightly, while the filters had 6-dB-per-octave slopes and -3-dB points of 70 and 4,000 Hz. The RIAA equalization was within  $\pm 1$  dB from 100 to 14,000 Hz, rising slightly to +3.3 dB at 30 Hz. Because the phono signals have to be filtered for CD-4 demodulation, the re-

(Continued on page 40)



Dual tonearms allow the most advanced cartridges to track accurately and gently. Gyroscopic gimbal suspension as used in 1229 and 1218 is best known way to balance precision instruments. Stylus pressure, applied around pivot, keeps perfect dynamic balance. Separate anti-skating scales for conical and elliptical styli achieve perfect tracking balance on each wall of the stereo groove.



Unlike conventional automatic tonearms, the 1218 and 1229 track records at the original cutting angle. The 1229 parallels single records, moves up to parallel changer stack. The 1218 has similar adjustment in the cartridge housing.

# You'll appreciate some things about a Dual right away. Others will take years.

You can appreciate some things about a Dual turntable right at your dealer's: its clean functional appearance, the precision of its tonearm adjustments and its smooth, quiet operation.

The exceptional engineering and manufacturing care that go into every Dual turntable may take years to appreciate. Only then will you actually experience, play after play, Dual's precision and reliability. And how year after year, Dual protects your precious records; probably your biggest investment in musical enjoyment.

## It takes more than features.

If you know someone who owns a Dual, you've probably heard all this from him. But you may also wish to know what makes a Dual so different from other turntables which seem to offer many of the same features. For example, such Dual innovations as: gimbal tonearm suspensions, separate anti-skating scales for conical and elliptical styli, and rotating single play spindles.

It's one thing to copy a Dual feature; it's quite another thing to match the precision with which Duals are built.

A case in point is the tonearm suspension. Every gimbal is hand

assembled and individually tested with precision instruments especially developed by Dual. Vertical bearing friction is specified at 0.007 gram, and quality control procedures assure that every unit will meet this specification. Only by maintaining this kind of tolerance can tonearm calibrations for stylus pressure and anti-skating be set with perfect accuracy.

Other Dual features are built with similar precision. The rotor of every Dual motor is dynamically balanced in all planes of motion. Additionally, each motor pulley and drive wheel is individually examined with special instruments to assure perfect concentricity.

## Precision and reliability.

Despite all this precision and refinement, Dual turntables

are ruggedly built, and need not be babied. Which accounts for Dual's unparalleled record of reliability, an achievement no other manufacturer can copy.

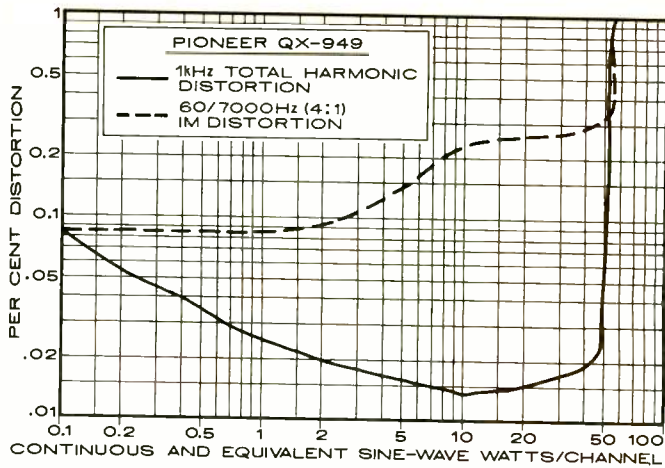
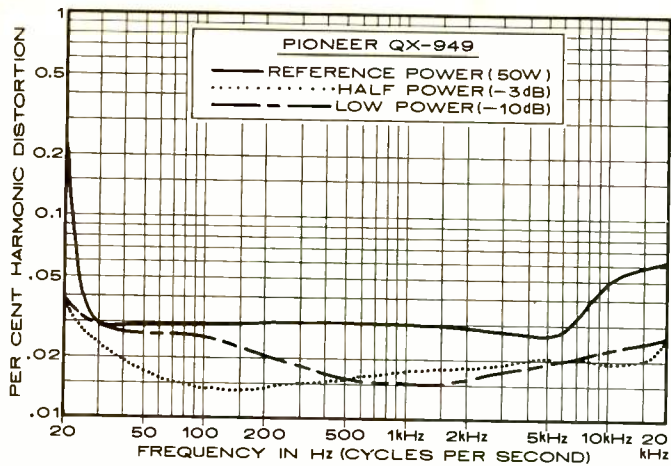
To appreciate Dual performance first hand, we suggest you visit your franchised United Audio dealer. But your full appreciation of Dual precision won't really begin until a Dual is in your system and you hear the difference it will make on your own records. Play after play. Year after year.

United Audio Products, Inc.,  
120 So. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon,  
N.Y. 10553



United Audio is exclusive U.S. distributor for Dual.

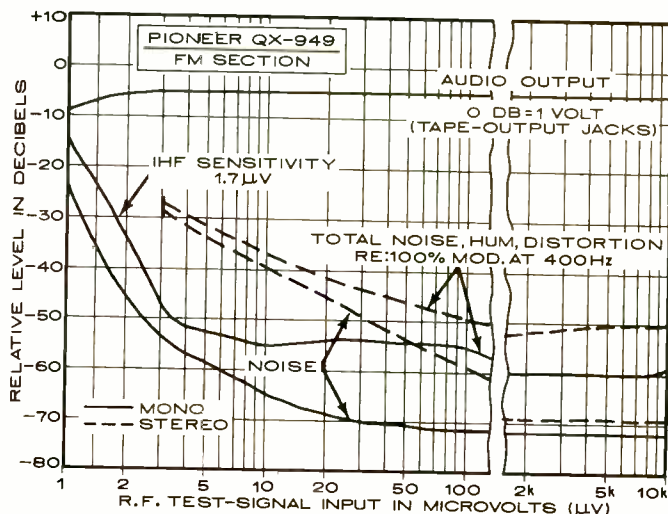
CIRCLE NO. 50 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Note: curves were made with the receiver in the four-channel mode, with two channels driven (one measured) to equal power outputs.



All the connectors for front-channel sources and speakers are arrayed along the top half of the 949's rear panel, with rear-channel connectors directly below. Two-channel sources plug in at upper left.



In the graph of FM performance, the levels of both random noise and noise plus distortion are compared with the audio-output level as signal strength increases. Both mono and stereo are shown.

sponse drops sharply above 15,000 Hz (at which point it is down only 1.5 dB), to about -20 dB at 20,000 Hz. Phono equalization was influenced only slightly by cartridge inductance (much less than with most receivers we have tested), and

showed a loss of less than 2 dB in the 15,000-Hz level with any of the popular cartridges we use for this test.

The FM tuner surpassed most of its already excellent specifications. The IHF sensitivity was 1.7 microvolts ( $\mu$ V) in mono and 4  $\mu$ V in stereo, and 50 dB of quieting was obtained with 2.4  $\mu$ V (mono) and 33  $\mu$ V (stereo). The corresponding distortion levels were 1 and 0.63 per cent. The signal-to-noise ratios at 1,000  $\mu$ V were 71.5 dB (mono) and 68.5 dB (stereo), and the distortion at that level was 0.09 per cent in mono and 0.21 per cent in stereo—about half the published ratings. The muting and automatic stereo-switching threshold was at 2.8  $\mu$ V.

The capture ratio of 1.4 dB (at 1,000  $\mu$ V) and AM rejection of 50 dB were the only measurements that failed to surpass the published specifications, although no apologies are required for either figure. The selectivity of the QX-949 was very fine—81.5 dB above the signal frequency and 84 below it. The image rejection was 92 dB.

The stereo FM frequency response was  $\pm 0.25$  dB from 30 to 11,000 Hz, down only 1.5 dB at 15,000 Hz. Even with this excellent FM high-frequency

response, the 19-kHz pilot-carrier leakage was a very low -78 dB. Channel separation was unusually uniform, remaining between 32.5 and 35 dB from 30 to 10,000 Hz, and it was still an excellent 30 dB at 15,000 Hz. The AM frequency response was somewhat better than average—flat within  $\pm 2.5$  dB from 25 to 3,700 Hz and down 6 dB at 4,500 Hz. Our test unit's dial pointer was displaced by approximately its width from the correct position, which gave a uniform 200-kHz calibration error across the FM band. A simple readjustment of the pointer would have produced essentially perfect FM calibration; even in the "as received" condition, the calibration was much better than that of most tuners and receivers because of the 200-kHz marking points.

● **Comment.** Despite the almost overwhelming completeness of the Pioneer QX-949's front panel, it is a fairly simple receiver to operate. The CD-4 calibration can be done quickly and easily with the test record supplied, maximizing the right/left, front/rear separation by ear or with the aid of the four-channel display. Although it is convenient to have the

(Continued on page 42)





# Speakers are a matter of taste.

## Yours.

No other component in your high fidelity system will influence your enjoyment of music as much as your choice of speakers. Every speaker design has its own individual characteristics, and actually imposes its own personality on any music you play.

What kind of a sound do you prefer? The tight sound of an acoustic suspension speaker? The open sound and flexibility of an omni-radial speaker? Or the presence and realism of a multi-directional speaker?

No matter which you choose, Sansui makes a speaker to match your taste. And they are all superior in performance, delivering sharp definition, and a smooth, but crystal clear dynamic attack over a wide range.

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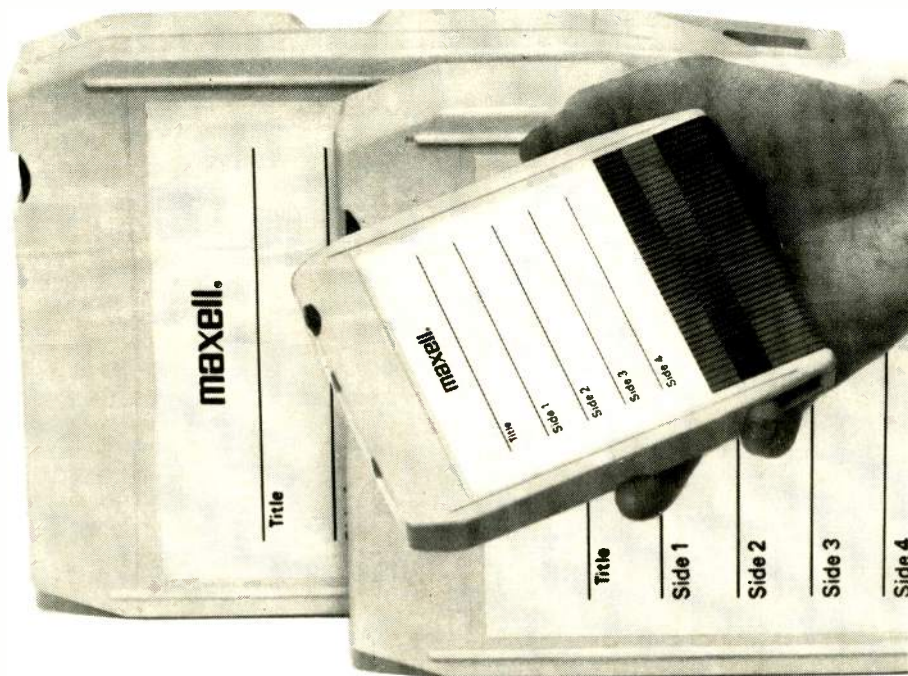
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## Pioneer QX-949 Four-Channel Receiver. . .

*(Continued from page 40)*

CD-4 adjustments on the front panel, it would be better if they were not so close to the volume-control knob, since recalibration is required if their settings are disturbed.

The CD-4 demodulator performed in a most satisfactory manner with the Audio-Technica AT-15S and Grado FTR+1 cartridges. The quality and subjective separation appeared to be limited only by the present state of the CD-4 recording art. Some of the earliest CD-4 recordings were marred by occasional disturbing noises (this happens with any demodulator we have used), but the more recent records produced essentially perfect results. The matrix decoders operated adequately, although they lack logic enhancement.

Perhaps the only instance of ambiguity offered by the well-marked controls has to do with the fact that, although the CD-4 position is also used for other discrete four-channel sources (such as a quadraphonic tape player), there is no indication of this on the panel (it is stated in the manual, however). We also noted that there is no provision for playing a single-channel or mono source through more than one channel. For example, if TV sound were to be connected to one of the AUX inputs, it would be heard only through the corresponding speaker unless an external "Y" adapter were used to parallel other channels.

The four-channel display is almost as fascinating to watch as a real "scope" display, and it has the added advantage that its response (unlike a scope's) is approximately logarithmic over a 20-dB display range. This permits simultaneous viewing of high- and low-level signals in different channels; it also gave us a clue as to the actual CD-4 separation, which appeared to be in excess of 20 dB. The variable illuminated quadrants responded rapidly and precisely to program changes.

The figures measured for the tuner section speak for themselves. This is an uncommonly sensitive, selective, and smooth-handling FM tuner. The interstation muting is first-rate, with no noise and only a trace of a muting "thump."

It is difficult to do justice to such a versatile receiver in the limited space available. A study of its schematic diagram leaves us with a sense of amazement that such a complex instrument can be sold for only \$750. It is not only a handsomely styled and highly flexible four-channel control center, but, in respect to the electrical performance of its tuner and amplifier, it rivals some of the finest separate-component systems.

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# GOING ON RECORD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND

Music Editor



## MUSIC AS METAPHOR

THE subject of music as metaphor is rarely considered today in serious writings about serious music. The reason is partly that it is not so much a musical matter as an aesthetic one, and partly that the whole matter of extra-musical meanings and connotations has, for many years, been considered unworthy of the attention of serious musicians and musicologists, though it has unquestionably fascinated certain composers. Yet it is a subject that obviously preoccupied some very great composers of the past, and a host of minor ones as well, and a lack of understanding of it has led some musicians and listeners to the conjecture that such composers as Claude Debussy were writing "storytelling" music when, in fact, they were not.

One is dealing with metaphorical music when one comes across a work that seems to have a programmatic title, when even individual movements have programmatic titles, but the music attempts neither a narration of events nor the aping of extra-musical sounds, when what is conveyed is a mood, but more than a mood. Such music is frequently referred to as Impressionistic, which is at least defensible as an aesthetic categorization, but impossible as a musical one. For if we consider Impressionism to be a *musical* movement, then we must consider certain harmonic, melodic, formal, and orchestral devices typical of it, and we must then find another term for those composers who have adopted an Impressionistic aesthetic at times (Sibelius, for example) without using the musical devices we have already decided characterize the Impressionistic style. Similarly, if we look upon Impressionism as purely a *historical* style, then we wind up with no satisfactory description of composers outside that historical movement who may have employed either the Impressionist aesthetic or the technical devices.

The aesthetic position of Impressionism is both a non-imitative and a non-

emotional one. It is non-imitative from intent, for it deals with the impression produced on the artist by an outside event rather than with the effect the artist is going to produce on his audience. It is non-emotional in a procedural sense, for, as opposed to Beethoven's categorization of his *Pastoral* Symphony, it is not concerned with the "feelings evoked" by the outside event, but with the prior step of the perception of the outside event. What Impressionism involves, then, is a way of looking at the world, both in the selection of *what* is seen and in the quality of *how* it is seen. "Seeing," in this instance, is an abbreviation for all sensory experience—hearing, feeling, smelling, tasting—and perhaps for factors of memory, association, and mood as well. This is the passive or receptive aspect of Impressionism.

The productive aspect is, theoretically, the selective giving back of one's impression *in the medium appropriate to the artist*, rather than that appropriate to the thing experienced. Since such a physical entity as a garden in the rain is far beyond music's ability to imitate onomatopoeically (a musical "drip, drip" sound might well be taken for a representation of a leaky faucet instead), what we get in such a titled composition is a musical *metaphor* for the physical and psychical event. The metaphor is, of course, a completely personal one, and, like all metaphors, it is subject to the evaluation of others as to its aptness, its musical (literary) quality, and its importance. It is clear, however, that in no sense is the music a realistic and recognizable portrayal of the original outside event, nor is it a reflection of the emotions produced in the composer by the experience of that event. This, despite the fact that the resultant music is not necessarily unemotional and that it does not necessarily eschew, in its metaphorical quality, musical sounds that are onomatopoeic in relation to the subject.

The argument has been raised against

Impressionist music (and against an impressionistic understanding of music) that the title may well have been put on *after* the music was written. In a few cases we know this to be so. In such a case (goes the argument) the music cannot possibly be a result of a perception of the event described in the title. Though this is certainly true in a causal sense, the notion of causality has not much to do with the products of the Impressionist aesthetic, and we need not get hung up on the chicken-or-egg problem. A piece of Impressionist music presents to us two things: the music and the title. That one is a metaphor for the other is inherent. We assimilate the title far more quickly than the music (it is shorter, for one thing), and we therefore judge the music as to *its* metaphorical aptness to the title rather than the other way around, and despite the order in which the two may very likely have been created. It is just the opposite of the case with the finale of Chopin's B-flat Minor Sonata, for which the pianist Anton Rubinstein coined the metaphor "the wind over the grave": the music was familiar long before the literary metaphor was born.

ALL the above rests on the idea of Impressionism as an aesthetic position rather than as a musical movement. The difficulties creep in when we examine the musical materials composers have used in the composition of Impressionist works, for, in many cases, the same composers have used identical materials to construct works that statedly are *not* Impressionist. So, for example, the harmonies of Debussy's *Études*, which for the most part bear specifically musical and technical titles only (no one can believe that such a title as *Pour les Huit Doigts* refers to a musical metaphor for eight fingers), are essentially the same as those used in the *Preludes*, whose titles (*Fireworks*, *The Maid with the Flaxen Hair*, *Footsteps in the Snow*, etc.) are indicative of "impressions."

Whether one is then free to read a metaphor into a nonmetaphorical work is a moot point. Rubinstein did it, but he was a child of his time. And it is interesting that no one seems to have come forth with a set of metaphorical titles for the Debussy *Études*. Perhaps—and here we venture into one of those unexplored psychological, psychoacoustic aspects of music—there are kinds of music that need titles and kinds of music that do not. The *musical* sense of every great work of music is complete in itself, but the *aesthetic* sense may be self-contained in some and may need a literary or pictorial addition to find completeness in others. That may well be a rationale for all program music, and, though it will not make the second-rate work sound any better than it does, it at least saves it from damnation through categorization.

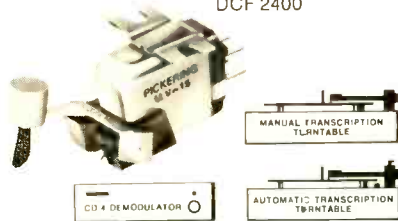


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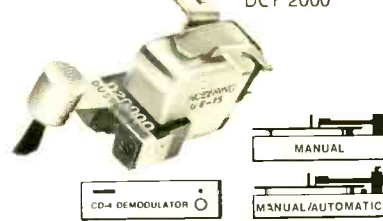
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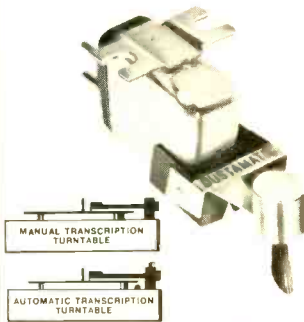


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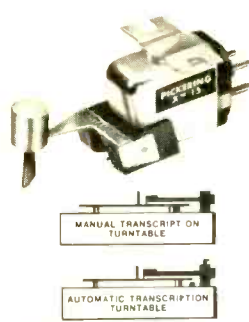


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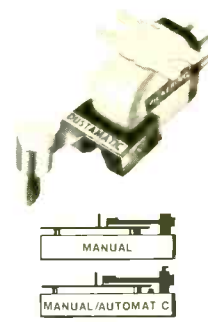
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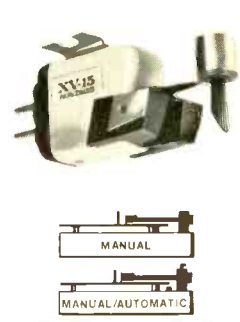
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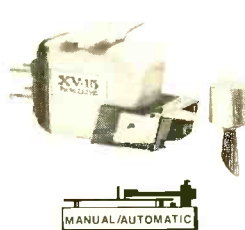
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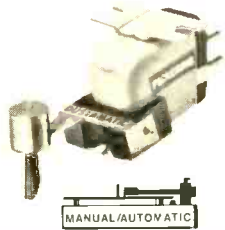
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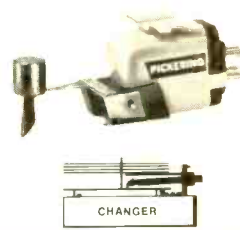
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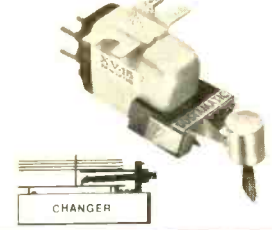
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# THE SIMELS REPORT

By STEVE SIMELS



## OLD MAN DYLAN

I'D LIKE to make it clear right off that I was never really a Bob Dylan fan, at least not in the way most of my contemporaries and college classmates were. I never memorized the lyrics to whole sides of his albums; I never claimed, as a Beatnik (!) chick I knew in my freshman year did, that Dylan made the most beautiful music in Western history; and I never even cared much for *Mr. Tambourine Man* until the Byrds electrified it. During his topical-song days, at the height of the folk period, I was too busy getting back into rock-and-roll after a six-year hiatus (a move I made when I discovered it was difficult to make it with girls by talking about Sibelius, who was my fave at the time) to pay much attention to Dylan. Besides, all that protest stuff always struck me as a bit simple-minded, though I will concede that I liked his first album for the traditional numbers (like *Baby Let Me Follow You Down*) and the obvious Everly Brothers influences on his guitar playing.

When Dylan finally began to rock in earnest, I was much more impressed with the other stuff on the radio; you will recall that the summer his *Like a Rolling Stone* exploded onto AM was also the summer of the Beatles' *Help*, the Beach Boys' *California Girls*, and the Rolling Stones' *Satisfaction*, to name just a few. But, with the passage of time, I began to appreciate what he was doing, and I did indeed get off on "Highway 61" and "Blonde on Blonde" like any normal American teenager. Still, I never related strongly to him, so when he lost me with the slick countrified banality of "Nashville Skyline" and "New Morning" I didn't take it personally.

All of that out of the way, and *still* not really a Dylan fan, I am glad to report that his new album, "Planet Waves," is an absolute knockout, his strongest and most deeply felt work in years, and that his recent performances, on the basis of what I saw in New York, were as good as rock-and-roll gets.

Rather than running all that down in detail, let me offer instead some observations at random. First of all, I caught the closing night at the Garden, but my spies at the afternoon performance (what Mick Jagger called "the breakfast show") report that, at one point, Robbie Robertson of the Band announced "See you next year" to the crowd. I bring this up because one of the unresolved Dylan enigmas, as of this writing, is just how seriously he intends to ply his trade now that he's gotten his feet wet again. The fact that he now has a record label that he feels comfortable with will undoubtedly have some effect on his plans, but the concert itself came off, at least on one level, so much as a retrospective that it was difficult to avoid the feeling that he was about to go back into hibernation for another couple of seasons.

Of course, if Robertson wasn't kidding, and if Dylan seriously wants to tour again soon, then the concert is subject to reinterpretation. If Dylan is indeed ready to be Dylan again, then he intended the concert not only as a reintroduction to an old friend, but as a calculated attempt to reach a new audience and re-establish himself as a major force. If, on the other hand, he is *not*, then what the hell was he doing? A farewell? A sop to his fans? Or, as rumor had it, a fund-raising effort for Israel? (Dylan himself has been conspicuously non-committal on this last point, as he has a perfect right to be, of course.)

Second, in New York at least, the audience was overwhelmingly and surprisingly youngish; this was the same crowd you'd see for the Allmann Brothers or, say, Loggins and Messina, which is pretty remarkable when you consider that most of these kids had not even reached puberty when the Dylan of the protest songs and Woody Guthrieisms began to be a cult figure for disaffected intellectual youth in the early Sixties. There are two theories that could account for this phenomenon. One is the Bangladesh

movie, which, quite by accident, may have functioned as Dylan's *A Hard Day's Night*. In other words, all the kids who went to see that film to view latter-day heros like Leon Russell were suddenly exposed to this unfamiliar yet fascinating figure in a jean jacket, and they came away instant fans. Personally, I much prefer the second theory, which is, simply, that today's kids have been looking (unconsciously, perhaps) for a Dylan, and finally, with his return, they have one. That it was also *the* Dylan is almost coincidental. For all intents, he was a new artist for them, but he was filling exactly the same needs he had filled for some of us old farts ten years ago. Eat your heart out, David Bowie.

Third, the earliest published review (by Lorraine Alterman) of "Planet Waves" was in the *New York Times*, and it was sadly typical both of that august journal and what seems, at this point, to be the prevailing critical judgment. Author Alterman dismissed the record as mere "Sixties nostalgia" (a comment that truly annoys me, because it's both a meaningless, hackneyed phrase and an obvious ploy to disguise the absence of any real insight), and as "inferior," if you can believe it, to new albums by Graham Nash (!) and Carly Simon. I found this last especially amusing in the light of their (the *Times*'s) classic 1968 piece on the Beatles' white album, one in which Mike Jahn dismissed the Fab Four's magnum opus in a one-to-one comparison with "Blood, Sweat and Tears." Ha! At the time, *Rolling Stone* Editor Jann Wenner commented that anyone who could write such a review was either deaf or evil, and while I won't go quite that far, I would, at this juncture, like to present to the *New York Times* music department and to Ms. Alterman the "Those Who Do Not Learn from History Are Doomed to Repeat Its Mistakes" Award.

FINALLY, a brief word or two on the concert itself. Both Dylan and the Band gave extraordinary performances. The Band, whose records and live shows have always struck me as being afflicted with a kind of studied, sterile perfection, stretched out and rocked harder than I could ever have imagined, and Dylan himself made such fresh interpretive choices that even the most overfamiliar of his material came across as brand new. The strongest impression I came away with was that, after all these years, he might just be at last in a position to become the kind of rock-and-roll star he's always wanted to be, one capable of holding, as he did so effortlessly that night, twenty thousand people in the palm of his hand. It's ironic that it's taken him so long, but at any rate, the idea of Bob Dylan, Father Figure, is something to conjure with.





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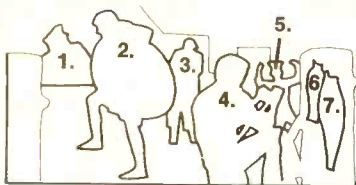
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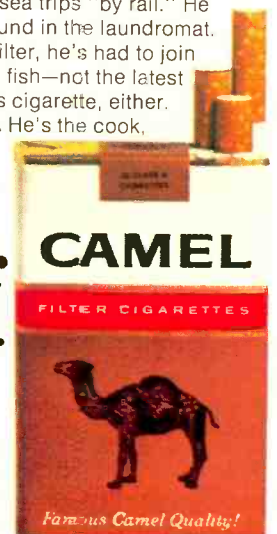
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Almost everyone going fishing today has a gimmick. Pick the one who doesn't. **1.** No. He's called "The Ole Skipper" by his landlord and the finance company. Gimmick: Never sails without a good tide, fair winds, and his rubber duckie. His hard-drawing cigarettes are like a cheap lighthouse—they blink twice, then go out. **2.** Nope. He's Tim Idsol, known as "The Codfather." Gimmick: Takes no chances. Even smears shark repellent all over himself—doesn't know it's really meat tenderizer.

His "Long-long" cigarettes send the smoke so far, it carries an overnight bag. **3.** No. He's Stu Mack Paump. Makes all sea trips "by rail." He even gets seasick watching his shorts go around in the laundromat. His cigarettes have so much charcoal in the filter, he's had to join the miners' union. **4.** Right. He's here to catch fish—not the latest fads and gimmicks. Wants no nonsense in his cigarette, either. Camel Filters. Good taste. Honest tobacco. **5.** He's the cook, Phil Layasol. His meals are so bad, African pygmies come to dip arrows in his soup. **6. & 7.** No and no. They're porgie and bass.

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# THE BASIC REPERTOIRE • 169

By MARTIN BOOKSPAN

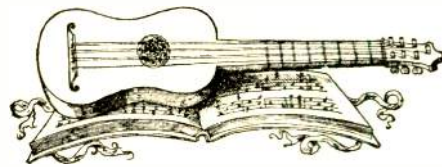
## RODRIGO'S CONCIERTO DE ARANJUEZ

THE guitar is the principal survivor and descendant of a whole series of plucked stringed instruments that date back to ancient European and Oriental civilizations. Though we tend to regard the guitar as the particular national instrument of Spain, other countries and cultures have contributed to its development and literature. For instance, the concerto for guitar was developed largely by Italian composers: an otherwise obscure self-taught performer and composer named Mauro Giuliani (1780-1840) wrote at least four concertos for guitar and orchestra. In our own time a significant contribution to the growing guitar literature was made by the Italian composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968), who composed a number of works for guitar solo as well as two charming guitar concertos.

It was in 1939 that a thirty-seven-year-old Spanish composer named Joaquín Rodrigo began writing a guitar concerto in Paris, finishing it a short time later in Madrid. Rodrigo titled his completed work the *Concierto de Aranjuez*, taking the name from the ancient royal palace of the Spanish kings situated some fifty kilometers from Madrid on the way to Valencia. Aranjuez is considered the most cheerful and beautiful of the royal sites, and Rodrigo has said that his concerto "is meant to sound like the hidden breeze that stirs the treetops in the parks; it should be only as strong as a butterfly, and as dainty as a *verónica*."

To achieve this intimate and gentle quality Rodrigo has scored the work for solo guitar and what is virtually a chamber orchestra: piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, two trumpets, and strings. Different sources give different dates and places for the premiere performance of the concerto: November 9, 1940, in Barcelona according to some; December 11, 1940, in Madrid according to others. What is certain is that from the very beginning Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* has been an instant favorite with audiences.

The concerto is in the traditional fast-slow-fast three-movement format, and the opening movement, *Allegro con spirito*, is in Classical sonata form. It is the solo guitar rather than the orchestral forces that immediately establishes the opening movement's rhythmic and melodic profile; the movement's two principal themes are perky and bracing, and the interplay of the solo guitar with the orchestra is deft and exhilarating. The



slow movement, *Adagio*, is the true center of the piece. Longer than both the opening and closing movements together, it takes the form of a ruminating dialogue between the guitar and solo instruments from the orchestra: English horn first, followed by bassoon, oboe, trumpet, etc. Near the end of the second movement there is an extended guitar cadenza with varied figurations and embellishments, and then there is an impassioned orchestral climax. The concluding movement, *Allegro gentile*, is in the nature of a rondo: one theme, folk-like in character, recurs several times in different keys. The ending is somewhat unexpected: a descending flourish in the unaccompanied guitar picks up pizzicato string unisons, *pianissimo*, in its last three notes and subsides into silence.

ONE guitarist, Narciso Yepes, has had the opportunity to record the *Concierto de Aranjuez* three different times, twice for London Records with Ataulfo Argenta and the National Orchestra of Spain and most recently—again with Spanish compatriots—for Deutsche Grammophon (disc 139440; reel L 9440; cassette 3300172). It is the second

of the three Yepes versions (London STS 15199) that I prefer above all the other currently available recordings of the score. Together with Argenta, whose untimely death more than a dozen years ago robbed the world of a truly outstanding young conductor, Yepes conveys the modest grace of the music most convincingly. The recorded sound may lack the immediacy of contemporary reproduction, but it is still highly serviceable. And not to be overlooked is the fact that the disc is a reissue in London's budget-price (\$2.98) Stereo Treasury series.

An altogether different kind of performance is the one by John Williams with Eugene Ormandy conducting members of the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia MS 6834). Here the approach is very much a virtuoso one; tempos are generally brisker than in any of the Yepes recordings, the sound is considerably more brilliant, and the overall effect is on the dazzling side. Of its kind, it is a perfectly splendid performance, and I can recommend it without qualification to anyone who might prefer an approach more robust than that of Yepes and Argenta. Julian Bream and Colin Davis, in their collaboration (RCA disc LSC 2730; reel ERPA 2730C; cassette RK 1052), offer an interpretive attitude similar to that of Williams and Ormandy, but the latter team scores higher points in terms of accuracy of ensemble and rhythmic buoyancy.

Special interest attaches to the RCA Victrola recording (VICS 1322) by the guitarist Regino Sainz de la Maza. It was to him that Rodrigo dedicated the concerto, and Sainz de la Maza was the soloist at the November 1940 performance in Barcelona. If the Victrola recording was made just before its release in this country in 1968, then Sainz de la Maza was already into his seventies at the time. His performance (with the Manuel de Falla Orchestra conducted by Cristóbal Halffter) resembles the Yepes-Argenta version in its relaxed ease, but it does not summon up quite the charm of the latter. The most recent recording to be released is the one by Alexandre Lagoya and Antonio de Almeida (Philips SAL 6500454). This is a perfectly reasonable performance, but not a particularly distinguished one.

Word from the grapevine has it that a Christopher Parkening recording of the score is on the way. It is curious, though, that the *Concierto de Aranjuez* has been neglected by that most prolific of all recording guitarists (and the master of them all), Andrés Segovia. True, Decca is no longer recording classical artists, but will not some other enterprising company snap up Segovia for a recording of the Rodrigo *Concierto*?

\* Mr. Bookspan's 1973-1974 UPDATING OF THE BASIC REPERTOIRE is now available in convenient pamphlet form. Send 25¢ and self-addressed #10 envelope to Susan Larabee, Stereo Review, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016 for your copy. \*







# IRA (MR. WORDS) GERSHWIN

“...any resemblance to actual poetry, living or dead, is highly improbable.”

By Edward Jablonski

LET us dispose of the doubters right off:  
*Blah, blah, blah, blah, moon.*  
*Blah, blah, blah, above:*  
*Blah, blah, blah, blah, croon.*  
*Blah, blah, blah, blah, love.\**

That ought to demonstrate once and for all that lyricist Ira Gershwin is no mere “moon/June” Tin Pan Alley tune man. He is, however, the first songwriter ever awarded the Pulitzer Prize (for his contribution to *Of Thee I Sing*, 1931), the author of a remarkably entertaining, thoroughly erudite book (*Lyrics on Several Occasions*, Knopf, 1959, just reissued as a Viking paperback), an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts (University of Maryland, 1966), and perhaps the first man in history—though certainly not the last—to rhyme “glamorous” with “amorous” (in *'S Wonderful*, from *Funny Face*, 1927).

When I brought this little historical fact to his attention recently, Gershwin's response was typically professional: “‘Glamorous/amorous’ is an ordinary three-syllable or triple rhyme; I don't understand why you give it so much importance, even though perhaps I was the first to use it in a song. Actually, a more original triple rhyme in the same song is the second refrain's ‘four leaf clover time/working overtime.’”

Gershwin may not have found the line particularly remarkable, but a drama critic once did. At an afternoon rehearsal during the out-of-town tryout phase of *Funny Face* (it was then still suffering extensive revisions before its New York opening), Gershwin happened to be standing in the lobby of the Shubert Theatre and was spotted by the critic, who first inquired about the show's progress and then went on to ask whether anything were being done about the “obscene phrase” in *'S Wonderful*. Ira Gershwin, the soul of decorum and the model of

taste, was taken quite aback. Recovering, he managed to ask the critic just which phrase he had in mind, and was informed that “feeling amorous” was a sentiment perhaps more fittingly scrawled on a fence somewhere than sung from the stage of the Shubert. The artist in Gershwin wisely chose to ignore the critical advice and *'S Wonderful* stayed in the show in its original form, uncensored for Philadelphian delicacy. What the critic apparently missed was that the song was a satire of the popular ballad (Tin Pan Alley-ese for lovesong). What Gershwin delivered with a wry twinkle in the eye, however, countless imitators were soon to declaim in dead, humorless earnest, and before long the air was almost as cluttered with “amorous/glamorous” as it had once been with “moon/June.”

But Gershwin has consistently walked confidently in where less imaginative eclectics fear even to borrow. The classic example, of course, is the already quoted *Blah, Blah, Blah*—not even the most desperate of plagiarists would dare lift its central idea, which is nothing more than a put-down of the conventional Hollywood “theme song” idea. It was concocted by the Gershwin brothers for their first film, *Delicious* (1931). The lyrics consist of a series of “blahs,” with line endings selected from such time-worn lyric rhymes as “eyes,” “hair,” “skies,” and, of course, “care.” These, together with a sprinkling of “tra-la-las” to lend rhythmic variety and a few multisyllabic clichés such as “cottage for two,” “merry month of May,” and “clouds of gray” say all that is necessary to be said on the subject.

The song is useful, however, for the insight it provides into the Gershwins' work methods. Written initially for a proposed Ziegfeld project, *East Is West* (1928, for production the following year), as *Lady of the Moon*, it had to be reworked when Ziegfeld switched in midstream from the Oriental setting of *East Is West* to the less exotic *Show Girl*.

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It re-emerged as *I Just Looked at You*, but when *Show Girl* finally opened in the summer of 1929 it was strangely not to be heard. And so it was that when the Gershwins were summoned to Hollywood the following year and needed a “good ballad tune” for their theme-song spoof, *Lady of the Moon* came out of the trunk to be born again as *Blah, Blah, Blah*, a good musical idea whose time had finally come.

Curiously, many of the Gershwins' friends accused the Words Gershwin of scuttling the Music Gershwin's fine melody, insisting that the “too-special” lyric denied the song its deserved popularity. But these misguided well-wishers hardly give George Gershwin his due. *His* musical wit, *his* compulsive striving for technical excellence, as well as *his* caustic view of inferior songwriting are completely at one with his brother's lyric in this song. For all their personality divergences, the Gershwins' attitude toward the art of popular songwriting was a common meeting ground. When they met for work, their relationship was purely, even severely, professional; that they shared the name Gershwin was merely an accident of birth.

**T**HERE is, it would appear, no satisfactory explanation in heredity for the Gershwins' talents. Their parents were Russian immigrants who had come to the United States in the early Nineties, had met on New York's Lower East Side, and married. Morris Gershwin was then a shoemaker and Rose Bruskin Gershwin kept house. Their first son, Israel (later Ira), was born December 6, 1896. The New York childhood of the Gershwins—George was born in 1898, Arthur in 1900, Frances in 1906—was typical of that of many who grew up there just after the turn of the century. It was an exciting time, but a relaxed one as well. On New York's “teeming

Lower East Side,” the Old World and the New fused. If the older generation tended to keep familiar traditions—language, folklore, religion, and song—alive, the younger generation was bent on Americanization. Thus the Old World values survived, but with a slight new twist.

