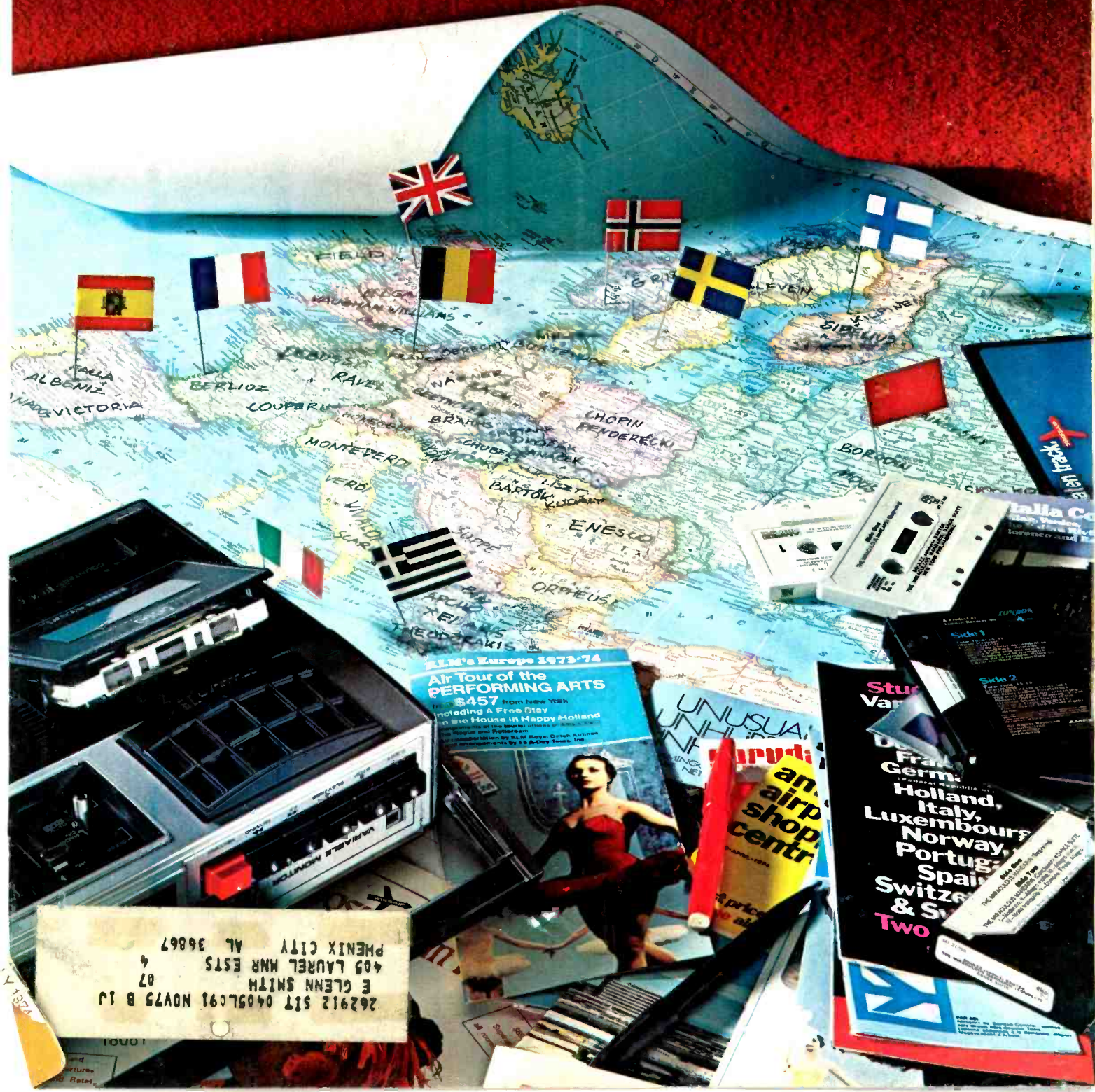


# Stereo Review

JULY 1974 • 75 CENTS

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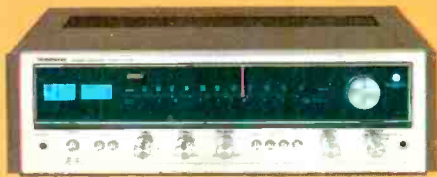
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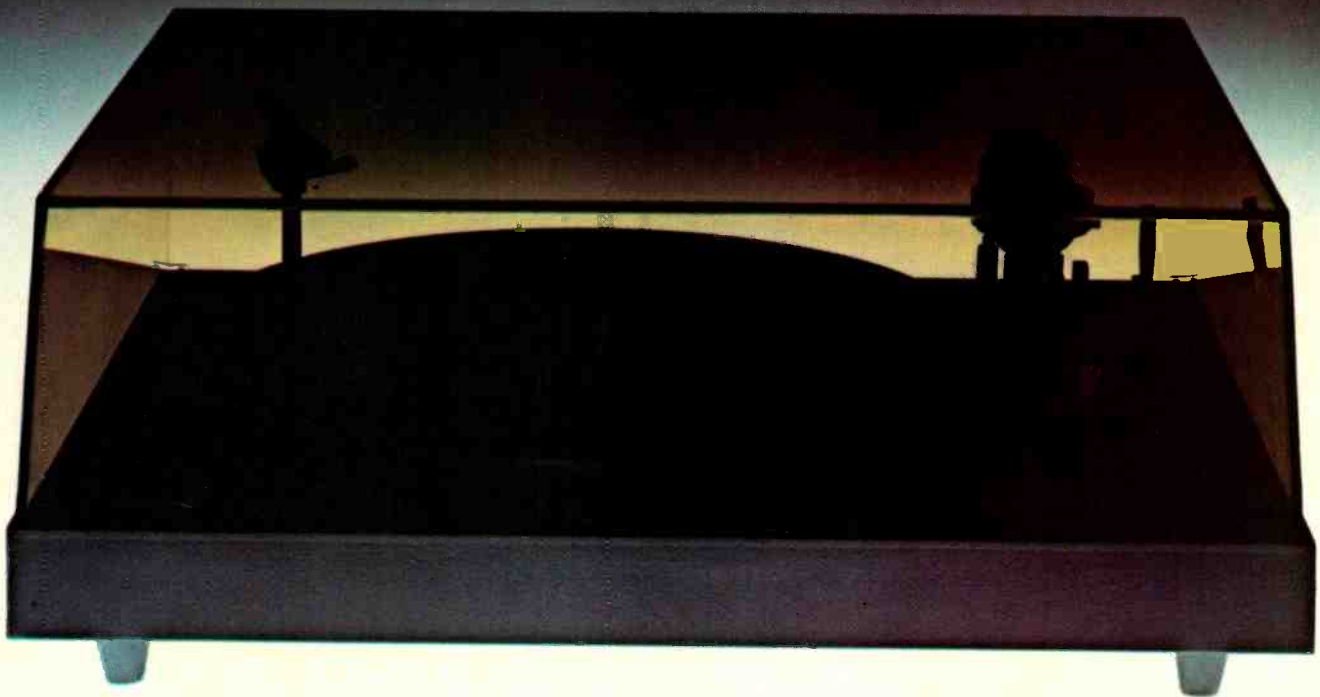
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# Stereo Review

JULY 1974 • VOLUME 33 • NUMBER 1

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# No other receiver will keep you so busy or make you so happy.

## The new Fisher 514.

Every Fisher receiver is designed for people who love to play music; but the new Fisher Studio-Standard 514 goes a step further. It's designed for the active audiophiles who get their kicks out of playing *with* the music, the people who can't even wait to get a new component out of the box and up on the shelf before trying it out. These are people who listen with their hands as much as their ears, and while others are snapping their fingers and stamping their feet, they're flicking switches, pushing plugs, and twirling knobs.

If you are as concerned with what goes on inside the box as you are concerned with what comes out, if you're still shifting speakers and splicing wires long after the party's over, chances are you just won't be satisfied by anything less than the Fisher 514.

### We left out nothing.

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CD-4 discrete disc demodulator as well as an SQ matrix decoder.

CD-4 has the potential for greater channel separation than SQ. This means that the musicians and studio people can do trickier stuff, and that listeners can wander around the room and still hear everything in its proper position.

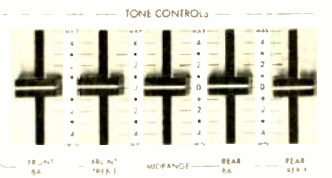
SQ is a cinch to broadcast on FM while CD-4 is just about impossible right now; SQ is used on many more records than CD-4, and the decoding circuit doubles as a 4-channel synthesizer for stereo recordings. With the Fisher 514 you do not have to make the difficult choice between CD-4 and SQ; we give you both.

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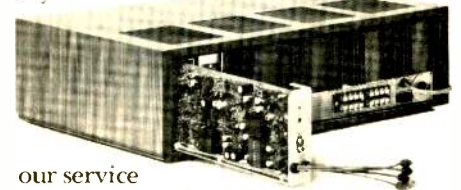
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# Stereo Review

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## EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

### A REPRISE FOR JAZZ?

WARNER-REPRISE gets out a snappy little newsletter called *Circular* every month that is usually worth a chuckle or two. Not long ago they quoted songwriter Randy Newman (the context was the Grammy awards) to the effect that "Blood, Sweat and Tears had just come along, and all the jazzbo dinosaurs in NARAS were excited—they thought that jazz was coming back." The remark is perhaps ungenerous and certainly irreverent, but it is also typical Newman candor, and one knows what he means—every time popular music has paused for breath during the last quarter-century one could hear the same refrain: "Jazz is coming back."

Jazz, too, is a popular music, but after holding center stage for perhaps a decade and a half, it lost its mass *popularity* somewhere in the mid-Forties at the end of the big-band era. The solo singers who grew out of the bands—Sinatra, Crosby, Lee, and many others—snatched up the falling mikes, in time begetting Elvis Presley, who begat rock-and-roll, which begat rock, which in its turn has reached that grand fermata which once again heralds a music's close. During all these years the "jazzbo dinosaurs" have been crossing their fingers, biding their time, and almost literally holding their collective breath to burst forth once again with a chorused "Jazz is coming back." It is easy to see how they might think so; signs and portents, though slender, abound. Rock *has* lost its forward momentum (it happened, paradoxically, at just the time it went, like jazz, "progressive"), new private jazz labels are proliferating, major labels are combing their catalogs and issuing a perfect flood of vintage material (an indisputable godsend for younger collectors), there seems to be greater activity in the recording of contemporary jazz, the Newport in New York Festival has been very well received for two years in a row, and, most significant of all, *horns* are beginning to appear in rock bands! Most of this can be taken with a grain of salt: when rock fades away, *something* will surely take its place, but that something need not be jazz; private labels are necessary for any kind of music when its audience becomes uneconomically small and specialized; record companies must go on producing *some* kind of product, and reissuing old jazz sides is at least inexpensive—and, too, most record companies have their own jazzbo dinosaurs in powerful residence to dictate both old and new releases; contrary to propaganda, New York is *not* an estival festival, and practically any kind of high-class entertainment (which jazz certainly still is) is as welcome as manna in its hot asphalt desert; and if a few horns in rock bands mean anything, it is that the still feisty rock genre may swallow up jazz rather than the other way around.

Cultural phenomena, like biological entities, go through the cycle of birth, generation, and death, and there seems no reason to make of jazz an exception. Born in humble circumstances, it made its way, through the most natural kind of growth, out of the saloon, across the tracks, into the concert hall, and finally, in its maturity, into the classrooms of our universities. That history, moreover, continues to determine its audience. It is on the one hand inextricably mixed up with the complex psychology of American *machismo*—booze, broads, roadhouses, and being sick out the back window of a Hupmobile (jazz is the only music most American males may be enthusiastic about without having their manhood called into question)—and on the other with a tradition of intellectual appreciation—that wonderful "musicology" of who, what, when, and where that keeps magazine critics scribbling and FM jazz-hour commentators mumuring into their mikes. This does not rule out the addition to the ranks of late, young converts, but they will more than likely be of the intellectual sort and small in number, those capable of recapitulating and digesting this fascinating—and lovable—history for themselves. Jazz may therefore be around for some years to come, but it will not again, I think, regain the spotlight. That is reserved for whatever is to come after rock. One can't help wondering what it might be. Hawaiian?

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### American Popular Singers

● I especially enjoyed Henry Pleasants' article on the historical position and qualities of the American popular singer (April). This was one of the most intelligent, wide-ranging, and perceptive articles on singing that I have read in a long time. For a nonsinger he has a very deep understanding of the difficulties of singing before the microphone. I hope you will have more articles by him, as he is the best critic writing today in Europe.

F. G. MORRILL  
Florence, Italy

*Baritone Pleasants studied voice at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute and privately in Vienna, thereby acquiring an enduring respect both for the art and for its practitioners.*

● It seems to have become a fad to denigrate the talents of serious musicians in order to enhance the popular performer's image. One of the most offensive attempts is Henry Pleasants' article in your April issue entitled "The Great American Popular Singers." Mr. Pleasants prefaces his attack by saying, "But nothing I say in appreciation of the art of the American popular singer should be construed as a disparagement of classical singers." He then proceeds to do everything in his power to make them appear ridiculous. Their art is too obvious, their enunciation is poor, they are limited in improvising by their attitude toward the composer and the music, every one of them interprets the same song or aria in much the same manner, they refuse to sing in anything but the original key, and on and on and on. He further accuses them of being musically educated and thus limiting their originality.

Since Mr. Pleasants, who brags that he was reared on opera, loves the popular singer so much, why cannot he merely limit himself to praise? Probably no one would argue with him. The popular artist is doing well financially and can hardly accuse the serious performer of doing any damage to his image. If there is discrimination, it is focused on the "classical" performer.

Almost every point Mr. Pleasants makes can be refuted. There is no proof, for instance, that the popular singer of today has as his objective the same *bel canto* that Italian opera singers cultivated in what Mr. Pleasants calls "the heyday of Italian opera." There is some proof that the great singers of Italian opera in

the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries *did* pursue the objective, since there are still recordings of some of those singers and surely the Verdi operas did continue the tradition of *bel canto*.

ROBERT HECKMAN  
Tulsa, Okla.

*Mr. Pleasants replies: May I remind Mr. Heckman that I wrote about the classical singers: "They do things, vocally and musically, that the popular singers cannot do. They sing music that even the best of the popular singers cannot sing." Elsewhere, having pointed out certain areas where the popular singer is superior to, or has advantages over, the classical singer, and works closer to the older criteria of bel canto, which Mr. Heckman does not deny, I wrote: "Something is lost, to be sure, and I, opera-bred as I am, must be the first to acknowledge it. Missing are the suspense of assaults upon the upper and lower extremes of the vocal range," etc.*

*Mr. Heckman would, I think, be surprised, probably dismayed, if he knew how many of the best classical singers are intimately familiar with, and great admirers of, the best popular singers. One of Ella Fitzgerald's greatest admirers is Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. And in London, one evening not long ago, Peter Schreier spoke to me glowingly of that great singer, Sarah "Vogon" (Vaughan) whom he had heard a few nights before on the German radio.*

*Listen, Mr. Heckman, Listen. . . .*

### Hearing

● I read one sentence in your April issue that, in light of recent events in my life, disturbed me greatly and made me feel that perhaps we audiophiles are a bit too smug and demanding. I'm referring to a letter written by Steven Kruger ("Middle-Age Slump"). In it, Mr. Kruger makes the statement, "I curse my good hearing." He should only go deaf.

I do not take issue with his remarks about inner-groove distortion, for it has always appeared to be one of the largest faults of commercial discs, even when played on superior equipment. However, it all seems pointless now for me to complain about audio quality at all; eight months ago I contracted an inner ear disorder known as Menière's disease. The symptoms and consequences include dizzi-

ness and loss of hearing (progressive, and often irreversible). Since that time, I have found it difficult if not impossible to find pleasure in listening to any of my rather large record collection.

I hope to make those of you who do listen critically to music, and who find fault with what you hear, simply to be thankful that you can hear at all. Sure, records and tapes and all sorts of audio equipment can stand improvement, but I think that in our judgments we should be more critically aware of the malfunctions of our own hearing mechanisms, as well as *appreciating* the experience of hearing the beautiful sounds available to us through sound recordings.

Unless something miraculous happens, I, at the age of twenty-one, am faced with the loss of a most prized possession: the sense of hearing. Unfortunately, it's too late to cram in all those yet unheard symphonies, concertos, quartets, *et al.* So, Mr. Kruger, and anyone else reading this, the next time you feel like complaining because that "high-F" buzzes a little, just be thankful that buzz got through at all.

DAN LILLEY, JR.  
Raleigh, N.C.

*Hear, hear!*

### Pancho Vladigeroff

● Thanks for your informative article on pianist Alexis Weissenberg (April). Reference is made to a Professor Vladigeroff, his earliest piano instructor. I own a Russian Melodiya recording of the Piano Concerto No. 4, Op. 48 (D. 4842-43), by Pancho Vladigerov (their spelling), with the composer as soloist. Could you tell me if they are one and the same person? I enjoy this and all the other Russian imports I've been able to get hold of, despite their "snowy" sound. Better pressings of these Russian (and neighboring) contemporary works as well as a biographical compilation of all these obscure (to Western ears) composers are sorely needed.

MICHAEL S. HORWOOD  
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

*Roy Hemming, author of the article on Weissenberg, tells us Professor Vladigeroff and Pancho Vladigerov are one and the same.*

### Ship Slip

● Your consistent and commendable correctness in musical terminology might well be extended to other areas. Shostakovich came to the U.S. in 1973 not by "boat" (caption, "The Private Shostakovich," May) but aboard a *ship*. The error is comparable to referring to a symphony as a string quartet.

NORMAN NADEL  
New York, N.Y.

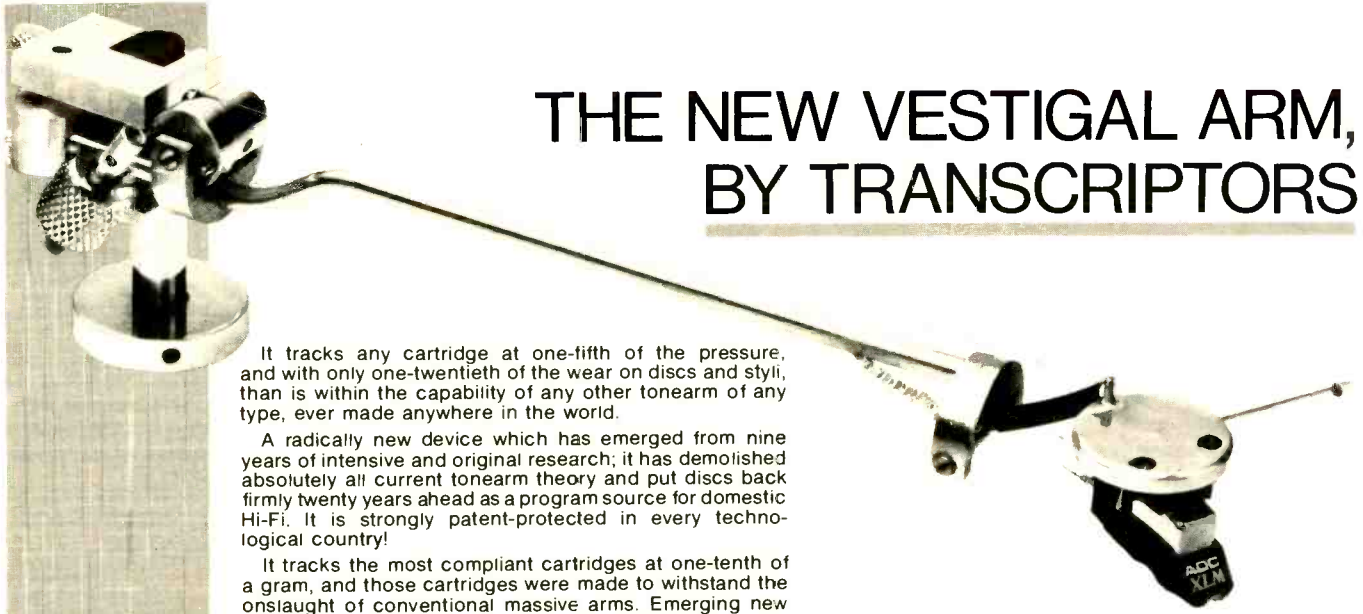
### Criticism

● I have been a hi-fi music lover since the days of mono, and over the years I have consistently enjoyed the reviews of George Jellinek. Here in Chicago, we had the pleasure of his opera program broadcast for a short time over WFMT. I like his approach and know from his reviews and program that he is indeed a lover of opera.