For example, in compliance with the traditions of learning and culture brought over from Europe, a second-hand piano was, conventionally enough, introduced into the Gershwin household—but so was a phonograph. The piano was intended for Ira, then about fourteen, but it was younger brother George who ran to the keyboard and surprised everyone by playing a current popular song. “I remember being particularly impressed by his left hand,” Ira Gershwin later wrote.

Ira's first earnings (from catering his mother's weekly poker parties) and allowance he spent seeing the new movies at the Unique Cinema on Grand Street; nearby was the Grand Street Theatre where he could experience live dramatic productions. By the time he was twelve he had begun a scrapbook, clipping and preserving those examples of humorous verse that delighted him. He revealed an even more enterprising intellectual curiosity by compiling a kind of encyclopedia from old history books and almanacs.

An omnivorous reader from boyhood, he rapidly graduated from the dime-novel phase (*Fred Fearnot* and the Horatio Alger series) and read everything he could lay his eyes on. And he began producing, in his early teens, his own handmade newspaper, *The Leaf*, which had a life of no less than twenty-six weeks. For this sturdy little publication (it was printed on shirt-cardboards) he wrote the text and drew the illustrations, reporting on neighborhood events and even supplying his own advertising.

*In 1904, at the age of eight, Ira Gershwin gave some evidence of becoming a snappy dresser. But more serious artistic talents were developing, and in 1915 he produced this sketch (far right) of the view from the Gershwins' window in Coney Island, as well as involving himself in the tricky craft of putting words together meaningfully.*







The mature Ira Gershwin is characterized by steel-rim glasses, a pipe in the mouth, and pencil and notepaper always in hand.

In his teens Ira Gershwin revealed himself to be a competent artist: his early sketches and paintings (and his mature productions as well) are excellent, his cartoons deft and witty. When asked years later why he had given up painting after mastering technique and developing a fine color sense, he replied that “it became too interesting”—meaning, of course, that it took him away from his true calling.

That calling was, of course, words. He had quite early become taken with light verse, particularly the witticisms of columnist F. P. A. (Franklin P. Adams, of *Information Please* fame) and C. L. Edson. Under their influence he began writing down his own wry world view in rhyme. And so we find him, in 1910, listed on the masthead of the *Academic Herald*, a little newspaper put out by the students of Townsend Harris Hall, the New York prep school for bright youngsters who hoped to enter the City College of New York; Gershwin was identified as one of the art editors. He was also co-editor of the paper’s “Much Ado” column—quips, verse, and snappy sayings—with a fellow East Sider, Edgar Y. Harburg. They continued the partnership later at City College, contributing the “Gargoyle Gargles” column to the school’s newspaper. Gershwin’s co-author would of course eventually burst upon the world as the lyricist E. Y. “Yip” Harburg (*The Wizard of Oz*, *Bloomer Girl*, and *Finian’s Rainbow*, among others).

Although “Gersh,” as he signed himself in CCNY’s monthly humor publication *Mercury*, had begun to carve out a modest literary reputation for himself on campus, his academic performance was not something to call home about. “My career at City College,” he once remarked, “could hardly be set down as felicitous. In my second year I was still taking first-year mathematics, and when I heard

that calculus was in the offing, I decided to call it an education.”

Gershwin followed his “education” with an assortment of odd jobs while trying to regroup his faculties by attending college classes at night. He was a cashier in his father’s hotel/Turkish bath, a photographic darkroom assistant, a shipping clerk in a department store, cashier for a traveling circus, and a critic for the long-gone show-business paper called *The Clipper* (at a salary of nothing per week). “I’m afraid I was pretty much of a floating soul, I couldn’t concentrate on anything. I haunted the movies; I read without plan or purpose. To tell the truth, I was at a complete loss, and I didn’t care.”

Then, in February of 1918, there occurred a small event that may have been decisive in breaking this spell. The Mencken-Nathan magazine, *The Smart Set*, published an eight-line contribution by Ira under the pen name of Bruskin (his mother’s maiden name) Gershwin. Titled *The Shrine*, the little piece must have seemed to its author to be some kind of sign or portent, for along with the check came the editors’ request that he send in more of his work. As Gershwin noted in his diary, the check, “in full payment for all rights in America and Great Britain,” represented “the munificent honorarium of 1 simoleum.”

Ira was not unaware, at the time, of the craft of songwriting, for brother George had long since (May 1914) dropped out of the High School of Commerce (no bookkeeper he) to become a Tin Pan Alley piano player and had, in fact, published his first song in 1916. He was also active as a piano-roll cutter and rehearsal pianist. And Ira Gershwin’s diary of this period reveals that he was a frequenter of vaudeville: “To the Century with George and saw *The Century Girl*, a mammoth musical extravaganza . . . Music by I. Berlin and Victor Herbert or vice versa.” Little sister Frances (“Frankie”) is mentioned in the diary’s pages as an aspiring singer/dancer. Clearly there was a musical/theatrical atmosphere into which Ira was irresolutely drifting.

At just what moment Ira decided to try his hand at joining his brother in the world of song is not precisely known. As early as June of 1918 he had written out lyrics to a song, *The Great American Folk Song*, on the stationery of his father’s St. Nicholas Baths (“Russian and Turkish”). He showed the lyric to George, and he liked it. “So we sat down at the piano and George started something. The something sounded good, so we kept it.” The song eventually evolved into *The Real American Folk Song (Is a Rag)*—that sounds almost prophetic today!—

the first Gershwin Brothers collaboration to be used in a show: *Ladies First*, starring Nora Bayes.

For this occasion Ira decided to use a pseudonym, so he borrowed the names of his sister and younger brother to bring into the world one "Arthur Francis"—he would not be accused of trying to smuggle himself into the theater on his brother's reputation. By this time George was collaborating with Irving Caesar and Schuyler Greene, both of whom enjoyed greater Tin Pan Alley celebrity than the newborn Arthur Francis. Ira's taste for anonymity, the background, and privacy was no pose. Even in the days when he was hailed and celebrated, he preferred blending, if not into the wall-paper, then at least into the crowd. George, he believed—and still believes—was the one who deserved the spotlight. Which is not to say that Ira Gershwin sells himself short—he enjoys intelligent recognition and sincere appreciation as much as anyone—but that he prefers to have his privacy and to let his work speak for itself and for him.

The year 1920 is something of a watershed date. It introduces the decade of the Twenties, so tightly held in those vise-like parentheses of history, the Great War and the Great Depression. The changes in the social fabric of the Western world of which these two events are still such potent reminders were not without their reflections in the arts, both serious and popular. If the period were not notable for anything else (Stutz Bearcats, bobbed hair, and spats?) it would have to be remembered as the begetter of a singularly productive and accomplished generation of songwriters. Native-born (most of them), they unconsciously (or even consciously) declared their independence from European traditions to embrace, with characteristic American zest, the sounds, both words and music, around them. Most of them were New Yorkers, most were

educated men, and these creators of the songs for the musicals of the Twenties brought to their work a standard of musical craft and literacy that had few antecedents in the Tin Pan Alley of the time, and regrettably few descendants since.

And so they came, these first-generation (most of them) Americans, from the halls of City College (Ira Gershwin, Yip Harburg, Irving Caesar), from Columbia (Oscar Hammerstein II, Lorenz Hart, Richard Rodgers, Howard Dietz), from Yale and Harvard (Midwesterner Cole Porter is part of the story if not quite cut to the pattern), out of the academy and straight into the rough-and-tumble of Broadway. To survive in that world it was necessary to be tough as well as talented; these men not only survived, but managed to invent in the process what was really a new kind of music, one whose base was the theater and the idea of the "musical show" rather than Tin Pan Alley and the individual "hit." And it was not only the music that changed, but the audience as well, for it was composed not of Everyman and his buxom wife, but rather a reasonably sophisticated, modestly literate, and, in fact, quite limited circle of metropolitan theater-goers. The music was not cynical hack work for the masses, and popularity, however gratifying and lucrative, was not their chief concern: excellence was.

THAT somewhat grand socio-cultural exposition out of the way, let us return to the career of "Arthur Francis." Some time in 1920 he joined forces in a songwriting venture with composer Vincent Youmans; by the next year they had made their mark. Arthur Francis, in fact, attached his name to two shows that year. The first, *A Dangerous Maid*, had music by George Gershwin, but it expired prematurely in Pittsburgh. The second, with music by Youmans and Paul Lannin, was *Two Little Girls in*

Bobby Clark and Paul McCullough (left) in the 1930 version of *Strike Up the Band*. Fred Astaire (right) lectures Betty Compton, Adele Astaire, and Gertrude McDonald in *Funny Face*, a hit the same year (1927) the original *Strike Up the Band* flopped.





*Blue*, which made it to Broadway and ran for more than 130 performances (not at all bad for those days). Though three songs from *Two Little Girls* were to enjoy some popularity (*Who's Who with You?*, *Oh, Me! Oh, My!*, and *Dolly*), the songs from *A Dangerous Maid* also reveal a lyricist of imagination and skill. In one titled *Boy Wanted*, for example, there are, surprisingly, references to Nietzsche and Freud. This must have been a little hard for the publishers to take—they would surely, along with the greater part of the public, have preferred less esoteric allusions. Another song, *The Simple Life*, is perhaps more typical, a little tribute to bucolic employments:

*I love to chase the butterflies,  
And watch them flutter;  
I think the greatest exercise  
Is churning butter.\**

The imagery is charmingly apt, and the double rhymes are characteristically Gershwin (though he would now be uncomfortable about using “butter” twice). The lyric later reveals (in a line using the then-current piece of slang “making hay”) the punster in Gershwin. More important, however, this relatively minor effort reveals all the elements of the Gershwin approach, those factors that make his work an enduring contribution to the history and evolution of the American popular song: originality without archness; a craftsmanship which issues naturally from intelligence, wit, and taste; rhymes that are true rhymes; and words that not only fit the music but make sense. It may seem obvious to list these virtues so flatly here, but they were very original virtues when they first appeared, and they are rare even today.

Gershwin is—always was—a stickler for the right word, whether in conversation, correspondence, or

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*Ethel Merman, a new name to musical comedy in 1930, appeared in Girl Crazy, making every single syllable of her songs count.*



Culver Pictures

song. He was one of the pioneers of good grammar and good sense in popular songwriting. Not that he shuns dialect, slang, colloquialisms, the pungent cliché, or other useful idiomatic ornaments, for everyday speech—and Gershwin songs are rooted in it—invests a lyric with timely vigor and a communicative energy today just as it did in the earthy, functional lyrics of the Elizabethans. Gershwin, despite the claims of many of his over-enthusiastic admirers, does not consider himself a poet. So far as a song lyric is concerned, he says, “any resemblance to actual poetry, living or dead, is highly improbable.” Popular song lyrics—unlike poetry—were never intended to stand alone, he maintains. They are there to verbalize the melody and, in a musical show, perhaps to further the progress of the plot a bit (though this was not as much a preoccupation of songwriters of the Twenties as it was to be for those of the Forties). The result of joining words to music is a single unit, a song. When the two parts are good, and when they match—aye, there’s the rub!—the song may be a very good one indeed. The secret is no secret at all: fine songs need only a certain genius and a lot of hard work, with an emphasis on the latter.

Gershwin’s collaborators always remarked on his industry and perseverance. He filled pages with notes, dummy lyrics, and alternate rhymes before, with much hesitation, he would part with one of his creations. His penchant for polishing even beyond that point earned him the nickname “The Jeweler” from friend and composer Kay Swift. As for that classic question about working method, in Ira Gershwin’s case it was almost always the music that came first. This was especially true in his collaborations with his brother; a melody George may have tossed off in an evening might keep Ira occupied for a week.

TYPICALLY, then, Gershwin went back to work. Having achieved a modest success with *Two Little Girls in Blue*, he kept the hand of Arthur Francis busy for the next couple of years collaborating with several composers, among them Lewis Gensler, Raymond Hubbell, and Paul Lannin. He also collaborated on a lyric now and then with B. G. DeSylva; their best-known joint effort from that time is the apparently imperishable *I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise* (it began life in Ira’s notebook as *New Step Every Day*). By 1924, since just about everyone in the music business knew the true identity of Arthur Francis, it seemed appropriate to consign him to history. Besides, Francis was being frequently confused with another lyricist, Arthur Jackson, and in England there was one whose real name, as

luck would have it, happened to be Arthur Francis.

With Francis' exit, Ira Gershwin entered the musical lists, his first show being the London-produced success *Primrose* in September of 1924. Within four months he made his American debut in his own name with the Broadway production of *Lady, Be Good!* The songs from *Primrose* are little known today (*Boy Wanted* is among them, having been salvaged from *A Dangerous Maid*), but not so those from *Lady, Be Good!*, which are already examples of the Gershwin brothers at their best. *The Man I Love*, now one of the everlasting musico-lyrical glories of our popular song, was intended for the show, but it was eliminated (as it would be from several subsequent productions) because it simply refused to function as a show song. But there were more than enough without it: the title song, *Fascinating Rhythm*, the duet *So Am I*, the satiric *Half of It, Dearie, Blues*, and *Little Jazz Bird*.

*Lady, Be Good!* was an auspicious beginning for the brothers, and its promise would be more than fulfilled over the next couple of decades up to the tragic ending of *The Goldwyn Follies* of 1937, which George did not live to complete. A listing of the songs the Gershwins provided for shows would read like a "hundred best" compendium of the Twenties and Thirties. The shows themselves were another matter: their librettos, or "books," were gossamer, mere vehicles to carry the stars, the comedians, the girls, the songs, and the dances—entertainment was all, plot incidental, enlightenment inconsequential. Not all of the musicals of the period in which the Gershwins were most active were plotless and utterly lacking in saving topicality—the revues of the time were often trenchant comments on current foibles and contemporary fools. But the Gershwin musicals following *Lady, Be Good!* and including the 1930 *Girl Crazy* were characteristic: lighthearted, amusingly brittle, cer-

tainly entertaining, and graced with songs of high quality. The "vehicles" are gone today, of course; what remains are the songs they were designed to carry.

ONE Gershwin show, however, does not fit into this mindless category: the original version of *Strike Up the Band* of 1927. It was one of the earliest Broadway shows with a truly "integrated" score (Jerome Kern's *Show Boat* appeared later the same year, and it too had songs that were woven carefully into the plot). The plot of *Strike Up the Band* revolved around an oddly delicate subject: war. Librettist George S. Kaufman was most unkind to various sacred cows, including patriotism, and the book impressed many as being too bitter, too mocking for "entertainment," which was at the time, of course, the very *raison d'être* of the musical. Undaunted, Kaufman went ahead with his decidedly jaundiced view of one of mankind's most popular and pertinacious activities, and the Gershwins matched it with songs that slipped seamlessly into the story. The point of view was right out front in the original verse to the title song:

*We're in a bigger, better war  
For your patriotic pastime.  
We don't know what we're fighting for—  
But we didn't know the last time!\**

*Variety* observed that the show would never become a favorite with the American Legion—but then that never became an issue, for *Strike Up the Band* closed in Philadelphia during its tryouts: it attracted critical praise, but it did not bring in an audience. The Gershwins had their disappointment alleviated by the success of *Funny Face*, a less bookish show, later the same year. Three years later, in a stingless revision by Morrie Ryskind, *Strike Up the Band* opened again for a successful

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*Credit for Of Thee I Sing, awarded a Pulitzer Prize on May 2, 1932, was shared by George and Ira together with George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind, the librettists. Victor Moore (right) played vice-presidential candidate Alexander Throttlebottom.*





run. Some of the original songs were retained, but new ones were fashioned to fit the revised version.

Broadway never discounts success, so the team of Kaufman, Ryskind, and the Gershwins was brought together to concoct another satire, *Of Thee I Sing*, in 1931. Though the show partook more of the flavor of Ryskind's revision than the original of *Strike Up the Band*, it was still a fairly devastating lampoon of the American political scene, viewing politicians as masters of stupidity and cupidity (shouldn't we be having a revival of it about now?).

The songs are as much a part of the book as the dialogue. "There are no verse-and-chorus songs," Ira Gershwin once pointed out. He took special pride in *Wintergreen for President* because it was one of the shortest lyrics ever written:

*Wintergreen for President!*  
*Wintergreen for President!*  
 He's the man the people choose;  
 Loves the Irish and the Jews.\*

That's it, all of it. Fifteen words (not counting the repeated line), and an ingenious invention. One wonders how politicians could ever again employ foolish campaign songs after it—but, as the show made clear, if anyone never learns from history, it's a politician. The irreverent tone of the show led to some concern, even fears, perhaps, of political repercussions (would there have been an "enemies list"?), and the story was that Victor Moore expected to be jailed for his interpretation of vice-president "Alexander Throttlebottom." Instead, *Of Thee I Sing* was hailed by practically everyone, including the Pulitzer Prize committee. One exception was the France-America Society, which objected to Ira's lyrical references to the war debt, the depiction of the French ambassador, and the representation of the show's Diana Devereaux as "the illegitimate daughter of an illegitimate son of an ille-

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gitimate nephew of Napoleon." Just the *idea* of the lyric was quite daring for the time—one simply did not bring up the subject of illegitimacy in a light-hearted musical comedy.

Further political dissections ensued in *Let 'Em Eat Cake* (1933), which carried the story of Wintergreen and Throttlebottom beyond their election, the point where *Of Thee I Sing* ended. Emboldened by the success of the earlier show, Kaufman and Ryskind reverted to the acrid spirit of the first *Strike Up the Band*. The result was undoubtedly one of the most bitter books ever written for a musical—and one of the outstanding scores of the American musical theater. It is also one of the Gershwins' least known—only the contrapuntal *Mine* has achieved any popularity.

*Let 'Em Eat Cake* was a festival of iconoclasm. No one was spared—politicians, the rich, the military, the Supreme Court (which had already received lumps in the first show), and revolutionaries. As Gershwin himself observed, "If *Strike Up the Band* was a satire on War, and *Of Thee I Sing* one on Politics, *Let 'Em Eat Cake* was a satire on Practically Everything. Straddling no fence, it trampled the Extreme Right one moment, the Extreme Left the next."

But Ira's gentle touch contrived nonetheless to take some of the bitterness out of the Kaufman-Ryskind invective:

*Down with one and one make two,*  
*Down with ev'rything in view!*  
*Down with all majorities;*  
*Likewise all minorities!*  
*Down with you, and you, and you!\**

This is but a sample from an extended segment of the show called *Union Square*, and it is sung by the professional agitator Kruger, who doesn't like *anybody* or *anything*. He rouses the rabble with his

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*Let 'Em Eat Cake* (left), produced in 1933, starred Victor Moore, Lois Moran, and William Gaxton, while *Park Avenue*, a collaboration with Arthur Schwartz in 1946, presented Mary Wickes, Marthe Errolle, and Ruth Materson in *Don't Be a Woman If You Can*.



Culver Pictures



The Gershwins Collection

denunciations, swearing to “tear down the House of Morgan,” and “burn the Roxy organ.” There are even more drastic incitements in an unused verse:

*Let's tear down the House and Senate!  
Down with Joan and Connie Bennett!  
Down with Russia, down with Stalin!  
Down with four quarts to the gallon!  
Down with Marx and those four brothers!  
Down with plays by Rachel Crothers!\**

While these sentiments and the technique that gives them expression may qualify as “light verse,” there is hidden among the rhythm and rhyme a bit of wisdom that says: *What fools these mortals be.* The witty juxtaposition of the reasonable and the ridiculous—a Gershwin trademark—is, of course, sublimely successful here. But, just as Gershwin does not view himself as a poet, neither does he cast himself in the role of social commentator. These lines were intended only to reveal character and move the story along. They are not Ira Gershwin voicing a political view; they are Ira Gershwin doing a job, and a good one too.

Long before these political operettas Gershwin had been making observations on human folly: social climbing in *These Charming People* (1925), psychiatry (and its conjoined inevitability, the giant fee) in *Tell the Doc* (1927), a theme he was to touch upon again in *Freud and Jung and Adler* (1933) and push to some kind of musical-theater apotheosis in *Lady in the Dark* (with music by Kurt Weill) in 1941. Women? Ira Gershwin noted their plight in contemporary society as early as 1946, long before *The Cause* resurfaced. Collaborating with Arthur Schwartz on the Broadway show *Park Avenue*, Gershwin created what he refers to as “an upper-bracket litany,” succinctly entitled *Don't Be a Woman If You Can*, in which a trio of well-heeled

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ladies lament their plight spending their lives “catering to man.” The coddled but put-upon trio



The Gershwin Collection

#### WORDS BY IRA GERSHWIN—A SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

##### Shows:

- *Lady Be Good!* (George Gershwin). Fred and Adele Astaire. George Gershwin. Monmouth-Evergreen MES 7036.
- *Tip Toes* (George Gershwin). Dorothy Dickson, Allen Kearns, others. Monmouth-Evergreen MES 7052. (Includes Youmans' *Wildflower*.)
- *Oh, Kay!* (George Gershwin). Gertrude Lawrence. Monmouth-Evergreen MES 7043. (Includes Porter's *Nymph Errant*.)
- *Funny Face* (George Gershwin). Fred and Adele Astaire, George Gershwin, others. Monmouth-Evergreen MES 7037.
- *Girl Crazy* (George Gershwin). Mary Martin, Louise Carlyle, others. Columbia CSP COS-2560.
- *Porgy and Bess* (George Gershwin-DuBose Heyward). Lawrence Winters, Camilla Williams, Avon Long, others. Odyssey 32360018E.
- *Lady in the Dark* (Kurt Weill). Gertrude Lawrence, others. RCA LPV-503. (Includes Weill's *Down in the Valley*.)
- *Lady in the Dark* (Kurt Weill). Risë Stevens, Adolph Green, John Reardon. Columbia CSP COS 2390.
- *A Star Is Born* (Harold Arlen). Judy Garland. Harmony HS 11366.

##### Song Collections:

- *Nothing Thrilled Us Half As Much*. Fred Astaire in several of the film songs. Epic FLS 15103.
- *For George and Ira*. Frances Gershwin Godowsky, with Alfred Simon and Jack Easton, pianists. Monmouth-Evergreen MES 7060.
- *We Like a Gershwin Tune*. Ronny Whyte and Travis Hudson, vocals and piano. Monmouth-Evergreen MES 7061.
- *Bobby Short is K-ra-zy for Gershwin*. Bobby Short, vocals and piano. Atlantic 2-608.







*Lady in the Dark* (1941), an early psychoanalytic musical, had lyrics by Ira, music by Weill, and starred Gertrude Lawrence.

voices its trials with perfume (“Shall it be Chanel or Flattery/Sexy or Assault-and-Battery”), fur coats (“Soon they’ll have a killer-diller/Made of unborn caterpillar”), nail polish (“Danube Blue or maybe Hudson River/Or that new tone called Chopped Liver”), and hair-dos (“Upswept, downswept, would you like it broom-swept?”).

Virtuoso word-play is Gershwin’s delight, as is obvious in these lines. *I Love to Rhyme*, one of the last songs he wrote with his brother, is probably as close to an Ira Gershwin credo as we’ll ever get. When he carries something off well, he is not ashamed to enjoy it, and he admits to certain favorites among his lyrics—the verse to *I’ve Got Beginner’s Luck*, for example, with its allusions to neophyte gamblers and anglers. He is disappointed when, as is customary today, singers omit the verses of Gershwin songs: “My brother and I worked as hard on the verses as the refrains. Old timers felt that verses were very important, but they seem to have gone out of style.” (As an example of the old style of thinking, it might be pointed out that what is now the brilliant refrain to *The Man I Love* was originally the verse to another song.)

Other examples of Gershwin’s facility in verbal capers may be found in *Let’s Call the Whole Thing Off* (“You say tomāto and I say tomahto . . .”), *Delishious*, and *Sunny Disposish*, not to mention *’S Wonderful*, especially the verse. The first of these parodies speech affectation, the others speech vogues. Gershwin has always had a fine ear for the verbal mannerisms, accents, and dialects in which English—any language, perhaps—is so rich, and his skill in bending them to the requirements of lyric writing was tested many times, not the least of them in the writing of *Porgy and Bess*. George had started work on *Porgy and Bess* with the dramatist-poet

DuBose Heyward at the time Ira was occupied with Harold Arlen and Yip Harburg on the revue *Life Begins at 8:40*. The whole of the first-act music of *Porgy* was completed (including the fine *Summertime*) before Ira was invited to lend a hand with the lyrics—it having been discovered that being a poet was not quite the same thing as being a lyricist! Gershwin thus assisted in editing some of the lyrics that Heyward mailed up from North Carolina. It developed into a smooth working relationship, with the two lyricists sharing the work on some songs and doing others on their own. In general, the more purely folk-like are Heyward’s and the more sophisticated Gershwin’s. Needless to say, Gershwin provided the words for the brilliant *It Ain’t Necessarily So*.

*Porgy and Bess* was the last major collaboration of the Gershwins, although their final film songs were among their best. The death of his brother led Ira to retire for a time from songwriting. He kept his hand in for an occasional chore, but from 1937 until 1941, with the triumphant production of *Lady in the Dark*, he preferred to remain inactive. This Kurt Weill musical finally liberated “Arthur Francis,” for in it he was, although not as he would have wanted it, finally on his own and out from under the shadow of his brother. The excellence of the lyrics caused many who had taken him for granted to reassess his work, and students of song and the musical theater quickly, if belatedly, promoted him to a place on the dais alongside his brother.

**I**RA’S future work with Weill as well as with Arthur Schwartz, Jerome Kern, Aaron Copland (yes, Copland—the songs for a film called *North Star*), Harry Warren, Burton Lane, and Harold Arlen were additional proof of the genuineness and importance of his gifts. Now, with the passage of time, it can be seen that even among those George Gershwin songs that have endured, the bulk of them have lyrics by Mr. Words. Among Ira’s last film scores was the fine one, done with Harold Arlen, for *A Star Is Born*. The haunting *The Man That Got Away*, with its chilling first line—“The night is bitter”—will be around for a very long time. Characteristically, the score also includes a couple of irreverent love songs—*Someone at Last* and *Gotta Have Me Go with You*—to prove that the lyricist has been consistent in his outlook. For, as he chided a friend, “Don’t knock love, my boy. Without it we’d be out of business.”

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Edward Jablonski is co-author, with Lawrence D. Stewart, of *The Gershwin Years*, just published in a new edition by Doubleday. He is now at work on *An Encyclopedia of American Music*.



What are the special

# AUDIO EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR LISTENING TO ROCK MUSIC?

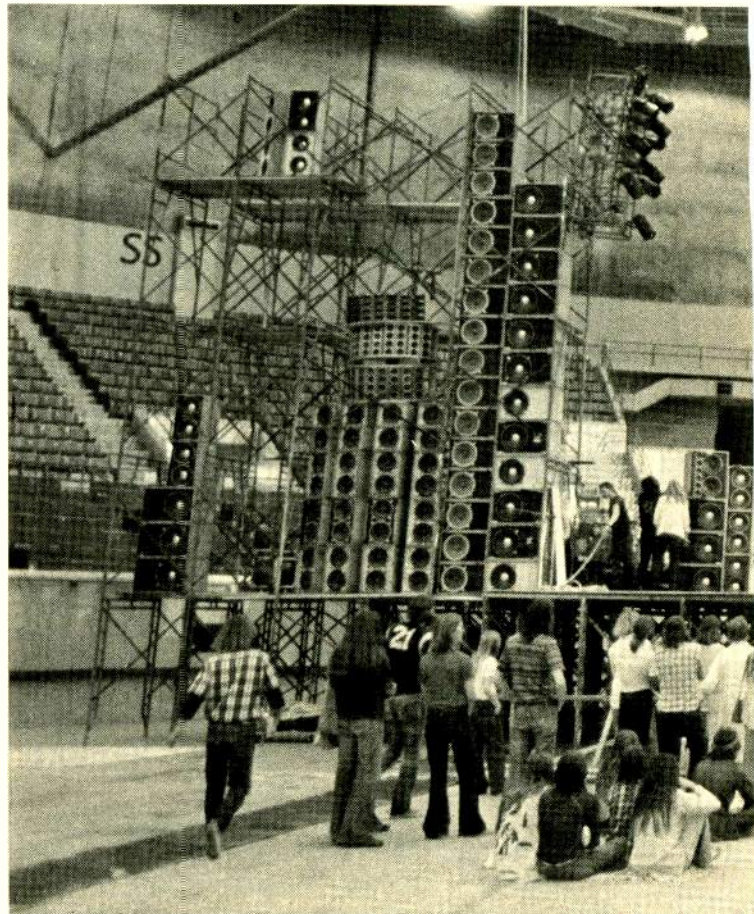
By Dan Dugan

*There is just no way you can  
get the Grateful Dead live  
into your living room.*

FROM its beginning up until the mid-Sixties, rock-and-roll was crippled in its live-performance aspect by inadequate sound equipment as the musicians—and their audiences with them—graduated from small clubs to larger and larger halls and auditoriums. Equipment manufacturers began to see the market potential in the need thus created, design engineers were put to work, and by 1968 or so live-music amplification systems had evolved to the point that concert-goers in the larger halls were at last getting sound that was adequate—from the standpoint of volume, at least.

There has been a continuing evolution since, though it is now principally in the direction of higher sound *quality*. In a sense, the trend was inevitable: the rock audience, conditioned to good sound by home hi-fi components, had simply become less tolerant of bad sound at concerts. But improvement has been slow, and rock concerts at which all elements—electronic and acoustic—combine to produce sound as good as can be heard from a top-quality home system are still rare.

Producers of rock recordings do not try to reproduce the concert experience. In fact, there are



so many differences between the sound at a concert and that on a record that recorded rock could almost be considered a different art form with different aesthetic criteria, and this has definite implications for home reproduction.

Live rock-and-roll is primarily a social ritual. The rock music lover's objective in going to a concert is to get off on a communal experience involving *witnessing* the live performance of his favorite music. The finer details of sound texture are not necessary for this experience, though they certainly enhance it when they are present. Live rock, just like most of the other performing arts, is a matter of two-way communication between artist(s) and audience. At its best, the current flow in such a circuit can become so intense that things like the fidelity of sound become almost irrelevant.

Recorded music, however, is a whole different trip. Like film, it is largely a director's medium, one in which the final product is usually not created by its performers as an integrated whole in real time. Most rock recordings are the product of laborious analysis and synthesis in the mixing and editing process, and these often take place quite some time after the performers have put down their instru-



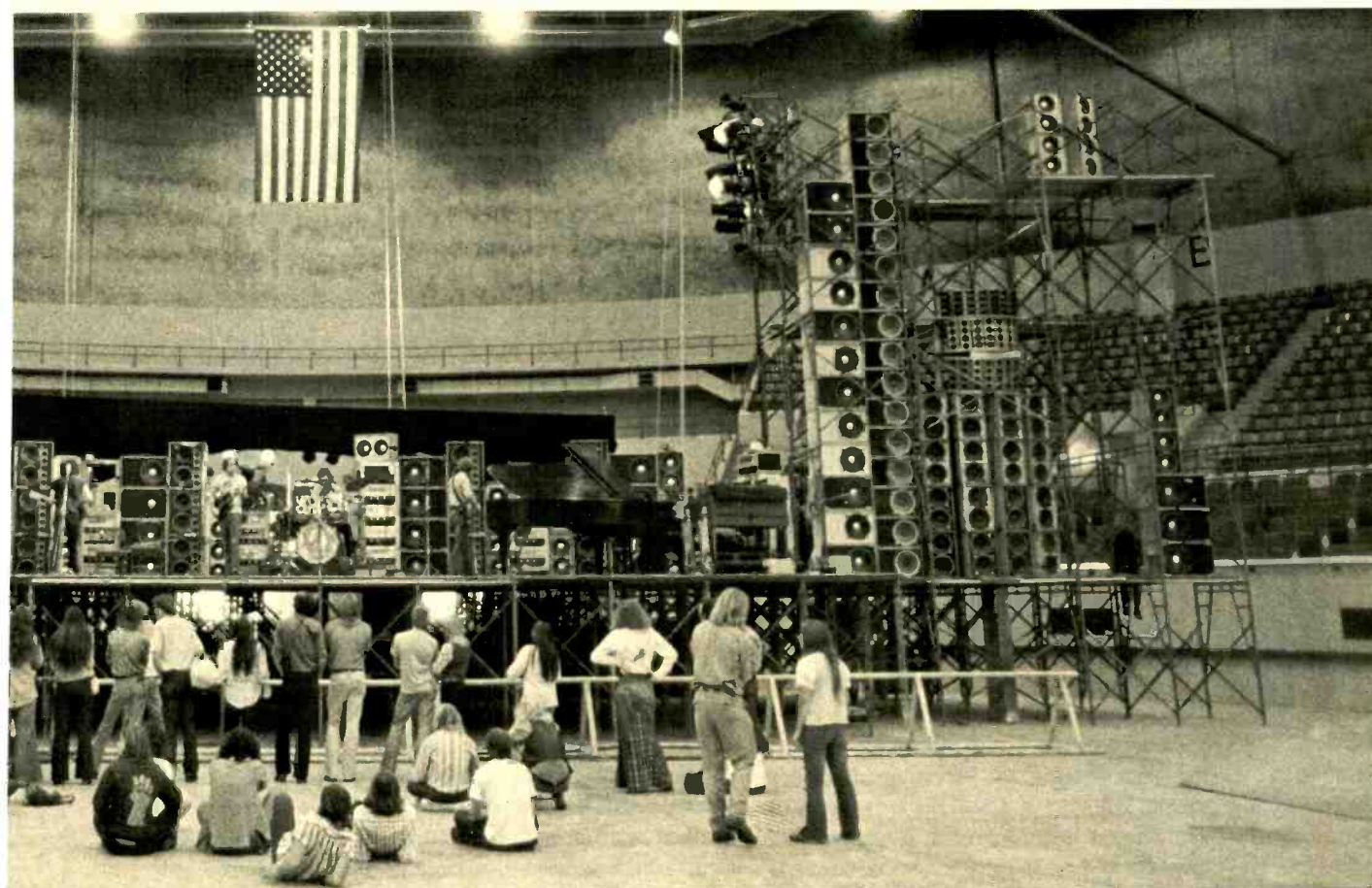


Photo by Annie Leibovitz, courtesy Rolling Stone

ments. The multitrack professional tape recorder that permits each of the instruments and vocalists to be recorded on a separate track (or even at different times) is the basic tool of the recording engineer/producer. In the recordings of certain groups this equipment plays such a large role that these groups cannot even duplicate their recorded performances in live concerts. And since few, if any, of the most devoted rock fans can work up for a recording the same degree of all-absorbing ecstasy induced by a concert, listeners to rock recordings are naturally a lot more critical of the sound on records and the way it is reproduced by their audio equipment than they are of "live" sound.

Given this situation, what special qualities are required in a home music system to do justice to rock recordings? To get right down to cases, there is abroad a common notion that there are *different* equipment requirements for classical and for rock-music listeners; I don't think there are. However, a real distinction should be made between serious and casual listeners to music of *any* type. "Serious" listening takes place when the music is *the* focus of attention and listening the *principal* activity. This usually, though not always, means comparatively

high sound levels—or perhaps *realistic* volume levels would be more apt in the case of music that could conceivably be performed live in your home, and just plain *loud* a suitable description for all the rest. Dynamic range is one of music's most powerful aesthetic elements, and when it is restricted by inadequate volume, most of the music's impact and excitement are lost. Casual listening to music played at background levels and functioning as a sort of rhythmic accompaniment to our daily activities involves entirely different—and far less critical—standards of reproduction.

**S**ERIOUS rock listeners tend to be concerned principally with two aspects of sound reproduction at home: getting enough volume and enough bass. Let's look at the sound-level needs first. Everybody agrees that rock concerts are loud, and most rock musicians take a certain pride in achieving ever-higher sound levels. Grace Slick of Jefferson Airplane once told an interviewer that her main ambition was to be "louder." Charlie Butten, the builder of Santana's big systems, says that stage monitor speakers that can produce a level of 130 dB at the performers' ears are accepted as "loud enough—but

they'd like more." (The purpose of stage monitors is to allow the performers to hear their own contribution separated from the general din.) Concert sound man Jim Coe (Jefferson Airplane, Hot Tuna) has reported typical levels in very large halls in the range of 100 to 115 dB. This is the sound level reached by a landing jet plane. So live rock *is* loud, and rock records—for serious listening, that is—are meant to be played loud, just *how* loud being a matter to be resolved between your personal taste and your neighbors' forbearance.

But there seem to be two kinds of "loud" music-listening levels. If listeners are relatively passive, sitting down, sound levels from 95 to 105 dB are usually as loud as they want. However, something happens when people get up to dance. About ten times more sound energy is then preferred, perhaps to support the human energy output. This means sound levels of 105 to 115 dB. If you're not dancing or otherwise physically involved, levels that high can be decidedly unpleasant.

The volume a hi-fi system can deliver depends principally on the power of the amplifier and the efficiency of the speakers it drives. (Efficiency is the ratio of acoustic power coming out of the speaker to the electrical power fed into it.) Speakers vary so much in efficiency that it is impossible to give any rules for matching up speakers and amps for some desired sound level. The accompanying chart shows the general relationship between speaker efficiency, amplifier power, and sound level in a typical room. The problem is to find reliable (and comparable) efficiency ratings for available speakers. Occasionally, speaker specifications will give some idea of the sound-level output achieved for a given amplifier-power input, but there are, unfortunately, no "standard" test conditions for such measurements and no agreement as to the type of test signals that should be used. Furthermore, efficiency ratings duck the question of power-handling capability. The fact that speaker X provides a 90-dB output with 1 watt of amplifier drive doesn't mean that a proportional increase (to 110 dB) is possible with a 100-watt drive. Very likely, the speaker will simply come apart—audibly or mechanically—instead. (For a detailed discussion of these matters, see "Loudspeaker Power Needs" by Roy Allison in the September 1973 issue.)

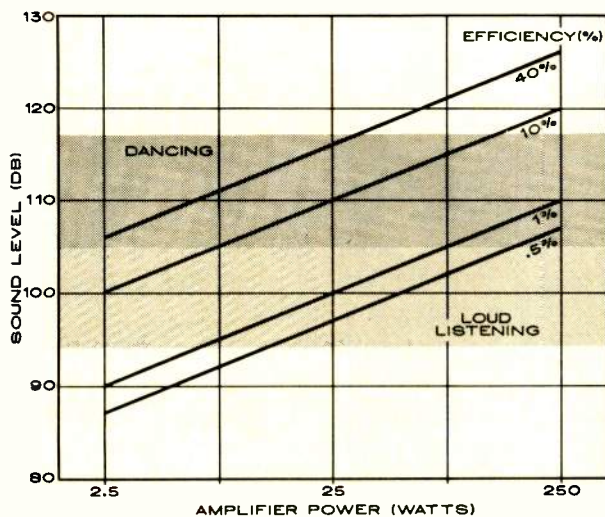
There is, however, a very rough method you can use in the showroom to determine a speaker's volume-output potential. First play a selection of the sort of music you like as loud as you would usually set your controls. The listening room in the hi-fi store should not be smaller, nor too much larger, than your home listening room. Turn the volume up

and switch between several speakers. Some will be able to put out a lot more volume than others before they distort or make other strange noises. The volume setting on the amplifier (it should be a high-powered one) will provide a rough guide to the relative efficiencies of the speakers, but don't get hung up on efficiency in and of itself. Many manufacturers have achieved high efficiency in their speakers at the expense of the really low bass—below 60 Hz or so—and/or by building in a mid-range peak. What you are after is a speaker that is efficient enough and has enough power-handling ability to deliver the volume levels you want with an amplifier priced within your budget. It is a bad trade-off if you have to sacrifice smoothness or low bass response in order to achieve high volume.