In the May issue there are two reviews of current opera recordings that are prime examples of his style. And what a wonderful style it is! He does not start out to tear down a recording. He is not a nitpicker. He is, in my

*(Continued on page 12)*

# THE NEW VESTIGAL ARM, BY TRANSCRIPTORS



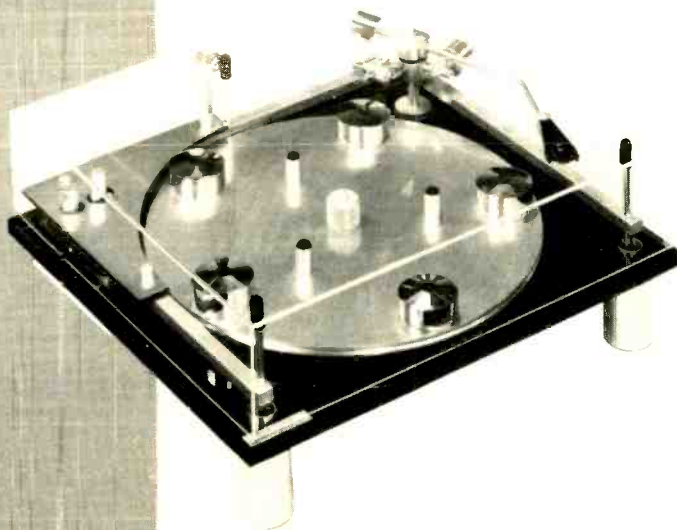
It tracks any cartridge at one-fifth of the pressure, and with only one-twentieth of the wear on discs and styli, than is within the capability of any other tonearm of any type, ever made anywhere in the world.

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SPECIFICATION	Best low mass conventional arm or parallel tracking arm, with best cartridge	Vestigal arm, with best cartridge	Perfect arm
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Inertia (effective mass) with Cartridge	Best 11 grams in all planes (often twice this figure)	6 grams horizontal; 1 gram vertical	Zero Inertia
Tracking Pressure	Best 1 1/4 grams on selection of highly modulated discs	Best one-tenth of a gram on selection of highly modulated discs	Zero
System resonance	2-30 C.P.S., system resonance within large air moving frequencies resulting in distortion and feedback	Over 180 C.P.S., system resonance well outside air moving frequencies no distortion or feedback	Over 30,000 C.P.S.
Disc Wear	Severe degeneration of discs after 15 playings, no longer Hi-Fi after 35 playings	Degeneration of discs at least forty times less due to low inertia and tracking force	No Wear



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opinion, a real critic. He is objective, honest, sincere, and at all times seems to be aware of the fact that he is reviewing a performance by a major artist of a major composer. I like the way he points out a work's major strengths and its "minor" flaws. He realizes that there has never been and will never be a perfect recording. Mr. Jellinek is a credit to criticism.

ROBERT DELL'ARINGA  
Chicago, Ill.

### The First Euridice

● Igor Kipnis was incorrect in stating that the Telefunken recording of Peri's *Euridice* is the "first" one (April). Recently I purchased the complete opera on Orpheus 344-345 from Musical Heritage Society.

MAX FOGEL  
Norristown, Pa.

*Mr. Fogel is correct. The MHS recording was issued in 1967.*

### Male and Female Created He Them

● I would like to say that I am offended by Noel Coppage's Mitchell and Lightfoot review ("Best of the Month," May). I, too, am bored with the desperate displays of freakishness used by far too many groups today as a substitute for musical talent, but Mr. Coppage's attempts to bring back the Dark Ages of narrow-minded stereotypes with his use of sexist clichés is nowhere near as refreshing as he seems to think it should be.

To describe the Lightfoot album as "broad-shouldered" and "slim-hipped" or the Mitchell offering as "intricately lacy, and even a bit bitchy" is as musically insightful as claiming that the former has b.o. and the latter shoves under its arms, to cite two of the few role-playing idiocies Mr. Coppage did not drag into his review.

JOHN SCHAUER  
Princeton, N.J.

*Mr. Coppage replies: Golly, I sure never intended to bring back the Dark Ages of narrow-minded stereotypes, and if Mr. Schauer is afraid I might do that singlehandedly, just me and my little old sexist clichés, then Mr. Schauer either is an alarmist or senses in me some power that I don't sense myself. If there is such power, I'd just like to know one thing: how come the Knicks didn't win the playoffs?*

### That 95 Per Cent

● I cannot, of course, speak for all of your subscribers, but here is one reader who most certainly is not 95 per cent male.

MYRNA COLLINS  
Appleton, Wis.

*Vive le (sorry about that!) pourcentage!*

● Although I am part of the male 95 per cent of your readership, I found your response to Ms. Zeddies' letter (May) irrelevant. I have always viewed such ads as Ms. Zeddies refers to with pity—for the advertiser; it's too bad he couldn't think of anything to say about his product.

RAYMOND O. LIERE  
Colora, Md.

*The response is irrelevant only if we are to believe that males have suddenly and mysteriously ceased to respond to female beauty. That, as they say, will be the day. The effectiveness of such attention-getters is a psychological truism; has reader Liere forgotten that*

*Ms. Zeddies was only asking for a little pulchritudinous balance on the male side? And does not Mr. Liere himself reveal a bit of the old MCP (male chauvinist pig) in assuming that only males are involved in the production of equipment ads?*

### Cleaner Discs

● In the April issue Larry Klein and Ralph Hodges both mentioned problems of cleaning discs and removing dust from their surfaces. I have for several years been using an extremely simple technique, combined with the C. E. Watts Disc Preener, that cleans record surfaces very effectively, cuts down static charge build-up, avoids all "special" fluids, and costs nothing.

All you have to do is the following. Hold the Preener in the left hand and begin cleaning the rotating record's surface at the 8 o'clock position on the turntable. At the same time, bend over the record, just ahead of the Preener, and simply "fog" the record surface with your breath from about 5 inches away (as one does on a cold window pane, making an "ahh" sound).

The benefits of this action are many. First, the condensing water vapor is almost pure, clean water (unless you have been sick, drinking, eating onions, or, of course, smoking) that will never gum up the grooves. The application rate is very light, extremely uniform, and dissipates in less than one rotation of the record. The effectiveness of dust pickup of the Preener is improved (and you never again have to worry about adding water to its center wick). Finally, and best of all, the increased moisture content of the air near the record surface and Preener (a naturally produced humidity, if you will) eliminates almost all static electricity buildup.

MERRILL K. BAUER  
Upper Marlboro, Md.

### Opera Lib

● Apropos reader Christina Ryker's inquiry (April) about women opera composers, may I add to James Goodfriend's praise of Dame Ethyl Smythe another bit of information sure to delight any musically minded feminist? One of the very first operatic composers was a woman: Francesca Caccini, whose father Giulio Caccini was a member of the Florentine Camerata which is credited with having "founded" opera. A singer as well, Francesca was the composer of an opera entitled *La Liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina*, first performed in Florence in 1625 and, like Handel's opera *Alcina* over a century later, based on the epic poem *Orlando Furioso* by the sixteenth-century Italian writer Ariosto.

DAVID LINTHICUM  
Baltimore, Md.

### Ragtime Ambassador

● Many thanks for Henry Pleasants' article on my recent visit to London ("Joshua Rifkin, Ragtime Ambassador," April). Perhaps inevitably, Mr. Pleasants' paraphrases of my remarks contain a few small imprecisions, which—since STEREO REVIEW is a journal of record (no pun in its field—I feel obliged to clear up. In doing so, of course, I intend no criticism of Mr. Pleasants, who was as ingratiating and conscientious an interviewer as one could hope for.

First, I should note that I was not "in on the founding of the Nonesuch label." My close association with Nonesuch did not begin until some months after Jac Holzman had started

the label. More important, I did not actually refer to myself as musical director of Nonesuch; this title, although it appears on the back of my Joplin albums, is and has always been largely a formality adopted for convenience. What I did wish to emphasize was how my relationship with Nonesuch, and the close cooperation in which I have always worked with its director, Teresa Sterne, allowed me considerable freedom to transform my musical interests—Joplin among them—into recorded form.

Third, without wishing to slight my friend William Bolcom, I must emphasize that his influence on my re-acquaintance with the music of Scott Joplin some years ago was channeled primarily through a mutual friend—STEREO REVIEW's Eric Salzman, to whom I owe the most direct credit for arousing my Joplinary enthusiasm.

Last, who ever thought of printing that picture—which one friend of mine most accurately likened to Mortimer Snerd?

JOSHUA RIFKIN  
New York, N.Y.

*A "formality," whether adopted for convenience or any other reason, cannot be other than an actuality when it is permitted to appear in print on thousands of record jackets. And it took hardly any thought at all to print a picture of Mr. Rifkin as he appeared in Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, particularly in an article labeled "London Letter," headlined "Ragtime Ambassador," and taking note of the fact that he played his Joplin "attired in white tie and tails"!*

### Ragtime Roundup

● I would like to add some comments regarding Paul Kresh's fine ragtime review (April). His remarks concerning Trebor Tichenor and the style in which he plays need a bit of amplification. Historically speaking, his style is the Midwestern style, which has roots in the playing of Brun Campbell who learned many Joplin rags from Joplin himself. Examples of the style are to be found in volumes one and two of "The Professors" (Euphonic ESR 1201/2, produced by Paul Affeldt in Ventura, California). Other exponents of this style are Bob Darch, who studied with Gene Turpin (a cousin of pioneer ragtimer Tom Turpin), Tom Shea, and Charlie Rasch.

I would also like to call to your readers' attention a recording by Brian Dykstra called "American Beauty." It can be obtained from him c/o The College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio, 44691. I have not seen it reviewed in any magazine, but I believe it would meet Mr. Kresh's standard of "... ragtime played with all its potential realized."

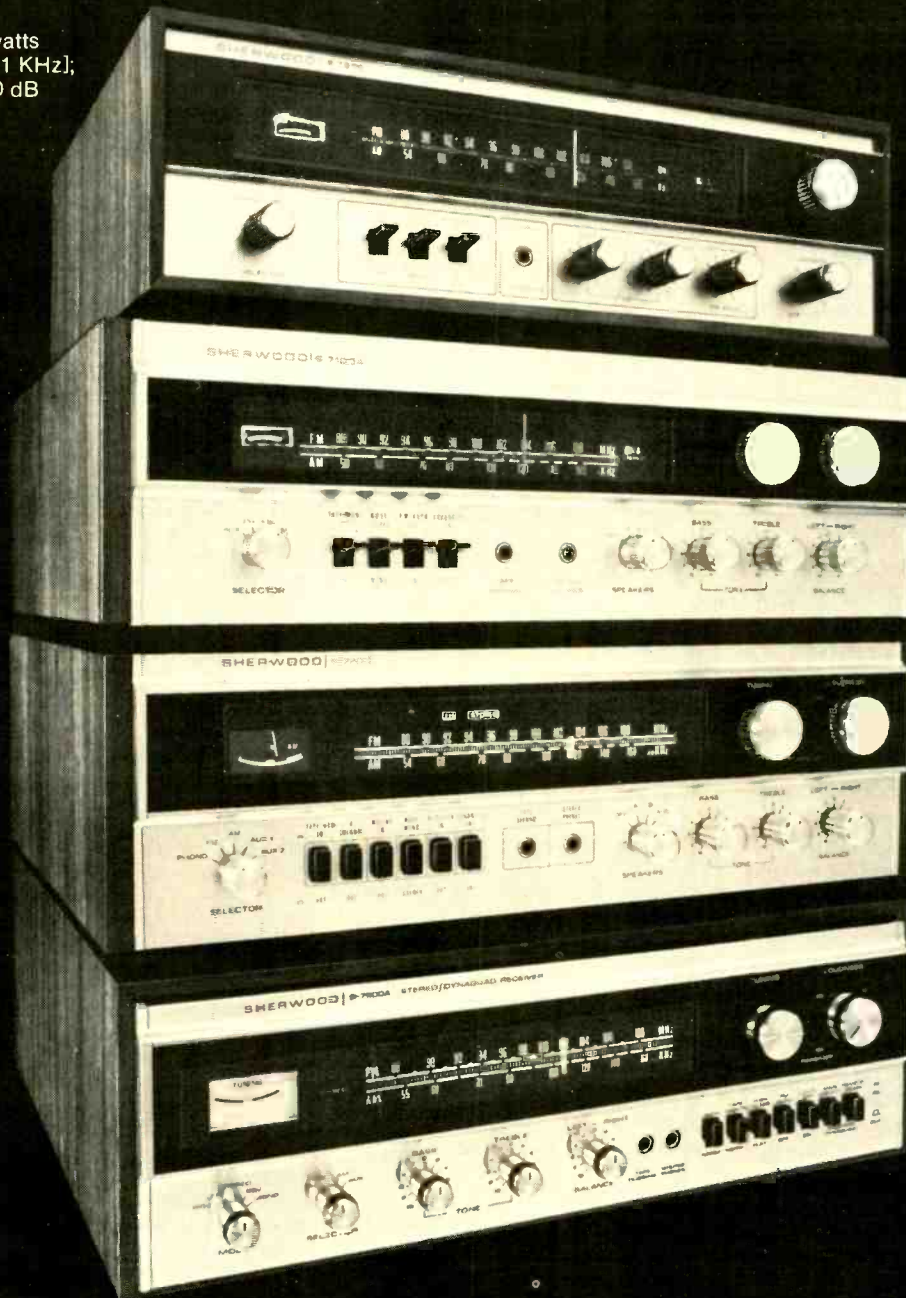
CHARLES B. DAVIS, JR.  
Midway Park, N.C.

● Paul Kresh's review of Trebor Tichenor's "King of Folk Ragtime" (in "First Annual Ragtime Roundup," April) illustrates a commonplace fallacy about classic ragtime—that if it doesn't have (in his words) "the comic spirit, the lyricism, the jaunty strut," as measured by today's standards, then it isn't good. Ragtime the way Tichenor plays it has all those things, but only when it is placed in the context of what went before it. It is pure, as the masters wrote it, played it, and intended it to be played.

Scott Joplin bemoaned time and again, in print, those performers who took creative or  
(Continued on page 14)

# The 'Best Buy' Line

S-7050. "The winner in our evaluation" Music World. (36 watts IHF; 10 + 10 RMS [8 Ohms @ 1 KHz]; 3.5  $\mu$ V FM Sensitivity [IHF]; 40 dB selectivity)



S7100A. "Best Buy," a leading consumer testing magazine. (22 + 22 watts RMS [8 Ohms @ 1 KHz]; 1.9  $\mu$ V Sensitivity [IHF]; 50 dB selectivity)

S7200. "Best Buy," a leading consumer testing magazine. (40 + 40 watts RMS [8 Ohms @ 1 KHz]; 1.8  $\mu$ V FM Sensitivity [IHF]; 60 dB selectivity)

S7900A (AM/FM) & S8900A (FM only), "Best Buy," a leading consumer testing publication. (60 + 60 RMS [8 Ohms] 20 - 20,000 Hz; 1.7  $\mu$ V sensitivity [IHF]; 65 dB selectivity)

There are certain rewards for producing the best receivers in this business.

One of them is critical acclaim.

And we admit, that when a leading consumers' testing magazine picks three of our receivers as "Best Buys" and

another independent publication rates our S-7050 as the best of the low-priced receivers, to us it's like getting an Oscar.

But nothing is more exciting than being discovered by thousands of new consumers who choose Sherwood over the giants of the industry.

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The word is getting around.

# 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 (Pat. Pend.) was used to play the commercial pressing. Without fail, listeners could not hear a difference between the disc and its master.

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. Customers were asked 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.

### Hearing is believing

Visit your Micro-Acoustics dealer and ask him to demonstrate our new QDC-1 cartridge (available in spherical, elliptical and Quadra-Point™/CD-4 configurations). Prices range from \$100 to \$120. Bring a record of your own and let him show you what the QDC-1 can do for your music. For technical information and a dealer list, write to:

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interpretive liberties with his stuff. Many of the current generation of ragtime pianists, including (especially) Max Morath, continue to embellish the works their own way, partly for commercial purposes and partly because this is the way they like to play it. You pay your money and you take your choice. As a historian and professional traditional jazz musician, I'll take Tichenor anytime.

GREGORY M. FRANZWA  
St. Louis, Mo.

*The Editor replies: There is, of course, more than one way of playing ragtime, which is not an art frozen in amber but a living, breathing musical genre. Individual stylistic preferences aside, however, "today's standards" are really all that matter today. The traditionalists and keepers of the flame had it their way for something like fifty years, and they failed to bring ragtime back to popularity. Whatever else one might think of it, the ragtime style of Joshua Rifkin, and its subsequent elaboration, correction, and emendation on records by William Bolcom, Gunther Schuller, Hersh and Montgomery, and, yes, Marvin Hamlisch did effect a renaissance. Ragtime is merely one of many musical languages, and people will speak it as they will, though the spirit of Scott Joplin himself rise up to confound them. Is it so terrible a thing that it is now the best-selling music on both the classical and popular charts? And one would hope that Mr. Franzwa does not, like the Schwann catalog, have ragtime confused with jazz.*

● In Paul Kresh's article "First Annual Ragtime Roundup" (April), he really snapped Mr. E. Power Biggs' harpsichord strings, and I am in complete agreement with him. I suggest that Mr. Kresh listen to William Neil Roberts' recordings on Klavier (KS 510 and KS 516) if he wants to see how it is indeed "possible to put ragtime over on the harpsichord."

HERSCHEL S. SANDS  
Houston, Tex.

### Keeping Kurrent

● What are you going to call your fine publication when the world goes quad? How about Quad Caper Paper or S-Q-Review? Maybe CD4-Score or Discrete Sheet?

ELLIOT M. GORLIN  
Central Islip, N.Y.

*Well, we had thought about "Quadro Review," but it begins to look as if there's no particular rush about it anyway. . . .*

### Leon Fleisher

● I read with great interest Richard Freed's April review of Britten's *Diversions on a Theme*, Op. 21, for the pianist was none other than Leon Fleisher. I had been led to believe that Mr. Fleisher was forced to abandon his career as a pianist, turning instead to conducting (due to arthritic fingers, I was told). Is this recording (Desto DC-7168) the product of several years back, or can we expect more from this supreme artist?

RICHARD VEIT  
Waco, Tex.

*Mr. Freed replies: The recording was made during the early part of 1973. Mr. Fleisher was afflicted only in his right arm and continues to perform works for the left hand in addition to conducting. (He is associate conductor of the Baltimore Symphony.)*

# BOOKS RECEIVED

Compiled by  
LOUISE GOOCH BOUNDAS

● *Biographical Dictionary of American Music*, by Charles Eugene Claghorn. Parker Publishing Company, Inc., West Nyack, N.Y. 10994 (1974), 491 pp., \$12.95.

This one's a lot of fun. Mr. Claghorn's grandfather, Septimus Winner, who composed such classics of nineteenth-century Americana as *Listen to the Mockingbird* and *Whispering Hope*, is just one of the over five thousand people identified in this useful and interesting reference work. The book, which is described as "comprehensive" by its publishers, covers all kinds of American music and musicians from the hymns of the seventeenth century to the hard rock of the present. As is to be expected from the first edition of such an ambitious project, there are some omissions and misprints—for instance, the listing for Paul Weston does not give the composer's original name (he was born Weinstein), and Capitol Records' name is misspelled; that Marc Blitzstein adapted Kurt Weill's *Three Penny Opera* is not mentioned in the listing for either man; Alexis Weissenberg has accomplished a great deal in the twenty-five years since he played with the New York Philharmonic under George Szell. Nevertheless, where else can you find Butterfield, James A. (who wrote the music for *When You and I Were Young, Maggie*) keeping such close company with Butterfield, Paul?

● *The Compleat Sinatra*, by Albert I. Lonstein and Vito R. Marino. Cameron Publications Ltd., P. O. Box 106, Ellenville, N.Y. 12428 (1970), 388 pp., \$15.95.

Since "Ol' Blue Eyes Is Back," *The Compleat Sinatra* isn't quite complete now. But everything else is here, right up to Sinatra's "retirement" in 1971 (although the material was copyright in 1970, the book apparently wasn't completed until some time after that). It contains a huge discography that lists all the songs on every side as well as information on privately owned tapes and recordings. As if that alone weren't worth \$16 to Sinatra fans, here are a "filmography," details about television and radio appearances and concerts, a song index, and lots of photographs. Maybe you could at least convince your local library to order it.

● *Opera Recordings: A Critical Guide*, by Kenn Harris. Drake Publishers, New York (1973), 328 pp., \$8.95.

This survey of most of the available complete recordings of seventy-six operas contains comments and evaluations by the author, an avid young opera fan. His taste seems reasonably sound, but some of his choices of what to include or exclude are hard to justify. The book is seriously marred by dozens of small errors of fact, grammar, spelling, and typography.



# AKAI's 4-Channel Challenge

We challenge any other manufacturer in the world to surpass the performance of AKAI's new 4-channel component combination. You can pay more. But you can't buy better.

Here they are.

First is AKAI's new AS-980 4-channel receiver. Endowed with sophisticated features for unparalleled performance. Sensitive and powerful, the AS-980 provides a continuous output of 120W (30 x 4). Plus 4 separate 4-channel modes: Discrete, SQ, FM, and built-in CD-4 with individual separation controls. It's everything you'd expect AKAI's *ultimate* receiver to be.

Unequaled reproduction quality is yours with AKAI's new GX-280D-SS. It's a fully discrete 4-channel tape deck that's also 2-channel compatible. The utilization of 4 individual heads—including AKAI's exclusive GX glass and crystal heads (dust free and virtually wear free)—and 3 superbly engineered and balanced motors make this unit the professional 4-channel tape deck for recording and playback.

Together these units are AKAI's unbeatable 4-channel challenge—providing professional 4-channel capabilities that no other equipment combination can match.

Both the AS-980 receiver and the GX-280D-SS tape deck are available at your nearest AKAI Dealer ... Whenever you're ready to make that ultimate step up. That's AKAI's 4-channel challenge.



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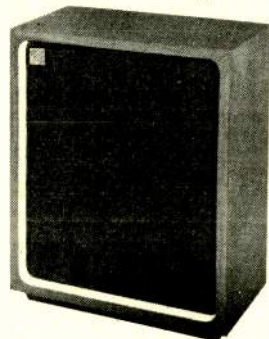
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# NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN  
HIGH-FIDELITY  
EQUIPMENT

## Romex Vega Speaker Systems



● THE first products from Romex Vega, a new company, are three speaker systems, all available in two cabinet styles with a choice of black or sand-colored grilles. The smallest models, offered in traditional (RV-8) and contemporary (RV-11) styles, employ an 8¼-inch

woofer and 4-inch tweeter, with a 12-dB-per-octave crossover at 1,750 Hz. Frequency response is 40 to 22,000 Hz, and power-handling capability is 25 watts of continuous program material. A larger three-way system, Models RV-25 (traditional styling) and RV-27 (contemporary), uses a 10-inch woofer and 6-inch mid-range along with a 4-inch tweeter. The crossover frequencies are 1,750 and 7,000 Hz, with 12-dB-per-octave slopes. Frequency response is 35 to 22,000 Hz, and power-handling is 50 watts continuous program. Romex Vega also offers a floor-standing system—Model RV-45 in traditional, RV-47 in contemporary (shown)—with a 12-inch woofer, 6-inch mid-range, and two 4-inch tweeters. Crossovers (12 dB per octave) occur at 875 and 7,000 Hz. Power-handling is 100 watts continuous

program, and frequency response is 30 to 22,000 Hz.

All the Romex Vega systems employ ducted-port enclosures for the low-frequency drivers, and have internal sub-enclosures to isolate the mid-ranges and tweeters. All models are equipped with three-position controls that adjust the output levels of the mid- and high-frequency drivers. Cabinets are of solid hardwood construction, finished on all six sides, with easily removable grilles. Dimensions: Models 8 and 11, 13¾ x 13¾ x 9½ inches (the RV-11 has a low base that increases its height one inch); Models 25 and 27, 23¾ x 13¾ x 13¾; Models 45 and 47, 26 x 21¾ x 12½ inches. Prices, in the above order: \$219.50 per pair, \$199.50 each, and \$299.50 each.

*Circle 115 on reader service card*

## Sony Model MX-20 Portable Mixer Console



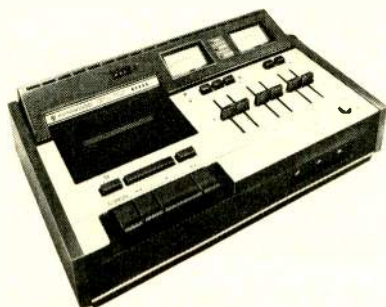
● SUPERSCOPE has introduced a portable mixer from Sony, Model MX-20, incorporating eight input channels, four output channels, and numerous professional features. All the input channels can be switched between line and microphone sources, with four degrees of switch-selected attenuation for each microphone input. The microphone input circuits are balanced low-impedance

and employ Cannon XLR input connectors. All the input channels can be switched to any of the four outputs. Inputs 1 through 6 can also be mixed equally into output channels 1 and 2, while inputs 7 and 8 have pan-pot controls that permit mixing either input simultaneously into output channels 1 and 2 with continuously variable adjustment of level distribution between the two. Six of the inputs are also equipped with equalization switches providing two positions of high-frequency boost or low-frequency cut, as well as flat response. Slide controls adjust the levels of all inputs. There is also a master gain-control slider affecting all output channels simultaneously, and a headphone-level control for the stereo headphone jack on the front edge of the unit. (The jack will take 8-ohm phones, and it can be switch-selected to provide signals from outputs 1 and 2, 3 and 4, or a mix of all four.) Four VU meters monitor the output levels.

The rear panel of the MX-20 carries the separate connectors for microphone and line inputs, balanced (level adjustable) and unbalanced output jacks, and connectors that can be used to insert auxiliary devices such as reverberation units or four-channel encoders into the signal paths. Specifications include a frequency response of 30 to 20,000 Hz within 1.5 dB, with a signal-to-noise ratio of 65 dB and distortion of 0.1 per cent. The microphone inputs are rated for impedances of 150 to 600 ohms. The unit can be interfaced with standard line impedances of 600 ohms, or the higher impedances typical of most audiophile equipment. Dimensions are approximately 18¼ x 16¾ x 7¼ inches. The weight is 23¼ pounds. A carrying handle is attached to the lower edge of the unit. Price: \$1,050. Two MX-20's can be interconnected with the cables supplied for sixteen-channel facilities.

*Circle 116 on reader service card*

## Kenwood KX-910 Dolby Stereo Cassette Deck



● A NEW stereo cassette deck from Kenwood represents the manufacturer's latest ideas on performance and convenience for this format. The transport controls have been grouped into two rows instead of the usual one, and the various push-keys and bars are of different sizes to make identification easy. High-leverage control linkages provide light-touch response. For the newer chromium-dioxide cassettes that have coding slots molded into their shells, the KX-910 switches automatically to the appropriate equalization. Manual switching is also possible. The deck has

a memory-rewind system that works in conjunction with the three-digit tape counter. Also, partially depressing the fast-forward or rewind key rapidly advances or rewinds the tape for as long as the key is held down. Releasing it returns the deck to the previously selected mode of operation.

The KX-910 has a large capstan flywheel and a "heat-compressed" ferrite record/playback head. Separate slider-type recording-level controls for microphone and line inputs permit mixing the two sources. The twin recording-level

*(Continued on page 18)*

# Before and after July 15th

## BEFORE



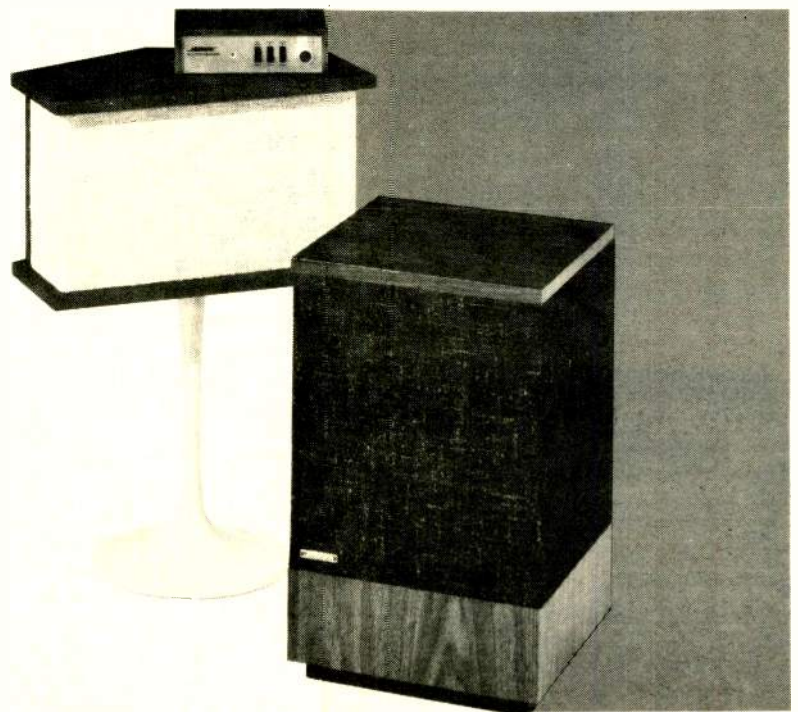
It's now clear that audio components will cost a lot more this fall than they did last year. Prices of many parts for these components have risen from 5 to 50% in the last few weeks alone.

We recently computed our new total parts' cost and it is clear that BOSE Direct/Reflecting® speakers must go up in price. However, we are happy that we can at least give you several weeks' notice from the time this page goes into print. Our prices will hold until July 15, 1974.

**AFTER** With BOSE products there will be no compromise in quality regardless of parts' prices or shortages. Thus, you may find the speakers hard to get, but when you get them you are assured of the same care in design, production, and testing that uniquely has characterized them to consumers throughout the world. We hope that you will take the opportunity to hear what this means by auditioning the BOSE 901® in side-by-side comparison to any other speakers regardless of size or price. And then listen to how many of the audible benefits of the 901 are present in the 501 at about half the price.

For those interested in the technology behind the BOSE Direct/Reflecting® speakers, reprints of the paper "Sound Recording and Reproduction," published in TECHNOLOGY REVIEW (MIT), Vol. 75, No. 7, June '73, are available from BOSE Corporation for fifty cents per copy.

For information on BOSE audio products, write us at Department S6.



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JULY 1974

# NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN  
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EQUIPMENT

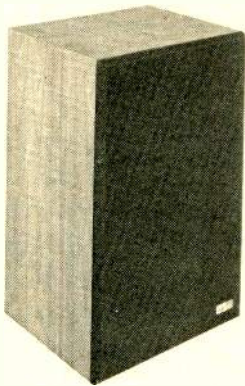
meters are supplemented by a peak-indicator light to warn against possible overload by high-level transients. There is also a switchable automatic recording-level control function for occasions when preserving the natural dynamic range of the program material is not important. The built-in Dolby noise-reduction circuits can also be used to de-

code external Dolbyized sources such as FM broadcasts. The KX-910 has a frequency response of 30 to 16,000 Hz with chromium-dioxide tape, less than 0.11 per cent wow and flutter, and a 58-dB signal-to-noise ratio with chromium dioxide and Dolby, 50 dB without Dolby. The high-speed tape-wind time for a C-60 cassette is 75 seconds. The dimen-

sions of the KX-910 are approximately 16¼ x 5 x 10 inches. A wood base is supplied. Price: \$299.95. The Model KX-710 Dolby cassette deck is similar in features and specifications, but lacks mixing facilities for line and microphone sources, and uses a different motor. Price: \$249.95.

*Circle 117 on reader service card*

## ESS amt 5 Speaker System



● THE unique Heil "air-motion transformer," first introduced as a mid-range/tweeter for the ESS amt 1, has

been modified for use in a new bookshelf speaker system, the amt 5. Like previous Heil drivers, the device employs a pleated polyethylene diaphragm that exerts "squeezing" forces on the air to generate sound. However, it is smaller—nominally 3 inches—and has a redesigned magnetic circuit in the form of a rectangular ferrous ring with slotted openings on its front surface. This "power ring" driver functions as a tweeter down to 1,500 Hz, where there is a 12-dB-per-octave crossover to a 12-inch air-suspension woofer. The frequency response of the amt 5 is 40 to 24,000 Hz. A minimum amplifier power of 7 watts per channel is required to achieve a listening level of 90 dB; the power-handling capability of the system is 150 watts on musical peaks. The dis-

ortion of the woofer is rated at less than 1 per cent over most of its frequency range. Distortion from the Heil tweeter is under 0.5 per cent. Nominal impedance of the amt 5 is 4 ohms.

Unlike the other Heil systems, the amt 5 does not radiate any sound to the rear, although some of the output from the back of the tweeter's diaphragm does reach the listener through slots in the speaker-mounting panel. Frontal dispersion of the system covers a solid angle of 120 degrees. A three-position tweeter-level control operates over a range of approximately  $\pm 2$  dB. The amt 5 is finished in oiled walnut, with a dark fabric grille. Dimensions are 24 x 14½ x 12¾ inches. Price: \$189.

*Circle 118 on reader service card*

## Koss Model HV/1LC Stereo Headphones



● JOINING the Model HV-1 in the Koss series of lightweight "high-velocity" stereo headphones is the new HV/1LC,

similar to the HV-1 but adding the convenience of level controls on each earcup for adjusting volume and balance. The phones are of the non-isolating type, enabling listeners to be aware of outside sounds. The round earcups have annular cushions of soft foam; the rear radiations of the diaphragms pass into the open air through an arrangement of small vents. Pivoting yokes connect the cups to the length-adjustable headband, which is treated with vinyl-covered padding.

The driver elements in the headphones are dynamic devices with 2-inch diaphragms, designed to be driven from

source impedances ranging from 3.2 to 600 ohms. Frequency response is 20 to 20,000 Hz, and distortion is under 0.5 per cent for a sound-pressure level of 109 dB. An input of 0.6 volt produces a sound-pressure level of 95 dB; power-handling capability is 5 volts (113 dB), with provision for brief transients of 14 dB in excess of that. The finish of the phones is black, with metal parts and trim in light gold and simulated rosewood. Without the 10-foot coiled cable, the headphones weigh under 10 ounces. Price: \$49.95.

*Circle 119 on reader service card*

## Scott R77S AM/Stereo FM Receiver



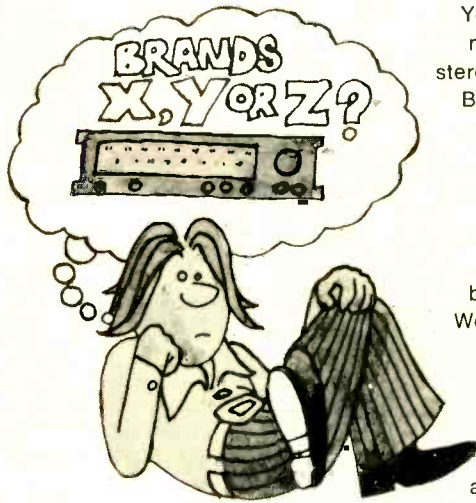
● H. H. SCOTT has announced the introduction of a new stereo receiver, the Model R77S, rated at 70 watts per channel continuous (8-ohm loads, from 20 to 20,000 Hz) with less than 0.5 per cent

harmonic and intermodulation distortion. The styling and control facilities of the receiver deliberately emphasize functional simplicity. There are five control knobs: volume, balance, bass, treble, and a fifth to select the program source. Three pairs of speakers are accommodated, playable individually or in two combinations of two pairs. Loudness compensation, tape monitor, mono/stereo mode, high-cut filter (6 dB per octave), and FM interstation-noise muting are all pushbutton-selected. There are signal-strength and channel-center tuning meters, plus a stereo headphone jack.

The IHF sensitivity of the R77S FM section is 1.9 microvolts. Other FM specifications include: capture ratio, 1.5 dB; AM suppression, 65 dB; frequency response, 30 to 15,000 Hz  $\pm 1.5$  dB, stereo separation, 35 dB. Harmonic distortion is 0.3 per cent in mono, 0.5 per cent in stereo. The amplifier section has signal-to-noise ratios of 75 dB (high-level inputs) and 65 dB (phono). One of the two phono inputs offers a choice of 3- or 6-millivolt sensitivity. The Scott R77S measures approximately 18½ x 5¾ x 15½ inches, with an integral all-aluminum cabinet. Price: \$599.90.

*Circle 120 on reader service card*

# Soundsational Advice



You'd really like to move up to a good stereo system, right? But you find stereo components confusing. So many names. So many claims. So many specifications to read. It fairly boggles the mind. Well, don't despair. You don't really need a PHD in audio physics to make a 'sound' decision. With a few helpful hints from KENWOOD and your

own two good ears you can be off to a flying start.

## Power is Important, But . . .

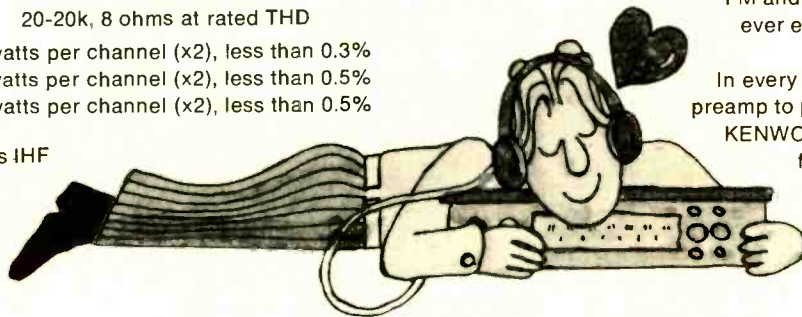
don't get caught in the numbers game. There is only one meaningful power output rating: RMS continuous power output per channel, both channels driven into 8 ohms, at all frequencies from 20 to 20,000 Hz. Many receiver manufacturers quote power output for mid-band frequencies only, i.e. at 1k Hz. An amplifier that can produce 50 watts at 1k may fall short of that capability at the extremes of the audio spectrum where power is most vitally needed for quality reproduction. KENWOOD gives you the powerful facts on its new top three:

### RMS CONTINUOUS POWER 20-20k, 8 ohms at rated THD

KR-7400	63 watts per channel (x2), less than 0.3%
KR-6400	45 watts per channel (x2), less than 0.5%
KR-5400	35 watts per channel (x2), less than 0.5%

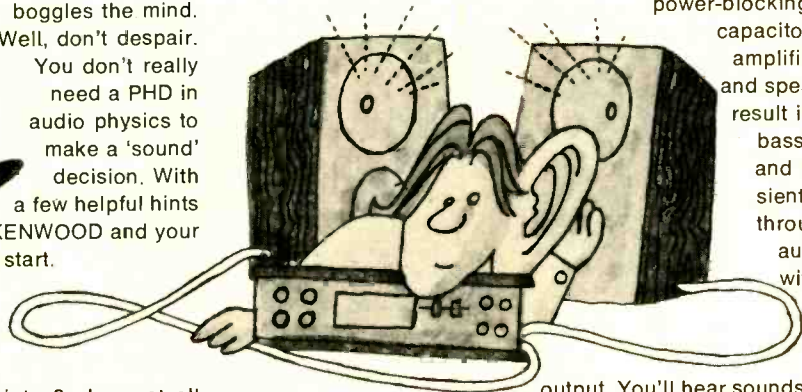
And for comparison, shows IHF power ratings at 4 ohms:

KR-7400	290 watts
KR-6400	240 watts
KR-5400	150 watts



## Nothing Comes Between You and the Music with KENWOOD's Direct-Coupled, Pure Complementary Symmetry Output Circuitry

As important as power is to good sound, power alone is not the only factor in determining quality. KENWOOD engineers utilize the most advanced concepts in audio circuitry to assure the finest sound reproduction. For example, consider the importance of direct coupling: By utilizing a massive power transformer and dual positive and negative power supplies, KENWOOD engineers have eliminated the



power-blocking coupling capacitor between amplifier outputs and speakers. The result is fantastic bass response and crisp transient response throughout the audio range, with minimal distortion even at full rated

output. You'll hear sounds from your favorite records and tapes that you never knew were there!

## A Tuner Section You Can Really Tune In To

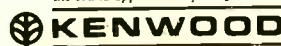
KENWOOD's reputation for creating fine tuners is reflected in the tuner sections of these superb receivers. There are all sorts of esoteric reasons for this — like MOS-FET's in the front ends, low-noise transistors, solid state IF filters, and a phase-locked loop MPX circuit. What it all boils down to is the best darned FM and FM-stereo reception you've ever enjoyed. In fact, even the AM

sounds great! In every aspect of performance from preamp to power amp to tuner, the new KENWOOD stereo receivers are the finest around. But don't take our word for it. Visit your nearest KENWOOD Dealer, and let your ears be the final judge.



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CIRCLE NO. 31 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



### Alcoholic Inquiry

**Q.** *I have for some time now been puzzled concerning the solvent properties of the various types of alcohol. The instruction manual for my Sony tape deck states that I may use denatured alcohol to clean the heads; my AR turntable manual says to use methyl (wood) alcohol—not rubbing alcohol—to clean the belt and platter; and, finally, at a recent cartridge clinic in Nashville, the representative who suggested rubbing alcohol to clean styli related an anecdote about someone who used the wrong kind and caused the diamond tip to fall off. What are the proper (and improper) uses for the various alcohols?*

WENDALL COUTS  
Springfield, Tenn.