UNFORTUNATELY, attempting to secure higher sound levels means that the cost goes up fast—it can cost a lot to get an increment of just a few more decibels. (A boost of only 3 dB means that you need *double* the power from your amplifier.) And there are other considerations, besides your budget, which may keep the sound levels in your home below what you might consider optimum. The listener to the spacier, jazzier rock music, which has its quiet moments, has to be concerned about the noise level inherent in the recording media (records and tapes). If you turn the volume up too loud, the hiss, hum, surface noise, and rumble get to you quickly. Most of us tend to play our equipment at a level where the noise of the medium (hiss, rumble, etc.) is just perceptible above the background noise in the room, but not much more. As recording media and playback equipment improve and noise is reduced, we tend to turn up the volume so that the noise is at the same relative audible level as before, and thus we listen to the better records and tapes at a louder level. For example, when I first installed Dolby noise reduction in my tape studio, I was disappointed to find that tape hiss seemed just as much of a problem as before—but *I was listening to everything about 10 dB louder*. For me, at least, the effect of using noise reduction turned out to be not less noise, but more dramatic contrast and intensity—in other words, improved dynamic range.

The hard-driving rock-and-roll freak may be aware of noise only during the "silent" passages between the songs, but he may run into another problem: keeping peace with the people who live nearby. When I had my tape studio in a small apartment, I used a sound-pressure-level meter to measure the attenuation (the reduction in sound levels) between my room and my next-door neighbor's. The readings were 38 dB on the A scale and only 23 dB on





A rough guide to the amplifier powers needed for loud sound levels with speakers of various efficiencies. Most speakers for home use are relatively low in efficiency (under 1 per cent). Only large horn systems are able to offer 10 per cent or more.

the C (flat) scale. This meant that if I listened at 100 dBC, 77 dB of it was going right through the wall! Consequently, at night, when the ambient noise (traffic) level dropped to about 40 dBA in our apartments, I had to keep my music down to 78 dBA (40 plus 38) in order to be inaudible next door.

So much for volume. Let's consider the other major concern of serious listeners to rock, the question of tonal balance. Doesn't rock music demand a system having more bass? No—no more than is needed for serious classical listening, and no less. Our ancestors enjoyed solid lows just as much as we do, and they went to great lengths to produce them using organ, large drums, and as many double-bass viols as the orchestra management could afford. Thanks to electronics, we can now get the same low bass from a flick of the fingernail on a bass guitar string, but the human perception of musical balance—the sound that “feels good”—hasn't changed.

There may be greater *density* of low-frequency energy in rock, however (because low-bass instruments make more of a contribution in rock than is common in classical music), but the *balance* of bass to other frequencies is the same. To put it another way, what rock listeners want from a speaker is the ability to reproduce accurately the *frequency* and the *strength* of the bass signal that is on the record or tape. We don't want our speakers second-guessing the record producer by changing either element of the bass line because of “doubling” distortion and resonant peaks.

In judging a system for bass balance, you run up against the problem of the human ear's nonlinear

volume/frequency response, the so-called Fletcher-Munson effect. A system that has relatively flat response may sound balanced at loud levels, but still be bass-shy at low levels. Conversely, a speaker with built-in bass boost may sound right at low volume, but will be somewhat boomy and muddy at high volume. We can help ourselves out of this difficulty with our amplifier's bass control. On most equipment, its curve is close enough to the compensation needed to boost bass for different listening levels, and therefore one shouldn't be timid about using it as required. As a matter of fact, with much equipment, the bass control seems to provide more satisfying compensation than the built-in loudness-control function.

Mid-range peaks and high-frequency slope are more difficult to deal with at the listening end. The tonal balance on a record as set during the original taping or mix-down was determined by ear, by listening to the monitor speakers and adjusting the various equalization controls until the sound was “right”—whatever the producer's notion of *that* was. For this reason, “flat response” has to be defined here as whatever response in reproduction achieves the musical balance that the producer intended in the first place. If the producer is sensible (*most* of them are), the monitoring equipment used to make tonal judgments will have reasonably flat frequency-response curves. But flatness is *not* always the rule in the recording studio, and two records produced in different studios with monitoring speakers equalized to opposite extremes of high-frequency rolloff (as a reflection of differences in engineering opinion) may differ by as much as 9 dB in the treble energy delivered by your amplifier.

To deal with this kind of variation, try to assemble a system that is flat all the way from phono cartridge to speaker, so that the ratio of acoustical output to electrical input remains constant throughout the frequency spectrum. *Then* trust your ears and do not be afraid to readjust your tone controls when necessary to compensate for the vagaries of different records. Despite the enormous number of frequency-response variables in the recording process, to most critical listeners (including the technical editors of this magazine) records sound better when played through a speaker that tests flat than with a speaker that does not.

The frequency-response data offered by the manufacturer do not always give you much of a clue as to how the speaker is going to sound in a given listening room. Why do speakers with almost identical (and honest) “on-axis frequency response” curves sound different from each other? Because what we hear is the *total energy output* of the speaker vibrat-

ing the body of air in the room. Our perception of the tone of a speaker is a combination of its direct (on-axis) radiation and the multiple reflections bouncing around the room. These reflections arrive at our ears in such rapid sequence that they are not heard as discrete entities, but blend together to produce a single "impression." The overall high-to-low frequency balance of a sound is determined by the tonal balance of the total integrated sound, while localization information is supplied by the direct, *non-reflected* sound. To put it in more practical terms, say you have two sets of speakers, one omnidirectional pair and a pair of conventional forward radiators. If they sound alike in a hard, reflective acoustic environment, they will *not* sound alike in a softer, more damped environment—and vice versa.

Loudspeakers, like musical instruments, have different radiation patterns for each part of the frequency spectrum—unless steps are taken to circumvent the natural laws involved. The higher frequencies are short sound waves (in the highest octave we can hear, the wavelength is less than one inch), and speakers and musical instruments tend to radiate them in very narrow patterns. Conversely, the low notes—below 250 Hz or so—are nondirectional for practically all instruments and speakers.

Some designers combat the inevitable loss of directional fidelity to the live music by producing high-quality multi-directional speaker systems. (The term "multi-directional" includes the direct/reflector type and also the hemispherical and omnidirectional radiators.) In most cases, these provide a much more spacious and realistic sound quality to any music that benefits from the illusion of existing in a large space. Unfortunately, however, some speakers designed to create this illusion are not as good as conventional speakers in creating another: providing pinpoint localization of voices or instruments.

Quadraphonic recording promises to improve the space-control aspect of reproducing sound, but it doesn't make *all* the problems go away. In a four-channel mix-down it is possible to create more variety in spatial effects than was possible in ordinary stereo, but being able to provide more *directional* effects doesn't guarantee that you can create credible illusions in the dimension of distance. When multi-directional speakers are used for quadraphonics, distant effects will be much better, but sounds meant to be close may *also* sound a bit remote.

Rock makes more demands on a playback system's ability to create the illusion of space than do the older musical forms. In mixing rock-and-roll, for example, many producers try to create several *different* space illusions at the same time: whereas an

orchestra is usually recorded to sound as if it is at a moderate distance, and a string quartet is ideally supposed to sound as if it is playing right in front of you, the rock recording engineer wants to provide *both* sonic illusions simultaneously. In most rock mixing, some elements—such as acoustic guitar, bass, and drums—are supposed to sound intimate, and the electric guitars and vocals are often supposed to have the kind of sound that is associated with large reverberant spaces.

There is a conventional method of doing this by varying the proportion of reverberated sound to close pick-up in the recording, but to my ears reverberation coming from directional speakers doesn't create a real illusion of space; it simply sounds as if it's coming out of a tunnel behind the speakers. Obviously there are still some unanswered questions about recording techniques relating to the "reality" of reproduction of multi-directional speakers. If such speakers sound fine with most recordings but provide rather vague localizations or 30-foot-wide pianos on others, the difficulty has its source in a *mismatch* of recording technique and speaker design rather than a flaw in either.

**W**HAT guidelines are there, then, for choosing the type of directivity you want in your loudspeakers? Considering the divergence of views among the experts, directivity preferences would seem to come down to a question of taste. I think your choice should depend on the kind of rock-and-roll you listen to most. If it is loud, hard boogie, you may want a fairly directional system to give punch and immediacy. But if your taste runs to the slower, spacier, Moody Blues head trips, you might prefer speakers with wider dispersion to give you transparency and "air" in the music. And systems are available with practically any amount of dispersion you could wish, ranging from fairly narrow to fully spherical.

What it all boils down to is that what we want for good rock reproduction is nothing *less* than is required for any other kind of music. The special demands? Make sure the speaker/amplifier combination you choose can play as loud as you like, but also make sure that low distortion and a reasonably wide frequency response have not been sacrificed. The name of the game—no matter what your listening preferences may be—is and remains high-fidelity sound reproduction.

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Dan Dugan is a San Francisco audio consultant with a great deal of practical experience in the field of concert and theater sound reinforcement. His professional involvement with rock notwithstanding, Mr. Dugan describes his musical tastes as catholic.





# THE PRIVATE SHOSTAKOVICH

When a composer has thoughts that lie too deep for tears, their musical expression will not likely be a symphonic one

By Irving Kolodin

SINCE the appearance of his first symphony in the mid-Twenties, Dmitri Shostakovich has let no decade pass without producing additional works in that form, with the result that they now number no less than fifteen. The appearance of each of the last ten in the sequence has been preceded, in this country at least, by a flash of invisible lightning and a roll of critical thunder such as is rarely generated by a symphonic work from any other contemporary composer. As a result, even when they have not heard them, most musically literate listeners already have a point of view about, or at least an awareness of, the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh ("Lenin-grad"), Tenth, and Thirteenth (*Babi Yar*) Symphonies if not of the perhaps lesser known Eighth, Ninth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth.

It would doubtless surprise many of those enthusiasts of the symphonic form to discover that there is another kind of Shostakovich altogether, one quite as extensive numerically and perhaps even

more substantial musically. Unlike the "public" Shostakovich that is associated with works of large scope for substantial forces, this other no less prolific but "private" Shostakovich contents himself with the same modest foursome of string players that sufficed for Haydn and Mozart, and occasionally, with the addition of a piano, with the quintet that was enough for Beethoven, Schumann, and Brahms. Though it was not until a decade and a half after he wrote his First Symphony (in 1925, at the age of eighteen) that Shostakovich published his first quartet, they have since accumulated at such a rate that they may now be said to number "thirteen, and still counting." If the composer's known practice with works in other forms applies also to his quartets, it is reasonable to suppose that there are more completed quartets on the way, awaiting only what their composer considers the opportune time for their launching.

Why this should be so pertains, to some extent, to the reasons why there should be a private as well as

a public Shostakovich in the first place. It relates to the repetitiousness with which we have been reminded, just as regularly as the decades have brought new major works from Shostakovich's hand, that not even a Hero of the Soviet Union (the award was granted for the first time to a musician when Shostakovich turned sixty in 1966) can claim the distinction of being a "Free Artist" such as many were during the Czarist regimes. As recently as 1970, when the *Babi Yar* Symphony was performed for the first time in the West, the channel of its delivery to Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra had to be kept a well-guarded secret, for circulation of the work was forbidden after its ill-fated Soviet premiere in 1962.

If any part of the Soviet power structure has found something displeasing in the ideological content of the Third, Fifth, Eighth, Eleventh, or Thirteenth String Quartets, however, no information about it has come to us through any of those "usually well-informed sources." None of the Shostakovich quartets contain verbal texts, of course, so any perception of their "political" content, if they have any, calls for a somewhat higher order of insight into such things than was expended in finding fault with *Babi Yar's* clear denunciation of anti-Semitism. There *may* be some kind of musical modulation that might be termed "antisocial," just as certain other aspects of Shostakovich's music have been found to be culturally offensive or capitalistically tainted, but the aesthetic canons of Soviet bureaucracy have not yet, apparently, been woven into a net subtle enough to capture allusions so fine.

Nevertheless, and in this more than a few attentive listeners agree, there are clearly defined indications that Shostakovich is speaking of more private things in his chamber music—in an order of expression to which Sibelius gave the title "*Voces inti-*

*mae*"—than in much of his other recent production. He is, indeed, "speaking" as only a musician of his quality *can* speak—through those notes and tones, inflections of the melodic line, and collisions of the crossing voices as they weave the tonal texture that tells us in its own eloquently non-verbal way what is in the composer's mind.

In the later quartets (those numbered five to thirteen) that line of communication strikes me most of the time as more direct, less hedged about by concessions, than it is in the bigger, more public pieces. And even more artistically significant than what is included in them is the *exclusion* of those bids for public favor that gave us the bumptious, repetitive finales in such otherwise excellent works as the Sixth and Tenth Symphonies.

**T**HE awareness that there might be another, secret Shostakovich to reward the attention of those whose esteem for his gifts (whatever their manifestation) has never flagged came to me perhaps a decade ago with the circulation of the Quartet No. 8. This awareness was considerably heightened by the appearance in 1968 of recordings of Quartets 1 through 11 by the Borodin Quartet (Nos. 1-5 in the Seraphim album SIC 6034, Nos. 6-11 in SIC 6035). The issuance, at about the same time, of the first twelve quartets in miniature scores (Kalmus Editions Nos. 429, 430, and 366), plus the recent release of a recording of the Thirteenth Quartet (1970) on Melodiya/Angel SR 40189, have now provided the necessary means for a thoroughgoing review and resumé of the whole subject. Taken all together, they prove the validity of these words:

. . . at times there is a graceful lyricism in his music when he forgets himself (particularly in his chamber music, which by its very nature is freer from those moral ob-

*Shostakovich in 1937 with his first wife Nina Vasilyevna and the music critic Ivan Sollertinsky. Each was later the dedicatee of one of the composer's chamber works.*



Courtesy Dr. Fritz Steedy



ligations that govern his long descriptive symphonies), and this natural lyricism shows us that somewhere deep behind the screen of impersonality and moral obligation there still lives an individual . . . a man by the name of Dmitri Shostakovich.

Surprising as the discovery will be to almost everyone who reads it, this prophetic statement has been in print for more than thirty years. The only one who could not possibly be surprised is the composer-critic-scholar Nicolas Nabokov, who wrote them in an article entitled "The Case of Dmitri Shostakovich" published in *Harper's* magazine in February 1943. I do not recall reading them during those somewhat distracting wartime days; they came to my delighted attention only lately in a perusal of the Shostakovich files of the Music Reference Division of the Library-Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center.

It would be enough of a compliment to Nabokov's perception had he comprehended the existence of Shostakovich's schismatic subjectivity when it was fully formed, if not yet rendered into the accessibility of a recorded survey, but he made his pronouncement in 1943, when only the very *first* of the quartets (Op. 49) existed. True, it had been joined, in 1940, by the Quintet for Piano and Strings (Op. 57), a decidedly major work of more than fifty minutes duration. But to project from these two pieces of evidence not only an inclination but, better, a *disposition* that would eventually produce results that history may well judge to be the most valuable and durable of all Shostakovich's music is, I think, an act of intellectual divination for which Nabokov deserves nothing but unstinting praise.

It is, indeed, even possible to argue that Nabokov was aware of Shostakovich's quest for privacy in his chamber music before the composer himself was. The First Quartet (nominally in C Major) is an attractive work. It is only sixteen minutes long, which is not necessarily an index to its worth, but it presents no grave structural problems, merely demonstrating an aptitude for on-going part writing which a composer of Shostakovich's attainments (at thirty-two) would reasonably command. But there are in it, particularly in its use of materials from the then just-completed Fifth Symphony, intimations of what we can now recognize as things-to-come (see the accompanying table). The significance of the composer's habit of self-quotation is less in the carry-over of an impulse or idea already committed to another purpose than it is in the composure, the reflectiveness, and the lack of the pressure-to-please with which the materials are so unselfconsciously utilized. (The best movement—the Scherzo marked *Allegro molto*—has a kinship with Hugo

Wolf's *Italian Serenade*, a family connection that may exist only in my own mind, but which I find, nevertheless, quite beguiling.

The Op. 57 Quintet is rather another matter. As presented by the Borodin Quartet and pianist Lyubov Edlina (Melodiya/Angel SR 40085), it depicts Shostakovich's growing awareness of chamber music as something more than a random outlet for otherwise unutilized capacities and energies. It conveys a consistent sense of a composer going his own confident, creative way in full, sure possession of a poetic purpose. Musically, it adds up to a rather full-blown retrospective of the values on which he had been nurtured, with little projection in depth of future possibilities.

A RATHER different impulse, one much more supportive of Nabokov's intuition, is evident in the E Minor Trio (Op. 67). This postdates the *Harper's* article by many months, having been written in 1944 and not performed until November of that year. (It bears the designation Trio No. 2, which suggests that there is an earlier work somehow overlooked in this survey, but No. 1 was never published.) The Trio No. 2 is, and definitively, the private Shostakovich, telling us more about his inner emotions than is contained in any other work of that period, including the massive Seventh Symphony. It is permeated with the composer's affection for and indebtedness to Ivan Sollertinsky, a music critic and enthusiast who had died in February of 1944. Sollertinsky, as one can read in that valuable source work *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 1917-1970* (by Boris Schwarz, W. W. Norton, New York, 1972), shared with Shostakovich an admiration for the music of Mahler—a fundamental factor in Shostakovich's aesthetic not often comprehended. Sollertinsky died at forty-one, and his death was a blow to Shostakovich, who needed all the intellectual support he could muster at that (or any other) time. The elegiac, compassionate character of the music is expressive of a real memory of its subject rather than merely an occasional utterance springing from the dedication.

If the person of a sympathetic critic has rarely before or since been so creatively commemorated, the work itself can be understood as but a down-payment on the many debts Shostakovich has so discharged over the decades. As the table on page 69 indicates, Shostakovich has repeatedly returned to chamber music to say what he perhaps could not express in words. Whether the tribute is to a dear friend (Sollertinsky), a respected fellow composer (Vissarion Shebalin), a cherished group of colleagues (the Beethoven Quartet), an outstanding

instrumentalist (Vasily Shirinsky), his first wife Nina (she died in the Fifties), or to Irina (who became his second wife in 1964), the pattern is far too consistent to be accidental. All this is, to be sure, no guarantee of musical quality, but it demonstrates an admirable earnestness of intention.

The Quartet No. 2, a product of the same year as the Trio No. 2, is reflective, rhapsodic, and, in some respects, retrospective as well. The overture, or first movement, with its slow introduction and cantilating rise and fall, the waltz-like third movement, and the concluding theme and variations are all reminders that Tchaikovsky, too, wrote quartets. But it is the Adagio that reminds us that slow movements, often with a string emphasis, have distinguished a number of Shostakovich works that are otherwise lacking in distinction.

The persons celebrated in Shostakovich's first post-war quartet (No. 3, 1946) were the members of the Beethoven Quartet, for whom he created a workmanlike piece of some humorous intent. It includes references to the Seventh Symphony as well as to the more recent Eighth. Three years were to intervene before the Fourth Quartet appeared in 1949. It is relaxed and free-flowing, a kind of philosophic *quintet* in which the listener is the fifth participant in the ensemble. In some opinion, such as that of the unidentified annotator of the printed score, the finale is "unmistakably Jewish."

By the time No. 4 was first performed (in Moscow, at the close of 1953, by the Beethoven Quartet). Shostakovich had moved on to another kind of expression. If the symphonies sometimes tell us less than we would like to know about what was truly on the composer's mind, the quartets sometimes tell us more than we can fathom—at least in the context of our immediately available information.

Nevertheless, there can be discerned, in the Fifth Quartet, a clear break with Shostakovich's chamber-music past and a clear endeavor to link up with and extend the tradition of Beethoven's late quartets. Its three movements flow, without break or interruption, in a sequence that is cyclical not only in its connective tissue but in its utilization of material that evolves across the work's whole length (half an hour). It is dedicated to the Beethoven Quartet as a token of gratitude for its thirty-five-year history of service to Russian (and other) chamber music.

The Quartet No. 5 marks, for me, the emotional and aesthetic high point, up to this time, of Shostakovich's chamber music. He was to write only one other quartet during the Fifties (No. 6, 1956), and it is pervaded with the same sophistication of craftsmanship as No. 5, though in a more cheerful, less personal, vein. He was not impelled to write another quartet until 1960, when he wrote two. No. 7 is one of the briefest of all (eleven minutes), another sequence of three movements performed without interruption. It is a heartfelt work dedicated to his wife Nina, who died in 1954, but the musical riches it contains relate less to the agony of separation than to a remembrance of the joy in their life together and a celebration of their offspring, especially their son Maksim, now one of his father's most effective musical interpreters. (One wonders why father Dmitri didn't write a finale of this quality for one of his symphonies of the time. I think his private comment might be, Why waste it?)

In the Quartet No. 8, Shostakovich was moved to memorialize "the victims of war and fascism" to whom the score is dedicated. The music invokes a retrospect of such works as the First and Tenth

*In 1973, Shostakovich visited the United States to accept an honorary doctoral degree from Northwestern University. After the boat docked in New York, the composer and his wife Irina received greetings and flowers from one of many admirers in this country.*





THE CHAMBER MUSIC OF SHOSTAKOVICH

Year	Work	Dedication	Musical references*
1938	Quartet No. 1	—	Symphony No. 6
1939	Quintet	—	—
1944	Quartet No. 2	Vissarion Shebalin	Symphony No. 9, Piano Sonata No. 2
1944	Trio No. 2	Ivan Sollertinsky.	—
1946	Quartet No. 3	Beethoven Quartet	Symphony No. 8
1949	Quartet No. 4	—	Song of the Forests, From Jewish Folk Poetry
1952	Quartet No. 5	Beethoven Quartet	Symphony No. 10, Piano Quintet
1956	Quartet No. 6	—	Fall of Berlin, Ten Poems
1960	Quartet No. 7	Nina Shostakovich	Symphony No. 5
1960	Quartet No. 8	In Memory of the Victims of War and Fascism	Symphonies Nos. 1, 7, 8, and 11; Cello Concerto No. 1; Katerina Ismailova
1964	Quartet No. 9	Irina Shostakovich	—
1964	Quartet No. 10	Moisei Weinberg	—
1966	Quartet No. 11	Vasily Shirinsky†	—
1968	Quartet No. 12	Dmitry Tsyganov†	—
1970	Quartet No. 13	Vadim Borisovsky†	—

\*From Seraphim annotations by Yoritoyo Inouye

†Members of the Beethoven Quartet

Symphonies as well as the Trio No. 2, *Katerina Ismailova* (the title for the revised opera *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*), and a song entitled *Languishing in Prison*. (I cannot pretend to the knowledge these citations suggest; they are derived from a commentary in the miniature score. Further acquaintance may yield the insights only hinted at in these allusions.)

Between 1960 and 1964, Shostakovich was absorbed with such major efforts as the *Babi Yar* Symphony (No. 13), an approach to the "larger public" he had been officially reminded to consider. The consequences have already been noted. Whether they were influential in impelling his return to the smaller, less exposed world of the quartet only Shostakovich could say. What he *did* say, eloquently, in his Quartets Nos. 9 and 10 (1964) related to matters close to his heart. Quartet No. 9 is dedicated to his second wife, Irina, and its excellence reminds me, through some sort of 180-degree perversity, of Saint-Saëns' petulant remark after listening to the César Franck Symphony: "The affirmation of incompetence carried to dogmatic lengths." Shostakovich's E-flat Quartet is not only an affirmation of competence, creativity, and affection quite beyond dogmatism, it is also as close to timelessness in its musical content as anything bearing the name of its composer, and I include the Symphony No. 1. Where that early work captured a moment of youth when the world was both pearl and oyster, the Ninth Quartet distills into sound

everything that had befallen its creator in the intervening forty years. Some of it is merry, some of it sad; it reflects the good as well as the evil. But none of it is either defeatist or insincere, and it is proof that there is, in Nabokov's words, "deep beyond the screen of impersonality . . . a man by the name of Dmitri Shostakovich."

Quartet No. 10 bears an inscription to Moisei Samuilovich Weinberg, a colleague born in 1919. It strikes me as much more concerned with purely compositional considerations, more abstruse and intellectualized than in any way intimate, save in the nine variations in the form of a passacaglia that make up the Adagio. And here again one wonders why Shostakovich did not choose to include a movement of comparable dignity and lofty musical purpose in one of the late symphonies.

Quartet No. 11, the last of the comprehensive sequence in the Seraphim albums, is a eulogy for Vasily Shirinsky, second violinist of the Beethoven Quartet and Shostakovich's lifelong friend, who died in 1965. It is a vigorous, emotionally abundant expression that pursues the uninterrupted pattern of Beethoven's late quartets and invites the same tribute of relistening. Quartet No. 12 is also dedicated to a member of the Beethoven Quartet, its leader Dmitry Tsyganov. Though the work is not yet recorded, the score suggests that it carries the possibilities of the quartet into a new dimension of tonal texture.

AND finally there is Quartet No. 13, written in 1970, recorded on Melodiya/Angel SR 40189 by the Beethoven Quartet, and not merely nominally but musically dedicated to viola player Vadim Borisovsky. His instrument is provided with a part of uncommon richness in this terse, uncompromisingly compact work, which is characterized by the composer's willingness to get away from a tonal center. It raises more questions musically than it answers, but it does at least support the belief that there are still musical questions that Shostakovich *wants* to answer. Above all, it projects a sense of Shostakovich's absorption in his task, which is all the assurance I have ever required to know that the outcome would be absorbing.

How much more music there is to come from Shostakovich no one can either imagine or predict. What we may have gleaned from this flood of it in a realm for which he did not appear to have an early inclination is perhaps this: the gifts of a truly creative person may be diverted, but they cannot be suppressed. Like water, their expression will flow around all obstacles and eventually join that ocean of influence for which they were destined.

# CHRISTOPHER PARKENING

"It's hard to find anything more beautiful to listen to than Bach"

By William Livingstone

SO MANY musicians have won fame after struggling to triumph over an environment of poverty or racial discrimination that it has become almost the *conventional* success story. It therefore comes rather as a surprise to learn that the white upper middle class in Southern California is also capable of producing a great virtuoso on a difficult instrument, for that is precisely the background of the twenty-six-year-old classical guitarist Christopher Parkening. When his debut albums "In the Classic Style" and "In the Spanish Style" were released by Angel Records in 1968, he was immediately proclaimed America's first important classical guitarist, and he quickly took his place among the half dozen greatest guitarists in the world.

More significant than the critics' raves about his musical taste, brilliant technique, and great range of tonal color and dynamics has been the approval he has won from composers for his instrument and from that elder statesman of the guitar world, Andrés Segovia, who brought about the twentieth-century renaissance of the classical guitar. The composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco heard Parkening play when he was still in his early teens and in 1966 honored the young artist by permitting him to play the world premiere of his Second Guitar Concerto. Segovia accepted him as a scholarship student in master classes at the University of California at Berkeley and at the North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem, and in 1968 invited Parkening to serve as a judge in the International Guitar Competition at Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Segovia has made many public statements praising his young colleague, as extravagant as they are sincere: "By reason of his unique talents, Christopher Parkening belongs to that special group of my disciples of which I am so proud. I am sure that the well-deserved success with which he has initiated his career will increase limitlessly in years to come."

Last year, when a festival honoring the Spanish composer Joaquín Rodrigo was organized in Japan, the administrators asked him which guitarist they should invite to play his *Concierto de Aranjuez* and other guitar works. Rodrigo specified Parkening.

When he returned from Japan, I interviewed Parkening over lunch in Los Angeles during a short vacation before he set off on his current tour across the United States and to Europe. He is the embodiment of what most Easterners think a Southern Californian of his generation should look like. Unusually handsome, tall, blond, and slender, with broad shoulders, muscular arms, and strong hands, he is a well-brought-up, polite young man who exudes an air of clear-headed good health that comes from plenty of exercise and the lately somewhat neglected art of clean living.

Others may find his artistic career incongruous against the Southern California accent on sports and the outdoor life; he does not. "I was born here in Los Angeles, grew up here, and went to school here, and I'm immensely

grateful for the advantages offered by life in this part of the country." One of those advantages is easy access to nature and to water—he swims, scuba dives, fishes, skis a bit, and rides horses a lot. Although he lives in North Hollywood, he also owns ranch property in Idaho and Montana, but is too modest to talk about that unless pressed.

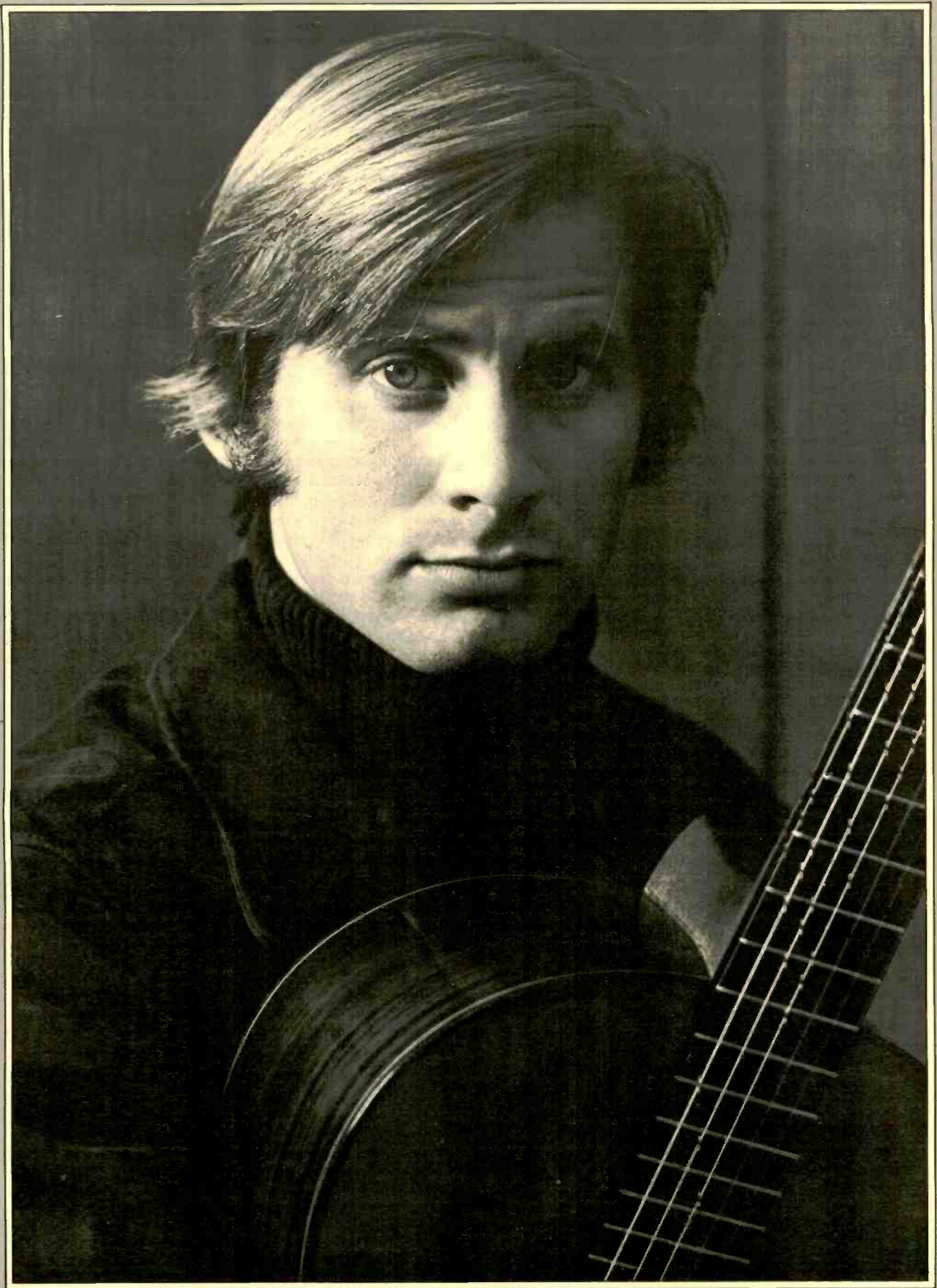
"Basically I'm not a city person. I prefer the out of doors. Sometimes the *people* thing sort of gets you down, always fighting traffic, always an hour driving somewhere and an hour driving back. My parents now live on a ranch in Idaho, and I visit them quite a bit. When I was very young, my dad and I fished a lot. We got into tournament casting, and eventually both of us won the Western United States all-around fly-casting championship. We release ninety per cent of our fish. It's tying the flies and the art of catching that's the sport."

A less well-publicized advantage of growing up in Southern California is that it offers excellent opportunities for musical education. When Parkening acquired his first guitar at the age of eleven, he was advised by his cousin Jack Marshall, a professional guitarist, to study classical technique, which could be the basis for any kind of playing he might care to do later on. He began lessons with the Spanish guitarists Celedonio and José Romero (father and son) and studied with them for four years. Although he gave a recital after only one year and made a formal concert debut in 1963 under the auspices of the Young Musicians Foundation, he was never exploited as a child prodigy, but continued his academic and musical education.

"I completed my freshman year at UCLA, but on the advice of some of my professors transferred to the University of Southern California, which they thought was a better school for a performing musician. At USC I studied with the cellist Gabor Rejto, the head of the string department, who taught me interpretation." Since there was no regular guitar program at the university at that time, he was listed officially as a cello major. "I also worked with Gregor Piatigorsky on the side, and from these gentlemen and my other professors I received marvelous training, and I work with them to this day." While he was still a student, USC invited Parkening to begin teaching there, and he has since become the head of the guitar department.

SEGOVIA, who is Parkening's greatest idol, has urged his disciples to do three things: to make the guitar better known throughout the world, to expand the repertoire for the instrument, and to foster the proper teaching of the guitar in major conservatories. Parkening is dutifully at work in all three areas. He is increasing the audience for the guitar through recordings and a very active schedule of performances, many of them in out-of-the-way places—so far he has given only two recitals in New York. "At present eighty per cent of my engagements are





at colleges, where the classic guitar has enormous acceptance—and not just by the classical music crowd. The audiences are not narrow stereotypes but represent the whole college.” He thinks the guitar appeals especially to the young partly because of its intimacy and partly because they identify it as *their* instrument since so many of them play it, though not necessarily in the classic style. “It’s the most popular instrument in the world right now. There are more than thirteen million guitars in this country alone.” He sees the guitar as a bridge between popular and classical music and is pleased to think he might help lead young people to expand their appreciation of music. Even popular performers have shown interest in his work—Grace Slick invited him to play on a Jefferson Airplane album, and Paul Simon has offered to commission a concerto for him.

Given the popularity of his instrument, it is little wonder that Parkening’s performing schedule is a busy one: “My manager is now working on 1975, and he says I can be booked for a concert every other day. It’s a question of how much I *want* to play. I’ve done close to ninety performances some years, and that’s almost too much. I’m going to Europe on my forthcoming tour and will probably return there in 1975 and perhaps go back to Japan. I’ve been invited to play in Russia, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. I’m getting married in May, and my fiancée [Barbara Colyear] is interested in animals and the out of doors, and she would like to see South Africa. And I want to go to Australia and to New Zealand, which I understand is absolutely beautiful and a great place for trout fishing. So it looks like another gigantic schedule. But I’ve talked with my manager about booking me so that I’ll have two weeks on tour and two weeks at home. To develop as an artist you need time to relax and time to learn new music.”

Parkening feels strongly about the second of Segovia’s dictates, the expansion of the guitar repertoire. “It’s the business of the young generation of guitarists to make further transcriptions and commission new works. It was an honor to be chosen by Rodrigo and to play for him in Japan, and I learned a lot from working with him on his two concertos. That’s important because I’ll record both of them with the London Symphony and André Previn in July, but what I’m most excited about is that I asked Rodrigo to compose a concerto for me, and he agreed. He even asked me what kind of concerto I’d like, and I told him I’d like it to be based on Spanish folk songs. When I’m in Spain on tour, I’ll work with him in selecting the songs.

“It’s a misconception of many composers that you have to play the guitar in order to write for it. I asked Rodrigo if he had ever tried to play it, and he said, ‘No, too difficult.’ So neither he nor Castelnuovo-Tedesco has ever played a note on the instrument, and nobody has ever written for it better than they have. There are a few very simple basic rules which Julian Bream has set down in a short essay on how to write for the guitar, and I’m sure he gave it to Benjamin Britten when he commissioned him to compose for him.

“Segovia has done a tremendous job in expanding the rather small literature for the guitar by transcribing hundreds of works written for other instruments. For my tour I learned several new pieces that he had transcribed, and it was fantastic just to pull down the music, open it, and find the fingering and everything all done and not have to do it myself.

“Transcription is a part of life for a guitarist. I and my assistants at USC have spent a year and a half working on the pieces for my next album, which will be of French Impressionist music. It’s a style that has been largely ignored by Segovia and other guitarists, perhaps because it is extremely difficult to transcribe and to play—the tremendous octaves in Debussy’s *Clair de Lune* and Ravel’s *Empress of the Pagodas*, for example. But actually Impressionism suits the guitar very well because of its five middle C’s, each of which has a different color, and the different kinds of vibrato and the different ways of striking the strings with the right hand to create certain sounds. Satie’s *Gymnopédies* sound as though they were written for the instrument.”

Parkening and his colleagues at USC have published the transcriptions they have made for his albums, and he has published an instruction book, *The Christopher Parkening Guitar Method* (1972), which brings up his activities as a teacher. “Five or ten years ago you couldn’t get a bachelor’s degree in the guitar, much less a master’s. That’s all changed. I’m proud of our guitar department at the University of Southern California and of my assisting teachers. I give a master class once a month for all the guitar majors, and my assistants give regular weekly lessons. If not actually the best, our department is certainly one of the finest in the country. Our curriculum is unique in that we offer not only the usual courses in technique, performance, and interpretation, but also courses in transcription, harmony, and theory as related to the guitar, plus recording techniques. You know, when I walked into the Capitol studios when I was nineteen, I hadn’t the faintest idea of what recording was really like. Our course will take a lot of the shock out of it. We actually go to a major studio, such as Capitol, and record—it’s as professional as you can get short of going as far as actually cutting the disc.”