**A.** Although my local bartender was willing to discuss the question of vermouth/gin ratios in a martini, he wasn't of much help with Mr. Cout's inquiry. However, a friendly chemist who works in a local laboratory volunteered his help in making the various alcohols less anonymous and provided the following data. There are three commonly available types of alcohol (1) ethyl, (2) methyl (wood), and (3) isopropyl. Ethyl is the stuff some of us drink (when flavored with other substances) under names such as scotch, vodka, and gin. Ethyl is also sold as "denatured" alcohol—which means that something has been added to make it undrinkable by giving it a bad taste and making the drinker sick, even if he can get by the taste. Methyl alcohol, on the other hand, will make one sick and/or blind without the aid of additives, as many unfortunates discovered during the days of prohibition. Isopropyl alcohol (also undrinkable) is commonly sold as rubbing alcohol as is denatured alcohol.

In respect to their cleaning properties, the three alcohols are roughly equivalent, and most, if not all, plastics are unaffected by their chemical properties. However, other substances do dissolve

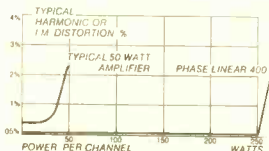
in, or are changed by, alcohol, so for use near cements—or anything else—the manufacturer's advice should be followed carefully. Obviously the man who designed a mechanism is in the best position to know what solvents attack what parts of his products. And for a number of other reasons it is wise to keep persons with too much alcohol on their breath away from your audio equipment.

### Speaker-Fuse Blowing

**Q.** *I fused my low-efficiency acoustic-suspension speakers following the manufacturer's recommendations and everything was fine for several years. During that time I was using an amplifier made by the same manufacturer rated at 60 watts per channel continuous power. To update my system I recently switched to a 400-watt power amp. On the positive side, the sound from my old speakers is more "open" and "clean." However, on the negative side, I find that I blow speaker fuses fairly regularly. I'm puzzled by this because I know that I'm not playing my music any louder than I was previously.*

BERNARD NEWMARK  
New York, N.Y.

**A.** The fuse blowing and the "open sound" are probably related but in a way that may not be immediately obvious. I suspect that your previous amplifier (because of inadequate power for your speakers) was clipping the peaks of high-amplitude transient waveforms—and by so doing was compressing the dynamic range of the music. Although the clipping was not severe enough to cause harsh or easily identifiable distortion, it nevertheless did "blur" the sound somewhat, and simultaneously limited the power fed to your speakers on musical peaks. Your new high-powered amplifier is able to deliver the peaks in their full unclipped amplitude. This has several consequences: the unclipped music not only sounds "cleaner," but the unclipped peaks also



deliver more momentary power to the speaker than the fuse apparently was designed to pass without blowing.

My hypothesis does not contradict your statement that you are not playing your system louder than before, since the overall "loudness" that you hear is determined essentially by the *average* level of the program, *not* by the height of the momentary musical peaks. For the same reason, at a given volume-control setting, the compressed music provided by the clipping may actually sound louder than the uncompressed music. (This psychoacoustic reaction to compression is employed in radio/TV commercials to produce a "loud" attention-getting message. By raising the average level and reducing the peaks, extra loudness is achieved without transgressing against the FCC's modulation regulations.) Since you naturally turn up the level so that you hear the same average loudness from your new amplifier as from your old one, there is substantially more power delivered on peaks—and your speaker fuses blow. (A 200-watt peak produces slightly over 7 amperes of current in a 4-ohm speaker and about 3.5 amperes in an 8-ohm speaker load.)

Fuse selection is usually a trial-and-error process, and it could be that the manufacturer of your speakers will want to review his fuse recommendations—possibly substituting a slow-blow type of the same amperage rating as the present fuse would be a safe solution.

#### Record/Tape Overload

**Q.** *When I dub some of my records onto tape, my cassette unit acts very peculiarly. I get a sort of harshly distorted break-up in the dubbed voice or music perhaps once a second or so. This only happens with some records, and when I listen to those discs during dubbing or later, they sound fine. Any ideas?*

JOHN SMYTHE  
Mobile, Ala.

**A.** The records that you are trying to warpage to cause severe deflection of your phono stylus. The stylus deflection is translated into a very-low-frequency, high-amplitude signal that appears at the tape-output jacks of your amplifier and overloads (overdrives) your cassette deck's electronics or the tape. The reason that the records sound okay on your system is simply that the warp "signal" either is handled without overload by the non-tape components in your system, or that it undergoes normal subsonic attenuation (in the circuit after the tape-output jack) before it can cause trouble. You can check my hypothesis simply enough by observing the records that are causing difficulties while they are playing and noting whether the stylus is pushed back into the cartridge body with every revolution of the disc.

JULY 1974

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#### MRX<sub>2</sub> Oxide Particle Configuration.



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But there's more than MRX<sub>2</sub> Oxide particles that go into making us the best. And that's the exclusive way we disperse and bind those unique particles to our tape surface.

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CIRCLE NO. 22 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# 3 GOOD REASONS FOR BUYING AN EMPIRE CART-RIDGE

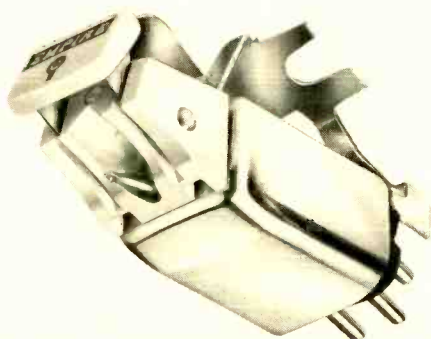
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CIRCLE NO. 21 ON READER SERVICE CARD

## AUDIO NEWS VIEWS AND COMMENT By LARRY KLEIN Technical Editor

● A RECENT visit by a group of fellow editors from a Japanese magazine called *Stereo Sound* gave me the opportunity to hear a music-demonstration disc made in Japan using a PCM (pulse-code modulation) recording technique. According to what I could gather from the Japanese editors, the electrical audio signal is converted from its normal analog form into a digital signal immediately after the mixer, and it remains in digital form until fed to the cutter head that engraves the master disc.

How does PCM work? Imagine an audio-signal waveform displayed (and frozen) on an oscilloscope screen. Now lay a fine-mesh crosshatch grid over the tube face. Let each vertical line represent a point in time 1/30,000 of a second away from the adjacent vertical lines, and each horizontal line an increment—up or down—in signal strength. The junctions of the horizontal and vertical lines in the crosshatch then form a sort of graph against which the instantaneous-signal level can be plotted and described by a single number—which changes 30,000 times a second. The numbers are converted to binary code, which then permits processing and storage of the audio signal, not in the usual analog form (in which the electrical waveform corresponds to the acoustical waveform) but rather as a rapidly changing series of binary numbers. I chose 30 kHz for my example because the rule of thumb seems to be that the "sampling rate" (the vertical crosshatch element) must be at least twice the highest frequency to be handled by the system. A 30-kHz sampling rate therefore provides a frequency response of 0 to 15,000 Hz.

If you are disturbed by the thought of a musical waveform being segmented in such a fashion and doubt that its integrity can ever be fully restored, remember that the stereo FM broadcast technique we've been living with all these years also uses a signal-sampling system, and it operates at a 38-kHz rate.

The advantage of processing and storing an audio signal in digital form is that there is no way overload, noise, distortion, or frequency imbalance can intrude into the signal. After all, how can you "distort" a number? The performance

data on the disc therefore read like an audiophile's fantasy. If I interpret the spec sheet correctly, the frequency response is  $\pm 0.5$  dB from 0 to 20,000, the dynamic range is 75 dB, the distortion 0.1 per cent, and the noise level -80 dB. However, we must assume that this refers only to the signal delivered to the cutting head, and not to the disc itself.

The PCM technique is certainly not new, although this is the first time I've heard of its application to disc recording. The British Broadcasting Corporation has for some time been using PCM for processing TV sound and stereo FM transmissions. The result for the BBC is "markedly enhanced quality."

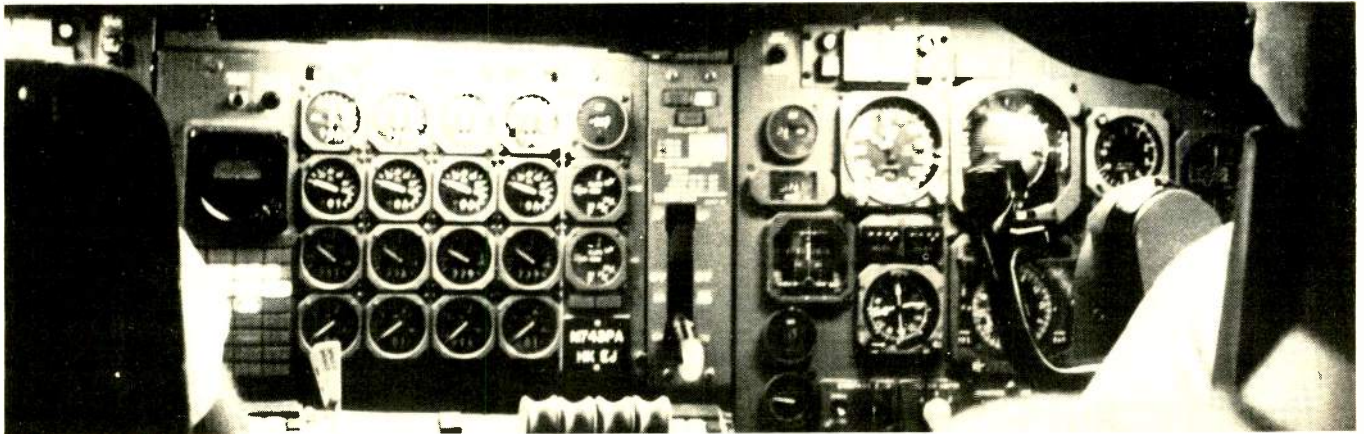
But how does the PCM record sound? Unfortunately, the musical content seems to be aimed at the Japanese "easy-listening" audience. It's like Muzak to my ears except for the constant clack of temple blocks and occasional twang of a koto. However, the dynamic range is audibly impressive, the frequency response wide, and the noise level low—and it does not require a decoder in the playback system. On the other hand, a video tape system and several relay racks full of special electronics are required to record using PCM. Would the results be worth it in the U.S.? It's an open question, mostly because there are simply too many other areas where the ultimate playback performance of a disc can be degraded—both before and after PCM processing.

● According to William Dixon of the Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, the FTC commissioner has now signed the regulation dealing with how amplifier power may be advertised. Mr. Dixon says that it is essentially the same as the proposed Rule printed as part of his article "Amplifier Power Specifications" (*STEREO REVIEW*, April 1973), except that the technical testing section has been modified somewhat. By the time you read this, the printed version of the new Rule should be available. It will not make life any more difficult for the hi-fi component manufacturers, but many of the mass-market "brown-goods" merchandisers will find that some of their products, formerly advertised as having "100 watts instantaneous peak power," must now be rated at about 2 watts per channel!

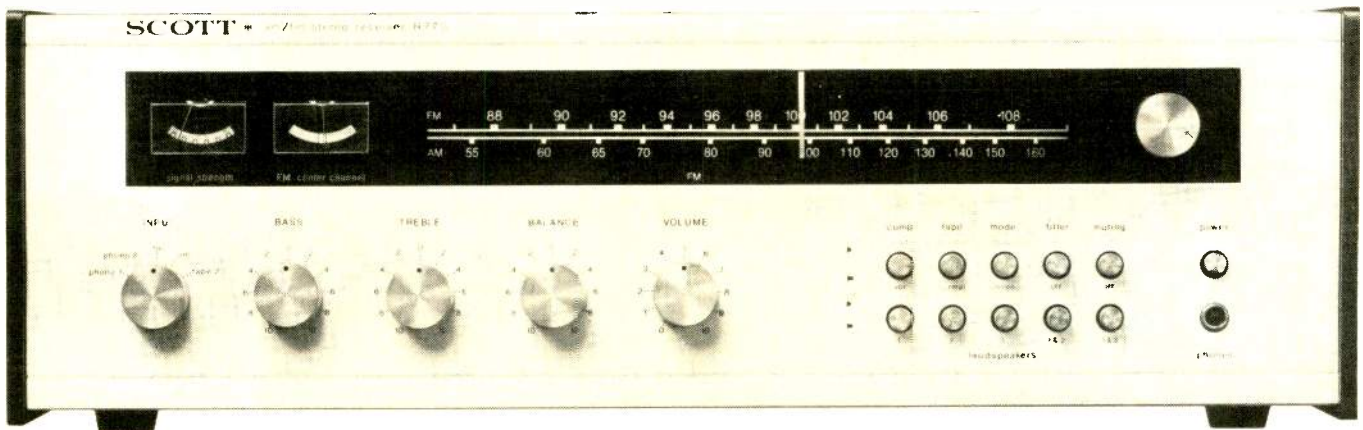
● For those with a taste for audio antiquity, there is a special publication, *The Horn Speaker*, which describes itself as "the newspaper for the hobbyist of vintage electronics and sound." Published monthly except for July and August, it contains such things as classified ads for old equipment and parts, plus reprints of early audio articles. A year's subscription costs \$3, a single copy 50¢. Write to *The Horn Speaker*, 9820 Silver Meadow Drive, Dallas, Texas 75217.



# Which would you prefer in your living room,



**this**



**or this?**

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Scott deplores the current faddish trend in our industry toward selling chrome instead of chromatics, sheen and flash instead of sharps and flats. Engineers at Scott are music lovers dedicated to providing you with the most accurate music reproduction the state of the electronic art will allow, without useless gimmickry. Scott believes you would rather have your receiver look like a receiver than the control panel of a 747, or a pinball machine in climax.

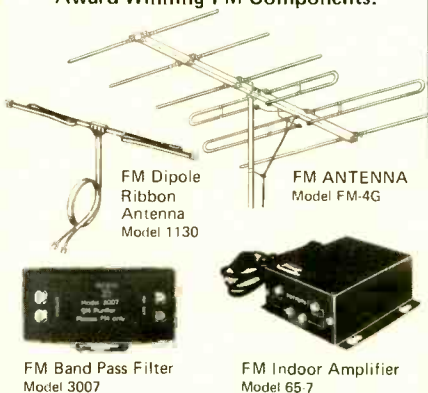
The elegantly simple exterior of the new Scott R77S AM-FM stereo receiver contains all the switches and controls you need to reproduce music from records, tapes and FM broadcasts. Its distinctively designed case conceals all new electronics using the latest advances in circuit design and componentry. It puts out a typically conservative 70 Scott watts per channel into 8 ohms and drives even low efficiency speakers to life size volume levels. The Scott R77S costs \$599.90 and probably substantially outperforms what you're listening to now. For a visual and aural evaluation of the new Scott R77S receiver, visit your demonstrating Scott dealer now. Or contact the factory for full product specifications and list of dealers serving your area.

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CIRCLE NO. 8 ON READER SERVICE CARD



## AUDIO BASICS By RALPH HODGES

### GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS—11

● **Dolby** is a noise-reduction process named for Ray Dolby, the American-born electronics engineer who invented it. The Dolby noise-reduction technique is a two-step procedure that "encodes" a signal before it is recorded and then "decodes" it when it is subsequently played back. The Dolby system works by first "compressing" the signal to be recorded—more specifically, by amplifying the soft passages by a precise amount *before* the recording or transmission process. The processing during playback "expands" the signal (cuts back the lower-level signals) to restore the original loud-and-soft dynamics of the music. The noise that has intruded into the signal *after* the Dolby encoding is thus cut back significantly as a result of the decoding process. Program material that has been encoded for intended reproduction through a Dolby processor is frequently spoken of in these pages as being "Dolbyized" (*i.e.*, Dolbyized tapes, Dolbyized FM broadcasts).

The Dolby system exists in two versions: the professional four-band system (Dolby A), used by recording studios in the preparation of master tapes, and the simpler single-band consumer system (Dolby B), which works only at higher frequencies to reduce noises such as tape hiss. Most cassette-deck manufacturers offer models with built-in Dolby-B circuits, enabling the user to make his own Dolbyized tapes or to properly play back the many commercially recorded Dolbyized cassettes now available. Some open-reel tapes and eight-track cartridges are also Dolby processed, and a few FM stations around the country now Dolbyize their broadcasts, since the Dolby-B process is effective against FM background noise.

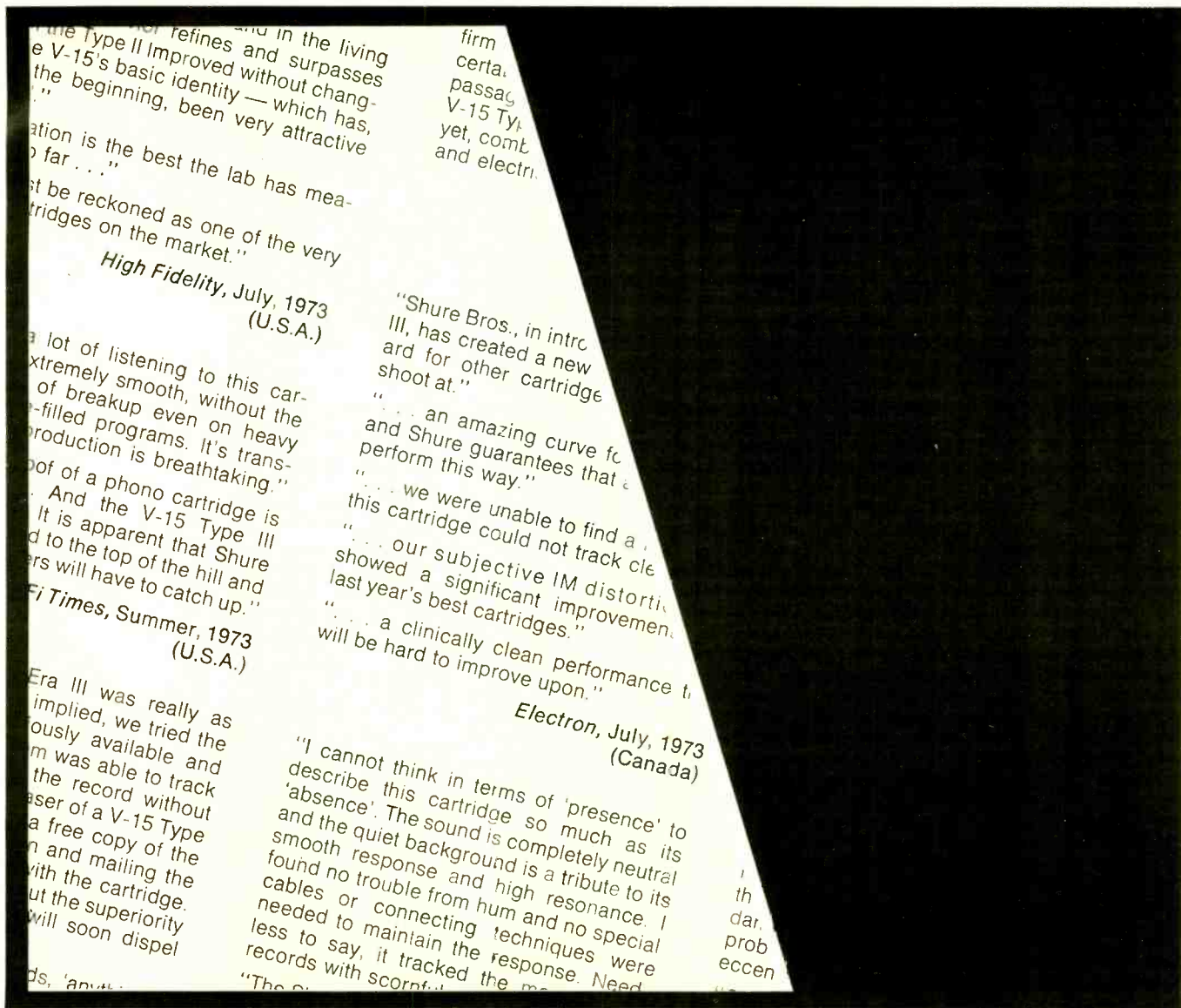
● **Dynamic range** is the spread (usually expressed in decibels) between the softest and loudest passages in a piece of live or recorded music. For example, a live symphonic performance might contain moments as quiet as 40 dB and as

loud as 110 dB, for an overall dynamic range of 70 dB. The ability of modern recordings and equipment to reproduce this dynamic range is limited by audible noise (for quiet passages) and maximum undistorted output (for the loudest passages). The best of today's disc and tape recordings have a dynamic range of something over 60 dB—thus approaching but not quite equaling the more demanding types of live music. Most good audio systems can cope with this range, provided the listening environment does not require high volume settings.

● **Editing** is the process of removing or rearranging sections of a recorded tape, usually by cutting the tape apart and excising, adding to, or transposing the segments. The ends are then joined in the new edited arrangement with splicing tape. At its best, editing is something of an art. A skilled editor can often work considerable wonders with a tape flawed by errors in performance, without the listener's ever detecting his efforts.

● **Efficiency**, generally used in reference to speaker systems, is a measure of how successfully an energy-handling device can convert or transfer the input to whatever form the output takes. Typical home speakers have efficiencies of 1 per cent or less, meaning that for every 100 watts of amplifier power put in, only about 1 watt of sound energy emerges.

In general, with systems using conventional cone drivers, there's a trade-off at the lower frequencies between efficiency, frequency response, and cabinet size. Some large systems for home and professional use have efficiencies greater than 10 per cent, and hence can achieve very loud listening levels with rather small amplifiers. It should be noted that there is no necessary relationship between the efficiency of a speaker and the *quality* of its reproduction. However, many high-efficiency speakers are capable of ultimately higher sound levels than typical low-efficiency designs.



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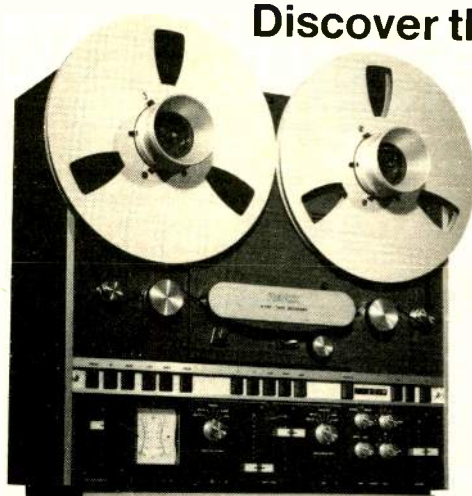
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# TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **NOISE-REDUCTION TECHNIQUES:** When audio-equipment noise reaches a certain level (which varies with the sensitivity of the listener), it can spoil the enjoyment of a record or tape. Noise can be part of the recorded material, it can be added later by the electronics of the audio system, or both. Logically enough, therefore, there are two basic approaches to reducing it. One is to remove the noise present in the program source, and the other is to prevent noise from being added before and during reproduction. Further, in either case, the noise-reduction process should not cause an audible change in the frequency content or dynamic characteristics of the program material.

The major emphasis today, in both home and studio equipment, is on minimizing the noise added during the tape recording and playback processes. The most successful methods use a *closed* system, in which the signal is modified (or *encoded*) just before being recorded and then decoded during playback. If these two actions are exactly complementary, it is theoretically (and practically) possible to eliminate nearly any audible contribution by the tape recording process to the total noise level.

These closed noise-reduction systems are all some form of *compressor/expander*. Dynamic range (the decibel difference between the maximum signal which can be cleanly recorded and the inherent noise introduced during the recording and playback process) can be extended by first "compressing" the incoming signal and then "expanding" it during playback by the same amount. The maximum signal levels that can be handled are still limited by tape characteristics, but weak signals can safely be amplified (compressed) because the limitations of the tape are not exceeded. Applying more amplification to the low-level signals than to the higher-level ones has the effect of boosting the weakest signals above the recorder's noise level.

In playback, the complementary expansion converts small decreases in the audio signal into greater decreases—which expands the dynamic range back to the original level. If properly executed, the dynamics of the original program are reconstructed, but the noise introduced by the recording process is reduced by the same amount as the expansion applied during playback. Although this sounds like a straightforward process, great care is required in choosing the "attack" and "decay" times of the compressor and expander. The compression before recording and the expansion during playback must be matched pre-

principle as their consumer products. These instruments can extend the dynamic range of a tape recording by 30 dB or more. External adjustments have been eliminated from the professional units, which can totally remove audible noise and hum from any open-reel or cassette recording processed through them. Unfortunately, their price (typically \$300 to \$600) inhibits their use in most home music systems.

As Larry Klein mentioned in Audio News last month, we recently had a most impressive demonstration of the dbx system as applied to phonograph records. That was the first and only time we have ever heard a phonograph record played back with absolutely *no* rumble or hiss audible at *any* listening level or distance from the speakers. There were also no unwelcome side effects from the dynamic compression/expansion process (a duplicate record, without dbx processing, was available for an A-B comparison). The total listening experience of the dbx disc almost defies description (can *you* imagine a 90-dB dynamic range from *your* record-playing system?).

A few dbx-encoded records are now available from Klavier, a small California record producer; dbx is also trying to interest other manufacturers in the idea. Unfortunately, such discs are basically "incompatible." Unless played back through a dbx unit, they are quite unlistenable. We would guess that a simple dbx playback unit could be priced competitively with most "add-on" Dolby or ANRS noise-reduction units, but it would have little value without the dbx-encoded records. Thus dbx seems involved in one of those classic chicken-or-egg propositions: however, the situation certainly bears watching.

The well-known Dolby technique employs a closed system whose action takes place only at low signal levels, typically 30 dB or more below maximum program level. As a result, any small

## TESTED THIS MONTH



**Lafayette SQ-W Decoder**  
**Dynaco Stereo 400 Power Amp**  
**Sylvania RQ3748 Receiver**  
**Solar Ultralinear 1000 Speaker**

cisely in both their timing and degree if their action is to be inaudible to a listener.

The best known example of the classical compressor/expander approach on the current market is the Model 117 Dynamic Range Enhancer manufactured by dbx. It can reduce noise by 10 to 20 dB with negligible audible side effects. And, since it acts throughout the audio-frequency range, hum and other low-frequency noises are reduced in addition to hiss. However, care is required to adjust the unit for optimum results; thus it is not a panacea for those people who would like to have noise reduction at the touch of a button. Dbx also makes a line of "semi-pro" and professional noise-reduction units that use the same

differences that might exist (through mis-adjustment) between the compression and expansion phases of its operation are essentially inaudible. The original Dolby "A" professional system operates in four contiguous, but independent, frequency bands, each of which is controlled by the program content within its range. Its noise-reduction capabilities are similar to those of a conventional compressor/expander, with the considerable advantage that critical adjustments have been eliminated. This has been achieved by using standardized input and output levels, so that a program recorded through any Dolby unit can be played back properly through any other anywhere in the world.

The complexity and cost of the Dolby "A" system limits its use to professional recording applications. For the consumer market, there is the B-Type Dolby, a single-band system operating only at frequencies above about 1,000 Hz, with a maximum noise reduction of about 10 dB at the higher frequencies. A similar concept is used by JVC in their ANRS noise-reduction system, although its circuits and specific operating characteristics differ from those of the Dolby system. The ANRS was originally developed to reduce the noise in the FM carrier channels of the CD-4 four-channel disc-recording system, and it is used in the encoding of CD-4 discs and in the CD-4 demodulators.

Almost every cassette recorder with a claim to high-fidelity performance now has a built-in Dolby-B system, and it is also appearing in a few of the higher-price open-reel recorders and even in eight-track cartridge machines. At this time many commercial cassette releases and some open-reel and eight-track cartridge tapes are being made with Dolby encoding.

Since noise is also a problem in FM reception (especially in stereo), some FM stations are now "Dolbyizing" their

transmissions, and several FM tuners and receivers are available with built-in Dolby-B playback circuits.

A very different technique is the *open-end* noise-reduction system, which does *not* require encoding of the program material. An open system is intended to reduce noise already present in a program. This is certainly a desirable feature when dealing with non-encoded discs and tapes—which includes the vast majority of such material. Of course, the fixed audio filters (labeled "scratch," or "hi-cut," and "lo-cut") found in many amplifiers do this also, but they have the annoying flaw of removing portions of the program together with the noise. A *good* filter (which is rare) can be better than none at all, however, particularly if the program material doesn't have much high-frequency content to start with.

One form of open system is the *dynamic filter*. This is usually a low-pass filter (so named because it passes the lows, but not the highs) whose action is controlled by the level and frequency content of the signal. When the program is loud enough to mask the noise, the filter is automatically out of the circuit and full frequency response is obtained. At low levels, or when no high frequencies are present in the program, the filter comes into action. Invariably, a simple dynamic filter has some audible effect on program frequencies as well as on noise when it goes into operation, but if these effects are minor the benefits can outweigh the faults.

An example of a dynamic filter is the Philips DNL, found on some Norelco cassette recorders. It works with considerable effectiveness, and frequently cannot be detected in action. Its subjective noise reduction is not as great as that of the Dolby system, but is nevertheless worthwhile. The chief weakness of these simple dynamic filters is the audible "swish" of noise that can occur when the program switches the filter out. A highly

sophisticated dynamic filter, developed by Burwen Laboratories, is essentially free of such problems, but its price limits it to professional use.

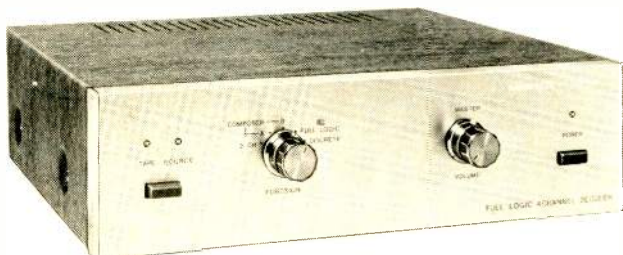
A new preamplifier, the Phase Linear 4000, has a unique *autocorrelator* noise-reduction system. Autocorrelation has been used for years to extract weak radio and TV signals from atmospheric noise, most notably in space communications. This represents its first application to a consumer product, however. The autocorrelator functions by distinguishing between the discrete frequencies in a music program and the random noise energy. The principal range of music fundamentals, from 200 to 2,000 Hz, is sampled by a number of control circuits. If a signal is present at any frequency with a level higher than the background random-noise level (usually -65 to -45 dB), a series of "gates" open up at the multiples (harmonics) of that frequency, in the range of 2,000 to 20,000 Hz. All other gates remain closed unless a signal is present to open them. In this way, fundamental music frequencies and their useful harmonics are allowed to pass through, while most of the random noise is blocked by the closed gates.

The Phase Linear autocorrelator gives up to 10 dB of effective noise reduction over a wide band of frequencies when playing phonograph records, and also works well on FM and taped signals. Unlike most dynamic filters, it is totally free of "swishes" and other audible side effects. It has no effect on the audible frequency response, and requires only that the listener set one knob (by ear) for proper operation. This system would not be practical without the availability of suitable integrated circuits, and at present it is found only in a rather high-price preamplifier. Having heard it in operation, we are confident that this technique will receive considerable attention from other audio-circuit designers in the very near future.

## EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

### Lafayette SQ-W Quadraphonic Decoder



● LAFAYETTE'S SQ-W full-logic SQ decoder not only incorporates the wave-matching logic of the most elaborate SQ decoders, but also has rear-channel variable blending, a signal-processing technique recently developed by CBS to further enhance the front-to-back separation of SQ material. The SQ-W is designed to operate in the tape-monitoring

(Continued on page 30)

# In the beginning there was folded horn bass reflex acoustic suspension.

## And now BIC VENTURI

For about 40 years, speaker designers have been juggling the characteristics they wanted from speakers: Compact size, high efficiency, high power-handling, and deep ranging, pure, clean, gut-reaction bass.

They tried folded horns: efficient, clean, good power-handling, but too large for most homes, quite expensive. They tried the bass reflex: Efficient, compact, but limited by uneven, one-note bass. Ditto the labyrinth, but far less efficient.

Today's favorite, the acoustic suspension: Compact, smooth, deep ranging bass. But inefficient (requiring costly, high-powered amplifiers) and limited dynamic range.

A virtue here, a virtue there -- but all with corresponding compromises.

Ironically, the principle that combines these objectives into one compact cabinet has been around for some 180 years: The VENTURI principle of fluid motion transformation, reapplied in a form better suited to acoustics (patents pending). Our simplified diagram shows how the scientifically formulated VENTURI coupled path functions as a step-up transformer. Up to 140 times more bass energy comes from the duct as comes directly from the woofer. And bass is reinforced broadly over the low frequency spectrum, not at a single "tuned" frequency.

The BIC VENTURI coupled path also operates as an acoustic, low pass filter, cleansing harmonics and distortion components from the bass waves. So, the bass not only goes down further and is louder, it's cleaner and more natural. And requires hundreds percent less amplifier power than other speakers of comparable size and performance. Yet, even though BIC VENTURI need less amplifier power, they can handle more. This new principle eliminates compromises in cone, suspension and magnetic design to "match" cabinet characteristics.

Above the woofer, you can see our mid-range. To match the exceptional high efficiency of the bass section, we had to invent a new horn, combining two different types of flare, conical and exponential, BICONEX™ (pats pend). It provides wide, smooth dispersion in both horizontal and

vertical planes, so placement in the home won't be critical. BICONEX covers the full midrange to well beyond 15,000 Hz without crossover network interruptions, for distortion-free, smooth response.

Our super tweeter handles just a half octave from 15,000 to over 23,000 Hz. While you can't hear single frequency tones in that range, the accuracy of musical "timbre" depends upon those frequencies being added in proper proportion to the complex tones you do hear. An important subtlety.

Because you hear less bass and treble at low and moderate levels, we built a DYNAMIC TONAL COMPENSATION circuit (patents pending)

into the speaker. It

adjusts speaker frequency response as sound pressure output changes, automatically. Amplifier "loudness contour" controls can't do that. Result: aurally "flat" musical reproduction always, regardless of volume control settings.

Our Formula 2 is the most efficient speaker system of its size, yet can be used with amplifiers rated up to 75 watts per channel! Formula 4 has deeper bass and can be used with amplifiers up to 100 watts. Formula 6, the most efficient, will handle 125 watts. Hear them at franchised BIC VENTURI dealers. Or write for brochure:

B·I·C INTERNATIONAL, Westbury, N.Y. 11590,  
a div. of Avnet, Inc. Canada: C.W. Pointon, Ont.



path of a four-channel receiver or amplifier, or with a two-channel receiver plus a separate rear-channel stereo amplifier. The tape-recorder outputs and inputs displaced by the SQ-W are duplicated on its rear apron. Considering its ability to take 3 volts of input signal without overload, it should also be usable connected at the output of most separate preamplifiers and feeding four channels of power amplification.

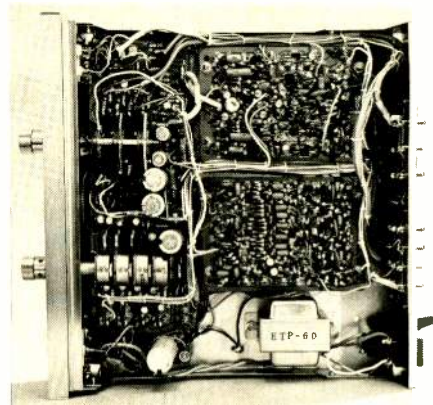
The Lafayette SQ-W measures 14½ x 11½ x 3 inches and weighs 5 pounds. On its front panel are two pushbuttons labeled POWER and TAPE/SOURCE and two knobs designated FUNCTION and MASTER VOLUME. The function switch provides 2 CH, COMPOSER A, COMPOSER B, SQ FULL LOGIC, and DISCRETE modes of operation. In the 2 CH mode, front and rear channels receive the same stereo signals, attenuated slightly in the rear. With the DISCRETE setting, the outputs of a four-channel tape deck, CD-4 demodulator, or other program source are passed through the SQ-W unmodified (except for the action of the volume control). The COMPOSER modes are matrix decoders, useful principally for synthesizing the rear channels from stereo programs, although the COMPOSER matrix is also quite effective in decoding records encoded with the Sansui QS (RM) matrix.

The rear apron of the Lafayette SQ-W carries the normal signal inputs, two-channel tape inputs and outputs, and four-channel tape outputs (ahead of the master volume control) as well as the normal outputs and discrete inputs. Slide switches change the input sensitivity for the source and tape inputs by a factor of five, to accommodate a large range of input signal levels without distortion (the SQ-W is rated at a nominal 1-volt output level, with 0.2 per cent rated distortion and a 70-dB signal-to-noise ratio, and requires inputs of either 0.1 or 0.5 volt for rated output). There is also a single unswitched a.c. convenience outlet in

the rear of the unit. The Lafayette SQ-W is supplied in a metal case finished in a wood grain pattern. Price: \$99.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** To measure the channel separation of the Lafayette SQ-W, we connected it to the tape outputs of a stereo receiver and played the CBS SQT-1100 test record with a high-quality stereo phono cartridge. This test disc has a variety of special signals on it designed to test the performance of a logic-enhanced SQ decoder. On one band of the SQT-1100 test record the signals are switched once per second between the cardinal points of the usual rectangular four-channel sound-field pattern (for example, left-front to right-front, right-back to left-back, center-front to center-back, etc.). We used an automatic graphic level recorder to plot the output of each of the four channels from the SQ-W from all eleven combinations of switched signal positions. The resulting graphs showed not only the level changes, but also the transient "overshoots" which sometimes accompany the action of a logic system. However, the graphs could *not* show the changing phase relationships between the various outputs and inputs, although with an oscilloscope we could see that the audio outputs were shifted in phase (relative to the inputs) by 0, 90, or 180 degrees.

When we monitored one front-channel output while signals were switched from the other front channel to either back channel, there was a large overshoot, typically about 5 dB, sometimes followed by a couple of "bounces" of smaller amplitude that lasted almost a second. On the return transition to the front channel, there was a perceptible time lag, almost a second in duration. All other switching operations appeared to be free of visible overshoots or lags. It should be noted that these test signals are artificial and designed to test the



An interior view of the Lafayette SQ-W shows two densely packed circuit boards for the principal circuits, plus associated controls.

various switching time constants within the decoder. We were never able to hear any of these unwanted effects when decoding discs with musical programs.

Another band of the CBS SQT-1100 record supplies 1,000-Hz signals at left front (L<sub>f</sub>), right front (R<sub>f</sub>), left back (L<sub>b</sub>), right back (R<sub>b</sub>), center front (C<sub>f</sub>), and center back (C<sub>b</sub>). We measured the four outputs of the SQ-W with each of these signals.

Lafayette's specifications were derived using a different test setup under different conditions, and we did not anticipate that we would match their specs in every area. Although we did not achieve the 20-dB separations claimed for the SQ-W, no apologies need be made for its performance, which was excellent—certainly as good as we have observed with any SQ decoder. Two units from different production runs were tested, and the differences were minor. The typical separations measured along the axes tested (we did not measure C<sub>f</sub> to C<sub>b</sub>) were: L<sub>f</sub> to R<sub>f</sub>, 11.5 dB; L<sub>b</sub> to R<sub>b</sub>, 10.5 dB; L<sub>f</sub> to L<sub>b</sub>, 17.5 dB; R<sub>f</sub> to R<sub>b</sub>, 18.5 dB; L<sub>f</sub> to R<sub>b</sub>, 18.5 dB; and R<sub>f</sub> to L<sub>b</sub>, 16.5 dB.

● **Comment.** Although they provide some clues as to the audible performance to be expected, measurements using single-channel test tones are not always good predictors of how well a decoder will handle complex musical programs in which there is significant (and rapidly changing) signal activity in all four channels at once. Accordingly, we conducted extensive A/B listening comparisons between the SQ-W and one of the early excellent SQ full-logic decoders (the Sony SQD-2000) using a large number of SQ records. The results were impressive and entirely unambiguous. We used program material which had produced "breathing" or abrupt level changes (caused by the gain-riding type of logic) in the older unit and, listening carefully, we heard no trace of this effect with the SQ-W. Whether evaluat-

(Continued on page 32)







## 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

ed by ear or with the aid of a four-channel monitor oscilloscope, the SQ-W always delivered a well-defined four-channel program without undesirable side effects. Although it lacks some of the control flexibility and the metering of more expensive decoders, the Lafayette

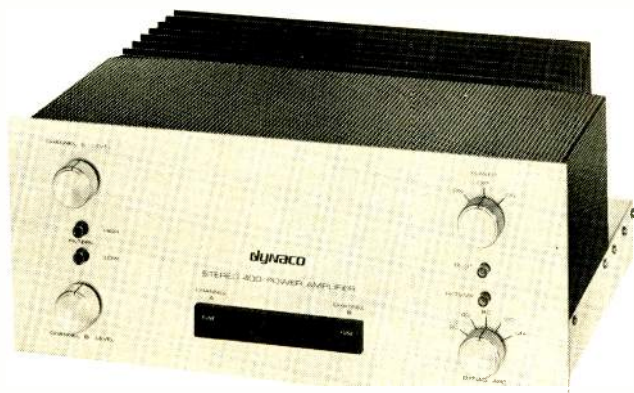
SQ-W can equal or surpass them from the standpoint of performance.