**P**ARKENING’S first four albums for Angel Records are among that label’s top-selling classical discs, particularly “Parkening Plays Bach,” and last year Angel issued “The Christopher Parkening Album,” made up of the most popular selections from his earlier records, to celebrate his fifth anniversary on the label. “Angel would like me to record two albums a year,” he said, “but the labor of transcription is so great that I’m doing well to finish one. It’s extremely difficult to assemble a program that works for the guitar and is good enough to pass the New York reviewers as well as satisfy the buying public. The Bach album seems to have passed that test. Really, it’s hard to find anything more beautiful to listen to than Bach. Now that it’s *finally* completed, I’m pleased with the Impressionist program, and I think it will make a beautiful album. I’ll record it in June or August, and in 1975 I plan to record both of the Castelnuovo-Tedesco concertos with the Pittsburgh Symphony.”

Does he ever listen to records for pleasure? “Yes, I travel a great deal and don’t rely on the airlines’ programs. I take along a small cassette player and listen constantly. It’s nice for a change to hear some folk music. I like Gordon Lightfoot, Paul Simon, John Denver, and some of the things the Carpenters do, and I’ve always liked Frank Sinatra. But mostly I listen to solo piano recordings of Impressionist works or Spanish pieces that might possibly be transcribed for the guitar. You see, even when I’m enjoying myself, I like to do something that’s at least slightly constructive.”



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



## CLASSICAL

### THE MAGIC FLUTE RESOUNDS AGAIN

*With Angel's new entry there are now six worthy recordings of the Mozart opera in the catalog*

SOME day I may be lucky enough to catch a top-flight performance of Mozart's *Magic Flute* at the Vienna State Opera—meeting the special demands of the work seems to be beyond the current capability of our own Metropolitan Opera. In the meantime, how reassuring is the opera's representation in the recordings catalog! There are four stereo recordings available, any one of which can be recommended for pleasurable listening, to say nothing of the pioneering Beecham version on Turnabout—pre-War and monophonic, but still wearing its years with grace and dignity.

A brand-new recording can now be added to this generous list, a performance by the Bavarian State Opera with Wolfgang Sawallisch at the helm. The opera has been brilliantly cast right down the line (a prerequisite, and this is precisely where the Met fails season after season), but the somewhat self-effacing conductor nonetheless deserves the lion's share of the credit: his approach to the music is alertly dramatic, his tempos sensible, and the finely nuanced whole is characterized by an admirable clarity. The Sawallisch way with Mozart may best be described as noncontroversial. It lacks the muscular energy of Böhm and the massive grand sweep of Klemperer, but it is also free of the occasional tempo eccentricities of Solti. Except for an occasional tendency toward squareness (the handling of the first Queen of

the Night aria, for example), it takes a consistently sensible view of the work and through firm control of a cast of topnotch singers flowers into an immensely pleasing totality. Happily, this version retains the spoken dialogue (Angel's previous *Zauberflöte*, S-3651, suffers from its absence), and the cast handles it all admirably.

In the role of Pamina is Anneliese Rothenberger, a consistently musicianly and dependable performer with a limpid tone and fine technique. I find her somewhat more mature-sounding than most recorded Paminas, but this in no way lessens her appeal. Edda Moser's Queen of the Night is not unfamiliar to Metropolitan Opera audiences as one of the positive elements in that house's otherwise

mixed bag of offerings. She knows what the character is about and attempts to bring some quality of menace into her recitatives. If her florid singing falls a little short of real virtuoso abandon, it is nonetheless accurate and impressive throughout the range. Olivera Miljakovic is a conventional but entirely pleasing Papagena.

Commenting a little more than two years ago (February 1972) on bass Kurt Moll, I predicted (on the basis of his brief appearance as the Night Watchman in Angel's *Die Meistersinger*) that he would eventually become a great Telramund, Dutchman, and Sachs. Well, here he is, a great Sarastro, rolling out that heav-



WOLFGANG SAWALLISCH  
*A consistently sensible view*



MOSER (*Queen of the Night*) and SCHREIER (*Tamino*)

enly music with a sumptuous warmth and roundness of tone, a firmly sustained legato—a true basso cantante. Peter Schreier is probably the best Tamino around today, and he is a reasonably manly sounding one, particularly in his dialogue with the Speaker and in his flute-accompanied search for Pamina. On records, only the late Fritz Wunderlich (Deutsche Grammophon 2709017) surpasses him.

This is Walter Berry's third recorded Papageno, and the character emerges here as a lighter and more entertaining one than it was under the baton of the more "serious" Klemperer. Berry's handling of the dialogue is delightful, with occasional ad-lib interjections enlivening the Schikaneder text. The two Armed Men, the three Ladies, and the three Boys are all good, blending into a smooth-sounding ensemble in which only the quavery Speaker of Theo Adam strikes a mildly discordant note.

The edition used in this recording contains a brief duet, between Tamino and Papageno, that was discovered after Mozart's death under circumstances that suggest it is authentic. It precedes the Quintet of Act 2 (No. 12 in the score), and this is its first appearance in a recording.

According to the illustrated booklet with the set, this *Magic Flute* was recorded quadraphonically. Angel says it will be released as a quadraphonic recording in Europe, but there are no present plans to do so in the U.S. That may or may not give us something to look forward to, but, in the meantime, the two-channel stereo sound is everything one might ask for.

*George Jellinek*

**MOZART:** *Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)*. Kurt Moll (bass), Sarastro; Peter Schreier (tenor), Tamino; Edda Moser (soprano), Queen of the Night; Anneliese Rothenberger (soprano), Pamina; Walter Berry (baritone), Papageno; Olivera Miljakovic (soprano), Papagena; Theo Adam (bass), Speaker; Leonore Kirschstein (soprano), First Lady; Ilse Gramatzki (mezzo-soprano), Second Lady; Brigitte Fassbaender (mezzo-soprano), Third Lady; Wilfried Badorek (tenor), First Armed Man; Günter Wevel (bass), Second Armed Man; others. Bavarian State Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Wolfgang Sawallisch cond. ANGEL SCL-3807 three discs \$17.98.

## RACHMANINOFF BY CLIBURN

*An album of works for solo piano reveals  
a decided flair for a virtuoso repertoire*

**W**ITHIN the last year there have been some notable additions to the catalog of recorded Rachmaninoff, including, unquestionably foremost, RCA's whopping five-album reissue of all the composer's disc recordings, plus Vladimir Ashkenazy's performance of the Etudes Tableaux and Corelli Variations for London, Sviatoslav Richter's account of a selection of the Preludes, André Previn's version of the uncut Second Symphony, and the U.S.S.R. Russian Chorus' *Vespers* (the last three on Angel).

All of these were splendid—if in some cases slightly tardy—contributions to the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Rachmaninoff's birth, and to them we can now add another RCA disc, Van Cliburn's first solo record devoted to the music of this composer. Cliburn, who has previously recorded Rachmaninoff's Second and Third Concer-

*VAN CLIBURN: a hell-for-leather approach*





tos as well as the Paganini Rhapsody, provides an excellent selection of works on this disc—a variety of short pieces plus the not-too-well-known Sonata No. 2. Throughout the program he displays the boldness, warmth, and expansiveness that marked the playing of a much older generation of performers, characteristics that are, for the most part, missing in that of the younger ones. Listen, for example, to the gorgeous tonal quality he lavishes on the G Major Prelude (Op. 32, No. 5), or to the way he thunders his way through the E-flat Minor Etude Tableau (Op. 39, No. 5) so brilliantly without slighting either the tremendous technical demands or the tragic passion of the music (I am thinking especially of those chromatic descending figures near the end of the piece, where all of Rachmaninoff's sorrows seem to well up in one great, despairing outcry). Cliburn does this sort of thing so supremely well in a number of works here that it is disappointing when he does not. In the familiar G Minor Prelude (Op. 23, No. 5), for example, he seems to be a bit guarded, as though deliberately trying to avoid being accused of daredevilry.

But if there are one or two places in which an inhibiting caution is evident, they are minor lapses in what is on the whole a bracing, hell-for-leather approach to the music. Nowhere is this more obvious or more kinetically exciting than in the recording of the Second Sonata, derived from a live performance in Moscow in June of 1960, two years after Cliburn had triumphed in that city's Tchaikovsky competition. The sound in the sonata is not as good as it is on the studio-made second side, but no matter. Cliburn's performance of the complete original version of 1913 (a few of the composer's later revisions are included) is simply stunning in impact. It is much more idiomatic than John Ogdon's reading of the revised version (also for RCA), but it

does not quite reach the voltage generated by Horowitz for Columbia. Horowitz, interestingly, works back from the revised version to add some material from the sprawling original; Cliburn's opposite approach gives us the opportunity to hear something close to Rachmaninoff's first tentative thoughts (there is a difference of about four minutes between the early version and the later revision).

Let us hope that Cliburn will record more solo Rachmaninoff; his grasp of this music is on a level with that of the finest interpreters. (A word of caution for buyers: my copy had an edge warp that resulted in unpleasant wow, especially at the beginning of each side. This is usually one of those non-repeating flaws, but it is good to check if you can.)

Igor Kipnis

**RACHMANINOFF:** *Sonata No. 2, in B-flat Minor, Op. 36 (original version); Etude Tableau, in E-flat Minor, Op. 39, No. 5. Preludes, Op. 23: No. 4, in D Major; No. 5, in G Minor; No. 6, in E-flat Major; No. 7, in C Minor. Prelude in G Major, Op. 32, No. 5.* Van Cliburn (piano). RCA ARL1-0352 \$5.98, Ⓟ ARS1-0352 \$6.98, Ⓒ ARK1-0352 \$6.98.

## POPULAR

### MITCHELL AND LIGHTFOOT: THE HE AND THE SHE OF IT

*New releases by Canada's leading songsmiths  
cast some revealing light on each other*

**I**N the old days of popular music, men were men and women were—it says in some of those recent analyses of old songs—abused. Now, though, David Bowie and other painted persons are happy to be asexual, bisexual, polysexual, pansexual, what-

JONI MITCHELL: *butterfly-light, bluebird-lovely*



Reprise Records

GORDON LIGHTFOOT: *broad-shouldered, lean-hipped*



Reprise Records

ever works, and many of the pop stars who are still interested in music (you remember music) are phasing out the Me-Tarzan-You-Jane (or vice versa) slant in favor of a commitment more, ah, aware politically.

Against that background then, one is likely to notice all the more that two powerful new albums from America's best Canadian songwriters, Joni Mitchell and Gordon Lightfoot, have the flavor of yesterday's heterosexuality about them, and seem, too, rather luxuriously traditional in their romanticism. The Canadian upbringing no doubt is a factor, as is the long view both artists are able to take. Lightfoot's "Sundown" for Reprise is a scrumptious summation of what else he has done; compared to what several *other* troubadours are doing, it's notably broad-shouldered, wide-brimmed, lean-hipped, and outdoorsy. Mitchell's "Court and Spark" for Asylum is, in that kind of comparison, butterfly-light, bluebird-lovely, intricately lacy, and even a bit bitchy. It is also punctuated with earthiness and stumped a time or two by vulnerability. Neither takes what might be called a smug view of anything, but Lightfoot, in a manly, ulcer-inviting way, bottles it up sometimes with lines like "that's how it goes," while Mitchell goes to her usual great lengths to track down and define feelings. And, yes, I *know* it is cliché-mongering to say women talk about feelings more easily than men do, but still it jibes with my own observations, some made at dangerously close range.

**B**UT that gets us into the matter of which sex Ingmar Bergman might be: *he* comes into this because "Court and Spark" is the kind of experience a good Bergman film is. You want to turn it off but cannot, you hate it and love it at the same time, you feel you are in the hands of a brutal but trustworthy genius and are somehow being tested. It is, as popular cant would have it, *heavy*, and Joni's feminine viewpoint doesn't lighten it much. Neither does her use of humor, which gets undermined when it has the floor, as it does in *Raised on Robbery*, the quotations of a pushy lady trying to pick up a gent who's more interested in the Toronto Maple Leafs game.

The title song ("courting" and "sparking" are dated terms used for a reason) is a charmer and only medium-heavy; *Free Man in Paris* is narrower in

**JONI MITCHELL:** *Court and Spark*. Joni Mitchell (vocals, piano); John Guerin (drums); Tom Scott (reeds, woodwinds); Larry Carlton (guitar); other musicians. *Court and Spark*; *Help Me*; *Free Man in Paris*; *People's Parties*; *The Same Situation*; *Car on a Hill*; *Down to You*; *Just like This Train*; *Raised on Robbery*; *Trouble Child*; *Twisted*. ASYLUM 7E-1001 \$5.98, (8) TP-5072 \$6.97, (C) CS-5072 \$6.97.

scope than all those boy-girl quandaries, but it is a brilliant song about fame-chasing, as ingratiating as it is well-built. *Car on a Hill* waits for the man to make the first move—specifically an *overdue* move, it seems—and reminds me of a story by Shirley Jackson. Only one song strikes me as weak—*Help Me*, which has no discernable melody. Joni's singing covers an even greater emotional range than it usually does, and the backing, while a bit too serene in places, is touched up with banks of harmonizing acoustic guitars, a stylized bouncy flow of piano and woodwinds, and other small delights.

"Sundown" finds Lightfoot reunited with bass player John Stockfish, a regular with the troupe in the early days, but latter-day regular Rick Haynes is still around, too, and both are great. Lightfoot's songs are often keyed to the bass, and Lightfoot takes a direct (manly?), no-nonsense approach to instrumentation. His songs don't need anything getting in their way, anyhow, and these particular ones have quite a way about them; one after another, they are remarkable.

*Too Late for Prayin'*, an embarrassment of riches in itself, demonstrates how *quietly* remarkable they can be, but give yourself time and it will also demonstrate Lightfoot's uncanny ability to invent beautiful melodies and keep them simple, to say his piece in verses so graceful and economical that you can enjoy the flow of the syllables as many times as you like before settling down to what the words mean. *Circle of Steel* is another such demonstration, and my other special favorite is *Somewhere USA*, which has that long-legged pace that Lightfoot practically owns. The title song is perhaps *too* simple, but its refrain—which will stay in your head for a month, and you have no choice in the matter—has three different wordings, including, "Sometimes I think it's a sin/When I feel like I'm winnin' when I'm losin' again."

Lightfoot puts images, mostly with outdoor settings, into your head; Mitchell puts you in parties, trains, social situations, and thinking situations. It isn't quite a purely objective-subjective contrast you'll find in their approaches, but no one can blame you if you do a little broad-brush (no pun intended) thinking about male-female questions when listening to two albums so different, so similar, and so fine.

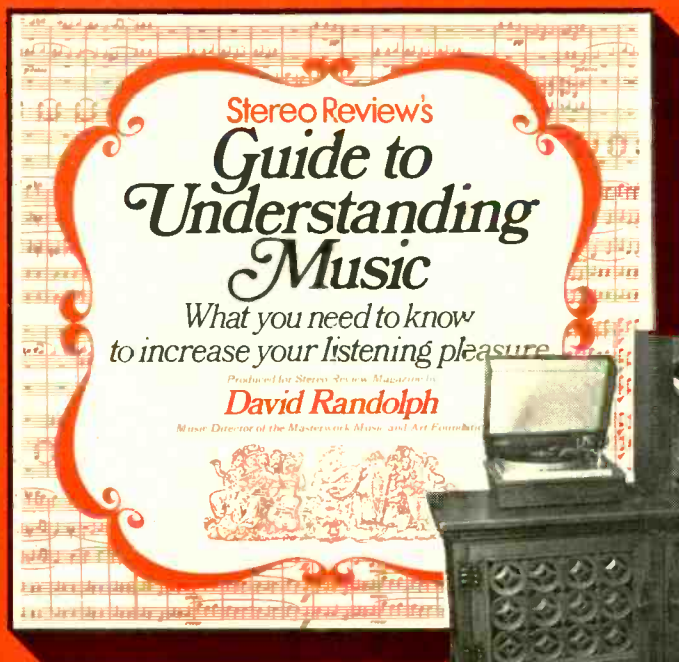
Noel Coppage

**GORDON LIGHTFOOT:** *Sundown*. Gordon Lightfoot (vocals, guitar); Red Shea (guitar); Terry Clements (guitar); John Stockfish (bass); other musicians. *High and Dry*; *Carefree Highway*; *Is There Anyone Home*; *Somewhere USA*; *Too Late for Prayin'*; *Sundown*; *Seven Island Suite*; *The List*; *The Watchman's Gone*; *Circle of Steel*. REPRIS MS 2177 \$5.98, (8) M8 2177 \$7.97, (C) M5 2177 \$7.97.



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# POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by CHRIS ALBERTSON • NOEL COPPAGE • PAUL KRESH • PETER REILLY • JOEL VANCE

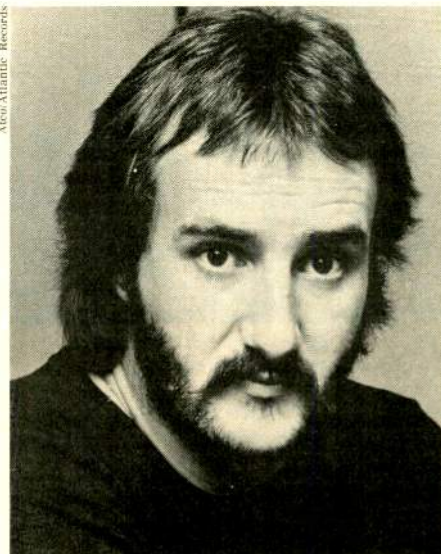
## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**JAN AKKERMAN:** *Tabernakel*. Jan Akkerman (guitar); orchestra. *House of the King*; *Javeh*; *Lammy*; *A Pavan by Thomas Morley*; and six others. ATCO SD 7032 \$5.98, Ⓟ TP 7032 \$6.98, Ⓞ CS 7032 \$6.98.

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

Jan Akkerman, the guitarist with Focus, has brought out one of the most interesting albums of the year. On a variety of guitars, (acoustic, bass, electrical), his playing suggests that the pop Julian Bream has arrived. If it were only on the basis of his work in the traditionally inspired material, such as John Dowland's *Britannia* or Morley's *Pavan*, then I might be tempted to judge him as a gifted technician with a peculiarly Seventies approach to the classics. But when he shifts gears into one of his own compositions, such as *House of the King*, with its rock beat and his vital performance on electric guitar, and proceeds to produce some of the most elegant sounds that I've ever heard in rock, then I know that I'm listening to a real artist. Akkerman is still developing, but all of the preliminary sketches for what will come are clearly there: the technique, of course, the compositional ability, the beauty of the sound he draws from his instrument, and the sheer order of his musical conceptions. I don't mean order in the Teutonic sense of one *must* and one *will*; instead he seems to sense the truth of

the French dictum that it is impossible to achieve true elegance *without* order. (Imagine the park of Versailles planted in blue spruce, or finishing off a dinner at Caravelle with a Hostess Twinkie, or Catharine Deneuve ac-



JAN AKKERMAN  
*The pop Julian Bream*

centing her Givenchy with patent-leather high heels and turned-over athletic socks, and I think you'll get an idea of what I mean.) Akkerman already knows all the components that go into a pleasing musical experience, and he displays them with the assured grace of a great gourmet ordering a dinner for you.

If all this strikes you as a mite too civilized, too unspontaneous to be representative of true rock, then let me remind you that rock is well into its third decade, stagnating faster and faster, and could use the dynamism of an obviously trained musical mind. In fact, if rock is to be saved at all, it is people like Akkerman who will do it, not a soon-to-be-old Mick Jagger going through his over-rehearsed paces some time in the 1980's with all the aplomb of a Ruby Keeler.

"Tabernakel" is the kind of straw-in-the-wind album that makes reviewing fun. P.R.

**AVERAGE WHITE BAND:** *Show Your Hand*. Average White Band (vocals and instrumentals). *This World Has Music*; *Twilight Zone*; *Show Your Hand*; *Back in '67*; and four others. MCA-345 \$5.98, Ⓟ MCA 345 \$6.98, Ⓞ MCAC 345 \$6.98.

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

Besides making me like them immediately for their name, this group of half a dozen Scots impresses me with how well they emulate black rhythmic styles, horn voicings, and vocals. Copycats, yes, but good ones.

They appropriate the styles of several people: surprising rhythm changes *à la* Sly Stone, saxophone *à la* Jr. Walker, vocals *à la* the O'Jays and twenty other groups. They write almost all their own material, and here too they produce facsimile versions—of Ashford & Simpson of Motown fame, Thom Bell of Philadelphia, and so on.

The Average White Band is listenable and sometimes pleasurable because they are emulating people and styles they admire: they aren't trying to swipe anything because of its commerciality. Still, it comes down to whether they swing or not, and they don't, really. It's awfully difficult to beat Sly Stone at his own game (when he feels like playing); Jr. Walker knows only one solo, but nobody else plays it like he does. As for the writing—well, "soul" these days is machine-made anyway.

But the band deserves high marks for diligence and application. If they have played themselves into a corner by not contributing anything original, at least that's where they want to be. *They sound happy about it.* J.V.

**BOBBY BLUE BLAND:** *His California Album*. Bobby Blue Bland (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *This Time I'm Gone for Good*; *(If Loving You Is Wrong) I Don't Want to Be Right*; *Goin' Down Slow*; *The Right Place at the Right Time*; *I've Got to Use My Imagination*; *Where Baby Went*; and four others. ABC-DUNHILL DSX-50163 \$5.98, Ⓟ M 8023-50163 \$6.98.

Performance: **Solid**  
Recording: **Good**

Bobby Blue Bland is one of those unsung he-

### Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
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The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.



roes who've been singing for a long time. I forget how many years it was that he recorded for the regional (Southern) Duke-Peacock label, having many black-only hits. Well, everyone else, from Little Richard to Ike and Tina Turner to B. B. King, has been "discovered" or, more accurately, rediscovered, so now it would seem Bland's turn.

The success (deserved) of B. B. King has a lot to do with Bland's effort. They come from the same background, both having been stars on small black-oriented labels, regulars on the grind circuit of hell-hole bar clubs, and sometime radio personalities. King, of course, broke through to the white market with his singing and guitar cleverly juxtaposed against sighing strings. Now comes Bland, who has been looking to break through to the national market for several years. The label on which his current album appears has contracted hearty folk like King, John Lee Hooker, and Jimmy Reed, all first-rate blues artists, which was what Bland was and where his roots still are. Unfortunately, with the "mulatto" texture of black music as it is these days (consciously trying for the white market while pretending to be all-black), Bland is stuck in a formula. His producers, who also produce the Four Tops—late of bang-bang Motown and now very much mulatto—tend to put all their artists into the same kind of sighing-string format that worked so well for King, but they go much more pop than King or his producer did. Bland is in the uncomfortable position of having to make something of an imitation.

To his credit, he does. There is no mistaking his experience and savvy. It is possible to listen to *him* while ignoring the mediocre songs he sings, and listening that way is rewarding. Bland is a man who has been waiting a long time for his chance, and he may get it this time. It's well deserved. If you have never heard him, this album isn't the best place to start, but it is a beginning from which you can work your way back. J.V.

**PAUL BUTTERFIELD'S BETTER DAYS: *It All Comes Back*.** Paul Butterfield (vocals, harp, piano); Geoff Muldaur (vocals, guitar); Christopher Parker (drums); Amos Garrett (bass, guitar); Billy Rich (bass); Ronnie Barron (vocals, keyboards). *Too Many Drivers: It's Getting Harder to Survive; If You Live; Win or Lose; Small Town Talk*; and four others. BEARVILLE BR 2170 \$5.98, Ⓣ M8 2170 \$6.98, Ⓞ M5 2170 \$6.98.

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

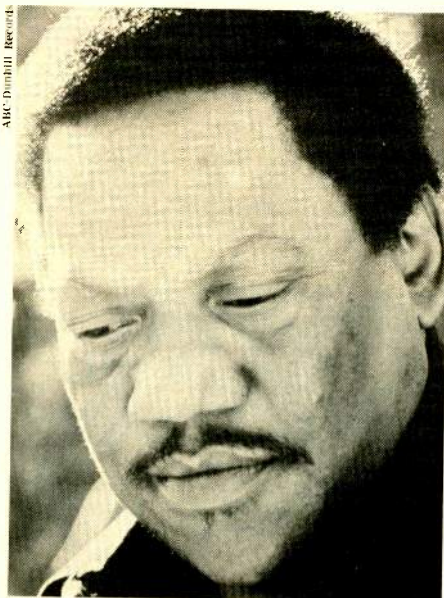
Paul Butterfield, as Paul Butterfield knows, doesn't have to prove anything. But handling one's own ego, like all pursuits, can be overdone. This album suffers because Butterfield doesn't hog *more* of the spotlight. He shares the vocals with Ronnie Barron and Geoff Muldaur, who get two cracks apiece in addition to Muldaur's harmony part in the title song. This doesn't produce negative results *per se*—although Barron, a vocal athlete, gives us a too-cocky, self-indulgent reading of *It's Getting Harder to Survive*, the subtler Muldaur does a fine job with *Small Town Talk* and *Poor Boy*—but it does scatter the thrust of an album whose songs gave it coordination problems in the first place. When Butterfield does step out, he is classy. He is so smooth, particularly on the harp, that the hard parts don't attract any particular attention sometimes, but the people who care will notice: his playing behind Muldaur in *Poor Boy* and be-

hind himself in *Too Many Drivers* takes off from solid ability and sensible understandings, in the one to become moodily beautiful and in the other tastefully inventive. Better Days is loaded with talent, but the emphasis here on jump tunes leads to laid-back rhythm tinkering and doesn't really allow the band to swing. Still, I play the album pretty often, and I'm looking forward to hearing more of Butterfield, percentage-wise, in his next one. N.C.

**DAVID CASSIDY: *Dreams Are Nuthin' More Than Wishes*.** David Cassidy (vocals); orchestras. *Mae; Fever; Summer Days; Sing Me; Daydreamer; The Puppy Song*; and seven others. BELL 1132 \$5.98, Ⓣ 81132 \$6.95, Ⓞ 51132 \$6.95.

Performance: **For fans only**  
Recording: **Good**

Television and personal-appearance superstar



**BOBBY BLUE BLAND**  
*Unmistakable experience and savvy*

and teeny-bopper idol David Cassidy's new album isn't nearly as bad as it is plain boring. As he hoarsely whispers his way through a pallid and creaky *Bali Hai* or struggles to inject some life into a burnt-out version of *Fever*, and as the glossy arrangements tinkle and thump around him, it becomes clear that this is an album that will appeal only to his most rabid fans. Even they are bound to dwindle soon, though, as he phases his way out of his TV series, thus denying his adorer's the opportunity to gaze upon him. I'm not sure how much time is left in his recording career. Quit while you're on top, or at least ahead, remains sound advice. But since Cassidy is one of the more likable and show-biz-wise of the pop phenomena, I hope that he has decided to take the vast amount of money he has earned—and run.

Oddly, this is one performer that I feel will be heard from again in a few years, but with a completely different act, an adult one. We'll see. P.R.

**RICK DERRINGER: *All American Boy*.** Rick Derringer (vocals, guitars, bass, sitar, percussion); instrumental accompaniment. *Rock and Roll Hoochie Koo; Joy Ride; Teenage Queen; Cheap Tequila; Slide On Over; Slinky; Teenage Love Affair*; and six others. BLUE

SKY KZ 32481 \$5.98, Ⓣ ZA 32481 \$6.98, Ⓞ ZT 32481 \$6.98.

Performance: **Good**  
Recording: **Clean**

Rick Derringer was an original member of the McCoys (*Hang On Sloopy*) and stayed with them for years while they went through various metamorphoses, the last as back-up group to Johnny Winter, the blues guitarist who never quite became a superstar. From there, Derringer moved over into record production and has guided Johnny's piano-playing brother Edgar into prominence (*Frankenstein*). Derringer is a fluent multi-instrumentalist and a good shouting singer (all those one-night McCoy stands toughened his throat), and he and the Winter brothers are managed by Steve Paul, former owner of the Scene club in New York, a gathering place for most of the best rock talent back in the mid-Sixties.

*Rock and Roll Hoochie Koo* has been performed by almost everyone in the Paul stable: here Derringer, who wrote it, gets his chance. It's a gonna-rock-tonight tune; a performer has to be energetic with it, but it's not the kind of song that inspires wild abandon. Most of the others are about depression, rolls in the hay, one-night (musical) stands, and the pains o' life 'n' love, all seen from the "teenage" standpoint that Derringer has adopted for himself. The album succeeds as straight-ahead rock-and-roll, but we already have enough of that. Derringer is a very capable musician—dear reader, I know I've been using the word "capable" a lot lately but dammit, that's what most rock musicians are today: good but not *that* good. That sums up this album as well. J.V.

**DR. HOOK: *Belly Up!*** Dr. Hook and the Medicine Show (vocals and instrumentals). *Ballad of . . . ; Roland the Roadie and Gertrude the Groupie; Come On In; Acapulco Goldie; When Lily Was Queen; Life Ain't Easy*; and five others. COLUMBIA KC 32270 \$5.98, Ⓣ CA 32270 \$6.98, Ⓞ CT 32270 \$6.98.

Performance: **Twitchy**  
Recording: **Good**

Dr. Hook and the Medicine Show are the Katzenjammer Kids of rock-and-roll, and their patron saint is probably Spike Jones. They seem to have a permanent case of the giggles, and they peddle mischief in an occasionally charming way. They have had two hits, *Sylvia's Mother* (boy calls old girl friend who's about to be married and is told by her mother to bug off) and *The Cover of Rolling Stone*, a deserved and delicious attack on the most venal of rock musicians and the youth-pop syndrome. Both were written by cartoonist Shel Silverstein, who most often gives himself to writing dirty limericks or kiddie lollipop fantasies. An example of the latter, on this album, is *The Wonderful Soup Stone*. Two examples of the former are *Acapulco Goldie* and *Penicillin Penny*: one is a whore and the other has the pox—such types occur so frequently in Silverstein's songs that it seems he must have general reservations about the female species. Poor fellow.

With this album, Dr. Hook and the Show offer some of their own material and try to be more of a band than they are normally required to be when singing Silverstein's songs and being comedians. They are a good, country-rock, white Southern band, and their



songs indicate they may well come up with better in time. The best of those included here are a hoo-raw stomp-down, *Come On In*, and *Ballad of . . .*, a melodramatic thingie about a deflowered rock fan who shoots her superstar betrayer dead at a concert.

Dr. Hook and the Medicine Show apparently want to be known less as humorists and more as a band: that's laudable, and this album indicates that they have enough talent to make it. *J.V.*

**DONOVAN:** *Essence to Essence*. Donovan (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth*; *Lazy Daze*; *Life Goes On*; *The Dignity of Man*; *Boy for Every Girl*; *Yellow Star*; and five others. EPIC KE 32800 \$5.98. Ⓟ EA 32800 \$6.98, Ⓢ ET 32800 \$6.98.

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

Can you imagine a grown man making a fortune by writing and singing such lines as "Don't pour filth into the air/Air is the best thing we can breathe"? Well, if it does nothing else, Donovan's new album proves once and for all that the worst of pop music cannot be satirized: nothing can ever equal unconscious self-parody.

Donovan is a canny young lad who started off imitating Woody Guthrie, switched to Bob Dylan, gave that up for semi-hip druggie songs in the late Sixties, and finally put on a sheet and turned guru as the decade ended. He changes persona as shrewdly as Walt Whitman or a society jewel thief: he is a canny combination of professional entertainer and *Angst* publicist. Since he started out, there never was a spiritual fad that Donovan Leitch was not either at the forefront of or comfortably ensconced in.

Ah, but of course I do not see with a loving eye. I am much too literal; there is no song in my heart and my mind is closed. I have missed the whole point of this album. Instead of its being the contemptible kitsch I think it is, this compleat collection of hokey may not only be masterly but have real Spiritual Significance. Why, if I hadn't heard *Lazy Daze* I wouldn't know what could be stolen from the clumpy melody of *The Battle of New Orleans*. Nor would I have discovered, had I skipped over *Life Goes On*, what would, with lyric changes, make a dandy chewing gum jingle.

Probably Donovan thinks he is sincere: at times he may even have been so. But most of his public life has been devoted to packaging himself *à la mode*—the scoop of vanilla atop the slice of pie. Well, to quote a famous cartoon, "I say it's spinach and I say the hell with it." *J.V.*

**FOUR TOPS:** *Main Street People*. Four Tops (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Are You Man Enough*; *Sweet Understanding Love*; *Peace of Mind*; *One Woman Man*; *Too Little*; *Too Late*; and five others. ABC-DUNHILL DSX-50144 \$5.98. Ⓟ M8023-50144 \$6.95. Ⓢ M 5023-50144M \$6.95.

Performance: **Professional**  
Recording: **Good**

The Four Tops had been banging around for some years when they became one of the staples of early and mid-period Motown. They were written for and produced by Holland-Dozier-Holland, staff geniuses of the same period. H-D-H were also writing and producing. *(Continued on page 83)*



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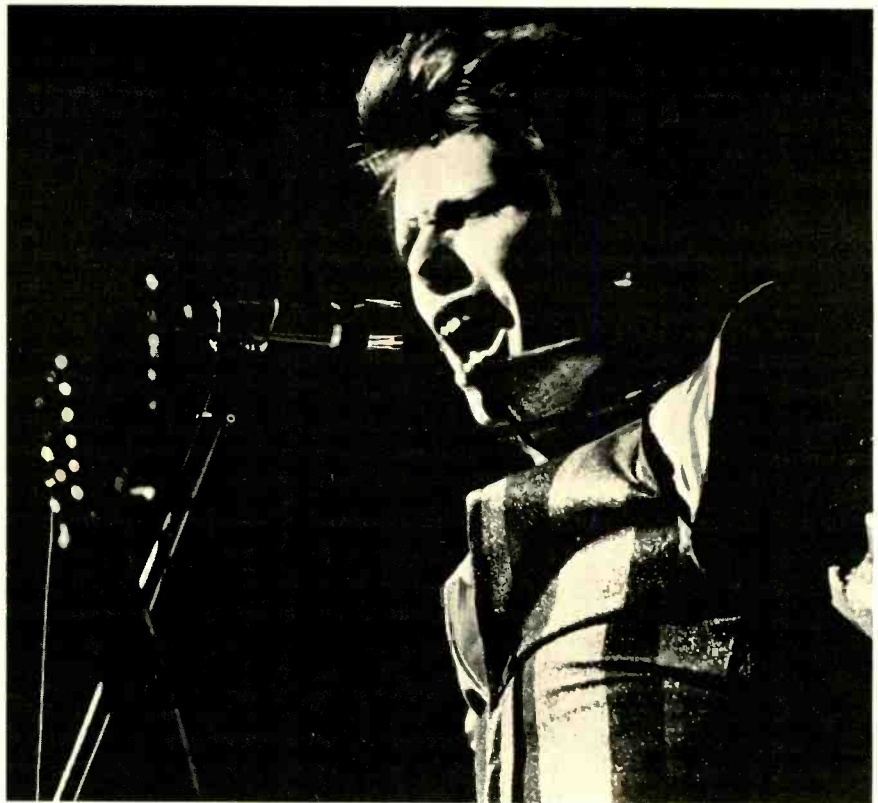


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# DARLING DAVID BOWIE

Has he gotten those "pinups"  
out of his system?

Reviewed by Jon Tiven



As a commercial phenomenon, David Bowie has been remarkably successful, having made the transition from private pet of the rock avant-garde to large-public pop idol in a relatively short period of time. As a serious artist, however, he has been the target of more than a few raspberries. The shoddiness of his "Aladdin Sane" album wasn't exactly gratifying to his supporters, and many old fans have been crying "sell-out" ever since his rise to fame—and with some reason, for Bowie the songwriter hasn't yet been able to match his uncanny "The Man Who Sold the World" of several years ago.

His new album, "Pinups," is something of a departure from his previous offerings. He wrote none of the songs, the material having been culled from the repertoire of the early days of the British Beat Boom (1964-1967), and those he has chosen show him in a far different light from that he has customarily dispensed himself in. Here Darling David is singer, arranger (adding his still distinctive touch on synthesizer, harmonica, and saxophones), and interpreter, but he seems curiously stripped of substance and is left only with style. That style is, to be sure, often striking, but unfortunately it is just as often inappropriate; he misinterprets the songs more than he does anything usefully original with them.

But one can still give him some credit simply for undertaking a project of this kind: many of his fans, after all, aren't overly familiar with the recorded work of such Sixties masters as the Yardbirds, the Pretty Things, and early Pink Floyd. If only he'd had the guiding hand of a Sixties producer like Shel Talmy or Andrew Oldham to show him the way.

Bowie does particular justice to the Pretty Things tracks *Rosalyn* and *Don't Bring Me*

*Down*, sticking close to the guitar-based sound of the original versions and adding a minimum of Bowie-isms and other vocal hanky-panky. We fare far less well with the Yardbirds' material, however, for his affected accent is out of place in *Shapes of Things* and Mick Ronson's guitar is not biting enough in *I Wish You Would*. The album's major disaster is *Friday on My Mind*, so arranged that it is heavy in all the places it should be light and vice versa—it cannot compare with the superb original by the Aussie Easybeats. *Here Comes the Night*, too, is execrable; Van Morrison's vocal delivery (on the Them original) communicated the purest kind of personal anguish, but Bowie just sounds as if he's trying to unload it all on the listener.

The Who songs here are half successful, half not—odd, since parts of Bowie's "Ziggy Stardust" album were so clearly influenced by that group. *I Can't Explain* just might have worked—the basic arrangement is okay—but in the end it drags terribly. Its faults are, ironically enough, thrown into considerable relief by Bowie's masterly performance of *Anyway, Anyhow, Anywhere*; he outdoes Roger Daltrey as lead singer here, and the new arrangement delivers a lot more punch than the original.

The album's single, *Sorrow*, is a ballad, a song more like one of Bowie's own than any of the others here. Its string-laden arrangement is a natural for him, and he does well by it. The Kinks' *Where Have All the Good Times Gone* and the Mojos' *Everything's Alright* are likewise stylistically congenial—they would, in fact, have been right at home in "Aladdin Sane," probably improving it in the bargain.

And then there's *See Emily Play*, a tune Bowie is perhaps spiritually very close to. Written by Syd Barrett, founder of Pink

Floyd, it reflects the schizophrenic mind warp that has been such an important part of Bowie's image from the beginning. There were those of us who thought of him, before his meteoric rise, as just another station on Barrett's wavelength. Perhaps he still tunes in, sometimes, and that is why this version of *See Emily Play*, while not really sticking very close to the original, seems somehow to capture the *feeling* of Pink Floyd's reading of it.