Anyone who has heard SQ programs decoded through a simple non-logic SQ matrix is well aware of the directional vagueness of the resulting sound. Connecting a Lafayette SQ-W into such a

system will provide a most impressive and convincing demonstration of the capabilities of the SQ system with logic assistance. The difference between SQ-W and "just plain SQ" is not slight. Listen yourself if you have any doubts.

*Circle 105 on reader service card*

## Dynaco Stereo 400 Power Amplifier



● THE Stereo 400 is Dynaco's long-awaited entry into the field of "super-power" amplifiers. It is rated (with the company's usual conservatism) at 200 watts per channel, with both channels driven into 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000 Hz. The maximum power outputs into 4- and 16-ohm loads are respectively 300 and 100 watts per channel. The intermodulation and harmonic distortion ratings are less than 0.1 and 0.5 per cent at any power up to 200 watts per channel over the full frequency range. Damping factor is greater than 80. With internal rewiring, the amplifier can also be used as a 600-watt (at 8 ohms) single-channel (mono) power amplifier.

The Stereo 400 is a large, heavy unit, measuring 17 inches wide, 14 inches deep, and 7 inches high, and weighing 54 pounds. Its front panel, finished in satin gold to match the other current Dynaco components, has individual input-level control knobs for each channel, an a.c.-power switch, and two pushbuttons that switch in low- and high-frequency filters. Red pilot lights serve as a.c.-power and HI-TEMP indicators. The latter is a thermal sensor that shuts down the amplifier if the output-transistor temperatures reach 85 degrees centigrade.

The remaining knob, labeled DYNAGUARD, controls the operating threshold of the Stereo 400's unique speaker-protection circuit. The Dynaguard switch settings are 20, 40, 80, 120, and OFF, the numbers corresponding to the nominal output wattages (with 8-ohm loads) at which the Dynaguard circuit comes into operation. The amplifier output voltage

is continuously monitored and integrated (separately for the two channels). When the selected power level is exceeded, the drive-signal level is automatically reduced to limit the output power. Unlike the separate power-limiting devices we have tested previously (March 1974), the Dynaguard has a response time that varies with the duration and nature of the overdrive. Short-term transient signals are passed unmodified up to the amplifier's full power-output capability, signals that slightly exceed the selected setting may require up to five seconds to activate the circuit, but severe overloads are cut back within a fraction of a second.

There are indicator lights on the front panel to indicate the activation of the Dynaguard circuits on either channel. Flanking the lights are two speaker fuses. Four power-supply fuses are inside the amplifier, and the a.c. power line is protected by a pushbutton-reset circuit breaker. The inputs and outputs are in the rear, overshadowed by the huge heat sink which occupies almost the full width and about half the depth of the amplifier. A space is provided for mounting a cooling fan to blow across the heat sink fins in case ventilation is inadequate or continuous high-power output is required. Dynaco offers an optional fan kit (\$30) that can be wired so that it is turned on by the power switch of the amplifier.

The Stereo 400 uses a heavy-duty, three-conductor a.c. line cord and three-prong plug. This is consistent with its considerable a.c. power consumption at full output, and the fact that few pream-

plifiers are designed to switch a load of this magnitude.

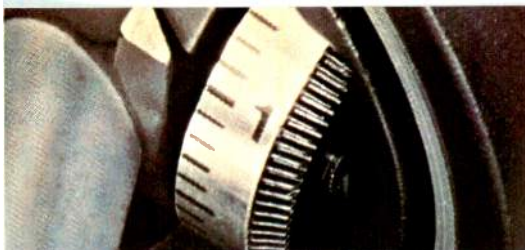
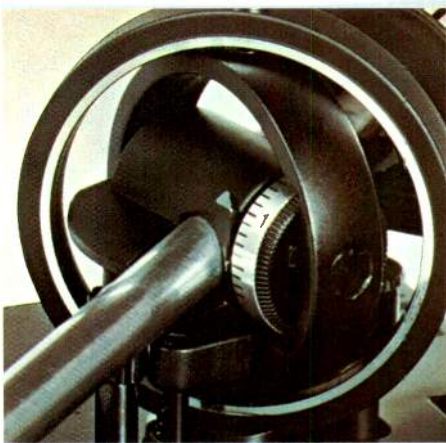
The Dynaco Stereo 400 is sold in kit form for \$449 and is available factory-wired for \$599. An optional front-panel meter kit is available (\$75) for indicating power levels from a fraction of a watt to the amplifier's maximum ratings on both channels. The kit can be installed on both kit and wired models. The wired version of the amplifier is also available with the two meters installed for \$669.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** We tested two Stereo 400's, one factory-wired and the other built from a kit. They proved to be as similar as two manufactured amplifiers from the same production run, with only minor and insignificant differences appearing in our tests. The following data specifically refer to the kit model, with the test results for the factory-wired unit appearing in parentheses when they differ.

With both channels driven into 8-ohm loads with a 1,000-Hz test signal, waveform clipping was observed on an oscilloscope at 248 watts per channel (243 watts for the wired unit). Into 4 ohms this increased to 352 (342) watts; it was 138 (157) watts into 16 ohms. At the rated 200-watt output, total harmonic distortion (THD) was 0.018 (0.08) per cent at 20 Hz, less than 0.01 per cent from 50 to 7,000 Hz, and 0.02 per cent at 20,000 Hz on both units. The distortion at lower power levels was quite similar. The lowest distortion reading (obtained at 100 watts output using a 1,000-Hz test signal) was 0.003 per cent—very nearly the residual level of our Radford test equipment! With a 1,000-Hz signal, THD was about 0.009 per cent from 1 watt to 220 watts output for both amplifiers tested. Intermodulation distortion (IM) was insignificantly higher on one channel of the kit unit, measuring between 0.04 and 0.05 per cent from 1 watt to well over 200 watts. On the other channel, and on both channels of the wired unit, IM was under 0.025 per cent up to 200 watts—typically 0.01 per cent or less. At low power levels (down to 5 milliwatts) the IM ranged from 0.046 per cent down to the

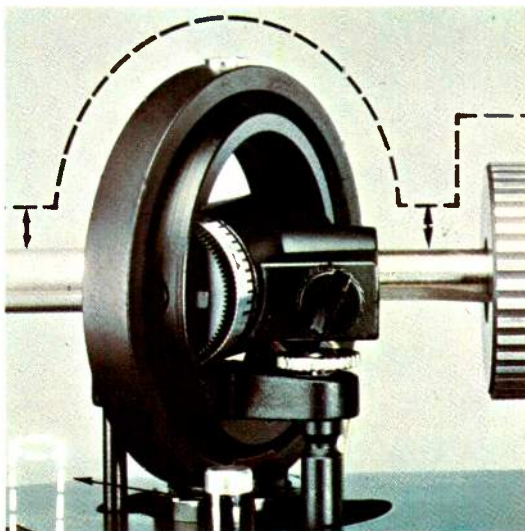
*(Continued on page 36)*

The gyroscopic gimbals suspension of the Dual 1218 and 1229 tonearms is the best known scientific means for balancing a precision instrument in all planes.



In all Dual models, stylus pressure is applied around the pivot, maintaining perfect dynamic balance of the tonearm.

Separate anti-skating calibrations for conical and elliptical styli achieve perfect tracking balance in each wall of the stereo groove.



The 1218 and 1229 tonearms track records at the original cutting angle. The 1229 tonearm parallels single record, moves up for changer stack. A similar adjustment is in the 1218's cartridge housing.

# Some of the reasons why other turntables don't perform quite like a Dual.

Because of the wide acceptance and acclaim Dual has earned over the years, especially among audio experts, many Dual innovations have understandably turned up on competitive turntables.

Still, to copy a Dual feature is one thing. To achieve Dual performance and reliability is quite another matter. A few examples will illustrate our point.

## True, twin-ring gimbals.

The 1229 and 1218 tonearms are centered and balanced within two concentric rings, and pivoted around their respective axes.

Vertical bearing friction is specified at 0.007 gram, and every Dual gimbal is hand-assembled and tested with special gauges to 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.

## Tracking perpendicular to record.

The CD-4 record is the latest and perhaps the most critical application of the need for identical tracking pressure

on each side wall of the groove.

This is best achieved by a tonearm that is perfectly balanced in all planes, with stylus pressure applied internally, around the pivot and perpendicular to the record. All Dual tonearms do this.

## Perfect concentricity assured.

The rotor of every Dual motor is dynamically balanced in all planes of motion. Each motor pulley and drive wheel is also individually examined with special instruments to assure perfect concentricity.

Any residual vibration within the motor is isolated from the chassis by a three-point damped suspension.

Finally, every assembled Dual chassis is "tuned"

to a resonant frequency below 10 Hz.

## The best guarantee.

Despite all these precision features and refinements, Dual turntables are ruggedly built and don't have to be babied. Which is why your Dual comes with a full year guarantee.

With all this — performance is still what counts. So we suggest you visit your franchised United Audio dealer to see for yourself that only a Dual performs precisely like a Dual.

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



Dual 1216 \$154.95

Dual 1218 \$189.95

Dual 1214 \$119.95

Dual 1229 \$259.95

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

CIRCLE NO. 50 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# KOSS INTRODUCES...

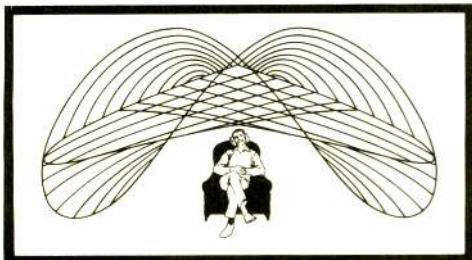


# PHASE 2<sup>TM</sup>



## The world's first stereophone with panoramic source controls.<sup>TM</sup>

Koss engineers have developed a second phase to stereophone listening. A new concept so exciting and so different from other stereophones, we called it Phase 2.<sup>TM</sup> Indeed, in either the +1 or +2 phase positions, you'll hear a Sound of Koss never before achieved in a dynamic stereophone. And you'll be able



to do things to your favorite recordings that, until now, only a recording engineer could do at the original recording session.

Slip on the new Koss Phase 2 Stereophone and flip the Phase Switch to +1. As you rotate the Panoramic Source Controls<sup>TM</sup> on each ear cup, you'll be drawn

closer and closer, like a zoom lens on a camera, to the center of the performing musicians. At the fully advanced position of both controls, you'll feel as though you're brushing shoulders with the performers. Indeed, the delicate, intimate sounds of breathing, fingers against strings, even brushes trailing over cymbals, become so clearly defined that you'll feel you're actually one of the performers. And by adjusting one control separately from the other, you'll be able to move from one side of the performing group to the other.

Now flip the Phase Switch to the +2 position. As you advance the Panoramic Source Controls, you'll hear a dramatic

expansion of the center channel on your recordings. You'll feel totally surrounded by the performing musicians. And as you rotate one Panoramic Source Control separately from the other, you'll feel as though you're sitting on the piano bench one minute and in the middle of the violin section the next.

All in all, Phase 2 will make listening to your favorite recordings a whole new experience. A panorama of new perspectives that creates a new intimacy and depth in your listening experience.

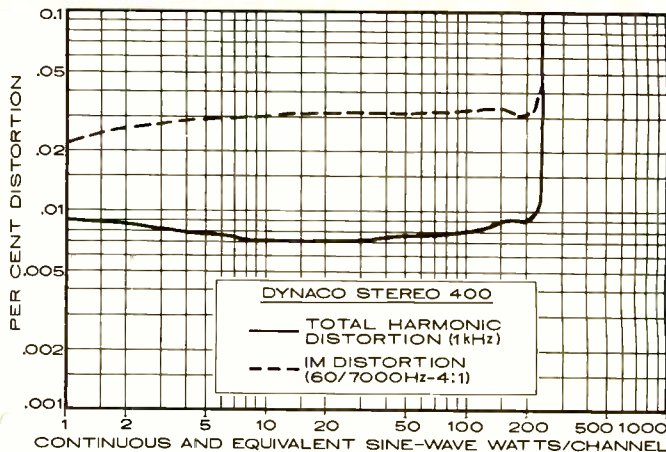
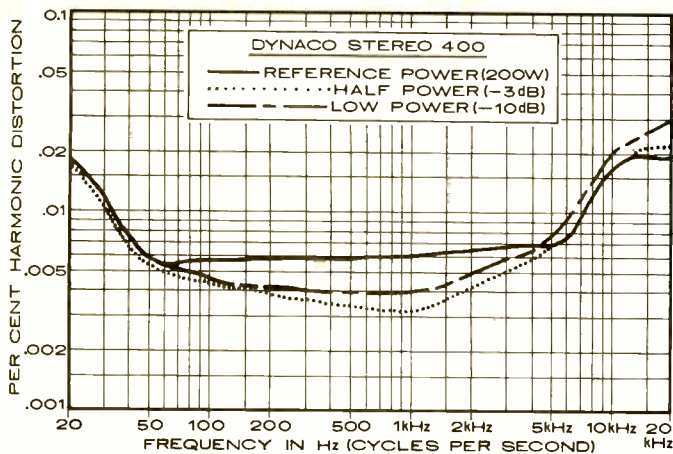
Ask your Audio Specialist to let you hear Koss Phase 2 Stereophones. And write for our free, full-color catalog, c/o Virginia Lamm. You'll find Phase 2 a whole new phase in personal listening.

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 **KOSS<sup>®</sup> stereophones**  
from the people who invented Stereophones.

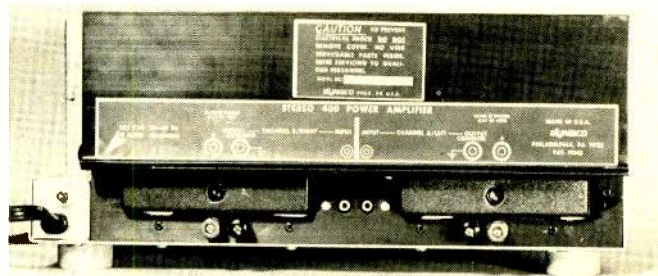
KOSS CORPORATION, 4129 N. Port Washington Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212 • Koss S.r.l., Milan, Italy • Koss Limited, Ontario.

CIRCLE NO. 18 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Note: the two sets of distortion curves above show the average of the two channels of the Dynaco kit amplifier. Test results on the factory-wired version of the Stereo 400 were quite similar.

The rear of the Stereo 400, showing the phono-jack inputs and the speaker connectors (five-way binding posts on standard centers). The space above the power cord will accommodate a side-mounted cooling fan.



0.003 per cent residual distortion of our test equipment.

An input signal of about 0.3 volt drove the amplifier to a 10-watt output, and the noise level was about -79 dB relative to that level (-87 dB on the wired unit) at any setting of the amplifier's input-level controls. The frequency response was just as flat as our test equipment in the audio range—within  $\pm 0.25$  dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz. It fell to -3 dB at 200,000 Hz and to -1.3 dB at our lower test limit of 5 Hz.

We measured the Dynaguard characteristics under various overdrive conditions. A 1,000-Hz signal was applied at a level which would drive the amplifier to 200 watts output without the Dynaguard switched in. When the Dynaguard selector was set to 20 watts (recommended by Dyna for most home installations), the full 200-watt output remained for 160 milliseconds, after which it fell rapidly to the "clamped" level, reaching it at 250 milliseconds. With lesser overloads (such as two to five times instead of ten times) the circuit took as long as a second to reach its ultimate power reduction. On the other hand, short transients (we used a single-cycle burst of a 1,000-Hz sine wave) were passed undistorted up to about 350 watts output, which could be considered as the amplifier's "dynamic power" output (Dyna, however, uses only continuous power ratings).

When the Dynaguard circuit limits the output, the waveform becomes a rounded square wave. This represents distortion, of course, but it is not audible with intermittent and moderate amounts of overdrive. However, when there was a

continuous large input signal that drove the amplifier past the Dynaguard settings (and kept the Dynaguard lights on continuously), a definitely distorted "mushy" quality resulted. The purpose of Dynaguard is to protect the speakers, which it does most effectively without reducing the short-term power-output capabilities of the amplifier. Dynaco reasons that a 10-dB peak-to-average power ratio, typical of most music on records, will be able to use the full power of the amplifier on peaks, while the Dynaguard system prevents the average power to the speakers from exceeding 20 watts.

With a 1,000-Hz test signal we measured the maximum sustained sinusoidal power output, into 8 ohms, at the various Dynaguard control settings. They were 13.8 watts (20-watt setting), 26.4 watts (40 watts), 58 watts (80 watts), and 95 watts (120 watts). The figures were virtually identical for both amplifiers. Since the Dynaguard lights may come on at power levels slightly under these, it is easy to gain an exaggerated impression of the average power output of the amplifier. Nevertheless, the lights frequently flicker on at rather moderate listening levels at the 20-watt setting without causing audible distortion.

The Stereo 400 is also protected against the possibility of unwanted d.c. output voltages arising from parts failure or miswiring of the kit. A relay disconnects the speakers if the d.c. level exceeds 0.5 volt. The relay can also be tripped by input switching transients or excessive signal levels, but it restores operation instantly when the overload condition is removed. It also provides a

few seconds delay when the amplifier is turned on, preventing transient thumps from being fed to the speakers. We measured less than 5 millivolts of d.c. offset in the amplifier outputs, and turn-on/turn-off transients under 100 millivolts.

Additional protection for the speakers is provided by the speaker fuses. Two sets are supplied with the Stereo 400 kit: a pair of 5-ampere devices for testing, and 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ampere fuses for ordinary use. We found the 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ampere fuses blew rather readily with medium-efficiency speakers at moderately loud listening levels. However, since they are standard-size fuses, slightly higher values can easily be substituted for speakers that have adequate power-handling capabilities (check with the speakers' manufacturer). Dynaco warns that the 5-ampere fuses should never be used with speakers, since they give no protection.

● *Comment.* Our kit-builder reports that the Stereo 400 went together in about fifteen hours with very little difficulty. The kit-builder's manual is exceptionally detailed and well-written, and includes a large four-color diagram showing the positions of all wires and components. Although the manual assumes some previous kit-building experience, we would judge that the project is not beyond the abilities of a beginner with normal mechanical aptitudes.

We cannot comment on the "sound quality" of the Dynaco Stereo 400, since it has no sound of its own. It is absolutely neutral and clean, and provides the large power reserves necessary for real-

(Continued on page 38)



## If Bach were alive today, he'd be recording on "Scotch" brand recording tape.

It's been said it would take a present-day copyist seventy years just to *copy* all the music Bach composed.

So, next time you record something take a hint from the master.

Use "Scotch" brand—the Master Tape.

The quantity of his work is staggering. But so is the quality.

And *that's* what made Bach the pro he was.

And that's why, if he were recording today, he'd be recording on "Scotch" brand recording tape. Just like the pros in today's music business.

After all, nearly 80% of all master recording studios use "Scotch" brand.



"Scotch" is a Registered Trademark of 3M Co.

## The Master Tape.

istic music reproduction in the home when using inefficient speakers. Nevertheless, as we verified by trial, even when deliberately overdriven it will not damage even a small, inexpensive bookshelf speaker if the 20-watt Dynaguard setting is used.

The amplifier gets only moderately warm in normal use, and we were able to trip the thermal cutout only after extended full-power operation. For professional sound reinforcement or live rock performances, installation of the optional fan would be advisable, but it is super-

fluous in home installations. The audio filters of the unit have 6- to 8-dB-per-octave slopes, with -3-dB points at 50 and 15,000 Hz. Apparently they were also meant for professional applications; so far as we can see they have no function in a home music system.

The Dynaco Stereo 400 is physically heavy and by no means inexpensive, even in kit form, but we do not know of any other amplifier that can outperform it within its power ratings. In our view, the near-total protection offered to the speakers, as well as to the amplifier's

own circuits, sets the Stereo 400 apart from its competitors. The multiple protective systems could possibly be compared to the practice of wearing both suspenders and a belt—unconventional, but guaranteed to avoid embarrassment. For example, we set the Dynaguard at 20 watts and *tried* to damage the Stereo 400 and the speakers, without success. This is no small achievement for an amplifier that can deliver—without distortion—short-term outputs as high as 350 watts per channel to 8-ohm speakers.

*Circle 106 on reader service card*

## Sylvania RQ3748 AM/FM Four-Channel Receiver



● **THE RQ3748** four-channel receiver is Sylvania's "top-of-the-line" model, with a high-quality FM tuner section and audio amplifiers rated at 50 watts per channel with all channels driven simultaneously into 8 ohms. It has an imposing appearance, measuring about 21 inches wide, 15 inches deep, and 7 inches high in its walnut cabinet, and weighing about 38 pounds. The front panel and knobs are satin-finished aluminum, contrasting with the black-out tuning-dial area. The AM and FM dial scales and the two tuning meters are lit in blue, with a choice of two lighting intensities selected by a front-panel pushbutton.

The operating mode and program source are selected by twelve pushbuttons in the lower right corner of the panel. The choice of inputs includes: AM, FM, PHONO, CD-4/AUX, and the TAPE MONITOR inputs from two four-channel (or two-channel) tape recorders. The output of the tape 1 deck can be dubbed onto the tape 2 machine. The available modes include MONO, STEREO, 4-CH DISCRETE, SQ MATRIX, SQ BLEND (which increases front-to-rear separation at some sacrifice of side-to-side separation), and LOUDNESS.

In the center of the control area is the master volume control (which affects all four channels) surrounded by four individual channel-level controls. The bass and treble tone controls are each a concentric pair for independent adjustment of front and rear channels. In the lower left of the panel are the power switch,

front and rear headphone jacks, pushbuttons for the high- and low-cut filters, and four toggle switches for separate actuation of main and remote front and rear speaker systems. There is a fifth switch to control the FM interstation-noise muting circuits.

The smooth flywheel tuning mechanism is operated by a large knob to the right of the dial area. Another knob, marked IMAGE ORIENTATION, permits the "front" channels to be located at any of four directions from the listener. This switch can be rotated in either direction in 90-degree steps. Below the dial scales, identifying words light in green to show the program source and the status of the two tape-monitor circuits. The zero-center FM tuning meter is supplemented by a meter that indicates the signal-to-noise ratio of the received broadcast instead of merely the signal strength. For AM reception, this becomes a conventional signal-strength tuning meter, and the illumination of the zero-center meter is turned off.

As may be expected, the rear apron of the Sylvania RQ3748 is fully occupied with the numerous input and output connectors and jacks, including separate terminals (normally connected by jumper plugs) for the preamplifier outputs and main amplifier inputs. There are two pairs of magnetic-phono inputs, selected by an adjacent slide switch, and an FM COMPOSITE output jack (anticipating a possible discrete four-channel FM adapter). The speaker connectors are insulat-

ed spring clips. A slide switch converts the output from four-channel to two-channel mode (the well known "bridging" system) for higher power-output capability in stereo operation.

The output stages of the RQ3748 are internally protected against damage by (1) electronic current-limiting circuits, (2) a thermal shut-off that operates if the output transistors get too hot, (3) four automatically resetting circuit breakers in the speaker outputs, and (4) a main a.c. power-line circuit breaker that can be reset by pressing a button in the rear of the receiver. There are no fuses as such. Two of the three a.c. convenience outlets are unswitched.

Space does not permit a full discussion of the circuit features of the Sylvania RQ3748. The main amplifiers are completely direct-coupled, and IC's are used for FM limiting and detection, multiplex demodulation, phono preamplifier, tone-control gain amplifier, and SQ matrix. The price of the Sylvania RQ3748, including cabinet, is \$599.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** In virtually every respect the RQ3748 met or surpassed its specifications, within the normal limits of measurement error. The FM tuner section had an IHF sensitivity of 2.1 microvolts ( $\mu\text{V}$ ) in mono, and the sensitivity for a 50-dB signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) was a very good 2.9  $\mu\text{V}$  in mono and 40  $\mu\text{V}$  in stereo. The automatic stereo-switching threshold was 4  $\mu\text{V}$ . At 1,000  $\mu\text{V}$ , the total harmonic distortion was 0.35 per cent in mono and 0.45 per cent in stereo. The respective S/N figures at that input were 70 dB and 67 dB. The capture ratio was an excellent 1 dB at 1,000  $\mu\text{V}$  (1.75 dB at 10  $\mu\text{V}$ ), and AM rejection was 45 dB. Image rejection was 56 dB, and alternate-channel selectivity was 59 dB.

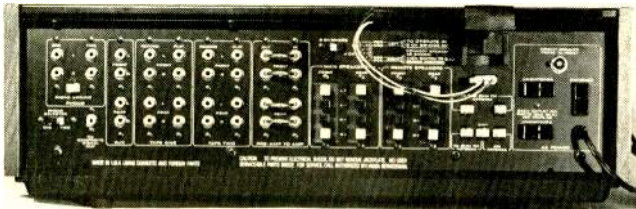
The FM frequency response with a stereo test signal was within 1 dB from  
*(Continued on page 40)*





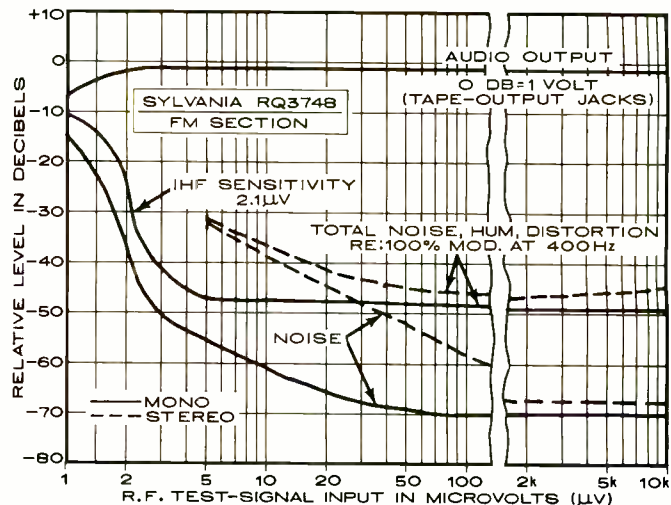
**Another  
Black & White,  
bartender.  
I have a heavy  
date tonight.**

**A  
Saint  
Bernard?  
Arf.**



The rear panel of the Sylvania RQ3748 is well organized. Instructions for connecting speakers in the two-channel "bridged" mode of operation are printed just above the speaker connectors.

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.



30 to 11,000 Hz, and was down 3 dB at 15,000 Hz. Channel separation was excellent, about 42 dB over most of the audible frequency range. It exceeded 40 dB from 75 to 13,500 Hz, and was better than 36 dB from 40 to 15,000 Hz. The FM muting threshold was 4 μV, and the muting action was extremely positive, with a slight click but no bursts of noise or modulation. The 19-kHz pilot carrier was suppressed by 70 dB in the audio outputs. The AM frequency response was down 6 dB at 37 and 3,700 Hz.

The audio amplifier section was particularly impressive. With two channels driven (in the four-channel mode), the output at clipping with a 1,000-Hz test signal was 78.5 watts per channel into 8 ohms, 83 watts into 4 ohms, and 44 watts into 16 ohms. In the two-channel "bridged" mode, the output into 8 ohms was a staggering 144 watts per channel with both channels driven. When we drove all four channels, the 8-ohm output clipped at 65 watts per channel, easily surpassing the receiver's 50 watts per channel four-channel rating. The 4-ohm power available was about 10 per cent higher.

Since forthcoming FTC regulations concerning amplifier power ratings will require that all four channels of a four-channel amplifier be driven simulta-

neously during tests, we are adopting that policy, effective with this report. We feel that for most four-channel amplifiers and receivers this is an unrealistically severe requirement, since most of them cannot be switched to a mono mode with all channels driven and will rarely, if ever, be presented with the same signal on all four channels. However, the RQ3748 does have a mono mode. With all channels driven at 1,000 Hz into 8-ohm loads, the total harmonic distortion (THD) was typically under 0.1 per cent from a couple of watts to over 60 watts per channel. The intermodulation distortion (IM) was nearly constant—between 0.3 and 0.4 per cent from a couple of milliwatts to over 60 watts per channel. At the rated 50 watts per channel and at reduced outputs, the THD was about 0.2 per cent at 20 and 20,000 Hz, but was well below 0.1 per cent over most of the audio range.

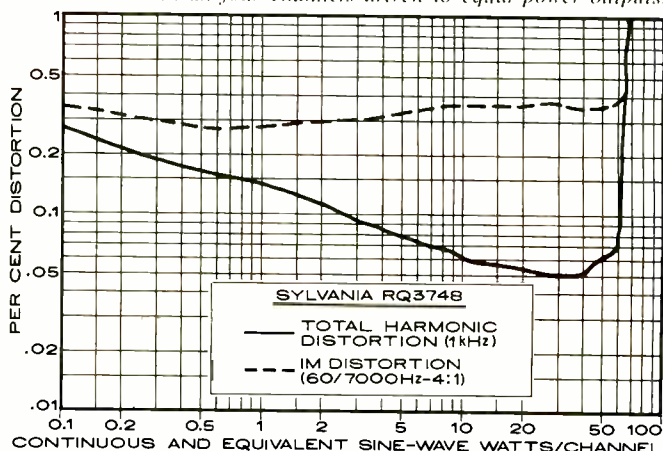
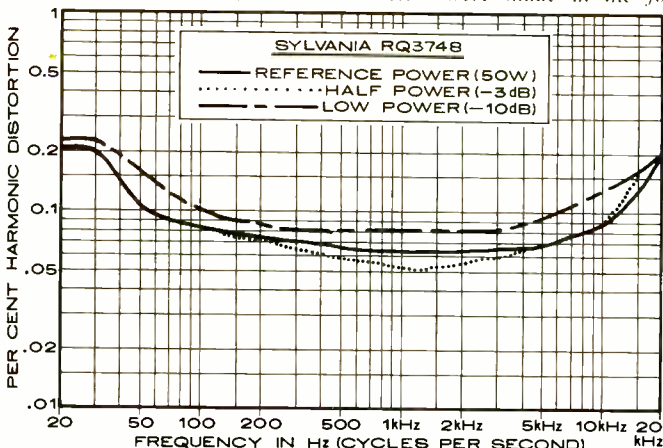
Through the AUX inputs, 67 millivolts was needed for a 10-watt output (with the channel-level adjustments at their mid-positions, which is about 4.5 dB down from maximum). The signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) was 73.5 dB. The phono sensitivity was 1.2 millivolts, with a noise level of -65 dB (mostly subsonic "bounce"). The phono-input overload margin was excellent; the pream-

plifier section accepted 115 millivolts before clipping. RIAA equalization accuracy was very good—within ±0.7 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz—and was affected only slightly by variations in phono-cartridge inductance.

The loudness compensation boosted the low frequencies, and the circuit can be adjusted to suit one's taste by varying the settings of the channel-level controls—a very desirable property. The optimum loudness compensation can then be coordinated with the master volume-control setting. The volume-control taper was too fast for our taste (the gain rose very rapidly at lower settings of the control), but the high- and low-cut filters were the best we have tested in years, with sharp "knees" and 12-dB-per-octave slopes. The filter responses were set to be 3 dB down at 65 and 8,000 Hz, and we determined that they actually were able to remove hiss and rumble with minimal effect on the program material. The tone controls had the familiar Baxandall characteristics, with a sliding bass-turnover frequency.

● **Comment.** The Sylvania RQ3748 is the most powerful four-channel receiver we have tested to date, and in its two-channel "bridged" mode it can supply  
(Continued on page 42)

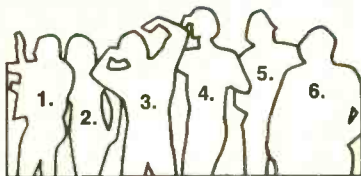
As stated in the text, the curves below were made in the four-channel mode with all four channels driven to equal power outputs.



# Can you spot the Camel Filters smoker?



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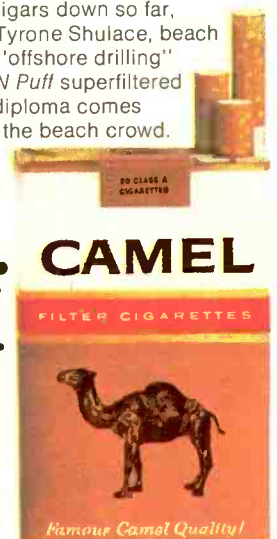


Almost everyone at the beach today has a gimmick. Find the one who doesn't.  
**1.** Nope. He's Harmon Nee. Gimmick: His singing voice,

that sounds like two chalk slates mating. Even his cigarette sings—every time he inhales, its multiple filter whistles "Dixie." **2.** Not Laura Enertia, beach queen. Gimmick: More movable parts than a Swiss watch. Has a waiting list for crew when she surfs. Smokes Ms. feminist cigarettes—whose taste just msses, too. **3.** Not "Bull" Gene Biceps. Gimmick: His waterproof makeup. Doesn't

always hold arms that way—this morning he mistook spray starch for his underarm deodorant. Smokes his fat cigars down so far, the ashes drop behind his teeth. **4.** No. He's Tyrone Shulace, beach pest. The "58" stands for his I.Q. (He thinks "offshore drilling" is something the Marines do.) Smokes *Huff 'N Puff* superfiltered cigarettes. You have to draw so hard, an art diploma comes with them. **5.** Right. He enjoys the beach, not the beach crowd. Needs no fads or gimmicks in his cigarette, either. Camel Filters. Honest tobacco. Good, rich flavor. **6.** Unidentified frying object.

**Camel Filters.**  
**They're not for everybody**  
 (but they could be for you).



Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

19 mg. "tar," 1.3 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report MAR. '74.

much of the performance (with inefficient speakers) formerly possible using expensive separate "super-power" amplifiers. The overall feel and handling of the RQ3748 were superb. We were immediately impressed by its smooth, noncritical tuning and positive muting system. The FM-dial calibration was about as accurate as the width of the illuminated pointer (about 150 kHz), and the S/N meter is an interesting feature that should be most useful to fringe-area listeners using rotatable antennas. It seems to give a more definite indication than the conventional signal-strength meter, although usually one would use

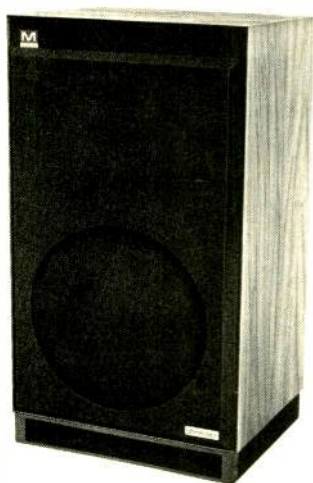
the zero-center meter for FM tuning.

The SQ matrix, which does not have logic circuits, provides a pleasing "surround" effect with SQ records, although like all such non-logic matrix systems it lacks specific directionality. The SQ BLEND mode was often able to make a worthwhile improvement in front-to-rear separation. Both SQ modes can be used for synthesizing rear channels from conventional stereo material. There is no RM matrix, and the RQ3748 does not have built-in CD-4 decoding circuits; however, the CD-4/AUX inputs are obviously intended to operate with an external CD-4 demodulator.

All things considered, the Sylvania RQ3748 is one of the most refreshingly "different" four-channel receivers we have seen. The differences are more than skin deep, although the external styling and many of the control functions are unlike those of other receivers. A very good FM tuner has been combined with an extremely powerful and versatile four-channel amplifier. The Sylvania RQ3748 is obviously well designed and thought-out and therefore deserves serious consideration by anyone shopping for a top-grade four-channel (or two-channel) receiver.

Circle 107 on reader service card

## Solar Ultralinear 1000 Speaker System



● THE Ultralinear 1000 two-way speaker system made by Solar Audio Products, Inc., of Los Angeles, employs a 10-inch woofer and two 3½-inch cone tweeters that operate simultaneously at all frequencies above the 2,600-Hz crossover. One of the tweeters has a conventional paper cone and center dome, while the other has an aluminum center cap. Their slightly different structures are said to provide better dispersion and a smoother overall response than would be obtained from two identical units.

The 10-inch acoustic-suspension woofer has 40 per cent of its cone area covered by a Neoprene disc which Solar calls an "inertial equalizer"; its purpose is to smooth the frequency response in

the area below crossover. Recessed into the speaker's front panel is a continuously adjustable tweeter-level control and a reset button for the system's protective circuit breaker. The conventional speaker terminals at the cabinet's rear have a phono-jack input installed in parallel with them.

The Ultralinear 1000 has a nominal 8-ohm impedance and is rated to handle up to 60 watts of power continuously. It is suggested that an amplifier of at least 25 watts per channel continuously be used to drive the speaker. The cabinet, which is covered with an attractive walnut-grain finish, is 27 inches high, 14½ inches wide, and 12 inches deep; the system weighs about 45 pounds and is meant to be installed vertically on its integral base.

The black sculptured plastic-foam grille can be removed easily, revealing a white speaker-mounting board contrasting with the black cones and the bright metal rings surrounding the tweeters. Without the grille, the system is attractive enough for many informal installations, yet with the grille in place it would be suitable for any style of living-room decor. Price: \$149.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The most uniform frequency response was obtained with the tweeter-level control set at maximum. The overall response was a good  $\pm 4$  dB from 36 to 15,000 Hz. The woofer output was almost perfectly flat

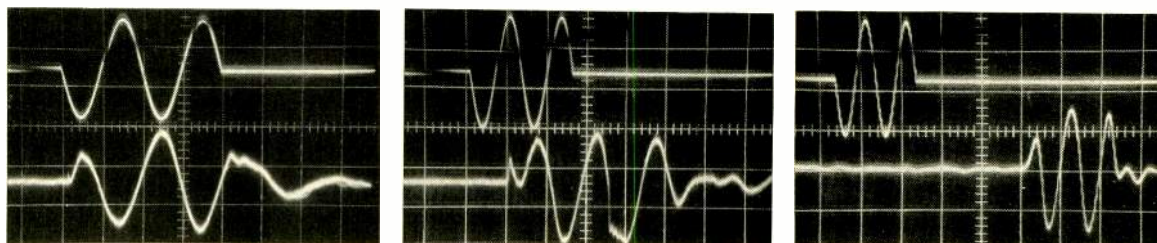
from 150 to 800 Hz. There was a broad 2.5-dB rise in the 60- to 90-Hz range and a rolloff below that. There was a slight irregularity in the 800- to 1,000-Hz region, and the output in the next two higher octaves was about 3 dB below the average woofer level, although response varied only  $\pm 1.5$  dB from 1,000 to 4,000 Hz. The output rose smoothly at higher frequencies, to a maximum of +2.5 dB at 10,000 Hz (relative to average woofer level), and fell off fairly rapidly in the highest audible octave.

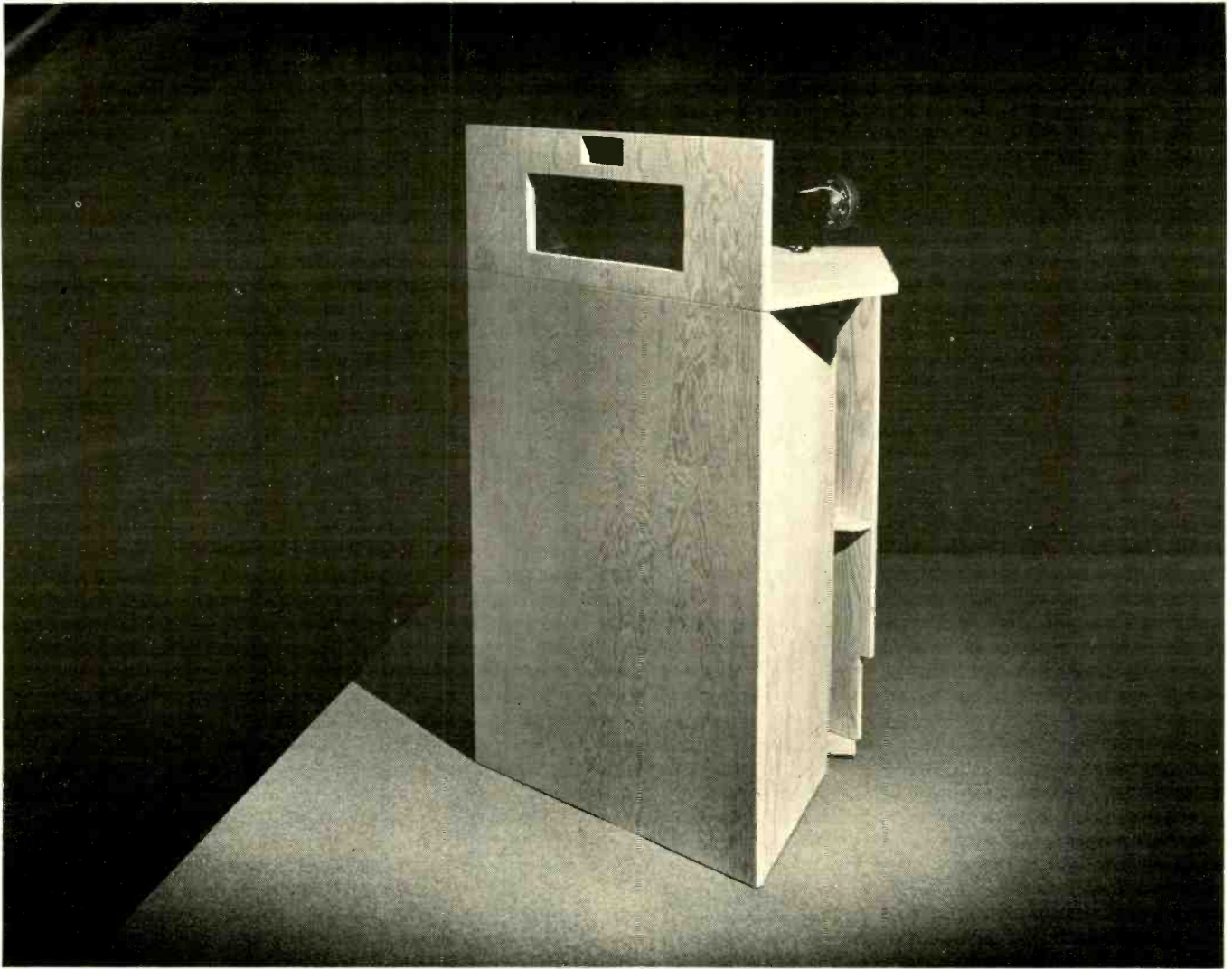
The Ultralinear 1000 is considerably more efficient than most other acoustic-suspension systems we have tested. Less than 0.4 watt was needed to produce a 90-dB sound-pressure level at a distance of 1 meter in the 640- to 1,280-Hz octave. With the speaker driven at a 1-watt level, the harmonic-distortion level was quite good: only about 1 per cent (the limit set by ambient noise in the test room) down to 60 Hz, rising to 3 per cent at 45 Hz, 5 per cent at 38 Hz, and 8 per cent at 30 Hz. At a 10-watt input, the distortion was 3 per cent at 50 Hz, 5 per cent at 45 Hz, and 17.5 per cent at 30 Hz. The system impedance was about 7 ohms in the 100- to 200-Hz range and above 5,000 Hz, with a broad rise to 20 ohms at 1,300 Hz and a bass-resonance rise to 30 ohms at 52 Hz.