On the whole, "Pinups" is a novel and perhaps even a *noble* idea (think of all those compositional royalties Bowie is forgoing!), but it can be considered an artistic success only if that is what you call an album in which seven out of twelve tunes work and the rest are miserable failures. Considering the material he had to work with and the quality of the backing musicians, Bowie *should* have produced a little masterpiece. He didn't. But perhaps, at least, he now has all this out of his system, and can move on to an album of all-new material as exciting as "Ziggy Stardust," as lasting as "The Man Who Sold the World." The way these things go, however, his next album will probably be a live two-record set, so grab a book and sidown. It could be a long wait.

**DAVID BOWIE:** *Pinups*. David Bowie (vocals, saxophone, synthesizer); Mick Ronson (guitar); T. J. Bolder (bass); Aynsley Dunbar (drums); other musicians. *Rosalyn*: *Here Comes the Night*; *I Wish You Would*; *See Emily Play*; *Everything's Alright*; *I Can't Explain*; *Friday on My Mind*; *Sorrow*; *Don't Bring Me Down*; *Shapes of Things*; *Anyway, Anyhow, Anywhere*; *Where Have All the Good Times Gone*. RCA APL1-0291 \$5.98, © APS1-0291 \$6.95, © APK1-0291 \$6.95.



ing the Supremes, so that the latest Supremes hit often became, with a few altered notes and new lyrics, the latest Four Tops hit. Holland-Dozier-Holland left Motown in a contract dispute. For this and other reasons, the Four Tops were sitting on ice for a few years. Later they left Motown and began appearing in "oldie but goodie" shows. They were then signed by ABC-Dunhill, which, like many other primarily white labels, eagerly began signing black acts when white rock began to disintegrate and black music appeared to be the only reliable (that is, selling) style.

The Four Tops' style has changed along with their label: lead singer Levi Stubbs no longer has to grate and growl his way through tunes. He and the group now sing very pop-oriented songs that purport to be black. They have been successful at it, and I am glad, as I would be glad for any artist who escaped the Motown machine and survived to prosper. What they do *as music*, however, is no more remarkable than what the Ink Spots did thirty years ago, only now we call it "soul." Correction: we are *supposed* to call it "soul." It is actually—not only for the Four Tops but for most of black music today—carefully crafted, highly professional, very commercial nightclub stuff touted and sold as Art with a Message. This is not to say that the Four Tops are not good and pleasing to hear; they are, as long as you take them as entertainers, and not as the prefabricated social spokesmen that most black artists are being merchandised as today.

I hope the Four Tops have many more hits because I respect a hard-working and talented group, even if I appreciate their hard work more than their talent. But there is nothing important or outstanding in this album besides perhaps two songs that will be, respectively, their most recent hit single and their next one. Er, um—right on? J.V.

**GENESIS: *Selling England by the Pound*.** Genesis (vocals and instrumentals). *Dancing with the Moonlit Knight; Firth of Fifth; More Fool Me; The Battle of Epping Forest; After the Ordeal*; and three others. CHARISMA FC 6060 \$5.98.

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

Guess I'm just going to have to get me 'ands (if 'ands is wot yer plays it wif) on one of those mellotrons and find out something for meself. Seems an increasing number of working-class British lads are coaxing not just music but *character* from the mellotron—and think of that: character from an electronic gadget. Here Tony Banks does some of his best work yet for Genesis, providing for me the only excuse I can find to keep listening to the album. The thing soars, bends, slides, curls around every which way, and it isn't that Banks plays better than the other musicians—they all play well, the problem being the songs they're playing—but that he and his instrument do so much with a mediocre score.

Genesis' writing hasn't improved much, you see, and Peter Gabriel's strained, scratchy vocals are starting to get on my nerves. They still go in for pretentious gobbledegook in lyrics that aren't really about much of anything but whose awkward configurations play havoc with melodic structure—they could write good melodies if they rearranged their priorities—and the arrangement ideas still infringe too much on Yes and Jethro Tull and such folk. Occasionally, of course, some



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originality does squeeze through. *After the Ordeal* is beautifully done by everyone, especially—hoo, boy—that mellotron. I've called this a promising group before, and it seems I will again . . . and again . . . and again. . . .  
N.C.

**GRATEFUL DEAD:** *Wake of the Flood*. Grateful Dead (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. *Mississippi Half-Step Uptown Toodleoo*; *Let Me Sing Your Blues Away*; *Row Jimmy*; *Stella Blue*; and three others. GRATEFUL DEAD GD-01 \$5.98.

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

The Grateful Dead have their own record label now—this being its first product—and if they run it in the neat, dull, businesslike manner in which they are now making music, it should be just the thing prudent investors are looking for. As music, I suppose this album could have great value in easing jazz-hermits back into the “real” world—no danger of an overdose of raunch here, and no chance that it will inspire your primly inhibited aunt to boogaloo on the tabletop, either. Restful, I might find it, if I could hold still for being rested by one of the original San Francisco hippie bands.

Time is cruel, especially in the way it erodes contexts (look out, John Mitchell) and leaves only the naked evidence to stand or fall on its own merits: the Dead had a lot of assumptions going for them in the late Sixties, an important point in the scheme of things. Now most of those assumptions have collapsed or—worse yet—are irrelevant, and a series of gently tricky and essentially antiseptic guitar licks by Jerry Garcia have no special *élan*. A seamless organ overlay placed just so sounds as much like a refinement contrivance in a Dead recording as it would in any other recording. Papa John Creach, it sounds like (there are no credits), is in there trying to stir things up, but his funkiness is absorbed by the routine competence of it all. The vocal harmonies are listless—even the cymbal clashes sound detached and resigned. *Stella Blue* is pleasant, a nice framework at least for bass playing, but it would have worked as well for Dick Haymes or Vic Damone fifteen or twenty years ago. The *Weather Report Suite* has some nice acoustic guitar work, but brevity should be the soul of weather reporting, and this one runs almost thirteen minutes. Weatherman Bowman, out in Denver, could decorate all his maps, all the studio walls, and the engineer's clipboard in that length of time. But if you want a pleasant, low-key, low-profile Grateful Dead album, and all *that* implies, well, here it is.  
N.C.

**AL GREEN:** *Livin' for You*. Al Green (vocals); orchestra. *Home Again*; *Free At Last*; *Beware*; *Sweet Sixteen*; and five others. HI RECORDS ASH1 32082 \$4.98, © M 92082 \$6.98, © M 52682 \$6.98.

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

Al Green can always be depended on to stir up some excitement, which is exactly what he does here in a rip-roaring performance of his own *Home Again* and a fervent rendition of the gospesele *My God Is Real*. The only bummer is that lugubrious piece of schmaltz titled *Unchained Melody*, which even Green can't rescue from banality. The rest of the album is interesting, but the addition of some-

thing called the Memphis Strings on some tracks was a grave error.  
P.R.

**GLADYS KNIGHT & THE PIPS:** *Imagination*. Gladys Knight & the Pips (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Midnight Train to Georgia*; *I've Got to Use My Imagination*. *Where Peaceful Waters Flow*; *I Can See Clearly Now*; and five others. BUDDAH BDS 5141 \$5.98, © M 85141 \$6.95, © M 55141 \$6.95.

Performance: **Smooth**  
Recording: **Good**

“Soul” is a term originally used in the late 1950's and early 1960's to describe a certain type of loose jazz that differed from the autocratic, stuffy, conservatory/closet styles of the time in that it was not ashamed to swing. The tune that prompted the term was Can-



AL GREEN  
*Dependable rip-roaring excitement*

nonball Adderley's *This Here*, and Bobby Timmons, who wrote it, was for a brief time the high priest of “soul.” Jazz and social etiquette being what they were at that time, it was never mentioned that “soul” jazz was not new but had been around for approximately forty years as played by the New Orleans grand masters and their disciples. Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, Earl Hines, and—oh, say, fifty or a hundred other musicians were “soulful” and swung without thinking about it or looking for a college grant.

“Soul” eventually was applied to all black music, including that portion of rock that was black. That portion has increased substantially in recent years, sometimes through merit and sometimes through expedience. But the specific reasons why black music is labeled “soul” do not always mesh with what “soul” is supposed to mean. “Soul” is supposed to be a spontaneous, individualistic, emotional expression of self *within* whatever kind of music is being played—for example, a wail, groan, gasp, murmur, or sigh that doesn't necessarily have to do with the song as written but is the singer accidentally or unabashedly declaring himself.

Now, how difficult is “soul” to fake? Simple as pie: a grunt or a growl, a tear or a whisper are as easily used by sly deceivers as by sincere people. In music, such slyness—

graced, to be sure, with occasional real feeling—is unbeatable. Russians sob over their balalaikas, Latins steam to boleros, Irish weep to ballads of mothers and their jolly bandit sons—the list goes on and on. Why should it be any different for black music? It's not. Thus we get today's black music, which purports to be “soul” but is in fact a merchandising and marketing of studied professionalism passed off, in these times, as urgent telegrams from a distinct, separate, unself-conscious culture. Ten or twenty years ago that may have been true, but not lately.

When you hear Gladys Knight & the Pips, then, you are not hearing “black” music, because there is no such thing as pure black music any more; it has been absorbed into the mainstream of American music where it always belonged and to which it always had a right. But having gained that, what has it lost? Much, I fear, because there is little American music that is individual these days; almost all of it is machine-made, and the talent goes into making the machine sound natural.

What has all this to do with Gladys Knight & the Pips? Everything and nothing. Miss Knight is a pro, an excellent vocalist, with many hits behind her. She has sounded good and *been* good for many years; she still is. But whatever individuality she had—whatever personal contribution many black artists had or were able to make—is now gathered into this machine, for which “soul” is the synonym. It might be called the “Soul Blob.” It makes money, and I am all for musicians getting paid well. They, like plumbers, have to pay rent, and are entitled to disposable income. But this music is not what it once was, and it is not now what it is *said* to be. Black? Hardly. Human? Well, yes and no. Jive? Yes, sir.  
J.V.

**GORDON LIGHTFOOT:** *Sundown* (see Best of the Month, page 75)

**LYNYRD SKYNYRD:** *Pronounced Leh'-nerd Skin'-nerd*. Lynyrd Skynyrd (vocals and instrumentals). *I Ain't the One*; *Mississippi Kid*; *Gimme Three Steps*; *Poison Whiskey*; and four others. MCA/SOUNDS OF THE SOUTH MCA-363 \$5.98.

Performance: **Wringin' and twistin'**  
Recording: **Good**

Al Kooper, formerly of the Blues Project, sideman for Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, and the Rolling Stones, inventor of Blood, Sweat & Tears, solo vocal-guitar-keyboard artist, and general shaker and mover, went to Atlanta two years ago. There he found a number of white Southern territory bands, fell in love with the sound, signed some artists, and started his Sounds of the South label.

The prestige and success of the Allman Brothers, the best-known white Southern band, may have opened the doors for others. Kooper, meanwhile, is to be commended for his enthusiasm and given high marks for taste, for white Southern bands have received little publicity and many of them are very good. Lynyrd Skynyrd is very good, and I especially recommend the shivering Hawaiian-style blues guitar in *Mississippi Kid*.

The only problem with white Southern bands is that much of their sound may have been pre-empted by other American or British blues bands, the best of whom are first-rate but second-hand. Whether this will make any difference to audiences, I don't know. Kooper's reaction to the pre-emption is:



"[Groups like the Stones, who started as a blues band] sing what they read about in the papers: *these people sing about their life.*" Kooper is right; there *is* a difference, and the contribution of white Southern musicians has yet to be recognized. I am not touting white Southern bands against black Southern bands: the point is *both* of them are Southern and the "soul" is shared. Black and white musicians down there (as up North, in rock or jazz) admire and swap stylistic accomplishments with one another, as they have been doing for fifty years.

Since we are rediscovering everybody else these days—from doo-wop groups to blues masters to nostalgic pop-rockers—the discovery of white Southern territorial bands would be a windfall. Lynyrd Skynyrd is a first installment, with—let's hope—more to come. *J.V.*

**ETHEL MERMAN: *Her Greatest Hits.*** Ethel Merman (vocals); instrumental accompaniment; Billy May arr. and cond. *I Got Rhythm; Medley—This Is It/Do I Love You?/I Get a Kick Out of You; Sam and Delilah; Life Is Just a Bowl of Cherries; Blow, Gabriel, Blow; You're an Old Smoothie;* and four others. STANYAN SR 10070 \$5.98 (from Stanyan Records, Box 2783, Hollywood, Calif. 90028).

Performance: **Loud and lusty**  
Recording: **Good**

I get the feeling sometimes that La Merman is making a continuous, nonstop comeback. What? Still another record containing *I Got Rhythm, I Get a Kick Out of You, You're the Top,* and *Down in the Depths on the Ninetieth Floor?* They seem to be issued by some company or other at the rate of at least once a month. After a while, you begin to know not only the songs but the liner notes by heart.

But are they really issuing any *new* records of Ethel Merman hits? Or could it be the same record coming out over and over again? In this case it *is* a reissue. What is labeled here as "Ms. Ethel Merman—Her Greatest Hits" came out years ago on the Reprise label under the title "Merman—Her Greatest!" So if you already have it, don't bother to buy this one again. But if you haven't—wow! Here's the old Ethel, all right, in wide-awake arrangements devised and conducted by Billy May, socking out all the old standbys that made her famous in the Thirties. Here's your big chance to latch on to any of those lines you might have missed in the verses before the familiar choruses of Cole Porter songs. "Ms." Merman did make a brand new record of her stuff for London last year, but she was not quite in the voice she was in for this one. Still, I'm sure we have not heard the last of her. *P.K.*

**STEVE MILLER BAND: *The Joker.*** Steve Miller Band (vocals and instrumentals). *Sugar Babe; Mary Lou; Your Cash Ain't Nothin' but Trash; The Joker; Lovin' Cup; Come On in My Kitchen;* and three others. CAPITOL SMAS 11235 \$5.98, © 8XW 11235 \$6.98, © 4XW 11235 \$6.98.

Performance: **Spotty**  
Recording: **Good**

If I remember correctly, the Steve Miller Band is a white blues group that grew overly eclectic, disbanded, then re-formed, and has now found its original fans and newcomers to welcome it back.

This new album starts off well with *Sugar Babe*, which sounds Beatle-ish and has a lot



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of jumpy nerve. But then there's *Mary Lou*, originally recorded by Ronnie Hawkins in the 1950's, when his backup group included future members of the Band (remember them?). Miller's version misses all the built-in clues the tune has as to how it should be played, and it falls flat. He does better on *Your Cash Ain't Nothin' but Trash*, which, with its friendly vaudeville jive, seems to be out of the (black) 1940's. It was written by Charles Calhoun, which seems to be a name I should remember . . . wait! I find, on consulting my stacks of shellacs and towers of vinyl, that the song was cut by the Clovers, one of the early r-&-b groups, back in 1954. The second side of the album contains Miller originals, with the exception of Robert Johnson's *Come On in My Kitchen*, recorded live by Miller as a solo at a club date.

As a white blues band, Miller's is pretty good. I am ambiguous about white blues bands, though, for the following reasons: (1) I heard black blues when quite young so that (2) white blues bands can't be, for me, as good

finding one of those little shoulder scaffolds for the harmonica. But you deserve to hear, if you haven't, that considerable semi-smart money is riding on Elliott Murphy as the Next of the Nexts. He is a good craftsman at what he does, but the whole thing strikes me as a self-conscious pitch to the adolescent side of the Dylan-fascination matrix. Murphy writes the middle-Dylan or early-Springsteen upset-over-somethin' word trip, and he writes it well. I would say, however, based on my adventures with my own throat, that he is struck with too specific a set of inflections (being something of a Bowie-Reed hybrid in general intonation), but, hell, I say that about lots of folks who go on to become rich and famous. Murphy's adaptation of Dylan's squeaky harp style does not always serve music well, in the abstract sense, for a more bluesy harp sound would go better with the driving, slightly overdone, but promising way he plays electric guitar. He brings his own sub-trademark to the fray, an identification with the world of Scott Fitzgerald—but that is suspiciously voguish

tages that seem to be a small rage of rock artists lately: traffic noise, mumbling voices, sounds of subways, and so forth. In this case it is set to some wayward free-form jazz—the musicians pay no attention to one another as they play. Again, JF Murphy & Salt have got to “get it together,” as the young people say. If they do, I'd like to hear them again. J.V.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**THE OZARK MOUNTAIN DAREDEVILS.** Buddy Brayfield (vocals, keyboards); Steve Cash (vocals, harmonica); Randle Chowning (guitars, vocals); John Dillon (fiddle, guitar, autoharp, dulcimer, vocals); Michael Granda (bass, vocals); Larry Lee (vocals, drums, guitar). *Country Girl; Spaceship Orion; If You Wanna Get to Heaven; Chicken Train; Colorado Song*; and five others. A & M SP 441 \$5.98.

Performance: **Impressive debut**  
Recording: **Very good**

Here's a band that knows what it is doing and has most of its warts and wrinkles in character-etching places. The band plays authoritatively a smattering of rock mitigated by the acoustic grace of the Byrds-Burritos-Eagles tradition and a suggestion of country in the accents of some of these boys and in the way Steve Cash plays harp. The songs are not all great but they hold up well, and *Road to Glory, Standing on the Rock, Spaceship Orion*, and *Colorado Song* demand several rerearings. The solo vocals are pretty mundane, but the harmonies and dubbed-up choruses handle the real vocal load, and handle it very well. The Daredevils do have their excesses: *Chicken Train*, despite a virtuoso performance on what sounds like a jew's harp (and must be the “mouthbow” the credits say John Dillon plays) carries barnyard dadaism too darn far, and a recycling riff tacked onto the end of the first side is just so much padding. But there are unexpected pleasures, too, such as the funky, ingenuous bass singing by someone at just the right places in *Standing on the Rock*, and the strange, good fiddling by Dillon here and there. Cash uses the harp almost as a rhythm instrument—and I could get enough of that—but he helps give the band a signature. On top of all that, one must consider that we had a Colorado boom, a Vermont boom, a West Virginia boom, and—well, why not an Ozark boom? N.C.



A & M Records

OZARK MOUNTAIN  
DAREDEVILS:  
left to right,  
Buddy Brayfield, Randle  
Chowning, Michael  
Granda, John Dillon,  
Steve Cash,  
and Larry Lee

as the originals, yet (3) blues are anybody's property, since white folks get unhappy too, and (4) some individual musicians in white blues bands are better than their black idols, and besides, (5) blues are so much fun to play; but (6) I can't join in the general huzzahs for white blues bands because I think that over the last seven years, despite the rediscovery of black blues masters, white blues bands have gotten the devotion that black blues bands should have had, but then again, (8) wise up, kid, and (9) what does it matter so long as good music gets played well?

What the Miller band can do for blues, they do; what they can't, they can't. In that regard, they're like most white blues outfits. And (10) doggone it, that's the way it is. J.V.

**JONI MITCHELL:** *Court and Spark* (see Best of the Month page 75)

**ELLIOTT MURPHY:** *Aquashow*. Elliott Murphy (vocals, guitar, harmonica); Matthew Murphy (bass); Gene Parsons (drums); Teddy Irwin (guitar); Frank Owens (keyboards). *Last of the Rock Stars; How's the Family; Hangin' Out; Hometown; Graveyard Scrapbook*; and five others. POLYDOR PD 5061 \$4.98.

Performance: **Well rehearsed**  
Recording: **Very good**

Don't know about you, but I started to suspect this thing was getting out of hand when a Rent-a-Next-Dylan Shop opened down the block. The most difficult thing about going into the Next Dylan business, it turns out, is

just now also. In any case, *Like a Great Gatsby* supposedly ties two great make-believe worlds together, and obligatory subjects are covered in *Last of the Rock Stars* and *Marilyn*. It's all constructed pretty well. I'm just too old for it, and glad, for once, that I am. N.C.

**JF MURPHY & SALT:** *The Last Illusion*. JF Murphy & Salt (vocals and instrumentals). *Sweet Byrd; New York City/Home; Bell Toll; Teenage Fantasy*; and four others. COLUMBIA KC-32539 \$5.98.

Performance: **Promising**  
Recording: **Good**

I am halfway convinced by this band and by JF Murphy's songwriting, but something tells me both are still in rehearsal. The performances and the songs seem always to be on the verge of being really good, but then they slide back into being merely a little better than average.

The group has to iron out a few things. For one, they play a mixture of rock and jazz, whose elements clash where they should either mesh or get out of each other's way. For another, Murphy's vocals seem studied and straightlaced, as he if he were paying more attention to hearing himself sing than just singing. And as a resident but unresigned New Yorker of some years, I was surprised by *New York City/Home*, which contains the line, “New York City, won't you breathe on me?” Good God, Murphy, as if the city didn't breathe on us enough already. Have you been out at night lately? The second part, *Home*, is another of those from-the-street sound mon-

**LOU RAWLS:** *Live at the Century Plaza*. Lou Rawls (vocals); orchestra. *Something; Tobacco Road; A Natural Man; Golden Slumbers; Dead End Street*; and five others. MGM SE-4895 \$5.98, © M-8130-4895 \$6.98.

Performance: **Fair**  
Recording: **Noisy**

Lou Rawls tries to touch all bases and as a result misses most of them. Jazz, blues, rock—you name it, he tries it. What emerges, for the most part, are Billy Eckstineish vocals fighting with a rampaging orchestra that is supposed to whip up excitement. After a while it all gets as leaden as a soggy blintz. *Tobacco Road* is his best effort here—that is, what I can hear of it through what must be the noisiest recording of the year. P.R.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**DIANA ROSS:** *The Last Time I Saw Him*. Diana Ross (vocals); orchestra. *Sleepin'*;



*You; Turn Around; Love Me; Behind Closed Doors*; and five others. MOTOWN M 812V1 \$5.98, ⓑ M 812T \$6.98, ⓒ M 812C \$6.98.

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

I don't know which is a more pleasurable experience—looking at Diana Ross or listening to her. Since they've been kind of stingy with pictures of her on this album, I've been listening. She catches me up in her seductive web in *Love Me*, she fascinates me in a moving and dramatic performance of Malvina Reynolds' sad-sweet *Turn Around*. I get a lot of flak from those who insist Diana Ross is not nearly as good as I'm always saying she is. In any purist sense perhaps she isn't. But I find her such a striking performer in so many ways that I can't resist her recordings.

The lavish production slinks around her like a see-through peignoir, and that Motown sound has never been more persuasive. P.R.

**SHA NA NA: From the Streets of New York.** Sha Na Na (vocals and instrumentals). *High School Confidential; The Wanderer; Splish Splash; Ring Around Your Neck; Get a Job; Sh-Boom; Earth Angel; Chances Are*; and four others. KAMA SUTRA KSBS 2075 \$5.98, ⓑ M 82077 \$6.98, ⓒ M 52077 \$6.98.

Performance: **Rollicking**  
Recording: **Good**

If you have ever seen Sha Na Na's stage act you will have been pleased and satisfied. They spoof the punk-ethic of the 1950's with a burlesque of the rock vaudeville of the time. They are good actors and play it straight, which brings the laughs. They copy the voices and arrangements of oldies hits note for note. Named after the nonsense bass vocal intro to *Get a Job*, the group began in 1969 and has been playing to packed houses ever since.

The problem with recording Sha Na Na has always been how to get their visual sense of fun into the grooves. It has proved nearly impossible unless they were recorded live—this group is best captured outside the studio. They have written original material (Scott Simon's countryish songs are promising), but they could not have two personalities at once: it must be all of one or the other. What saved Sha Na Na on records was the nostalgia craze, which finally caught up with them. A recent double-disc set, "The Golden Age of Rock and Roll," was a certified million-dollar package. It will probably never happen again, though, unless the nostalgia craze is so strong and protracted that future Sha Na Na LPs are automatic smash hits. There is a wealth of material from the Fifties and early Sixties for the band to emulate, though their performances rarely have the charm of the originals. If they alter their stage-act dialogue from time to time there may be something "new" about successive albums—here we get a dance contest, with the Central Park audience voting for couples number one, two, and three. Outside of that, it is still best to see Sha Na Na rather than hear them, though owning one of their albums, such as this one, isn't a bad idea. J.V.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**CARLY SIMON: Hotcakes.** Carly Simon (vocals, guitar, piano); Jim Keltner (drums); Klaus Voorman (bass); James Taylor (guitar, vocals); other musicians. *Safe and Sound; Mind on My Man; Think I'm Gonna Have a Baby; Older Sister; Just Not True; Hotcakes*;

and five others. ELEKTRA 7E-1002 \$5.98, ⓑ ET-85075 \$6.97, ⓒ TC 55075 \$6.97.

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

Carly Simon's voice is not my idea of lovely, but she is smooth, and she is stylish in a studied, middle-class sort of way. A fine album this is, too, flawed only in the quality of a couple of songs that seem to have sprung not from the need to get something said in words and music but from the need to fill up an album. *Just Not True*, written solo, and *Forever My Love*, written with husband James Taylor, are examples of such fluff. But then *Misfit, Grownup, Think I'm Gonna Have a Baby* (which she did), and, especially, *Older Sister* are all marvelous, and that's a hell of a lot of marvelous songs for one little phonograph record. Carly and James also do a nifty job of singing *Mockingbird*, James sounding almost (you're not going to believe this) happy and getting almost frontal toward the end, which would be a first, you know. The arrangements are good, too, particularly if you crank up the bass at the part where Klaus Voorman starts acting out this athletic fantasy he has. The backing is a bit stiff occasionally—but you should wonder, as I do, if I'd even bother to notice that if I didn't know Richard Perry was the producer for the second Carly Simon album in a row. Carly's outlook is as middle-class as her vocal style is, but intelligently not apologetically so, and that means vast numbers of people can congratulate themselves for having good taste as they sit down and identify with her. That's what I did. N.C.

**STEALERS WHEEL: Ferguslie Park.** Stealers Wheel (vocals and instrumentals). *Good Businessman; Star; Wheelin'; Waltz (You Know It Makes Sense); What More Could You Want; Over My Head; Blind Faith; Who Cares*; and four others. A & M SP-4419 \$5.98.

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

Gerry Rafferty and Joe Egan are the main forces in Stealers Wheel, which sounds something like the Beatles warming up. These lads could play the same chord all night long, and as long as they write the way they do now, they may have to—there simply isn't anything to these songs, except that some of the words do rhyme. The decorations are generally imaginative, if sometimes almost a bit zany; the boys know how to listen with enough objectivity to realize that an electric guitar can be put to good use in unconventional ways (meaning it doesn't have to try to emulate B.B. King), and they seem to grasp tone and rhythm in a purer way than most arrangers do. All this album needs is words and music. N.C.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**TEMPTATIONS: 1990.** The Temptations (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Let Your Hair Down; I Need You; Heavenly; You've Got My Soul on Fire; Ain't No Justice; 1990; Zoom.* GORDY G 966V1 \$5.98, ⓑ BT 966 \$6.98, ⓒ BC 966 \$6.98.

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

I've lately been complaining about much so-called black music, observing that it's a counterfeit of its former greatness—mocha, expedient, venally commercial, and dull. So I'm

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pleased to be able to cry huzzah about this latest Temptations album. It's sublime. The performances are perfect, the production flawless, the arrangements and musicianship tantalizing, and the songs provocative. The brilliant Norman Whitfield—who wrote and produced the album—has found in the Temptations the ideal vehicle for his ideas, much as Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht found one in Lotte Lenya, or Bert Bacharach and Hal David in Dionne Warwick. Doubtless this album will go to the top of the charts as it deserves; it should also be in the Library of Congress and the White House Record Collection. It is so full of life and savvy, and so American, that it makes you feel good, in these wobbly times, to be so yourself.

Real joy is hard to put down on paper, but if we were together and I wanted to give you a taste of the good life, I would hand you this album and a bottle of 1937 vintage port and wish you Godspeed. J.V.

**NEIL YOUNG: *Time Fades Away*.** Neil Young (vocals, guitar, piano, harmonica); Tim Drummond (bass); Jack Nitzsche (piano); Ben Keith (slide guitar, steel guitar); John Barbata (drums). *Time Fades Away: Journey Thru the Past; Yonder Stands the Sinner: L.A.*; and four others. REPRISE MS 2151 \$5.98, M8 2151 \$6.98, M5 2151 \$6.98.

Performance: **Flawed but stylish**  
Recording: **Acceptable**

Recorded during the national tour, this disc has some of the quirky charm of Neil Young's first solo recording: it has some of the problems a Neil Young studio album would have but few of the distressing features most live albums have. Young is strangely authoritative in his uncertainty and puzzlement, like the Young of old, and, even though he does tend to keep rewriting his own stuff, he comes off here again—dash it all—as a songwriter a fellow can depend upon. The first few bars establish that the song is indeed going somewhere, and that must be a load off any listener's mind nowadays. Drummer John Barbata slams *Time Fades Away* relentlessly forward, bringing home to us the importance of simple *beat* in rock music, and the album is off to a flying start. Young's technical failures as a singer are well known, and practically all of those get involved in this project at one point or another, but it's often better to miss notes fervently than to hit them stolidly. He does, in fact, take his meager vocal equipment, a slightly less modest ability on the piano, a simple and derivative melody, and a fairly ordinary bunch of words, and, somehow, keep an audience engrossed through *Journey Thru the Past*. Then, proving that was no fluke, he makes hash of arithmetic in adding up a similar group of modest elements to get *The Bridge*. The backing band is good—there are cameo appearances by Graham Nash and David Crosby—and the production is only occasionally muddy. Two fine rockers whose melodies need a little boost, *Yonder Stands the Sinner* and *L. A.* (love that lyric), are jacked up precipitously by these fine and unselfish musicians.

Some of the music is tedious. On the other hand, there are a few signs of growth even in the mistakes, and *Last Dance* is the only place where the mindless pounding of the typical live album holds sway in this one. The album wears pretty well, all things considered. Young probably *is* in a rut, but he does manage to muddle along nicely. N.C.



## THEATER • FILMS

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BEN BAGLEY'S SHOESTRING REVUE.** Original-cast recording. Beatrice Arthur, Fay De Witt, Dody Goodman, Dorothy Greener, John Bartis, Eddie Hilton, Bill McCutcheon, G. Wood (performers); orchestra, Dorothea Freitag arr. *Roller Derby; Someone Is Sending Me Flowers; In Bed with the Reader's Digest; The Sea Is All Around Us; Grace Fogarty; Medea in Disneyland*; and eight others. PAINTED SMILES PS 1360 \$5.98 (from Painted Smiles Records, 1860 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Vintage satire**  
Recording: **Good**

The days of the Impudent Little Revue seem to have gone the way of that night club in New York with the dizzying sobriquet of Upstairs at the Downstairs, which closed shop recently. Yet not everything about that brand of smart-set satire is as dated as you might think. The irrepressible Ben Bagley, responsible for such triumphs as "The Decline and Fall of the Entire World as Seen through the Eyes of Cole Porter" and all those Rodgers and Hart and Jerome Kern and George Gershwin Revisited records, was twenty-one when he introduced his first Shoestring Revue at the President Theater in New York in 1955. Two years later, *Shoestring 57* opened at the Barbizon Plaza Theater. If you were around at the time, you can no doubt recall the method: a song, a skit, a monologue, a tongue-in-cheek production number—all in the suave, low-key tone considered tasteful in those days—with a withering glance at every pomposity being indulged in by the populace then, and with a pride in unflappability that vanished some time during the Vietnam War protest movement.

Mr. Bagley was a terribly choosy casting director. He turned away Carol Burnett, Warren Beatty, Shelly Berman, Rod McKuen, Phyllis Diller, Elaine May and Mike Nichols. But he brought to the stage the entirely off-beat humor of Dorothy Greener, Dody Goodman, Beatrice Arthur, and Bill McCutcheon. He got Sheldon Harnick and Jerry Bock, Charles Strouse and Dee Adams, Mike Stewart, Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt to write his songs and sketches. No wonder his admirers included not only Wolcott Gibbs, Walter Kerr, and Brooks Atkinson, but also President John F. Kennedy.

Fortunately for us, there was a tape recorder around in the heyday of the Shoestring Revues, and this record was dubbed from both the 1955 and 1957 editions. Originally, the album came out on a label called Off-Beat Records and too soon disappeared. This delayed re-release, with deft cover art by Yves Saint Laurent, is a delight from start to finish: the aborted attempt by a socially conscious musical comedy producer to start his show off



with an opening number about *Man's Inhumanity to Man*; generous dollops of Dorothy Greener in skits about a tough-talking rollerderby girl with murder in her heart, about a salesgirl from W. T. Grant with a numbing wit, and as the star of a full-dress musical that brings Medea to Disneyland in a version for children all rigged out with sugary ditties about bluebirds and a Southland fairy godmother from the pages of Tennessee Williams. Beatrice Arthur (is that *you*, Maude?) carries a torch for a man who treats her like dirt in a Sheldon Harnick gem of a song called *Garbage*, and, with Miss Greener, despairs over the plight of a son who has sold his soul to the evil world of the arts instead of knocking down to a steady job. And so forth.

As noted earlier, it's surprising how much of the comedy has *not* dated; only the rather roguish style is boxed into the period. After hearing this generous sampling of Mr. Bagley's once so stylish revues (they seem to have managed to put practically everything in the two shows on this one record) I found myself wondering if the undertakers really hadn't shoveled this kind of entertainment under prematurely. It is still breathing. P.K.

**BURNS AND SCHRIEBER: *Pure B.S.!*** Jack Burns and Avery Schreiber (comedians). *Dial-a-Friend; Youth Wants to Know; The Faith Healer; The Man from P.R.O.D.; Family Reunion; Booze; The Cab Driver.* LITTLE DAVID LD 1006 \$5.98.

Performance: **Lowdown lunacy**  
Recording: **Good**

The suave, stentorian Jack Burns, exuding the air of an encyclopedia salesman with one foot in the door, and the mustachioed, curly-headed mischief-welcoming Avery Schreiber have had their full share of television exposure, and their fast exchanges and high-strung skits are often funny and only sometimes fall flat. They specialize in quick raids on the Establishment and well-aimed kicks at stuffy hypocrisy, but TV seldom allows the heavier ammunition they are able to train on their objectives on this occasion.

In their war on the world's killjoys, Burns and Schreiber start by launching a full-scale attack on sanctimony in *Dial-a-Friend*, wherein an oily-voiced advice artist cons his callers with preachy platitudes, and for "an extra ten dollars a month will accept an obscene phone call . . . at any hour of the day or night." In *Youth Wants to Know*, the author of *The Role of the Sadist in Limited Warfare* disdainfully drops condescending answers to questions as inane as any really put forward on such charades. Then there is *The Faith Healer*, another kind of charlatan called Holey Moley, issuing right-wing warnings about "the red tide lapping at the shores of Fire Island" and inviting his radio audience to "kill a Commie for Christ." Later, Police Officer Peter Pummel, described as the person in charge of "an elite division of the vice-squad known as P.R.O.D., or Public Restroom Observation Duty," reveals his methods for preventing "Commie perverts" and "Moscow Marys" from "making a mockery of America's Public Restroom System." A long skit about a father visiting his son in Greenwich Village and stalwartly refusing to recognize the true nature of the boy's relationship with his roommate has been seen on television, but is equally effective as a gloss on parental insensitivity here. In *Booze*, a junkie virtuously repels a reformer's attempts to

convert him to alcohol. Finally there is the classic taxi scene that first brought the Burns and Schreiber style to public attention. It holds up well in a program where no punches are pulled and few are fumbled. The two write their own stuff—all of it—which may be one of the reasons the pump of their comedy does not have to be primed with feeble gags. This is a funny record, as coarse as its title, but never merely snide or second-rate. P.K.

**GIGI (Lerner-Loewe).** Original Broadway-cast recording. Alfred Drake, Agnes Moorehead, Maria Karnilova, George Gaynes, and Howard Chitjian (vocals); orchestra, Ross Reimuller cond. RCA ABL 1-0404 \$5.98.

Performance: **Plaster of Paris**  
Recording: **Excellent**

The only thing French I can recall from the Lerner and Loewe all-plastic movie version of *Gigi* is the personality of Maurice Chevalier, lending a jaunty Gallic charm to songs like *Thank Heaven for Little Girls* and *I'm Glad I'm Not Young Anymore*. Now Mr. Chevalier is gone, and Alfred Drake has taken his role in the new stage version. Mr. Drake's approach to these numbers is vigorously appealing but also totally British; the last remnants of Frenchness are therefore purged from the snobbish story of the young lady brought up in Paris to lead the life of a professional courtesan. Even Louis Jourdan, the least French of Frenchmen, is replaced in the role of Gaston, the handsome young man who falls in love with Gigi, by Daniel Massey, an Englishman with a fine acting style and an excellent voice—but an Englishman. Since I am not an admirer of the bouncy synthetic music-hall verve of *Gigi's* score, I cannot pretend to glow with pleasure at anything in it, neither the songs transplanted from the movie version nor the four new ones that have been added. Between myself and them falls the shadow of an exquisite movie made in France many years ago, so sensitive and faithful to Colette's novel that the Anglicized *Gigi* seems doubly coarse and heavy-handed.

Yet, by this time the score of *Gigi* (Hollywood's version has been with us since 1957) is so much regarded as a classic that it would be tiresome to cavil. This record reflects an ultra-slick theatrical re-creation of it. Of the new songs, two were written for Karin Wolfe, who plays the title role. They are *The Earth and Other Minor Things* and *In This Wide, Wide World*. Both would be as suitable for Snow White as for Gigi, who, for a courtesan-to-be, come to think of it, is something of a Disney heroine in her current incarnation. Miss Wolfe sings every word and note with professional sweetness and competence. Then, for Mr. Drake, there's *Paris Is Paris Again*, a stock Parisian piece, ideal as a period production number for any musical set in France; I gather there's an opulent one in *Gigi* for it to accompany. The most ambitious of the new songs is *The Contract*, a little operetta on the subject of French pragmatism and avarice. Agnes Moorehead and Maria Karnilova are heard in this one as a pair of stereotyped French madams working out the details of a match in counterpoint with George Gaynes and Howard Chitjian, and it seems as long as a conference of accountants. When it finally did end, there were still three songs to go, but by that time I was fed up with this glib and glittery disc. P.K.

(Continued overleaf)

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**ELLA  
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**AT CARNEGIE HALL**

Reviewed by Paul Kresh



WHEN Ella Fitzgerald, that hardiest of warbling perennials, stepped out on the stage of Carnegie Hall wearing new glasses and a wild-print dress to deliver a kind of autobiography in song on the night of July 5, 1973, she had all the help she could ask for—indeed, more than she needed. On hand to accompany her and to make her feel at home were her favorite quartet—Tommy Flanagan on piano, Keeter Betts on bass, Freddie Waits on drums, Joe Pass on guitar. Later, the Chick Webb Orchestra, which was there behind her when she first sang *A-Tisket A-Tasket* at the age of eighteen (she's fifty-five now) was present for a historic reprise, with some of the men from the original combo—Eddie Barefield and Pete and Arthur Clarke on saxophone, Taft Jordan and Dick Vance on trumpet, George Matthews on trombone—still in there making good music. In the manner of a Newport matinee, the instrumentalists took over for a kind of jam session during the course of the evening, with Al Grey, Eddie “Lockjaw” Davis, and Roy Eldridge featured as inspired improvisational soloists in a mini-concert that included *I Can't Get Started*, *The Young Man with the Horn*, *'Round Midnight*, *Star Dust*, and Ellington's *C Jam Blues*.

The concert was slightly rearranged for Columbia's “Live at Carnegie Hall,” a two-record set, and the instrumental interlude gets a side all to itself, which it certainly deserves, but it is still Ella's evening. We hear her fitting herself comfortably into song after song, relaxed and surefooted and altogether genuine. Acknowledging a surge of applause with a modest chuckle, she explains convincingly why *I've Gotta Be Me*, lends her own easy way to Billie Holiday's *Good Morning Heartache* (although she warns us at one point, “I'm not a blues singer”), and creates the personality of a maid far cheekier than the original as conceived by Ethel Waters in Cole Porter's imperishable *Miss Otis Regrets*, that ballad about a girl whose hanging for murder makes it quite out of the question for her to keep a luncheon appointment.

Side two finds Ella still capable of evoking all the original girlish charm of *A-Tisket A-*

*Tasket*, calming the kinks as ever out of Gershwin's *Nice Work if You Can Get It* and *I've Got a Crush on You* to the poised piano of Ellis Larkins, and working the kind of velvety magic that is her hallmark to pump life into such half-forgotten oldies as *Indian Summer*, *Smooth Sailing*, and *You Turned the Tables on Me*.

The final side presents some challenges, but the singer takes them on like a tennis champion lobbing a series of fast ones. She turns herself into a kind of black Sophie Tucker for her own Harlem version of *Some of These Days*, stretches the toes of her style voluptuously in the warm bath of *I'm in the Mood for Love*, and winds up with a personalized version of *People* that owes nothing at all to Barbra Streisand.

Miss Fitzgerald has always given me the creeps when she starts speaking in tongues, in that peculiar kind of dated doodley-doodled gibberish singers used to mumble when they thought they were sounding like saxophones, and there's an excruciating example in *Lemon Drop*; as far as I'm concerned, there's nothing else wrong here. Ella is in glorious form—irresistible throughout. Long may she tour!

Iring Townsend has contributed to the album one of those chatty show-biz liners that is unnervingly inside-track and dreadfully knowing, but also, in this instance, exceptionally informative.

**ELLA FITZGERALD:** *Newport Jazz Festival—Live at Carnegie Hall*. Ella Fitzgerald (vocals); Ellis Larkins (piano); Jazz at Carnegie All-Stars (instrumentals); the Chick Webb Orchestra. *I've Gotta Be Me*; *Good Morning Heartache*; *Miss Otis Regrets*; *Don't Worry 'Bout Me*; *These Foolish Things*; *Any Old Blues*; *A-Tisket A-Tasket*; *Indian Summer*; *Smooth Sailing*; *You Turned the Tables on Me*; *Nice Work if You Can Get It*; *I've Got a Crush on You*; *I Can't Get Started*; *The Young Man with the Horn*; *'Round Midnight*; *Star Dust*; *C Jam Blues*; *Taking a Chance on Love*; *I'm in the Mood for Love*; *Lemon Drop*; *Some of These Days*; *People*. COLUMBIA KG 32557 (two discs) \$14.98.

**JAZZ**



**SONNY BERMAN:** *Beautiful Jewish Music*. Sonny Berman and Marky Markowitz (trumpets); Earl Swope (trombone); Al Cohn (tenor saxophone); Serge Chaloff (baritone saxophone); Ralph Burns (piano); Eddie Saffranski (bass); Don Lamond (drums). *Wood-chopper's Holiday*; *BMT Face*; and two others. ONYX 211 \$5.98 (available by mail from Onyx Records, 160 West 71st Street, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Spirit of '46**

Recording: **Excellent for the period**

*Jewish music?* That's actually a bit farfetched, but I will accept the claim that it's beautiful. Ira Gitler's notes refer to Lennie Tristano's old statement that “Jewish cantors and gypsies sound more like it [jazz],” as far as its melodic and harmonic aspects are concerned, “than anything from Africa.” I doubt if Mr. Tristano would make such an assertion today, but even in 1946, when the late Jerry Newman preserved this music on a disc recorder in his parents' New York apartment, such views hardly went unchallenged.

Be that as it may, this session—comprising for the most part members of Woody Herman's band, and previously released on the poorly distributed Esoteric label—forms an important part of recorded jazz history. It is a good example of the work of trumpeter Sonny Berman, who made very few recordings before his death a year later at the age of twenty-one or twenty-two; it interestingly documents a group of white big-band musicians in transition from swing to bop, and, above all, it treats us to a spirited, informal gathering of first-rate musicians who obviously share a rapport and enjoy the intimacy which their regular big-band setting did not afford them.

Another unusual aspect of these recordings is the length of the selections, ranging from eight and a half to ten and a half minutes—a rare luxury in 1946. The technical quality easily competes with some of that period's better studio recordings; there's a minimum of surface noise, and there are no obvious edits. I heartily recommend this album—whether you like Jewish music or not. C.A.

**MILES DAVIS SEXTET:** *Jazz at the Plaza—Vol. 1*. Miles Davis (trumpet); John Coltrane (tenor saxophone); Cannonball Adderley (alto saxophone); Bill Evans (piano); Paul Chambers (bass); Philly Joe Jones (drums). *My Funny Valentine*; *If I Were a Bell*; *Oleo*; *Jazz at the Plaza*. COLUMBIA C 32470 \$4.98.

Performance: **Pre-electric Miles**

Recording: **Vintage stereo**

Why, I wonder, did it take fifteen years for Columbia to release this session by the star-studded, pre-electric Miles Davis Sextet? According to the liner notes, the 1958 session in the Edwardian Room of New York's Plaza



Hotel was not recorded with release in mind—although a threatened recording ban might have been a motivating factor—but surely it should have been clear to anyone hearing these tapes even then that this is not the sort of stuff you keep in the rack like a rare wine too precious to be uncorked. Yet time has made it akin to rare wine, a vintage to be savored in the knowledge that we shall never again get the likes of it. One might wish the balance had been a bit better, particularly on *If I Were a Bell*, but, given the content of this bottle, that is an annoyance to be overlooked as readily as a bit of cork floating in the glass.

Miles' music of 1958 has aged beautifully: it gives us Coltrane in transition, Cannonball in ascension, Evans in full bloom, Chambers and Jones rendezvousing in rhythmic orbit, and Miles way ahead. Skaal! C.A.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**ROY ELDRIDGE:** *The Nifty Cat Strikes West*. Roy Eldridge (trumpet); Grover Mitchell (trombone); Eric Dixon (tenor saxophone and flute); Bill Bell (piano); Norman Keenan (bass); Louis Bellson (drums). *Blue 'n Boogie; Willow Weep for Me; Satin Doll*; and four others. MASTER JAZZ MJR 8121 \$5.98. (Available from Master Jazz Records, P.O. Box 579, Lenox Hill Sta., New York, N.Y. 10021.)

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

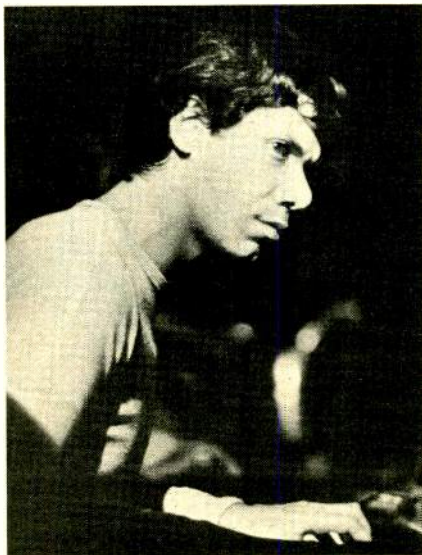
Don't let the dull cover of this album fool you, for the music within is superb: small-hand swing at its very best. The session took place in San Francisco in July of 1966, when Roy Eldridge and all but one of his cohorts—pianist Bill Bell—were on tour with the Count Basie band. It is from beginning to end a most relaxed set, with excellent arrangements by Eric Dixon and fine solos by all.

Louis Bellson and Norman Keenan lend the kind of solid rhythmic support one would expect of Basie men, Grover Mitchell and Eric Dixon swing their perennial posteriors off, Bill Bell keeps admirable pace with his illustrious company, and Roy Eldridge forms the heart of this delectable artichoke. He builds up his solos with architectural logic, embellishes his material with exquisite taste and invention, and delivers it all in a characteristic tone: soaring, growling, and oozing beauty and fire. C.A.

**GENE HARRIS:** *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*. Gene Harris (piano); John Hatton (bass); Carl Burnett (drums and percussion). *Trieste; Monk's Tune; On Green Dolphin Street; After Hours*; and seven others. BLUE NOTE BN-LA 141-G2 two discs \$6.98.

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

Gene Harris' Three Sounds group was popular on the jazz-club circuit in the early Sixties, but it never sent critics scrambling for their typewriters. Yet, he is a good pianist with a very pleasant, bluesy style and a technique that is beyond reproach. The trio is a close-knit unit, but it fails to generate any excitement, and it is indistinguishable from any number of lesser-known, competent piano, bass, and drums combinations. The repertoire for this set has been chosen with taste, the album is skillfully executed and well recorded, but two sides would have sufficed. C.A.



CHICK COREA: piano artistry

## ON IMPORTING OUR OWN JAZZ

A pretty, coals-to-Newcastle pass reviewed by Chris Albertson

EUROPEANS were the first to appreciate jazz as an art form. Ever since Ernest Ansermet wrote what is believed to be the first article on jazz, over fifty years ago, there have been many serious historical studies, evaluations, and documentations of Afro-American music from the other side of the Atlantic. The music of Louis Armstrong's Hot Five and Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers may seem ancient history today, but when it first attracted Europeans and inspired some of them to make a serious study of it, it was actually quite avant-garde, breaking many age-old traditions. Thus it is not without precedent that today's avant-garde jazz, the so-called "new music," is finding wider appreciation on the Continent than it is in its homeland. Many American jazzmen, frustrated by a lack of interest on the part of U.S. record companies, have been recording abroad or have recorded in this country with foreign financing.

In recent years, one European outlet for American creativity has been ECM Productions, a West German label managed by bassist Manfred Eicher. Although Eicher has been producing outstanding albums of contemporary music by American artists for three years, his releases have up to now been available in only a few U.S. stores specializing in imports. Last January, however, American Polydor released the first albums under a new distribution deal with ECM, and, judging by the five I have heard, the critical acclaim the series has received is highly justified.

I have previously expressed a lack of enthusiasm for the work of saxophonist Robin Kenyatta, but his "Girl from Martinique" set radically alters my opinion: Kenyatta, playing with a German/Norwegian/American rhythm section, is simply superb. Unfortunately, this record was made in 1970, prior to the efforts that dismayed me, so it may simply be that I like the way Kenyatta used to play. In any case, I found this album delightful.

Chick Corea's album of solo improvisations—recorded in Oslo in 1971—is not quite "one of the finest jazz albums of all time," as Polydor's blurb contends, and I am not even sure it can be called a jazz album, but it is an extremely beautiful set of impromptu lyrical performances by a pianist whose true artistry has never been made more clear.

Keith Jarrett and Jack De Johnette, who have collaborated in the past (as members of the original Charles Lloyd Quartet and a later Miles Davis group) go it alone here on "Ruta + Daitya," a set of marvelous instrumental dialogues without the slightest conversational lag.

English bassist David Holland, another Miles Davis alumna, recorded his album "Conference of the Birds" in New York in 1972. An outstanding performer himself, he has also chosen his cohorts well; Sam Rivers and Anthony Braxton are among the new music's most exceptional reed men, and I strongly recommend this album to anyone who still thinks the new music is a structureless hit-and-miss exercise.

Vibraphonist Gary Burton's album, recorded in Massachusetts last year, is his first with his new quartet. Along with the other releases, it demonstrates producer Eicher's apparent ability to bring out the best in his artists. Burton has never sounded better, and his three colleagues, none of whom I have heard before, are outstanding.

A sixth album, by Norwegian guitarist Terje Rypdal, was announced as part of this initial release, but I did not receive a copy of it in time for this review. However, the five albums I did receive were selected from over thirty ECM releases and were designed to introduce the series to the American market. They are superb both technically and musically. The irony is, of course, that such a distinguished collection of American music has to come to us by way of Europe.

**ROBIN KENYATTA:** *Girl from Martinique*. Robin Kenyatta (flute, alto saxophone, percussion); Wolfgang Dauner (clavinet, piano); Arild Andersen (bass); Fred Braceful (drums). *Blues for Your Mama; Thank You Jesus*; and two others. POLYDOR ECM 1008 ST \$6.98.

**CHICK COREA:** *Piano Improvisations, Vol. 1*. Chick Corea (piano). *Song of the Wind; A Suite of Eight Pictures*; and four others. POLYDOR ECM 1014 ST \$6.98.

**KEITH JARRETT/JACK DE JOHNETTE:** *Ruta + Daitya*. Keith Jarrett (piano, E-piano, organ, flute); Jack De Johnette (percussion). *Algeria; Pastel Morning; All We Got*; and four others. POLYDOR ECM 1021 ST \$6.98.

**DAVID HOLLAND QUARTET:** *Conference of the Birds*. David Holland (bass); Sam Rivers, Anthony Braxton (reeds, flutes); Barry Altschul (marimba, percussion). *Four Winds; Interception*; and four others. POLYDOR ECM 1027 ST \$6.98.

**GARY BURTON:** *The New Quartet*. Gary Burton (vibraphone); Michael Goodrick (guitar); Abraham Laboriel (bass); Harry Blazer (drums). *Open Your Eyes, You Can Fly; Brownout; Olhos de Gato*; and five others. POLYDOR ECM 1030 ST \$6.98.



# CHOOSING SIDES

By IRVING KOLODIN



## GREAT WHALES AND LITTLE PIECES

WHEN I heard the opening, earth-shaking measures of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* rumbling as "music under" for a stomach mint commercial on TV the other evening, it occurred to me that Richard Strauss, with his acquisitive itch, had lived too soon. Corporate purses are wide open for the ghouls who plunder the works of dead composers to supply the TV theme market, as they are for those living composers who can find nothing better to do with their ingenuity. In comparison with some others, Bernard Herrmann, who has made art out of an extraordinary facility for musical characterization, has pursued a rigorously artistic course in restricting himself to film scores and other serious musical pursuits.

Herrmann is a curious example of an American composer whose music has been heard by literally millions but who nevertheless is better known in a foreign country (England) than in his own. When he was growing up in the Thirties, he acquired a taste for the singular and the uncommon in music, ranging from Charles Ives and Carl Ruggles to Josef Holbrooke and Bernard Van Dieren. All were then equally outside the orbit of American taste, especially of those who manage orchestras and hire conductors. Herrmann, who habitually created characters for himself and eventually turned into one, was an outsider too. "Yars and yars" (to use a Herrmannism for "years and years") before he went to England, he had confected, despite an upbringing on New York's East Fourteenth Street, a *patois* that was much more English than American. He was thus well equipped for the oceanic transition, especially after he became acquainted with Orson Welles, who had also invented a character for himself—a mature "star of the New York Theatre Guild"—by the time he landed, a teenager, in Dublin in 1931. Welles was no such thing, of course, but he gatecrashed into an acting career when his bold strategem succeeded, winning a place in a Dublin Gate Theatre production of *Jew Süss*.

Herrmann's rise to prominence is associated with the score he wrote for Welles' classic *Citizen Kane*, but his apprenticeship predated that smashing success by several years. He was part of the Mercury Playhouse Theatre of radio fame from its beginnings on CBS in 1936. Indeed, Herrmann was part of CBS before Welles was, having found employment in the early Depression days by putting his

Juilliard-acquired education to work on a program directed by the composer of *Body and Soul* and *I Cover the Waterfront* (then well-known as Johnny Green, now less well-known as John Green). Herrmann rehearsed the Green program, enduring in the process such trials by fire as the scathing repartee that developed (during the preparation of the *Poet and Peasant* Overture, or something similarly elevated) when he asked a member of the reed section, "Who told you you could play the clarinet?" and was answered, "Who told you you could conduct?" It was a matter of one Benny to another, for the clarinetist was B. Goodman (this was before that name became a household word), and Herrmann is "Benny" to his many friends to this day.

Herrmann qualified to be addressed more formally as Bernard as early as April 1940, when his name appeared in a program of the New York Philharmonic as the composer of a cantata based on Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, John Barbirolli conducting. It was a good piece then, and it is a good piece now, as one can hear from a recording (TPLS 13006) made under the composer's direction for the English Virtuoso label. The following year, 1941, though not a good year for French wines (the male population of France being otherwise deployed), was a vintage year for

Herrmann. He was nominated for an Academy award not once but twice: for *Citizen Kane* and for *All That Money Can Buy*, the William Dieterle-directed version of *The Devil and Daniel Webster*. *The Devil* won, and Herrmann got his Oscar.

Since then, scarcely a year has passed without at least one film score by Herrmann, including works of such excellence as those for *Anna and the King of Siam*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *Five Fingers*, and, of course, the now lengthy Hitchcock sequence that began in 1958 with *The Trouble with Harry*. But all this movie work has impelled the composer toward, rather than diverting him from, flexing his mental muscles elsewhere. It was as a result of his work on *Jane Eyre* (1943) that he became absorbed in the subject of the Brontë sisters, an absorption that was to produce *Wuthering Heights*, perhaps the only opera by an American to have been recorded without ever having been staged (Pye CSCL 30173, four discs). I don't doubt that a lot of Hitchcock-derived loot went into the financing of this recording (of excellent quality, incidentally). What went into the writing of it was a good deal of sturdy dramaturgy, but the score did not escape the unevenness that mars many first operas, and Herrmann has not, alas, been motivated to undertake another.

THE purpose of this paean to Herrmann is not, however, to propagandize for his compositions but rather to salute his abilities as an interpreter of music, his own and that of others. As I have suggested above, he is much more a presence in English concert halls than he is in American ones. He occupied, from time to time, a flat near Regent's Park in London, and I am told by a recent returnee that he now lives in one formerly occupied by that star of the political theater known as Christine Keeler. Life in London (which he enjoys), a solicitous wife, and a fine bank balance are equitable consolations for never having made the Arthur Judson management stable, for never having learned how to bow from the waist at symphony-orchestra board meetings.

Since Herrmann does not frequent our American concert halls, there may be more than a few to whom his flair as a conductor is unknown. A pity, for they may, as a result, be denying themselves substantial pleasure. Like a bygone celebrity he affectionately dubbed

BERNARD HERRMANN: in a scene from Alfred Hitchcock's *The Man Who Knew Too Much*





"the old boy" (perhaps because Sir Thomas Beecham directed the radio premiere of his *Welles Raises Kane* suite in 1942), Herrmann has rarely felt impelled to perform music he didn't genuinely enjoy. But, considering the variety of names peppered through the preceding paragraphs, it should not be surprising that the range of his musical sympathies is wide. As documented in a series of excellent recordings for London, Herrmann's favor extends to such works as the Second Symphony of Ives (the most affecting, because the most unaffected, performance I have heard of this work: SPC 21086), Holst's *The Planets* (clangorous and communicative, minus any Stokowskian "reinforcements": SPC 21049), and the delectable oddities embodied in the collection called "The Impressionists" (especially Fauré's *Pavane*, Satie's *Gymnopédies I and II*, and Ravel's ineffable *Five O'Clock Fox-Trot*; SPC 21026).

A companion to the last-named release is a more recent miscellany, misleadingly titled "Four Faces of Jazz," on SPC 21077. It includes not only the best performance on contemporary discs of Milhaud's *Création du Monde* and a pungent one of Stravinsky's *Ragtime*, but equally appropriate treatments of music by Gershwin and Weill: a brilliantly persuasive rendering of the *Variations on I Got Rhythm* (David Parkhouse is the gifted pianist) and a suitably *sec* one of the songs from *The Three Penny Opera*.

The specific distinction between Herrmann's re-creation of these pieces and those of most others is simple: he was around when they were being created, he understands the idiom as well as he understands his own, and he is therefore neither faking nor intellectualizing the appropriate mode or manner when he conducts them. In more than a few instances—and this applies certainly to Milhaud, Ives, and Weill—he knew the composers and has access to personal insights not shared by others.

**M**USICAL careers run many courses and they proceed at many paces. There is a breed of interpreter born to flourish when young, one to whom maturity may be an unwelcome synonym for aging. Such performers tend to be those who revel in technical expertise and the kind of music in which it is most appropriate. One such I think of in this context reacted with alarm rather than with pride to the news that a famous version of the Liszt B Minor Sonata he recorded in the Thirties was going to be reissued in the Sixties. With concern in his voice, he said, "I can't play it that way any more"—as if there were no values to a musical interpretation but the physical.

Herrmann, however, is an interpreter whose interests, sensitivities, and expository abilities are flourishing now as never before. As he would not impart to his own lovely string quartet called *Echoes* (coupled on Pye's Golden Guinea Collector Series GSGG 1 with Edmund Rubbra's Quartet No. 2) the breadth of sound he poured into "And God created great whales" at the beginning of his *Moby Dick*, so the hand he applied to *Five O'Clock Fox-Trot* is not the one he reserves for *The Planets*. In a time of competition among batonists for the next version of Bruckner's Eighth, Beethoven's Ninth, Mahler's Tenth, and Shostakovich's Eleventh, it is reassuring to know that there is, at large and practicing, one remaining Master of *Morceaux*. Long may he continue to flourish in all his idiosyncratic individuality.

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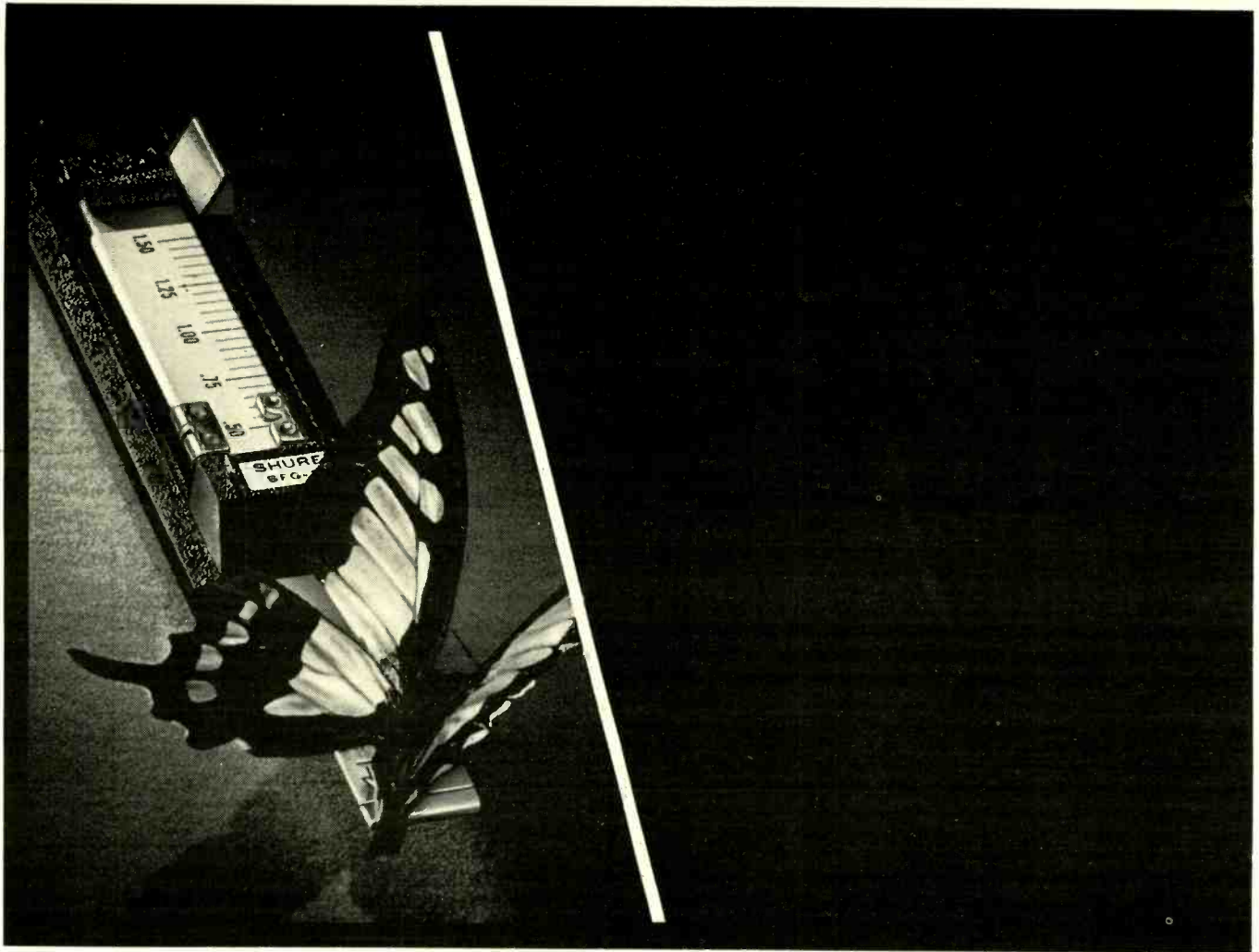
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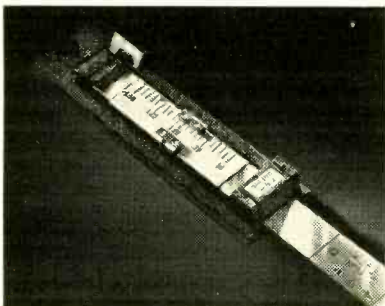
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# CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by RICHARD FREED • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS  
PAUL KRESH • ERIC SALZMAN

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**ALI AKBAR KHAN:** *Raga Manj Khammaj; Raga Misra Mand*. Ali Akbar Khan (sarod); Nikhil Banerjee (sitar); Mahapurush Misra (tabla). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2055 \$5.98.

Performance: **Remarkably colorful**  
Recording: **Excellent**

The particular aspect of special note in this recording is the use of both the sitar and the sarod in the duet form known, if memory serves, as *jugalbandi*. On the whole, the sitar is used in its lower registers, creating a kind of treble-alto interchange that is very striking and beautiful. In this context, the tabla emerges not only as a rhythmic element but as a kind of bass. Of course, I do not intend to imply that this "voicing" has anything to do with harmonic parts in the Western sense; rather, it is a play of registers and timbres that is certainly an important part of Indian performing tradition.

Important as the sitar may be in this kind of duet music, there is really no question as to where the focus of interest lies. Ali Akbar Khan gets very much into the play of timbres right at the beginning of the *Raga Manj Khammaj* when he pushes off from the lower strings of the sarod. The arrival point of this raga is a striking rhythmic unison that provides a blend of sound and a *sense* of arrival that is actually unusual (and probably quite modern) in Indian music. The *Raga Misra*

*Mand* on the other side seems less dramatic and more lyric, moving on to a really breathtaking series of tempo step-ups in which the sitar participates on an equal basis. The end is a whirlwind. The recording is beautiful, all in



ALI AKBAR KHAN  
*A sense of arrival in Indian music*

all a worthy addition to the impressive list of Ali Akbar Khan recordings for Connoisseur Society. *E.S.*

**BACH, J. S.: *Works for Lute (complete)*.** *Suite in G Minor (BWV 995); Suite in E Minor (BWV 996); Suite in C Minor (BWV 997); Suite in E Major (BWV 1006a); Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro in E-flat Major (BWV 998); Prelude in C Minor (BWV 999); Fugue in G Minor (BWV 1000)*. Narciso Yepes (Baroque lute). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 2708 030 two discs \$13.96.

Performance: **Commendable**  
Recording: **Almost flawless**

**BAROQUE LUTE RECITAL.** Bach, J. S.: *Lute Suite in E Major (BWV 1006a); Gavotte and Two Minuets, from Fugue in G Minor (BWV 1000)*. Visée: *Allemande. Tombeau du*

*Vieux Gallot; Rondeau in A Minor, La Montsermeil; Courante and Sarabande in D Minor*. Weiss: *Lute Sonata in D Minor; Fantasia in C Minor; Chaconne in G Minor*. Toyohiko Satoh (theorbo). KLAVIER KS 514 \$5.98.

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

To my knowledge, this is the first time that all of Bach's music for solo lute has been recorded by one performer—certainly it is the first time on the instrument for which the music was intended. A glance at the Deutsche Grammophon listing above provides the repertoire count: four suites, including arrangements of a cello suite and a violin partita (BWV 995 and 1006a, respectively); a fugue that also comes from a violin sonata, and, finally, the Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro, which is equally well known in performances on the harpsichord. Some of this music certainly may stem from the time that Bach met the Dresden lutenists Leopold Silvius Weiss and Johann Kropfgans in 1739.

One of the problems with playing these works on the original instrument, as opposed to, say, the guitar, is that the Baroque lute by Bach's time had become a most unwieldy instrument, loaded with strings and fearfully difficult to play, especially with the kind of contrapuntal writing that Bach was wont to indulge in. I was a bit surprised when I saw the performer's name for this complete set of Bach's lute music. Señor Yepes is a superb guitarist, but I never thought he would have much sympathy for Baroque style. In point of fact, however, the Spanish performer handles the majority of the complex ornaments in admirably correct fashion, and he gives a good impression of many of the dance movements. One cannot, however, help noticing that technically Yepes doesn't have a particularly easy time of it; there are slips, occasional mistakes and dropped notes, and unevenness galore (in scale passages especially), and the overall impression is that of a kind of dogged, sometimes even desperate attempt to get through some of the most difficult movements. One can hear a good many splices, and not just through tempo deviations. Yepes has obviously played most of this repertoire for years on the guitar, and his interpretations

### 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.



sound seasoned; on the Baroque lute, however, he just doesn't sound very comfortable. How else can one explain the lack of tonal variety, the dearth of subtle plucking effects, and a curiously hard sound to notes of the same value (as in the first part of BWV 998), plucked seemingly without any desire to shape or modulate the sound?

But let us look at the competition. Two lutenists have recorded substantial portions of this repertoire, the late Walter Gerwig and Michel Podolski. Both sound completely idiomatic on their instruments; stylistically they are knowledgeable as well (though Yepes, I feel, holds his own here). Yet, they are both dull to hear—perhaps earnest is a more polite description—and I, at least, can't get excited about their Bach at all. Of those who do the guitar transcriptions, Bream and Williams are my favorites. Bream does play the Renaissance lute, but so far as the complex Baroque version of the instrument is concerned, he hasn't yet committed himself on discs. That would be worth waiting for. In the meantime, though, there is Señor Yepes, who, for all his problems, still manages to make some of the dance movements sit up as pieces of music; basically he gives them vitality and personality, despite some of the attendant difficulties. Archive has produced good, clean sonics, though final chords strangely are not allowed to reverberate at side ends.

The "Baroque Lute Recital" by thirty-year-old Japanese lutenist Toyohiko Satoh is an enterprising program that provides a good sampling of lute music written by Robert de Visée, guitarist and lutenist to the French court, the aforementioned Sylvius Leopold Weiss, and Bach. Properly, Mr. Satoh, who studied among other places at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, plays a twenty-six-string theorbo, the lute with an extra peg-box for bass strings. It has a splendidly resonant tone, and Satoh plays it with good technique and tonal subtlety. Thus, for example, his Bach G Minor Fugue (BWV 1000) sounds more idiomatic and comfortable than Yepes's rendition, though Satoh's personality as a player seems stiff and uninvolved in comparison. Nor is Satoh terribly imaginative when it comes to embellishing his dance-movement repeats. It is all very commendable playing, but in the long run it is just not very interesting. The reproduction of the theorbo is very vivid, however, and for that and the choice of repertoire, the disc has much to recommend it. *I.K.*

**BARTÓK:** *Five Village Scenes; Five Songs, Op. 15; Five Songs, Op. 16.* Julia Hamari (mezzo-soprano); Konrad Richter (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 405 \$7.98.

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

Even casual students of Béla Bartók's life and work know that his folk-song arrangements were a vital part of his activity, but relatively little is known about him as a composer of art songs. This new recording of his two song collections, Op. 15 and Op. 16, then, fills a notable gap (earlier recordings by Magda László were deleted many years ago). Both collections date from 1916, and there are still traces of Debussy's influence in them, but Bartók's unmistakable individuality is already asserting itself. The poets who wrote the texts were Bartók's contemporaries in those unsettling and tragic times, and the songs are about love, yearning, and frustration. Bartók's vocal writing is semi-declamatory, clearly

anti-Romantic, yet attesting to the sure knowledge and understanding of singing that he had already demonstrated in the opera *Bluebeard's Castle* (1911). The songs, and particularly those set to the poems of Endre Ady (Op. 16), are introspective and haunting, though not immediately endearing, with piano accompaniments of such distinct character that they could almost stand on their own.

The *Village Scenes* (some of which are known in choral-orchestral arrangements and have been so recorded on Westminster 8210) date from 1924. They are based on Slovak folk songs, distilled in Bartók's peppery and astringent manner. It is a weirdly attractive group. Julia Hamari's singing is absolutely beautiful, and few listeners are likely to complain about her concentrating on tonal sheen at the expense of crystal-clear Hungarian enunciation. (The texts are supplied, in any

Deutsche Grammophon



JULIA HAMARI  
*Absolutely beautiful Bartók songs*

case.) The difficult piano parts are expertly handled by Konrad Richter, and the technical reproduction is exceptionally fine. *G.J.*

**BASSETT:** *Sounds Remembered* (see KUPFERMAN)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata No. 21, in C Major, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"); Sonata No. 23, in F Minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata").* Vladimir Horowitz (piano). COLUMBIA M 31371 \$5.98. Ⓜ MA 31371 \$6.98.

Performance: **Top-drawer**  
Recording: **Excellent**

Vladimir Horowitz has recorded both of these sonatas before, his earlier "Waldstein" having been released as RCA Victor LM 2009 in 1955 and the "Appassionata" as RCA Victor LM 2366 (now deleted) four years later. The pianist has since then changed his ideas about both pieces in many ways, some obvious and others more subtle, and this new Columbia album is, in my view, the finest Beethoven he has yet given us. Thus, for example, the new "Appassionata" boasts an almost symphonically conceived first movement (I could well imagine Toscanini performing it this way had it been written for orchestra), a highly poetic and freer slow movement, and an emotionally

turbulent finale. Some of these same symphonic qualities were also present in the earlier version, but here they sound less blown-up and exaggerated: there is, overall, more spontaneity, as well as a wonderful feeling of inevitability about the progression of themes and their relation to the structure, and a greater identification with the Classical-Romantic spirit of the period of composition. The forced accent (*sforzando*) is used to a greater degree than is usual in most performances of Beethoven on the piano, even more than in Horowitz's earlier Beethoven.

In his attempt to seek tonal clarity Horowitz seems in fact to emulate some of the characteristics of the piano of Beethoven's time. This is most apparent in his new "Waldstein," where the low-lying passages, left-hand arpeggios, and so forth emerge with far more clarity than in his previous recording. Here, too, Horowitz adopts an epic but not dynamically or tonally overstated approach to the instrument and the piece. To be sure, the pianist's usual enormous control, both interpretive and technical, is displayed in both sonatas. Yet, in many ways, the results here sound freer and more natural, even in the manner in which the pieces are held together: there is dramatic tension, but there is also a modicum of relaxation—and when the music heads for a climax (as in the codas of both sonatas' fast movements), the effect is hair-raising but invariably Beethovenesque in its stylistic boundaries. The sound is fine. *I.K.*

**BEETHOVEN:** *String Quartet No. 13, in B-flat Major, Op. 130 (original edition with Grosse Fuge, Op. 133).* La Salle Quartet. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530351 \$6.98.

Performance: **Detailed**  
Recording: **Big sound**

The La Salle Quartet, best known for their performances of contemporary works, has been appearing increasingly in Classical literature with generally striking results. Their strong point is an extraordinary fidelity to details—with which late Beethoven abounds—and a remarkable energy that carries right through even the immense original edition of Op. 130, the Beethoven quartet with the *Grosse Fuge* as its finale. Not surprisingly, it is the latter—which sounds so much like modern music anyway—that prompts the La Salle's best efforts. Elsewhere I feel a certain inwardness is lacking or perhaps obscured by the rough vigor of the playing and the very resonant recording. In fact, the group often sounds more like a string orchestra than a quartet. In one or two places I could swear I hear a double-bass. This is partly due to the fact that the cellist tunes down his lowest string and is sometimes actually playing in the double-bass rather than the cello octave. But recorded overkill is the major part of the problem. One wants to get inside a string quartet—especially late Beethoven—not to be overwhelmed by it. *E.S.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BELLINI:** *I Puritani.* Beverly Sills (soprano), Elvira; Nicolai Gedda (tenor), Arturo; Louis Quilico (baritone), Riccardo; Paul Plishka (bass), Giorgio; Heather Begg (mezzo-soprano), Enriqueta; Richard Van Allan (bass), Walton; Ricardo Cassinelli (tenor), Bruno; Ambrosian Opera Chorus; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Julius Rudel cond. AUDIO (Continued on page 98)





## THE MUSIC OF GESUALDO

Just what kind of madrigals might a sixteenth-century Italian nobleman, a manic-depressive with strong masochistic tendencies, be expected to write?

Reviewed by Igor Kipnis

**D**ON CARLO GESUALDO, Prince of Venosa (ca. 1560-1613), is perhaps as well-known for his personal life as for his compositions. He had his first wife, Maria d'Avalos, murdered along with her lover, and, according to anecdotes, killed his son by her because he doubted the paternity of the child. A second marriage, to Leonora d'Este of the prestigious court of Ferrara, was not a happy one either, though the adultery this time seems to have been on Gesualdo's side. The sordidness of Gesualdo's life (a long-awaited biography by Glenn Watkins is to be published by the University of North Carolina later this year) might not seem especially important were it not for the decidedly unusual quality of much of his music.

Following the use of the term in reference to the purposefully distorted, exaggerated style of some sixteenth-century artists (Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino, for example), Gesualdo's music can most accurately be described as "manneristic." If you think of sixteenth-century music in terms of the smooth, unruffled polyphony of Palestrina, Gesualdo's madrigals will be an incredible shock, for they use musical devices and sounds we might consider far more typical of the twentieth century than of the sixteenth. Yet, they are not "modern" music, despite the incredible tension and torture of the harmonies, but the product of a characteristic, if psychologically extreme, personality of the late-Renaissance/early-Baroque period.

If I may play psychologist for a moment, the composer-prince appears to have been something of a manic-depressive with strong tendencies toward masochism. The first two

books of his madrigals, which were published in Ferrara in 1594, reveal nothing of these personality characteristics; they are merely well-made, rather limpid, reflective pieces using all the conventional composing devices of that time. But with *Voi volete ch'io mora* (*You want me to die*), which commences his third book (published in Ferrara the following year), one suddenly hears some startling shifts, unexpected harmonies, anguished chromaticisms, and angular melodic leaps. This foreshadowing is intermittent until the fourth book, printed in the same city in 1596, two years after his second marriage. The brooding from here on becomes almost omnipresent, chromaticisms abound, the texts reflect morbidity (titles from Book Four include *She is spreading death; I die and sigh; Behold, I shall then die; When the sun no longer shines*), and to Gesualdo's usual quiet intensity is added a fascinating, bizarre quality that is totally disquieting. By the second half of Book Five (Genoa, 1611), just about every madrigal is manneristic in the extreme: *Tu m'uccidi, o crudele* (*Thou slayest me, cruel one*) and *O tenebroso giorno* (*O gloomy day*) are typical. A number of Gesualdo's most astonishing madrigals have become familiar from their inclusion in recorded anthologies, among them *Ecco, morirò dunque* (*Behold, I shall then die*), *Moro lasso al mio duolo* (*I die of grief*), *Dolcissima mia vita* (*My sweetest life of all*), and the harmonically audacious *Ardo per te* (*I burn for you*), but there has been no systematic exploration of the whole of Gesualdo in recordings (the first three discs of this set were issued here three or four years ago by Musical Heritage Society—MHS 917/19).

Now, however, with the release of a seven-disc set, Telefunken has made it possible for us to hear *all* of Gesualdo's extant madrigals, a total of 125 works. Fourteen sides of madrigals by one composer may seem rather an earful, but in fact the succession of these pieces, more and more brooding and tortured, builds up to an overwhelming listening experience (especially if taken at the leisurely pace of not more than two sides to a hearing).

The performances very much reflect the introverted nature of the music: there is no untoward breast-beating here—though there are moments in the later madrigals where I might have preferred a more rhetorical and dynamically dramatic approach. Nevertheless, the singing is leisurely, lyrical, full of affect, and rhythmically flexible (perhaps even a bit too much so), and it avoids sounding as if there were a conductor beating out the rhythms. Intonation, an incredibly difficult matter in these scores, is on the whole good, though one of the basses in the earlier madrigals has occasional moments of wobbly pitch. None of the singers are named in this production, and evidently the cast of participants was changed from recording session to session.

**T**HERE are two primary faults in the Telefunken set (it is derived from the Italian Arcophon label), the principal one being the lack of any original text or even a translation, an unforgivable omission in a set this important and this expensive. Musical Heritage Society did supply them for its album, but that set includes the earlier madrigals, not the later. Neither the earlier editions of the scores, an unreliable Italian production, nor the more recent scholarly publication by Ugrino Verlag, Hamburg, used for this recording and available from Associated Music in New York, is of much help, for there is no English translation of them either. The set therefore loses a good deal of its pleasure potential and scholarly value, although its importance as an integral unit is still, of course, considerable.

The second fault is that the reproduction is weak in the treble and overly prominent in the mid-range, and this sometimes plays havoc with balances that favor the mid-range voices. Diction, too, is less than ideal (consonants seem continually to be swallowed) unless a boost in the treble is applied: this, gratifyingly, results in an improvement both in diction and in balance.

In sum, then, those who require the complete Gesualdo will acquire this set without any prodding. Those searching for Gesualdo in a smaller sampling have regrettably little to choose from at the moment; my own preference is for the selection by the Deller Consort on RCA VICS-1364, but others may prefer the more antiseptic and instrumentally oriented disc by Robert Craft on Columbia Special Products CKS-6318, which also contains Stravinsky's homage to Gesualdo. Perhaps Telefunken ought to issue a selection of this material on one or two discs—and, for heaven's sake, with the texts in Italian and English.

**GESUALDO: Madrigals for Five Voices (complete).** Quintetto Vocale Italiano, Angelo Ephrikan dir. TELEFUNKEN SJA 25086-T1/7 seven discs \$41.86.



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

*I Puritani* is the current "in" bel canto opera; this recording follows its recent revival by the New York City Opera Company, first in Los Angeles and then in its home city. The cast of the recording has been strengthened by artists of international rank, but the pivotal elements—Beverly Sills and conductor Julius Rudel—are the same.

*I Puritani* was Bellini's last opera and, in the view of some commentators, his best. Sweeping judgments are not really my style, so I am inclined to view such assertions with some reservations, but I do consider *I Puritani* an opera of considerable power and theatrical effectiveness, quite apart from its abundant melodic riches. The libretto of Count Carlo Pepoli has its weaknesses, but it gives us personalities with recognizable human traits, reactions, and sensibilities. In the role of Elvira, the trusting, wronged, but ultimately blissful Puritan maiden, Beverly Sills offers an interpretation of by now familiar components. Above all, her singing is a study in expressivity: all rapt urgency in the music accompanying Arturo's arrival, girlish and vivacious in the catchy "*Son vergin vezzosa*," heartbreaking in "*Qui la voce sua soave*"—especially in the phrase "*Ah, toglialemi la vita*"—and light and agile when the plot turns to happiness in "*Vien, diletto*." Together with these felicitous touches, though, we must accept tones that are frequently too tremulous, intonation that is less than consistently accu-

rate, and several poorly sustained notes in the extreme high register.

The role of Arturo, which was created by the prodigious Rubini in 1835, makes fiendish demands for notes above high C. Nicolai Gedda, however, is one tenor for whom the tessitura is no problem. He gives us a brilliant C-sharp in the aria "*A te, o cara*," flings out two strong and fearless D's in "*Vieni, fra queste braccia*," and even manages to press out the high F (!) in "*Credeasi misera*." (No present-day tenor should be asked to do such a thing; it is a punishment to singer and listener alike, no matter what the original score calls for.) Even apart from the bravura feats, there is much to admire in Gedda's singing, but also a fair measure of spread and hard-edged tones.

Paul Plishka sings the part of Elvira's kind uncle with mellowness, dignity, and fine responsiveness to Bellini style. On the other hand, although Louis Quilico portrays the character of Arturo's rival vigorously and convincingly, he is not comfortable with the florid writing. The others perform their relatively small roles creditably, and the experienced Ambrosian Chorus gives a good account of itself throughout. There are a few passing moments of coarseness in the orchestral sound, but the overall result is impressive and even eloquent. Julius Rudel has become a thoroughly persuasive interpreter of the Donizetti-Bellini repertoire, displaying an evident understanding of and affection for the bel canto style.

This is the most complete version of *I Puritani* before the public, restoring a few passages (none particularly significant, though)

omitted from the Sutherland/Bonyngé edition on London OSA 1373. The comparison between the two sets is unavoidable, and the choice will be defined by one's preference for the superior dramatic insight and variety of Sills or the higher degree of Sutherland's vocal refinement. In all other elements the two sets are closely matched. It should be added, though, that London has a new *I Puritani* awaiting release, with Luciano Pavarotti joining the Sutherland-Bonyngé team. You may want to wait until it comes out before purchasing any version. *G.J.*

**BERWALD: String Quartet No. 1, in G Minor; String Quartet No. 2, in E-flat Major; String Quartet No. 3, in A Minor.** Phoenix String Quartet. GOLDEN CREST □ CRS-41233 two discs \$13.96.

Performance: **A bit rough but vital**  
Recording: **Close-miked**

While the string quartets of Sweden's nineteenth-century symphonist Franz Berwald (1796-1868) don't pack quite the wallop of his four major essays for orchestra, the three that survive from the pairs written in 1818 and 1849 are superbly crafted and vital in substance, antedating in some respects the quartets of Brahms and Franck.

The G Minor Quartet could even be mistaken in many ways for undiscovered Schubert, save that the Viennese master had written none of his mature chamber music masterpieces by that time (1818). The E-flat is not only intriguing in its fanciful ideas and juxtapositions, but its one-movement structure can be said to anticipate that of the Sibelius Sev-



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enth Symphony. The scherzo section embedded midway in the adagio contains some of Berwald's most scintillating quartet writing. The A Minor Quartet combines something of the Romantic fervor of the G Minor with the brilliance of the E-flat, and for my taste is the most satisfying of the lot.

Record buyers in Sweden have had their choice for some years of two versions of the Berwald quartets in their entirety: one by the Hamburg-based Benthien Quartet, and another by the Frydén Quartet. In this country, separate performances of the E-flat by the Saulesco Quartet and of the A Minor by the Copenhagen Quartet have been available, through import specialist shops in the former instance and on Turnabout TV 34091S in the latter.

The Phoenix Quartet brings great vigor and passion to its performance, but the tone of the group is not as polished nor the critical attacks as precise as in the readings of the Copenhagen Quartet or the Benthien Quartet. Still, this is no reason to forgo the opportunity of getting to know all three of these works, which in my opinion should be part of the regular concert repertoire of Romantic chamber music.

The Golden Crest SQ-matrix four-channel recording is rather close-miked in the frontal channels, but not uncomfortably so, while the rear channels expand the listening ambiance effectively without in any way obscuring the musical texture. *D.H.*

**CAMPRA:** *Suite from "Les Fêtes Vénitiennes."* Collegium Aureum. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1681 \$3.50 (plus 75¢ handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

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

André Campra (1660-1744) spent the early part of his career as a church composer, writing some stage works under a pseudonym for fear of losing his position as director of music at Notre-Dame in Paris. By 1700, however, he began writing in earnest for the stage, and he became the most important composer of ballets, lyric tragedies, *entrées*, divertissements, and opera-ballets in the period between Lully and Rameau.

Campra scored a particular success in 1710 with *Les Fêtes Vénitiennes*, an opera-ballet extravaganza in which the plot took second place to the concept of varied and colorful tableaux, graceful dances, and, almost for the first time, the exploitation of comedy on the lyric stage. The Parisians, tired of the formalized stage tragedies of the older school, took to Campra's comic fantasy with enthusiasm, and *Les Fêtes Vénitiennes* stayed in the repertoire until 1762. In the present selection of dances—just over a half-hour's worth—there are some charming examples of Campra's melodiousness, rhythmic zest, and characterizations of Spaniards, French peasants, Bohemians, and buffoons. The Collegium Aureum ensemble interprets the eleven instrumental excerpts with knowledgeable style, though perhaps not with the maximum sparkle and rhythmic pointing, and the disc is a good contribution to a rather unexplored area of the French Baroque. The quality of sound, however, is rather dull (the harpsichord continuo is almost nonexistent), and I would strongly recommend giving it a sharp treble boost. *I.K.*

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**CHÁVEZ:** *Los Cuatro Soles; Pirámide, Ballet in Four Acts, Acts 3 and 4.* Ambrosian Singers; London Symphony Orchestra, Carlos Chávez cond. COLUMBIA □ MQ 32685 \$6.98.

Performance: **Mostly excellent**  
Recording: **Very good**

In his seminal 1945 volume, *Music of Latin America*, Nicolas Slonimsky mentions in the chapter on Mexico's Carlos Chávez an "unfinished orchestral score entitled *Pyramids*." The music apparently found final form in the ballet *Pirámide*, commissioned by the Ballet Folklórico de Mexico. The title of the work refers, of course, to the Aztec pyramid builders of ancient times, and the music of the final two sections (*The Elements: Wind, Water, Earth, Fire and General Dance*, which depicts the discovery of fire and the communal building of a pyramid) is in my opinion totally successful in achieving what Chávez has set out to do—to synthesize the Mexican Amerindian mythos with the Western art-music tradition, much in the same way Bartók did for the Magyar music of Hungary.

All of Chávez's highly individual musical know-how, acquired over a period of more than fifty years, is brought to bear here, and, for all the eclectic origins of certain of his musical devices (the choral "*Sprechstimme*" is much like Milhaud's *L'Orestie d'Eschyle* of 1915-1916), the whole adds up to a most convincing and impressive listening experience.

*Los Cuatro Soles* deals with much the same subject matter as *Pirámide*, though at a far lower level of musical sophistication. But the music still has enormous freshness and élan, beginning with the passacaglia-like opening and concluding with the choral-orchestral dance to the god Centeotl.

The performance is generally excellent, although the British Ambrosian Singers manage only a rather inconclusive close to *Los Cuatro Soles*. The very sparse program notes for this record and the lack of text with translation are also to be regretted. These reservations aside, however, the recording is splendid. This is one instance where a "surround" quadraphonic technique would have enhanced the music (particularly *Pirámide*) spectacularly, but as it is, Columbia's four-channel sound (SQ matrix) is very impressive.

A final word is in order regarding the recorded representation of Chávez's works over the years. Despite his indefatigable efforts as composer, conductor, organizer, writer, and performer of his own works going back to the early 1930's, only the *aficionado* of Latin American music is likely to have much idea of the really enormous scope of the seventy-five-year-old Mexican master's creative achievement. The current *Schwann Record and Tape Guide* lists a dozen or so works (most of them recorded under Chávez's own direction), but more than twice that number have been available at one time or another on LP. In view of Chávez's importance—his position in Latin American music is comparable to Bartók's in Hungarian music—it would seem reasonable to restore some of these to the catalog. Efforts should be made by Columbia to reissue at least their composer-conducted recordings of the six Chávez symphonies and the Violin Concerto. And there should be a new recording of the Piano Concerto. *D.H.*

(Continued overleaf)

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Caruso as Eléazar at the Met, 1921

## Halévy's **LA JUIVE**

Reviewed by George Jellinek

**L**A JUIVE enjoys an unusual status among operas: it is famous but unknown. Music lovers everywhere *think* they know Jacques Fromental Halévy's opera, but how can they? No major opera company has staged it during the last forty years or so (it was last given in Paris in 1934, in New York and San Francisco in 1936), and, except for an amateurish and negligible venture, it has never been recorded complete. Where does its fame come from, then? Mainly from the enduring stature of Enrico Caruso.

Eléazar in *La Juive* was Caruso's last major role, and it was in this role that he was last heard in public, on December 20, 1920. Around that time he recorded the deeply moving aria "*Rachel, quand du Seigneur*" from the opera's fourth act, a recording that has remained in the active catalog, one way or another, ever since. On the strength of Caruso's superb performance, the aria was subsequently recorded by such eminent tenors as Georges Thill, Beniamino Gigli, Franz Völker, Joseph Schmidt, Jan Peerce, and Richard Tucker. There have been other isolated recordings from *La Juive*—the second-act soprano aria with Rosa Ponselle, Cardinal Brogni's two arias with Ezio Pinza, the Passover Scene with Giovanni Martinelli and Jan Peerce—but none lasted long in the catalog, nor did they ever add up to enough to afford a cohesive view of the opera.

Because persecution of the Jews has continued to be a burning issue in contemporary life, interest has often been voiced in reviving *La Juive*, an opera written by a Jew and exposing the shattering consequences of religious hatred and fanaticism. For many years, Jan Peerce and Richard Tucker have actively sought a Metropolitan revival. These two artists were partly motivated by their own Judaic commitment, but also by valid artistic reasons: Eléazar is an ideal role for a mature tenor—both Caruso and Martinelli achieved success with it in middle age. Neither Peerce nor Tucker succeeded as far as the Metropolitan was concerned, but Tucker's long devotion to the idea finally paid off in a New Orleans revival in 1973 and a London concert performance earlier that year. The byproduct of the London performance is a new RCA disc of highlights,

the first continuous recording of this fascinating opera since an elusive French import containing excerpts (Philips 837.026) was released about ten years ago.

RCA's recording leaves no doubts about the genuine musical merits of *La Juive*. Halévy was a first-rate composer. It is not enough to say that he knew his craft well enough to teach it to such pupils as Charles Gounod and Georges Bizet, for that implies only academic knowledge. Halévy was also gifted with a sure theatrical sense. Even Wagner thought highly enough of him to exempt him from his wholesale condemnation of the Meyerbeerian school of "grand opera" producers. *La Juive* (set to one of Eugène Scribe's best librettos) is not free of grand theatrical gestures, but the action that develops against the historical background (the Council of Constance in 1414, following the defeat of the Hussite rebellion) is convincing, the characters are strongly etched, and the listener is firmly gripped by the tension of the plot. The vocal writing is superb, the choral ensembles are effective and cannily developed, and the color and sophistication of Halévy's orchestration are of a kind no French composer save Berlioz could equal in that era—and Berlioz lacked Halévy's natural understanding of the theater.

This is a grand opera with ample opportunities for its substantial cast. Richard Tucker, as a commanding Eléazar, brings dignity and fine artistic restraint to the Passover Scene and a convincing fervor to his fourth-act aria. The taxing cabaletta following the aria ("*Dieux, m'éclaire!*") is omitted here. That is a minor loss, but I do regret the omission of the powerful scene between Eléazar and Brogni in the fourth act. Bonaldo Giaiotti delivers Brogni's two imposing scenes with sonority and good style. As heard here, in the proper dramatic context, both gain in impact. Martina Arroyo appears in two duets—this is an opera of many confrontations—and she is always competent or better. Unfortunately, in the second-act duet she is partnered by an undernourished-sounding Léopold, and the imbalance damages the music. This is the disc's only weakness, for Léopold, too, is a major role, and it should have been cast accordingly.

One of the eight excerpts, the Boléro "*Mon doux Seigneur et maître*," has never before been recorded. It did not appear in the opera's original version, but was added later to strengthen the part of Eudoxie. Except for a somewhat effortful concluding high E, it is sung with verve and grace by Anna Moffo.

The musical leadership of Antonio de Almeida succeeds in conveying the music's tension without unduly highlighting its brasher qualities. Orchestra and chorus are fine, and the recorded sound is excellent. I wish it had been possible to record more of this eminently listenable opera.

**HALÉVY: *La Juive* (highlights).** Richard Tucker (tenor). Eléazar: Martina Arroyo (soprano). Rachel: Bonaldo Giaiotti (bass). Cardinal Brogni: Anna Moffo (soprano). Eudoxie: Juan Sabaté (tenor). Léopold: Leslie Fyson (baritone), Ruggiero; Ambrosian Opera Chorus; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Antonio de Almeida cond. RCA ARL 1-0447 \$5.98.

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**DEBUSSY: *Trois Chansons de France; Fêtes Galantes* (second series); *Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé; Le Promenoir des Deux Amants; Noël des Enfants Qui N'Ont Plus de Maisons; Trois Ballades de François Villon.* Bernard Kruszen (baritone); Noël Lee (piano). TELEFUNKEN SAT 22540 \$5.98.**

Performance: **Superb**  
Recording: **Fine**

These are Debussy's last songs, composed between 1904 and 1915. I don't believe they have been collected on a single disc before, and I am more certain that few of them have been so compellingly projected on recordings as on this quite exceptional disc, which will surely establish itself as a landmark in the discography of French vocal music. Kruszen, more than confirming the happy impression made by his earlier recordings, is so thoroughly "inside" this material that comparative evaluations would be quite beside the point, whether the matter at hand be the touching *Noël*—for once neither sentimentalized nor overdeclared, but chilling in its sweeping bitterness—the intimate Mallarmé settings, or the different treatments of the same Tristan Lhermite verse in the *Chansons de France* and *Promenoir de Deux Amants*. Moreover, he has in the person of Noël Lee a keyboard collaborator who fully shares his insights.

One may hear a wobble in Kruszen's delivery of the last of the Villon *Ballades*, but it is not obtrusive to the point of lessening the impact of the performance. If there is any cause for complaint, it is that Telefunken, while presenting the Valois-originated recording in an elaborate gatefold container, has printed the texts only in French, with no translations. But that too is minor: for those unacquainted with Debussy's songs, I cannot imagine a better way of getting to know them, and those who know them already should have even more reason to welcome this disc.

R.F.

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**DVOŘÁK: *Mazurkas, Op. 56; Humoresques, Op. 101.* Rudolf Firkusny (piano). CANDIDE CE 31070 \$3.98.**

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

Here is a collection of Dvořák piano music that can be heartily recommended, with no reservations about naïve programmatic depiction or sentimentality. The *Mazurkas* are delectably crafted and cunningly harmonized dances: for the most part they are more poetic than brilliant, exceptions being the opening piece in A-flat and the closing one in D—which has been added as a supplemental number seven to the half-dozen that make up the original Op. 56.

Everybody knows *the Humoresque*, which has been all but done to death in every conceivable performing combination in its eighty years of existence. But in its original form, as elegantly played here by Rudolf Firkusny, it regains its original power of enchantment. More important, the recording includes the other seven *Humoresques*, ranging in style from gypsy dances to the most tender ruminations. Here is the intimate, small-scale aspect of Dvořák's genius at its very best, beautifully projected in Firkusny's performances with fine recorded sound to match. My review



disc, unhappily, was afflicted with off-center pressing. *D.H.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DVOŘÁK: *Piano Trio in F Minor, Op. 65.* Yuval Trio. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 371 \$7.98.

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

The Yuval is an Israeli ensemble making its Deutsche Grammophon recording debut—and an impressive one it is. The unanimity of approach and spontaneous-seeming mesh in the playing of pianist Jonathan Zak, violinist Uri Pianka, and cellist Simca Heled suggest that they have worked together daily for years, and that they must be, individually and collectively, in love with this magnificent work. Rarer still, theirs is a love accompanied by the deepest understanding. Both string players—the violinist especially—display a remarkable sweetness of tone, yet steer clear of anything resembling self-indulgence; they share with the pianist a style at once aristocratic and impassioned. Both the tenderness of the slow movement and the propulsive drive of the scherzo have at their base a robust warmth to match Dvořák's own. The justly admired Beaux Arts performance on Philips 802 917 LY is infused with a little more tension, a little less sweetness: both versions are distinguished, and the listener cannot go wrong with either of them. *R.F.*

FALLA: *Nights in the Gardens of Spain; El Amor Brujo.* Alicia de Larrocha (piano, in *Nights*); Inés Rivadeniera (contralto, in *El Amor*); Orquesta de Conciertos de Madrid, Jesús Arámbarri cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1649 \$2.99 (plus 75¢ handling charge from Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Evocative**  
Recording: **Satisfactory**

Anyone who wants to enjoy Alicia de Larrocha's performance of *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* would be well advised, I think, to save a couple of dollars and take this one in preference to the London recording with the Suisse Romande Orchestra under Comisisona. In the all-Spanish version, actually the earlier of the two recordings, the pianist is more successfully integrated with the orchestra, as is appropriate to the work. Moreover, Jesús Arámbarri's *El Amor Brujo* on the other side of the Musical Heritage disc is not only idiomatic but thoroughly convincing.

There are other recordings of *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* than those by De Larrocha, of course, and I still prefer both the second of the three by the late Gonzalo Soriano, with Argenta conducting (London CS 6046), and the splendidly atmospheric account by Margrit Weber and Rafael Kubelik (Deutsche Grammophon 139 116). For *El Amor Brujo*, my first choice is still Ansermet's version, with Marina de Gabarain (London STS 15014), which is a unique amalgam of earthiness and elegance. *R.F.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HANDEL: *Concerti Grossi, Op. 3, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 4 bis, 5, and 6; Concerto Grosso in C Major ("Alexander's Feast"); Overture in D Major; Overture in B-flat Major; Hornpipe in D Major; Largo in F Major.* English Chamber Or-

chestra, Raymond Leppard cond. PHILIPS 6700 050 two discs \$13.96.

Performance: **Exceptional**  
Recording: **Superb**

The major portion of this album, the latest in Raymond Leppard's estimable Handel series, is devoted to the Op. 3 Concerti Grossi, including both totally divergent versions of No. 4. The playing is on the same high level found in such previous issues in the series as the Op. 6 Concerti Grossi, the concertos for double wind choirs, a collection of overtures, the *Water Music*, the *Fireworks Music*, and the various orchestral pieces that are thematically related to the last two works. Altogether, so far, it's a really fine series, with Leppard's imaginative understanding of the composer setting a standard that has seldom been equaled. To take just one imaginative example from Op. 3: the opening concerto has come down to us as a three-movement work, with a first movement in B-flat Major followed by two in the relative minor (G), a rather improbable published grouping in which Handel most likely had no part; Leppard has added an extra movement in B-flat Major as a finale, removing it from the end of the second concerto where it was extraneous.

Equally intriguing in this album is the choice of additional orchestral pieces, some of them fairly familiar (such as the "Alexander's Feast" Concerto), others very likely being first recordings (the delightful Hornpipe written for a 1740 concert at the Vauxhall Gardens and the impressive three-movement Overture in B-flat). The isolated Overture in D and the Largo in F (a reworking for two horns and orchestra of a movement from an oboe concerto) are also welcome. I do think, however, that Leppard might have applied himself to supplying what is obviously a missing fugue in the first movement of the Overture in D; the abruptness of the adagio in B Minor after the initial dotted opening is jarring, as it is also in Linde's version on Archive 1533079.

Throughout these two discs, the English Chamber Orchestra and the various instrumental soloists play with enormous verve and vitality, and the recorded sound is extraordinarily good. *I.K.*

HAYDN: *Piano Trios (H.XV): No. 18, in A Major; No. 19, in G Minor; No. 22, in E-flat Major.* Beaux Arts Trio. PHILIPS 6500 521 \$6.98.

Performance: **Attractive**  
Recording: **Symphonic**

The Haydn piano trios—trios for piano with violin and cello "accompaniment," as they were usually styled—contain some of the finest little-known music in the Classical literature. Their rediscovery (hindered no doubt by the largely secondary role assigned to the violin and cello) was only a matter of time.

This album is listed as Volume Four in a series of Haydn trios being recorded by the excellent Beaux Arts Trio. The performances and recordings are symphonic in scope, and the caliber of the playing is uniformly of the highest quality. I don't find any special insights into Haydn's particular genius; for example, gorgeous tone and suave, melodic ensemble are stressed at the possible expense of wit or fantasy or playfulness. Similarly, the chocolate-fudge recording is rich for my taste and not especially suited to Haydn chamber music. Nevertheless, the charms of the music



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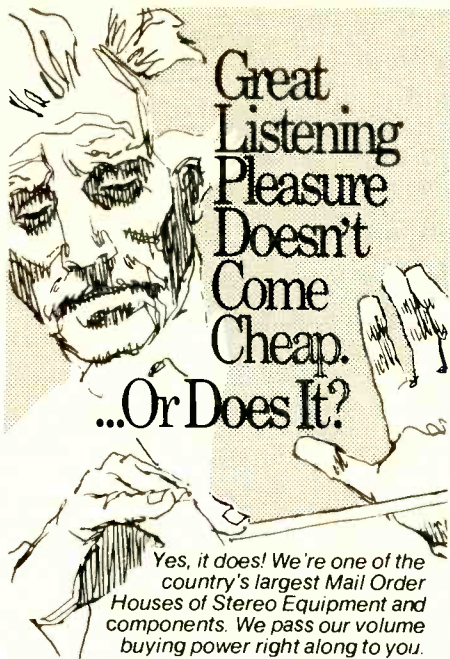


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and the utter suavity and mellow cantabile of the playing are certainly entrancing. E.S.

**JOSQUIN DES PRÉS:** *Déploration sur la Mort d'Ockeghem* (see OCKEGHEM)

**KUPFERMAN:** *Sonata for Two Pianos.* Jean and Kenneth Wentworth (pianos). *First Woodwind Quintet.* Ariel Quintet. *Infinites 22.* Robert Nagel (trumpet); Gilbert Kalish (piano). SERENUS SRS 12044 \$6.98 (available by mail from Serenus Corp., P.O. Box 267, Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y. 10706).

**KUPFERMAN:** *Fantasy Sonata.* Robert Mann (violin); William Masselos (piano). **BASSETT:** *Sounds Remembered.* (Charles Treger (violin); Samuel Sanders (piano). DESTO SC 7142 \$5.98.

Performances: **Very good**  
Recordings: **Desto better**

If Meyer Kupferman is not as well represented on the concert platform as he might be, he is fortunate in having a great many of his works available in excellent recorded performances. And if the wonderful enthusiasm of the Serenus program-note writer (about Kupferman's importance in the ultimate scheme of things) seems more touching and naïve than prophetic, there is no doubt at all about Kupferman's good-hearted skill and—dare I say it?—the "listenability" of his music. The Two-Piano Sonata and the Woodwind Quintet date from the late Fifties; *Infinites 22*, composed in the late Sixties, is one of a series of twenty-five works based on a single tone row. The Fantasy Sonata of 1970, commissioned by and recorded with a grant from the McKim Fund of the Library of Congress, uses related material in a still wider context. It seems to me one of Kupferman's best and most attractive works.

Leslie Bassett's *Sounds Remembered* (1971) was composed and recorded under the same auspices. The remembered sounds are fragments from the work of Bassett's friend and sometime mentor, the Spanish-British pupil of Schoenberg, Robert Gerhard, who died in 1970: this work, written a year later, is a homage to the older composer. It is a longish piece, moody, full of effective gestures. Both works—indeed, all the works on both records—are very well performed. The Desto recording is sonically more attractive. E.S.

**LISZT:** *Années de Pèlerinage (complete).* Jerome Rose (piano). Vox SVBX 5454 three discs \$9.95.

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

Franz Liszt published three collections under the title *Years of Pilgrimage*. The first set, *Switzerland*, turned up in 1855, although most of the music had been written two decades earlier. The pieces in this set are mostly nature-inspired, and at least one of the works, the *Vallée d'Obermann*, is by itself a major Liszt tone poem. The second set, *Italy*, published three years later (the supplement, *Venezia e Napoli*, was put out another two years after that) also consists of reworkings of earlier music, mostly souvenirs of the composer's travels with the Countess Marie d'Agout. The inspiration here is cultural rather than natural: Raphael, Michelangelo, Salvator Rosa, Petrarch, and Dante (who inspired a sonata, the largest work in the *Années*). The *Third Year*, published in 1883,

only three years before the composer's death, carries no single specific geographic location, and the character of the music is meditative. These very striking late pieces, with one exception not very well known, form a fitting conclusion to the great cycle of the *Années*, a cycle that covers the tremendous range of Liszt's creative life and imagination.

A great deal of the composer's best and most original music can be found in these highly poetic and colorful pieces. The brilliant and the demonic sides of Liszt's personality are only too well known. But the music of the *Années*, from early to late, has still another character—philosophical lyricism, one might call it. Indeed, the *Années de Pèlerinage* suggest that Liszt was as important as Wagner in the evolution of the expressive tradition that culminated in Mahler and the Viennese school. Rich, wonderful stuff!

Jerome Rose is a first-rate interpreter of all this. He has the technical skills in abundance, but, contrary to what one might imagine, the real challenges here are not technical. Rose really captures (and sustains) the tone of elevated introspection without giving any impression of mere rhetoric or synthetic emotion. Once or twice I think he misses the essentially vocal character of the lyricism, and one or two of his tempos are on the slow side—the *Canzonetta del Salvatore Rosa* is the most obviously misjudged in this respect. But the overall impression is very strong: indeed, Rose makes remarkable overall sense out of the collection. The music emerges in all its variety and invention, and yet a unifying inner vision is pervasive.

The sonic qualities of the recordings are good, but the review discs themselves were inferior. And surely Vox could easily have managed to indicate the actual order of the pieces to go along with its fine and informative program notes. E.S.

**MACDOWELL:** *Suite No. 2, Op. 48 ("Indian"); Piano Concerto No. 2, in D Minor, Op. 23.* Eugene List (piano). Westphalian Symphony Orchestra, Recklinghausen, Siegfried Landau cond. TURNABOUT TVS 34535 \$2.98.

Performance: **Concerto strong, suite sluggish**

Recording: **Concerto good, suite poor**

Edward MacDowell has been compared—not unfairly but not without a bit of malicious patronage—to his older Norwegian contemporary Edvard Grieg. After all, MacDowell was born (in 1861) in New York City, but it was in France and Germany that he studied and European Romanticism followed him unshakably all the way back to Boston. There is certainly an affinity between those open, melodic, fluid works by Grieg and MacDowell's own fluency and gift for melody, as well as his fondness for delineating the moods of nature in decorative musical sketches. But Grieg was consciously nationalistic; MacDowell gave regional and "American" titles to his pieces only with a sense that he was betraying his belief in the universality of music as a language. Still, he couldn't resist the regional material that lay unexplored at his disposal, and in his "Indian" Suite he made use of American Indian themes before Dvořák got around to composing the "New World" Symphony. The suite has a compelling atmosphere, from the opening notes of the *Legend* that sets the mood in a running motif of three notes through the tender passages of the *Love Song* and the somewhat tacky rhythms of the Indi-



an war dance. But only in the poignant *Dirge* did MacDowell come close to the gravity and grandeur of his subject matter.

The piano concertos are another matter. The Second Concerto in particular, written in the 1880's, is fleet and shipshape beyond the constructions of its day. It sings to us still, free and open, in a voice compatible with Whitman's. A fresh kind of musical air blows through its pages despite the European accent of the musical idiom, and there is a hint of things to come in the flirtations with syncopation, intimations of Gershwin and even Bernstein—or are they reminiscences of Gottschalk? Throughout, the orchestral colorings are lovely, and the flights of inventive writing for piano no less than brilliant. And so must this work be played—with brilliance. The concerto has been performed on records a number of times—by Jesús María Sanromá, by Van Cliburn, by Roberto Szidon. List's grand Romantic line here almost rivals that of Sanromá in the recording conducted by Howard Hanson (alas, no longer available), while the recorded sound and the orchestral playing under Siegfried Landau are not disappointing. What *is* disappointing is the soft, almost sentimental treatment of the "Indian" Suite here, and the inferior recorded sound on that side of an otherwise valuable release. Mr. Hanson did much better by the suite for Mercury back in the old pre-stereo days, and so did his engineers. P.K.

**MAHLER: *Symphony No. 10*** (performing version by Deryck Cooke). New Philharmonia Orchestra, Wyn Morris cond. PHILIPS 6700 067 two discs \$13.96.

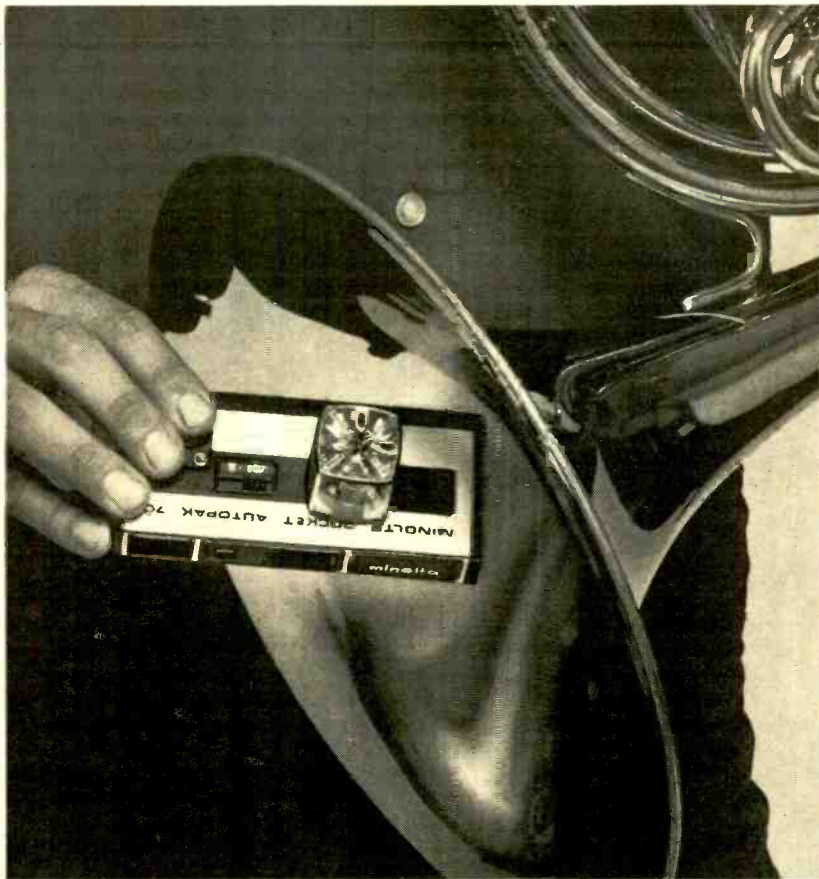
Performance: **Lyrical**

Recording: **Spacious but warm**

When I reviewed the 1966 Eugene Ormandy-Philadelphia Orchestra premiere recording of the remarkable Deryck Cooke performing version of Mahler's Tenth, I observed that Ormandy's interpretation emphasized the drama and passion of the music, and that perhaps future recorded readings would "reveal more of the purely lyrical depths of the score, especially in its more serene episodes." To a considerable extent, this new Philips recording does just that. It is billed as the "finally revised full-length performing version by Deryck Cooke," and incorporates some second thoughts by Cooke regarding orchestral texture in the two scherzos and the central section of the finale.

Welshman Wyn Morris has been gaining steady acclaim in London over the past few years as a searching Mahler interpreter of the newer generation. His recording of the five-movement version of the First Symphony in its original 1893 scoring has yet to be issued over here (it was done for the English Virtuoso label in 1970), but his reading of the colossal Eighth has been issued by RCA, and the British reviewers seem to consider it a worthy rival to Georg Solti's superb realization.

I must say straight off that neither the recording nor the quality of orchestral playing packs the wallop of Ormandy and his Philadelphians. The Philips recording is at a considerably lower volume level and the microphone placement more distant, resulting in less rich presence in the ensemble climaxes. On the other hand, both the character of Morris' reading and Cooke's revisions in instrumentation—including an increase in the woodwinds—has made for a greater clarity and overall transparency of texture—though



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## STEPHEN FOSTER'S SOCIAL ORCHESTRA

... and the music folks used to make at home

Reviewed by Paul Kresh

A MUSICAL evening at home in the Old South, based on selections drawn from Stephen Foster's own 1854 anthology of instrumental pieces called *The Social Orchestra*, has been re-created in the recording studio by Columbia and delivered on disc with considerable elegance and panache. Lest you be misled, "orchestra" in this case does not denote an aggregation of symphonic size but a modest assembly of talent such as might have been brought together informally almost anywhere during those dear, dead days before radio and phonograph made such personal musical expressions obsolete. The danger to avoid here is the dead-handed antiquarian impulse that haunts such exercises like a virus. But what might easily have been an occasion of stupifying gentility is redeemed not only by the interesting manner in which Foster arranged his own tunes and those of others for domestic musicales, but also by conductor Gregg Smith's approach to the material—honestly zestful, with no wry condescension or paralyzing reverence—and the conscientious contributions of his soloists

*The Social Orchestra* sold in pre-Civil War days for a dollar a copy, and it must have been worth every penny of it. This recording sells for considerably more in the same (now inflated) currency, but it is an equal bargain. Most of the melodies that supply the nucleus of these arrangements for amateur music makers are drawn from the composer's best-known sentimental songs—*Old Folks at Home*, *My Old Kentucky Home*, *Good Night*, *Old Dog Tray*—and from those celebrating such sweetly pallid heroines as *Nelly Bly*, *Irene*, *Eulalie*, and *Lilly Dear*. But there are dances and opera airs from Europe—by Lanner and Kleber and Strauss, Donizetti and Bellini—too. As STEREO REVIEW contributor H. Wiley Hitchcock points out in the liner notes (drawn from the recent Da Capo Press edition of *The Social Orchestra*), the inclusion of these arrange-

ments was motivated by "the general view ... that European music was more 'tasteful' than American," and the aim of Foster's book, as a review of the period in *Musical World* had it, was to "improve the taste of the community for social music." With the benefits of hindsight, we might now be as willing to argue the validity of the first point as we would be to endorse the aim of the second.

There may be times, in listening to these homely strains, when you will want to turn the volume down, to relegate Mr. Foster's more pastel moments to the background where they will be most effective, but, for the rest, Mr. Smith's expansions of the sketchy arrangements in the original anthology and his persuasive performances of them are amply diverting, quite enough to engage your full attention. In at least a couple of cases, they may even be sufficiently inviting to pull you into the dance—can you resist the bewitching quadrille on *Old Folks at Home*?

**STEPHEN FOSTER'S SOCIAL ORCHESTRA.** **Foster:** *Old Folks at Home*; *Oh, Boys, Carry Me 'Long*; *Nelly Bly*; *Farewell My Lilly Dear*; *Plantation Jig*; *The Hour for Thee and Me*; *Irene*; *Eulalie*; *Village Festival Quadrilles*; *My Old Kentucky Home*, *Good Night*; *Old Dog Tray*; *Jennie's Own Schottisch*; *Anadolia*; *Old Folks at Home*, *Variations and Quadrille*. **G. Barker:** *Where Are the Friends of My Youth*. **Byerly:** *Byerly's Waltz*. **Lanner:** *Waltz*. **Strauss:** *Waltz*. **Donizetti:** *Maria Redowa*; *O Summer Night!*; *Gems from Lucia*, Nos. 2 and 3. **Kleber:** *Rainbow Schottisch*; *Coral Schottisch*. **Bellini:** *Katy Darling*. *Jacqueline Giat* (flute); Robert Rudie (violin); David Starobin (guitar). The Columbia Social Orchestra, Gregg Smith cond. COLUMBIA M32577 \$5.98, Ⓜ MA 32577 \$6.98, Ⓞ MT 32577 \$6.98, □ MQ 32577 \$6.98, ☒ MAQ 32577 \$7.98.

here too the more distantly miked recording may be a significant factor.

Though Ormandy for my taste achieves more communicative impact in the overwhelming end movements of the Tenth, Morris achieves greater rhythmic vitality and textural transparency with the inner movements. This is borne out most sharply by direct comparison of the opening pages of the first scherzo. If I had a limited purchase budget, I'm not sure that I would add the Morris album to my collection if I already had the Ormandy. Without the Ormandy, though, I'd give it serious consideration. D.H.

**MASSENET:** *Le Cid: Ballet Music. Scènes Pittoresques, Orchestral Suite No. 4. La Vierge: Le Dernier Sommeil de la Vierge.* City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Louis Frémaux cond. KLAVER KS 522 \$5.98.

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

It was enterprising of Klavier to get hold of this material from English Columbia's Studio Two series, EMI's counterpart of London/Decca's Phase Four. The showcase quality of the sound is not wasted: the two suites surely represent Massenet's most ingratiating music for orchestra—filled with infectious tunes and most imaginatively orchestrated—and Louis Frémaux is a very stylish interpreter. He makes a little less of the trifle from *La Vierge* than Beecham did, but his flair for the suites themselves is unmistakable, and he has the Birmingham orchestra really on its toes: the winds, in particular, are first-rate. The only real disappointment on either side of the disc comes from the cellos, who do sound provincial indeed in their big moment in the voluptuous *Catalane* of the ballet sequence.

There is no complaint at all, though, about Jean Martinon's recording of the suite from *Le Cid* on London STS 15051. Martinon is even more persuasive, he has a real virtuoso orchestra—the Israel Philharmonic, whose cello section is a dream—and the recorded sound, itself of showcase caliber fifteen years ago, is still pretty striking. As for the *Scènes Pittoresques*, the finest of the surviving records of Albert Wolff is the one he made with the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra of that work and the last of Massenet's seven orchestral suites, the *Scènes Alsaciennes* (London STS 15033); the sound is not as rich as the original mono release of 1956, but it is certainly adequate. The combined cost of the two London STS discs is no more than that of the Klavier alone. R.F.

**MAXWELL DAVIES:** *Eight Songs for a Mad King.* Julius Eastman (voice); The Fires of London, Peter Maxwell Davies cond. NONE-SUCH H-71285 \$3.48.

Performance: **Remarkable**  
Recording: **Okay**

Peter Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King* are settings of the words of King George III—the same one who lost the Revolutionary War with the American colonies (enough to make any king mad). He ended his days trying to teach caged birds to sing and announced his own exit howling. In Maxwell Davies' dramatization, the howling, squealing protagonist is surrounded not by birds but by musicians in cages. In the end, a distinctly unbird-like percussion player beating on a bass drum with a whip drives him off-stage. The king's part, originally written for Roy Hart, is



a compendium of the most extreme possibilities of the human voice—not easy to perform or to listen to. The songs are classified in terms of eight traditional songs and dances, and bits of old music, often ragged in mock Twenties style, surface here and there. Outside of these quotations and references, however, there is very little music in the piece, and, although the work has been described as music theater, there is very little actual drama, either (the outside world is not permitted to intrude, the authors offer no discernible comment on the proceedings, and we are never even sure that we are eavesdropping on the ravings of the king himself or simply on some madman who fancies himself the king).

Many of the techniques employed were in fact developed by the remarkable Roy Hart as part of his communal group-therapy psychodrama (oddly enough, Roy Hart's name is nowhere mentioned). Julius Eastman's success with this work, which he has often performed here and abroad, is really extraordinary and must be heard to be believed. Although the cycle is not likely to become singers' repertoire, it is good to have it recorded for the edification of the curious and the astonishment of posterity. I do wish, though, that the English recording engineers had come up with something more interesting. Much more could have been done technically with the recording, which, considering the nature of the material, is rather blah. *E.S.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**MESSIAEN: *Visions de l'Amen*.** Peter Serkin and Yuji Takahashi (pianos). RCA ARL1-0363 \$5.98. Ⓟ ARS1-0363 \$6.98. Ⓢ ARK1-0363 \$6.98.

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

In 1943, when this music was composed and performed by an Olivier Messiaen just back from a German prison camp, it must have been shocking to its first audiences: surely it was audacious to present it in occupied Paris. The shock value has eroded now, but *Visions* still carries fascination aplenty. Messiaen tells us that he demands from the pianos "their maximum force and diversity of sounds," but the first of these demands does not mean a steady barrage of thundering fortissimos, nor does the latter involve any fooling with the instruments' innards: both elements are implicit in his intense and original musical thought, and are to be realized—as they are quite brilliantly on this record—through correspondingly evocative playing.

Each of the seven sections of the work is based on an example of one of the "four different meanings" of "Amen" set forth by the composer. The music is studded with bell effects, exotic harmonies, and, in one section only (*Amen of the Angels and Saints*), Messiaen's beloved bird-songs (specifically identified by him). "Precious stones of the Apocalypse ring, collide with, dance, color and perfume the light of life" in the concluding *Amen of the Consummation*. If the words sound like Scriabin, the music itself is not too far from such a resemblance—but the Scriabinisms are filtered through a clarification process rooted in both Messiaen's own ascetic mysticism and the Gallic keyboard tradition.

The playing throughout is sheer glory, and RCA has done it proud with exceptionally realistic piano sound. No one who owns the earlier recording by John Ogdon and Brenda

Lucas (Argo ZRG-665) need be unhappy with it, but the new one is a clear winner in terms of both performance and sound. *R.F.*

**MOZART: *The Magic Flute*** (see Best of the Month, page 73)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**MOZART: *Mass in C Major* (K. 317, "Coronation"); *Missa Brevis in C Major* (K. 220, "Spatzenmesse"); *Ave Verum Corpus* (K. 618).** Edith Mathis (soprano, in K. 220 and 317); Tatiana Troyanos (alto, in K. 220); Norma Procter (alto, in K. 317); Horst R. Laubenthal (tenor, in K. 220); Donald Grobe (tenor, in K. 317); Kieth Engen (bass, in K. 220); John Shirley-Quirk (bass, in K. 317); Regensburger Domchor, Hans Schrems dir. (in K. 220 and 618); Bavarian Radio Choir (in K. 317); Bavarian Radio Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 356 \$7.98.

Performance: **Superb**  
Recording: **Superb**

The most impressive performance here, perhaps because it is also one of Mozart's grandest church works, is the "Coronation" Mass. Kubelik adopts quite fast tempos for it, but the vigor of the interpretation as well as the solo contributions, particularly of Edith Mathis and Norma Procter, place this version among the very best ever committed to records. The late *Ave Verum Corpus* and the other, slightly earlier C Major Mass are also very beautifully conceived. The latter, incidentally, takes its subtitle (*Spatzenmesse*, or Sparrow Mass) from a repeated violin figure, rather like a bird call, in the Credo, and I found myself wondering whether the use of the Regensburg Cathedral choir with its *Domspatzen* (cathedral sparrows, the name of the boys' chorus) was an intentional bit of humorous casting for this particular Mass. Both choirs (the Bavarian Radio group is a mixed one) are excellent, the orchestral playing is precise and very clear, and the recorded sound, though not close-up and with a cathedral-like ambience, admirably conveys that clarity. The only competitor with almost the same coupling (minus the *Ave Verum Corpus*) is the version on Philips 835187AY with the Vienna Choir Boys and Ferdinand Grossman: in nearly all respects, including superior sound, the new Deutsche Grammophon version is preferable. DG omits the usual texts and translations, though. *I.K.*

**MOZART: *Piano Concertos: No. 5, in D Major* (K. 175); *No. 24, in C Minor* (K. 491); *No. 9, in E flat Major* ("Jeunehomme," K. 271); *No. 21, in C Major* (K. 467).** Lili Kraus (piano): Vienna Festival Orchestra, Stephen Simon cond. COLUMBIA SPECIAL PRODUCTS P 11810 and P 11813 two discs \$5.95 each.

Performance: **Enjoyable solo, mediocre accompaniment**  
Recording: **Fair**

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**MOZART: *Piano Concertos: No. 21, in C Major* (K. 467); *No. 25, in C Major* (K. 503).** Stephen Bishop (piano): London Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis cond. PHILIPS 6500 431 \$6.98.

Performance: **Superb**  
Recording: **Superb**

**MOZART: *Piano Concertos: No. 21, in C***

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*Major (K. 467); No. 24, in C Minor (K. 491).* Paul Badura-Skoda (piano); Prague Chamber Orchestra, Paul Badura-Skoda cond. SUPRAPHON 1 10 1176 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good style but lightweight**  
Recording: **Good**

The two Lili Kraus recordings are volumes four and seven, respectively, of the complete Mozart piano concertos, originally issued on twelve Epic discs around 1966 or 1967 and now re-released in their entirety on the Columbia Special Products series. The pianist's Mozart performances are of course extremely well known; they are warm, gracious but not in the least namby-pamby, and often quite personal in approach as regards dynamics and phrasing. Above all, however, as revealed in these recordings, Kraus' Mozart is spontaneous and full of personality, showing a lifetime of familiarity with the music. Regrettably, her playing is not matched by the decidedly second-rate accompaniments in which *tutti*s invariably crawl in without impact, orchestral precision is not ideal (the strings in particular sound thin and scratchy), and the niceties of phrasing and subtler dynamics are never really explored. Nor is the undefined and slightly backward orchestral pick-up much better.

Stephen Bishop has not, I believe, been represented on discs in any previous Mozart performances, although, of course, Colin Davis, his conductor in Nos. 21 and 25, is justly renowned for his. They make an ideal team, combining a strength, brilliance, effervescent wit, stylistic understanding, and give-and-take that make this particular recording

one of the most enjoyable Mozart concerto interpretations I have heard in many years. If I write that I consider these two concertos on a par with the distinguished Mozart performances recorded in the past by such notables as Edwin Fischer, Artur Schnabel, and Myra Hess (Bishop was one of her pupils), it should be obvious that I consider the present disc something quite special. The orchestral contribution is marvelously precise and tonally clear, one of the best balanced performances to be heard; the recorded sound is exceptionally good.

Paul Badura-Skoda, who together with his wife, Eva, is the author of a valuable book on Mozart interpretation, is thoroughly familiar with Mozart style: he adds all the proper improvised lead-in (so for that matter do Kraus and Bishop), he fills in bare passages on occasion, and he sometimes plays a bit of continuo in *tutti* passages, in addition to providing more detailed articulation in both solo and instrumental parts than one usually hears. His performances of Nos. 21 and 24 with the Prague Chamber Orchestra are generally good ones, though I prefer his previous version of No. 24 (Westminster XWN 18662, recorded in the late Fifties with the pianist also directing from the keyboard, and now deleted) for its more powerful impact. In his newer interpretation Badura-Skoda seems curiously lightweight, too close to the Dresden china approach. No. 21 is better, but must still take a second or third place to the Bishop-Davis collaboration. The Prague players perform with clarity and precision here if not with the refinement of dynamics and shaping of phrases that make the Philips recording such a joy. Supraphon's

recorded sound is clean though a bit distant for the accompaniment.

And perhaps it is unnecessary to point out to critics of catalog duplication just why there should be three almost simultaneous releases of Concerto No. 21: Elvira Madigan may not make the music-history books, but she surely sells records. *I.K.*

MOZART: *Symphony No. 39, in E-flat Major (K. 543); Symphony No. 40, in G Minor (K. 550).* London Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis cond. PHILIPS 6500 559 \$6.98.

Performance: **Tight**  
Recording: **Good**

While not announced as such, this is a reissue of a disc released here as PHS 900-036 about ten years ago: it was reissued in a low-priced series in England in 1971, but in this country Philips has only one price for its classical line. The sound is not really dated (it is, in fact, an improvement over what we heard on the domestic pressing), and neither are the performances, which are forceful, crisp, dramatic, tightly controlled—and a little austere. I wonder if Colin Davis would be a bit more expansive today than he was in the 1962 sessions. I do like the idea of his taking the exposition repeats in the outer movements, but Leonard Bernstein also does this on the only other current disc to pair these two symphonies (Columbia MS 7029), and Bernstein's sense of urgency and high drama does not rule out warmth of heart. And, after hearing Eugen Jochum's new recording of the "Jupiter," I think it may be time for *him* to remake these two symphonies. *R.F.*

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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MOZART: *Symphony No. 41, in C Major* (K. 551, "Jupiter"). SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8, in B Minor* (D. 759, "Unfinished"). Boston Symphony Orchestra, Eugen Jochum cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 357 \$7.98, 89468 \$6.98, 3300318 \$6.98.

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

Every now and then a record one is tempted to ignore because the material is so overexposed turns out to be exceptionally or even irresistibly attractive: Jochum's Beethoven Fifth with the Concertgebouw Orchestra on Philips was a notable example, and so is his disc debut with the Boston Symphony, on whom he seems to have set his imprint no less clearly than on the London Philharmonic for his splendid new Haydn set. It is not that Jochum does anything conspicuously different, but simply that he revalidates the integrity of these durable masterworks in the happiest way, his approach built on a healthy and illuminating regard for the rugged strength all too often concealed by interpreters willing to give sentiment more than its due. One has the feeling of great reservoirs of vigor held in reserve, allowing the warmth and charm abundant in both works to come through without coaxing, and the Boston Symphony has never sounded better. In short, I know of no more satisfying recording of either symphony.

Perhaps these symphonies are too familiar to require annotation: in any event, as with several other of its recent releases, Deutsche Grammophon provides none, but does include a bound-in twenty-four-page illustrated catalog of its wares. R.F.

MOZART: *Variations for Piano. Twelve Variations in C Major* on "Ah, vous dirai-je, maman" (K.265); *Four Variations in A Major* on "Come un agnello" by Sarti (K. 460); *Four Variations in G Major* on Papageno's aria from "The Magic Flute"; *Twelve Variations in C Major* on a minuet by Fischer (K. 179); *Six Variations in A Major* on a theme from the Clarinet Quintet (K. Anh. 137). Bernardo Segall (piano). ORION ORS 73132 \$5.98.

Performance: **Pearly**  
Recording: **Fair**

Bernardo Segall is a good, strong pianist with a pearly touch and a feel for the energy flow of this music, characteristics that are attractive in Mozart playing. But the relative neglect of Mozart variations stems from a contemporary lack of sympathy with them, and Segall's playing suggests how much of the tradition has been lost. The operatic origins and display functions of the music are almost forgotten here; Segall misses the point of many of the ornaments and neglects innumerable opportunities to add some of his own. This is not subtle music at all: wit and public display are the point, and panache, style, and dash are essential elements in its performance. But these are just good, solid, jewel-like but un-stylish readings without enough in the way of a larger dynamic.

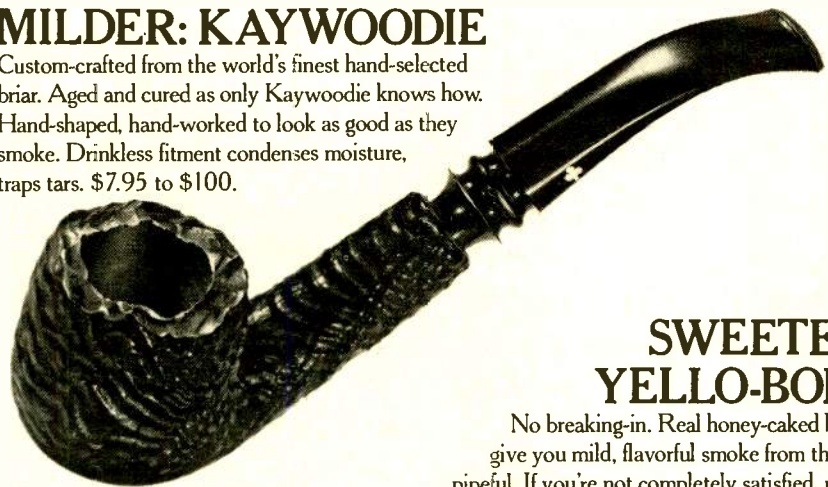
The issue is further clouded by the inclusion of a set certainly not by Mozart (on Papageno's aria), and another which is probably not by him (a literal transcription from the Clarinet Quintet). There are, it should be pointed out, at least a dozen other authentic sets—Mozart always had one handy for his

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public appearances, and he was always quite ready to apply his musical wit and effortless brilliance to the pop tunes of the day. Wit and brilliance are the very qualities missing here.

E.S.

#### RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

**OCKEGHEM:** *Ecce Ancilla Domini, Mass for Four Voices; Intemerata Dei Mater, Motet for Five Voices.* Pro Cantione Antiqua, London; members of the Collegium Aureum and the Hamburg Bläserkreis für Alte Musik, Bruno Turner dir. BASF KHB 21512 \$5.98.

**OCKEGHEM:** *Missa pro Defunctis.* **JOSQUIN DES PRÉS:** *Déploration sur la Mort d'Ockeghem.* Pro Cantione Antiqua, London; Hamburg Bläserkreis für Alte Musik, Bruno Turner dir. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 2533 145 \$7.98.

Performance: **Both first-class**  
Recording: **Archive has the edge**

Relatively little is known about the life of Johannes Ockeghem, a composer often described as the leader of the Flemish school in the latter part of the fifteenth century and now considered one of the most important musical figures of the early Renaissance and the *ars nova*. He was born around 1430 in East Flanders, served as a choirboy at the Cathedral of Antwerp and later as a chorister in the service of the Duke of Bourbon. Then, between 1454 and 1495, the year of his death, he was composer to three successive French rulers, Louis XI, Charles VII, and Charles VIII. Among his appointments was the unusual one

of treasurer of the Abbey of St. Martin in Tours (1459), the wealthiest and most prestigious monastery of the region, and the position of master of the royal chapel in 1465. He appears to have spent most of his career in France, although he did visit Spain as well as returning to his own native country at least once. Ockeghem may have studied with Dufay and Binchois, had a number of distinguished pupils himself, including Josquin Des Prés and Pierre de La Rue, and seems to have been widely admired by his contemporaries. His output, at least what has come down to us, was relatively small: twenty chansons, eleven complete Masses plus isolated Mass movements, and ten or so motets. Stylistically, his music is typical of the late Gothic "flamboyance," rich and lavish in detail, with soaring, floating melismatic vocal lines and highly intricate counterpoint, full of canonic imitation, numerological construction, and unending lines with voices overlapping even at cadences. *Ecce Ancilla Domini*, based on a Gregorian *cantus firmus*, is a typical example, as is the five-voice, three-section motet that fills out the BASF disc.

Ockeghem's *Missa pro Defunctis* is the first complete setting of a Requiem Mass to have come down to us (a previous one by Dufay has been lost); it is an extremely dignified, moving piece. (It must be noted that during this period the text of the Mass for the Dead differed in some instances from post-sixteenth-century settings, as for example in the lack of the *Dies Irae*.) No one knows the circumstances of the Requiem's composition, although it has been conjectured that it was written on the death of Louis XI. The com-

panion piece on the Archive disc, which has been recorded several times before, is a touching lament by Josquin on the death of Ockeghem; justly famous, it makes a highly suitable filler for the Ockeghem Requiem, as well as allowing instructive comparison between the composing styles of the earlier Renaissance and the more homogeneous sound of the styles to come.

The London-based Pro Cantione Antiqua, supplemented on both discs by German groups playing period instruments, perform all these works with superb understanding, splendid ensemble, and exquisite tonal refinement. I very much admired Bruno Turner's group in a previously released disc of Byrd's Mass for Three Voices coupled with Tallis' *Lamentations of Jeremiah* on Archive 2533 113; both the present releases clearly demonstrate that Turner and his ensemble should be considered among the most outstanding interpreters of this period. The BASF reproduction, acoustically a bit more distant than the Archive, is very satisfactory, but in terms of clarity as well as pressing quality Archive must be rated higher, as it is in the presentation of annotations, texts, and translations. BASF provides only the Latin text of the Motet. Because of the performance quality, however, both discs are highly recommended.

I.K.

**OLDFIELD:** *Tubular Bells.* Mike Oldfield (grand piano, glockenspiel, Farfisa organ, electric guitars, bass guitar, acoustic guitars, piano, speed guitars, Lowrey organ, timpani, Spanish guitar, fuzz guitars, percussion, flageolet, honky tonk, Piltown Man, moribund

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Performance: **Where's the harmonica?**  
Recording: **Home-studio fantasy**

This is the ultimate do-it-yourself fantasy noodle. Virgin Records is obviously wherever it is that Mike Oldfield lives—somewhere in the (presumably English) countryside at a place grandly dubbed The Manor and obviously full of stacked-up instruments and recording equipment. Ah me! A sixteen-track recorder maybe even?

Night after wonderful night, Mike laid down these dreamy tracks: organs and guitars and fuzz tones and voices and pianos and electronic muckabouts and tubular bells and sailor's hornpipe and I forget what else. The starting point is the sort of Eastern-pop patterns of cycles and overlays that Terry Riley used to do, and these are rather effectively managed. But Oldfield's range is much wider than Riley's. For instance, he goes into a hilarious Frank Zappa Piltown Man routine that somehow ends up in a hornpipe. Side one—the more effective of the two—ends with a long, long A Major crescendo, with the instruments entering one by one as introduced by a very suave master of ceremonies. Shades of Benjamin Britten!

It is in England that the notion of extending rock-pop styles to "symphonic" dimensions seems to be holding on, and these are rather grand examples: twenty-five minutes at a shot. However, the length is not sustained on either side, and there are many awkwardnesses and stumblings on the slopes between the high points. Climbing mountains is difficult work, if at times exhilarating. Even at its most awkward, however, there is a double-take quality of shrewdness and naïveté, of put-on and upreach, that is likable. By the way, what ever happened to Terry Riley? *E.S.*

**RACHMANINOFF:** *Piano Music* (see Best of the Month, page 74)

**RODRIGO:** *Concierto de Aranjuez* (see The Basic Repertoire, page 49)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SCHUBERT:** *Symphony No. 5, in B-flat Major; Symphony No. 8, in B Minor ("Unfinished")*. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau cond. ANGEL S-36965 \$5.98.

Performance: **It sings!**  
Recording: **Highly satisfactory**

Assuming congenial repertoire, the needed technical know-how, and effective communication with his fellow musicians, there is no logical reason why lieder singer Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau should not be as persuasive with the baton as he is with his voice. As far as I am concerned, he is, for these are beautiful and pleasurable performances. Fischer-Dieskau brings to Schubert's symphonies all the freshness that, at his best, he has brought to his singing of Schubert lieder.

The B-flat Symphony is played as *Hausmusik*, recorded in intimate ambiance with strings reduced in number so that the woodwinds assume their proper importance as in the orchestras of Schubert's and Beethoven's day. The music is kept moving along but with just enough pointing of significant phrase endings and cadences to make the total conception a living one rather than an exercise in

orchestral refinement. Likewise, it is a pleasure to hear the familiar "Unfinished" played with great tenderness, yet forthright rhetoric where called for, and with not a trace of overblown theatricalism. *D.H.*

**SCHUBERT:** *Symphony No. 8, in B Minor* (see MOZART)

**SHOSTAKOVICH:** *Symphony No. 1, Op. 10; The Age of Gold, Ballet Suite, Op. 22*. London Symphony Orchestra, Jean Martinon cond. LONDON STS 15180 \$2.98.

Performance: **Superb**  
Recording: **Good**

This is the third time around for this package: it has always seemed exceptional musically

but has always had some "practical considerations" working against it. When it first appeared fifteen years ago on RCA, the performances were obviously outstanding, but the clumsy layout of the disc was hard to take: the symphony's final movement was interrupted for turnover—surely a gratuitous irritation in combining these two works, as most reviewers noted at the time. That frustrating format was repeated when RCA Victrola reissued the recording in 1966. Now, at last, the obvious correction has been made: the ballet suite precedes the first movement of the symphony on side one and the remainder of the major work is on side two without breaks. Martinon's remarkably sympathetic realization of the symphony now becomes even more recommendable than it was before—

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very likely first choice among recordings of this work. A more persuasive case for *The Age of Gold* has not been made, either, and the fine, clean sound is hardly dated.

Now that there is no longer a packaging problem, however, there is the one of possible or probable duplications. Leonard Bernstein's incomparable performance of the Shostakovich Ninth (Columbia M 31307) happens to be paired with a very good account of the First (complete on one side, too), and so does the Rostropovich/Ormandy version of the Cello Concerto (Columbia MS 6124), while another *Age of Gold* comes with Stokowski's beautiful Chicago Symphony recording of the Sixth Symphony (RCA LSC 3133). These factors tend to diminish the urgency of the Martinon reissue, but, considered on its own very substantial merits, it is clearly a winner—and certainly a splendid buy at \$2.98. R.F.

VISÉE: *Lute Music* (see BACH)

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VIVALDI: *Violin Concertos, Op. 8: No. 5, in E-flat Major (La Tempesta di Mare); No. 6, in C Major (Il Piacere); No. 7, in D Minor; No. 8, in G Minor*. Pinchas Zuckerman (violin); English Chamber Orchestra, Pinchas Zuckerman cond. COLUMBIA □ MQ 32693 \$6.98, □ MAQ 32693 \$7.98.

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

This recording is evidently the second installment in a Zuckerman Vivaldi series that will include all twelve of the Op. 8 concertos, the first four being the ever-popular *Four Seasons*, which Columbia released last year. There is terrific *brío* and juice to these performances, with little of the schmaltz that bothered me in the Zuckerman-Barenboim Bach violin concertos issued by Angel some months ago.

*La Tempesta di Mare* is somewhat in the same programmatic spirit as the graphic *Four Seasons* sequence, while *Il Piacere* is obviously less so. The D Minor Concerto emerges here as a serious, almost massive work, and the G Minor, which has a particularly fine slow movement, is splendidly virile.

While Zuckerman eschews the fussier aspects of the Baroque style in the interest of direct and colorful musical communication, he does have the benefit of effective keyboard continuo from harpsichordist Philip Ledger. The solo violin work is slashingly brilliant, as befits a Venetian style based as much on dramatic as on architectural concepts. The recording is every bit as red-blooded in sound as in performance, and as heard in Columbia's quadrasonic sound (SQ matrix), the end product is a truly room-filling affair. I enjoyed every moment of this disc and eagerly await the final one of the series. D.H.

WEISS: *Lute Music* (see BACH)

### COLLECTIONS

FRITZ KREISLER: *The Immortal Art of Fritz Kreisler*. Bach: *Praeludium, from Partita No. 3, in E Major; Adagio, from Sonata No. 1, in G Minor*. Beethoven: *Violin Concerto in D Major (excerpt)*. Brahms: *Violin Concerto in D Major (excerpt)*. Mendelssohn: *Violin Concerto in E Minor (excerpt)*. Weber: *Larghetto*. Schubert: *Rosamunde, Ballet Music No. 2*.

Dvořák: *Slavonic Dance No. 1*. Falla: *Jota*. Albéniz: *Tango in D Major*. Glazounov: *Sevénade Espagnole*. Heuberger: *The Opera Ball*. Waltz. Friml: *Rose Marie; Indian Love Call*. Kreisler: *Schön Rosmarin; Liebesleid*. Fritz Kreisler (violin): Carl Lamson and Michael Raucheisen (pianos); unidentified orchestras, Leo Blech and John Barbirolli cond. SUPRAPHON □ 0 11 1233 \$5.98.

Performance: **Old-world elegance**  
Recording: **Vintage**

Supraphon is a surprising source for this historical material, but then why should the Czechs be denied "the immortal art of Fritz Kreisler?" In any case, this is a welcome collection, and it duplicates only the two original Kreisler compositions, which are available in the Victrola (1372) reissue.

Listeners are urged to turn first to side two, which is devoted to these two originals and six of Kreisler's "encore" arrangements. These display not only the violinist's creamy tone and insinuating style at its most enchanting, but also reveal his knack of making these pieces, originally conceived for other settings, come to fresh new life. Side one offers brief teasers from Kreisler's famous early recordings of the Beethoven and Mendelssohn concertos under Blech and his somewhat later (and less successful) treatment of the Brahms concerto under Barbirolli. The concerto excerpts are not too well reproduced, but the encores are reasonably good facsimiles of the original 1926-1930 sound with the exception of the Bach *Praeludium*, which predates the others by several years and, accordingly, sounds dimmer.

There is a moment of history captured in these selections. Kreisler's unhurried, aristocratic style, with its lingering portamentos and at times emphatic articulation, will sound dated to the modern ear. It must be remembered, however, that these renditions were intended for—and cherished by—a very broad audience. They were the "hit singles" of their time, helped to establish the phonograph in thousands of homes, and, together with the records of Caruso, McCormack, and Paderewski, performed a missionary function for the cause of music and records. They may not—indeed, they *cannot*—cast the same spell today, but for me they remain beyond criticism. G.J.

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CHRISTOPHER PARKENING: *The Christopher Parkening Album*. Albéniz: *Rumores de la Caleta*. Tárrega: *Capricio Árabe; Estudio Brillante*. Villa-Lobos: *Etude No. 1, in E Minor*. Anon. (arr. Marshall): *Romance*. Albéniz-Segovia: *Leyenda*. Bach-Parkening: *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Preludes I and VI*. Bach-Segovia: *Courante, from Cello Suite No. 3 (BWV 1009); Fugue, from Violin Sonata No. 1 (BWV 1001)*. Bach-Foster: *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*. Christopher Parkening (guitar). ANGEL S-36069 \$5.98, □ 8XS-36069 \$6.98, © 4XS-36069 \$6.98.

Performance: **Gorgeous guitar**  
Recording: **Excellent**

Christopher Parkening, who made his recording debut for Angel in 1968, has not only dazzled the concert audiences of the world with his lanky good looks and his handy way with a classical guitar, but has also elicited the sort of reviews usually reserved for Segovia. But Parkening, as it happens, is Segovia's own



protégé, and in this album of the best of his best, culled from his three previous records for Angel, he proves that he deserves the encomiums that have been lavished on him. Whether he is evoking the Spain of Albéniz with an immaculate line that would be the envy of many a veteran virtuoso, or soothing the ear with a Tárrega serenade, or etching out the gorgeous embroidery of a gaudy Villa-Lobos étude, this young magician exhibits a technique and a musical understanding that are almost matchless in a world that seems at times to be entirely populated by guitarists. Side two, after a two-minute run-through of the Tárrega *Estudio Brillante* that left this listener stunned with admiration, is devoted thereafter to Bach, mostly in Segovia's transcriptions. Parkening's Bach is a purling stream, pure freshets of melody arising out of nowhere to flow by in unabashed tranquility—never as dry, as secret as Segovia's, but with an elegance, a restraint, an ability surely acquired from the master. If you haven't collected any of Parkening's earlier recordings, here is an ideal way to get started. P.K.

**HARVEY PHILLIPS: *Recital, Vol. III.* Baker: *Sonata for Tuba and String Quartet.* Harvey Phillips (tuba); Composers String Quartet. **Gould: *Tuba Suite, for Solo Tuba and Three French Horns.*** Harvey Phillips (tuba); New York Horn Trio. GOLDEN CREST □ CRS-4122 \$5.98.**

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

Tuba player Harvey Phillips has stubbornly refused to regard his instrument as a clown, and in the course of his career as soloist and teacher has been doing a public relations job for the tuba for quite a few years. This is the third album in the "Harvey Phillips in Recital" series, and, despite the limitations of the instrument, it does manage to hold its own as both serious music and entertainment.

David Baker's *Sonata* is a clever if at times rather frivolously overdecorated and mannered effort. A blues movement, for example, billed bravely as a "21st-century Blues," is strictly from the early Twenties of this century, and sounds like a silent-screen star trying to make a comeback. Baker is ingenious enough, however, to send his motifs off into unexpected tracks and twists, and to keep both his tuba player and his quartet members busy every second, drawing us into the various moods and tempos of a work that may be too cute at times but is never boring. Morton Gould, using the thick, brassy textures he developed for his Venice music a few years ago, has written a work that pulls the tuba up out of its usual low register and gets it to sing and revel in a finely worked musical embroidery. Even so, the effect at times is like watching a performing dolphin; it is not that easy to take a tuba seriously. Mr. Gould must have felt this, for he has provided, in the course of a suite that contains a chorale, a waltz, an elegy, and a quickstep, a tonal atmosphere in which the tuba does what amounts to virtuoso vaudeville turns as the performing star. This is skin-deep stuff, but always graceful and attractive.

The quality of the playing is definitely advanced through the open effect of the quadraphonic recording, particularly in the Gould suite, where the trio of horns furnishes a kind of tapestry backdrop for the solo sound in an auditory illusion of distance that could not be achieved with two-channel stereo. P.K.



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SR-574

# TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



## TAPE COATINGS

**M**ULTIPLYING the tape speed by 1,000 used to be the rule for calculating a recorder's high-frequency response. At 15 inches per second you could get up to 15,000 Hz. at 7½ ips to 7,500 Hz. and so forth. Today, of course, even cassettes running at only 1⅞ ips are capable of providing the highest audible frequencies, and much of the credit for this must go to new oxide formulations. What are they?

Chemically speaking, the "standard," "low-noise," and "low-noise/high-output" oxides are the same: a magnetic material known as gamma-ferric oxide ( $\gamma$  Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>), the gamma simply denoting a type of crystalline structure common to them all. This oxide is a brown powder or pigment obtained as a precipitate from raw materials that may be as diverse as the mineral hematite and recycled baling wire. The particles are needle-shaped and typically measure about 0.5 micron in length and about one-sixth to one-tenth that much in diameter. (A micron, one-millionth of a meter, is 0.000039 inch.) The designations "low-noise," "standard," or "low-noise/high-output" depend on such factors as average particle size, length/width ratio, relative absence of needle deformities, and so forth.

An entirely different magnetic substance, chromium dioxide (CrO<sub>2</sub>), is often used today for cassette and video tapes. The reason is that its magnetic properties make it particularly suitable for recording what are called "short-wavelength" signals—that is, high frequencies at slow tape speeds. (The wavelength of a 15,000-Hz tone at 15 ips is 0.001 inch, or 1 mil; at the cassette speed, the same tone must be squeezed into 1⅞ ips, so its wavelength becomes ⅞ mil—which certainly qualifies as a short wavelength.) Unfortunately, in addition to its greater cost, CrO<sub>2</sub> has some disadvantages. It requires substantially higher bias current and a higher record level to produce the same output on playback. Also, its exceptional high-end response requires changes in the

equalization circuits of many recorders.

In the attempt to improve short-wavelength response without losing compatibility with machines designed for ferric-oxide tapes, modified "high-energy" oxides have been developed. One company, for example, uses magnetite (Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub>) for its top-of-the-line cassettes. Another introduces small amounts of cobalt to "dope" the Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> particles.

But whatever the magnetic material used, the "oxide formulation" includes a host of other materials collectively known as the "binder." This is an amalgam of resins whose job is to hold the oxide particles to the tape, solvents to liquefy the resins, wetting agents to make the resins adhere better both to the oxide needles and to the tape base, plasticizers, lubricants, carbon—the list goes on, and, of course, each company has its own secret, proprietary recipe. At some point, however, the magnetic particles are mixed together with the other ingredients, making a paint-like goo called the "slurry." This is what is applied to the plastic base material and force-dried before the base is slit into finished tape.

Depositing the slurry on the tape film is an art which involves, among other things, deciding how thick a coating to put on: low frequencies tend to penetrate the oxide surface very deeply; high frequencies remain closer to the top. This gave several manufacturers a new idea. Why not coat the tape in two stages—and put on two layers? The first dispersion can then be relatively thick, using gamma-ferric oxide, and it will determine the basic magnetic properties (bias requirements, signal output, low-frequency response, etc.) of the tape. The second, much thinner, top coating can then be a cobalt substance or chromium dioxide, which will jack up the high-frequency response without requiring special bias and equalization from the recording and playback electronics. To my knowledge, only 3M (Scotch) and Sony have used this technique up to now, but who knows what the future will bring?

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