The tone-burst response of the Ultralinear 1000 was excellent at almost all frequencies. We observed the usual

(Continued on page 44)

Photos show the Ultralinear 1000's tone-burst response at (left to right) 100, 800, and 5,000 Hz, with input signal above.

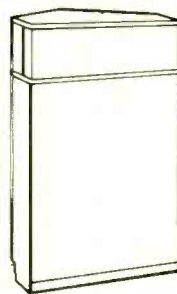




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\*K-D-FR or K-D-FB

\*\*K-C-FR or K-C-FB

You have to come to a decision between your ear and wallet when you buy a microphone. Take the AKG D-224E for example. It's one of the most advanced mikes made. Technically it's a "two-way" cardioid dynamic microphone. There's one mike element for highs. Another for lows. You get incredibly smooth, even recordings. And a lot of other features that will satisfy the most demanding ear. But it might shake up your wallet. It costs about two hundred dollars.

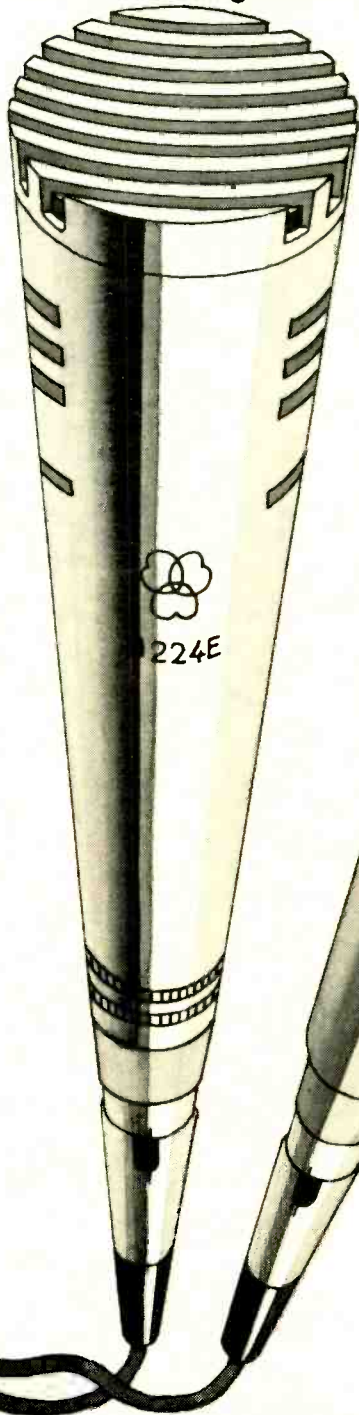
If you don't earn your living as a recording engineer, the AKG D-200 is for you. It's a "two-way" mike, also. And it's working recording wonders for thousands of part-time professionals in studios and on location, too. The AKG D-200 makes almost every ear happy. Wallets, too, at \$79.00.

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**If price  
is no object.**



**If it is.**



## Solar Ultralinear 1000 Speaker System . . .

(Continued from page 42)

"turn on" and "turn off" transients unavoidable in systems with conventional crossover networks, but these were of moderate amplitude and duration. At 800 Hz, where we had measured some irregularity in the woofer response, a full cycle was added to the end of a two-cycle burst, but even there we found no extended ringing.

● *Comment.* In our simulated live-vs.-recorded listening test, the Ultralinear 1000 proved to be an accurate reproducer. The major difference between its sound and that of the original source it



*The 1000's handsomely finished speaker panel. The tweeter-level control and circuit breaker are above the dual tweeters.*

was reproducing was a slight added warmth in the lower mid-range. This suggests that the ear, instead of sensing the 1,000- to 4,000-Hz "depression" as a decreased response, establishes it as the norm and instead interprets the 2 to 3 dB greater output below 800 Hz as an *increased* response. We could also detect a loss of extreme highs on sounds such as wire brushes and cymbals. Since this is apparently associated with the falling output above 14,000 to 15,000 Hz, it is not likely to be detectable in most listening situations.

The horizontal dispersion afforded by the dual tweeter array was audibly better than that of most single tweeter systems. With a random-noise test signal, we could hear the beaming from each driver as we moved past the front of the system, but the two merged smoothly to generate a wider polar pattern for a stationary listener.

Summarizing, the Ultralinear 1000 is a very good speaker system in its price class. We could not fault its audible sound quality in any respect (the minor response irregularities revealed in our tests are not at all obvious when listening to the system). Furthermore, many people may find the higher than usual efficiency of this speaker to be an important consideration in keeping the sound clean when amplifier power is limited.

Circle 108 on reader service card

# Another Milestone



Heathkit  
AR-15

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1967

1971

1974

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**AR-1500A SPECIFICATIONS — TUNER — FM SECTION (Monophonic):** Sensitivity: 1.8  $\mu$ V. Selectivity: 90 dB.\* Image Rejection: 100 dB.\* IF Rejection: 100 dB.\* Capture Ratio: 1.5 dB.\* Harmonic Distortion: 0.5% or less.\* Intermodulation Distortion: 0.1% or less.\* (Stereo) Channel Separation: 40 dB or greater at midfrequencies; 35 dB at 50 Hz; 25 dB at 10 kHz; 20 dB at 15 kHz. **AM SECTION:** Sensitivity: 50  $\mu$ V with external input; 300  $\mu$ V per meter with radiated input. Selectivity: 20 dB at 10 kHz; 60 dB at 20 kHz. Image Rejection: 70 dB at 600 kHz; 50 dB at 1400 kHz. IF Rejection: 70 dB at 1000 kHz. **AMPLIFIER — Dynamic Power Output per Channel (Music Power Rating):** 90 watts (8 ohm load)\*; 120 watts (4 ohm load); 50 watts (16 ohm load). **Continuous Power Output per Channel:** 60 watts (8 ohm load)\*; 100 watts (4 ohm load); 40 watts (16 ohm load). **Power Bandwidth for Constant .25% Total Harmonic Distortion:** Less than 8 Hz to greater than 30 kHz.\* **Frequency Response (1 watt level):** — 1 dB, 9 Hz to 80 kHz; **Harmonic Distortion:** Less than 0.25% from 20 Hz to 20 kHz at 60 watts output. **Intermodulation Distortion:** Less than 0.1% with 60 watts output. **Damping Factor:** Greater than 60. **Channel Separation:** Phono, 55 dB. **Output Impedance (each channel):** 4 ohm through 16 ohms. **Dimensions:** Overall — 18½" W x 5½" H x 13¾" D.

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# GOING ON RECORD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND  
*Music Editor*



## UNDERSTANDING MEDIA

I HAVE swiped the title deliberately, not because I have a bone to pick with Dr. McLuhan, but for purely practical purposes, because it has continuously been brought home to me that, at least in regard to the *presentation* of classical music, most people who make the decisions do *not* understand media. I will not go so far as to say that they do not understand music. That is possibly so, but it is beside the point. The point is that they cannot possibly understand what television, radio, and records are, or they would not use and abuse them the way they do.

I will not take this opportunity to decry television as a vast cultural wasteland. That is an often-made charge that is too easily refuted by long laundry lists of cultural programs that, on paper, look awfully good. Rather, I would ask how it is that the same box that brings us so cannily produced a dramatic series as "Upstairs, Downstairs" (which was, quite literally, *made* for television) can also bring us Bach's Mass in B Minor (last April 12) in so stultifying a production as to convince even those who know better that it is boring and overbearing music? Obviously, it was not the music that was at fault. And I doubt that it was the performance per se that immobilized the muse. Rather, I think, it was the total lack of understanding, on the part of those who planned and produced the musical film, of what television *is* that brought us to such a deadly end.

Television, for most people, is no more than a flickering screen about nineteen inches across ("measured diagonally," as the ads coyly put it) accompanied by whatever sound can be gotten out of an inexpensive four-inch speaker. With these, and with the proper program material, broadcasters are able to produce illusions sufficient to keep an adult mind occupied for hours at a time.

But even so simple a definition of the television experience implies limitations in the medium, as well as advantages,

and these should logically be taken into account by anyone who produces material for television. For example, high-level and complex instrumental and vocal sounds are not likely to emerge from that four-inch speaker with any great degree of clarity, balance, or coloristic effectiveness, and a large dynamic range is going to be compromised by compression even before the signal reaches the television receiver. Further, a reverberant acoustic ambience in the recording locale often adds to the aural confusion. Similarly, camera shots of distant vistas usually show up on a screen as mere unintelligible patterns, and the camera's panning of architectural details in dark church interiors conveys little to a viewer visually restricted by the size and light-intensity limitations of his television receiver. And if one is going to show closeups of an orchestra in action (even though such shots are among the most boring of images), surely it is wise to synchronize sound and picture, and not focus on the oboes when the trumpets have the solo line. One of the demands of synergism, after all, is the proper relationship of elements.

The fact of the matter is that the Mass in B Minor is probably not good television material to begin with, and certainly not in the kind of production that attempts to overwhelm us with the grandeur and the sanctity of the occasion. One may say, "Better a flawed production than none at all." But that argument is out of date. One *can* hear the Mass in B Minor almost on demand today; it is no longer a once-in-a-decade opportunity. And what of those innocents exposed to it for the first time on TV?

A television program is not a concert, not a theatrical production, not a record, not even a proper FM broadcast. Television is, for most people, an *intimate* medium, and it demands an intimate treatment of musical works that *can* be treated intimately. It also demands a visual element that is not only appro-

priate, but comparable in interest to the aural one. It rarely, in the programming of classical music, gets either of them. Aren't the same men who produce soap operas so cleverly available to lend their talents to real opera—and to chamber and symphonic music, cantata and oratorio, and solo recitals too? Television, after all, has its own technical potentialities, as the late Ernie Kovacs demonstrated almost weekly years ago. And, musically speaking, there *are* things that can pass successfully and effectively even through the needle's eye of a four-inch speaker.

A PHONOGRAPH disc is a medium too. As such it is not defined by its appearance (a twelve-inch circle of black plastic) but by what it sounds like to most people, how they listen to it, and what they do with it. This means that a quadrasonic record consists of two infinitely repeatable twenty-minute segments of musical time that exist in a room usually acoustically too small for the music, and in the form of sounds that are more or less, but generally rather vaguely, directional in two dimensions. A record is not a concert, not a theatrical presentation, not a telecast. Properly produced, it has the capability of modifying room acoustics and of creating an aural illusion that can almost, but not quite, overcome what the listener *sees*. (What he sees is usually his living room furniture.)

One of the limitations of the medium, then, is that the listener cannot visually verify what his ears *seem* to tell him is the directional quality of the music, nor can he support the aural illusion of being in a room of different acoustic qualities than his own by any visual means. But he can, on the other hand, distinguish fine details in the most complex music, and he has the opportunity to repeat the experience, in whole or in part, whenever he chooses.

Why, then, one wonders, do so many producers of four-channel recordings attempt to prove something that is exceedingly difficult to prove to the ear alone (and so easy to prove to the eye)—directionality—*particularly when that directionality is not a significant part of the music at all?* Why try to aurally convince someone he is in a concert hall when he knows visually that he is not? The advantage of a record is that it can create its *own* musical ambience. It should be enough that the ambience created is one proper and appropriate to the music, so that the listener can hear what he wants to hear without bothering himself with guessing which hall the producer thinks he is transporting him to, and in what row he is supposed to be sitting. The fly in the quadrasonic ointment is the software; it will not go away until the industry learns to understand this new medium better than recordings in it have so far demonstrated.





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\*Manufacturer's suggested retail price.

**GTE SYLVANIA**

# THE SIMELS REPORT

By STEVE SIMELS



## SATISFACTION REVISITED

THE Rolling Stones have taken an incredible amount of abuse lately, some of it warranted, so from the standpoint of a fan, it's nice to be able to report that their new movie, *Ladies and Gentlemen, the Rolling Stones*, is a really snappy piece of work. Of course, in some ways it's a bit dated, though not enough to be troublesome; as you probably know, it was shot at various stops along the 1972 tour (which makes it pre-David Bowie and the Glitter phenomenon, though you'd never know it to look at Jagger), and it was supposed to be released last summer with a soundtrack album due at the same time. Unfortunately, the group's ex-business manager Allen Klein still owned the copyrights to three or four of their older songs, and the Stones refused to deal with him. So, rather than delete the songs in question and muck up the flow of the performance, they scrapped the record and rushed out an inferior studio album to fill the gap, which you may recall was called "Goats Head Soup." However, last March they finally cleared up the litigation with Klein, and the flick is out, if a bit belatedly.

On a technical level it's nothing short of extraordinary. From beginning to end, it's been conceived as a two-dimensional Stones concert rather than a film; the illusion of actually attending a performance is close to overpowering. For starters, it's being toured just like an honest-to-god road show—after its initial two-week engagement in New York the whole shebang, including the complicated sound equipment needed to mount it, is simply being packed up and moved on to another one of eight cities (which means a lot of you are going to miss it, including some of my more mellowed-out acquaintances in places like Denver)—and the audio portions (in quad, with incredibly realistic spatial effects) are louder and clearer than what you would actually hear in person.

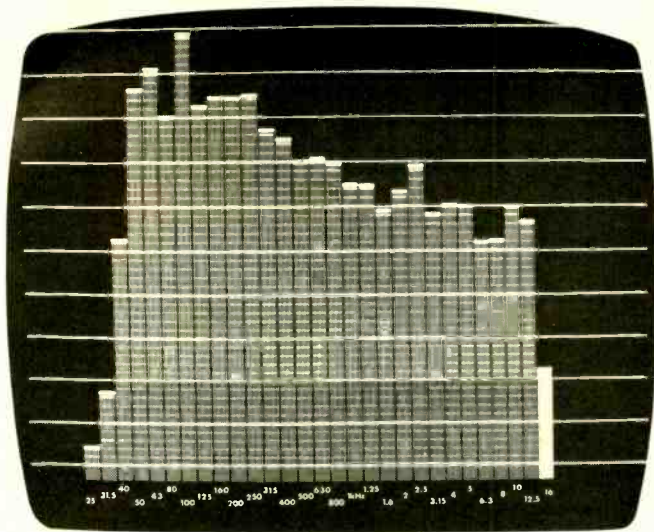
The presentation overall is just too

clever for words. When you walk into the theater, the lights are up, but occasional indeterminate flashes are appearing on the screen, and over the sound system you can hear crowd noises as well as the stage crew setting up, roadies carrying on, etc. Finally, the "real" house lights begin to dim, you can hear the Stones getting their two-minute warning, the amps and stage setup begin to come into focus, Chip Monck announces "Ladies and gentlemen, the Rolling Stones," the concert audience goes bananas (you can hear them on all sides of you, thanks to the quad setup), the house lights go down completely, the screen lights up, the Stones charge on, Jagger yells hello, and the opening chords of *Brown Sugar* begin. That particular physical rush is alone worth the price of admission. You will note, by the way, that there are no opening credits. And there aren't any at the end, either: when the band goes off, the screen goes black, but the crowd noises continue, so you actually get suckered into thinking that if you stay in your seat and cheer they might come back and do an encore. Just like real life. Haha.

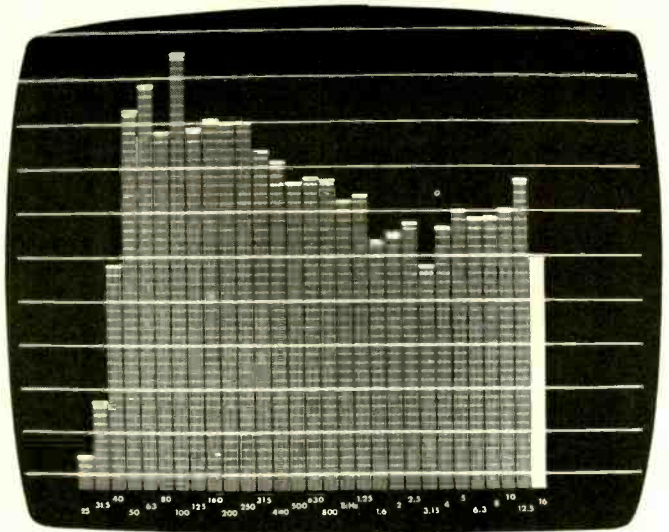
Cinematically, the shooting is nothing special, but for rock-and-roll it's probably ideal. Everything is very close on the band itself, and there's absolutely no camera trickery, no slow motion, split screens, or any of that junk. Wonder of wonders, they even photograph the right people during the solos. The lighting is gorgeous, cued beautifully to the music, there are just enough human moments (tuning up, cueing each other) and just enough show-biz slickness, and they all play to the camera really well, which of course contributes to the illusion. You get only one brief flash of the audience, so they really seem to be performing right at you; at one point, Jagger turns directly to the camera and asks if we can all hear in the back, and the balcony of the movie theater I was in responded with a resounding affirmative.

Of course, I have some niggling criticisms. For one thing, having seen one stop on that tour, and having heard bootleg tapes from some of the other nights, it strikes me that a few of the performances in the film are not quite as musically intense as they could be; *Tumbling Dice*, in particular, which I think is one of their most moving songs, has a kind of frantic desperation in the flick that rather disappointed me, and *Bye Bye Johnny* in this new version still impresses me as the only time they've ever fallen on their faces with a Chuck Berry song. For another, I think the critical slugging they've taken about their overreliance on the horn section (despite some marvelous sax work from Bobby Keyes) is by and large justified; they sound infinitely more professional with the added instrumentation, but that quality of ragged adventurousness that characterized much of their earlier work is somehow lacking. Finally, the mere existence of "Get Your Ya-Ya's Out," the live album from their 1969 tour and the greatest single live performance from any rock-and-roll band ever, necessarily forces the Stones into the unpleasant bind of having to compete with themselves; good as they are, some of the renditions in the film just don't measure up. Still, the new version of *Love in Vain* (done now as a slow soul ballad à la Otis Redding, with two gorgeous solos by Mick Taylor) and a reworked, show-stopping run-through of *You Can't Always Get What You Want* more than compensate. And, as always, there are moments . . . the kind of moments that have kept me a fan for all these years, despite their seeming uncertainty about their roles and what it means to be a Rolling Stone in 1974, and despite the generally middling and mechanical quality of the last album. Besides, Keith Richard (who looks the picture of health) is still the single coolest human being in the history of the planet, and his confreres remain the most visually breath-taking entourage in rock—or anywhere else, for that matter.

I WAS on the phone the other day with a certain younger rock critic (who shall remain nameless), and when I asked him if he had seen the film, he snorted "Those has-beens." Well, that's nonsense, despite the air of viciousness toward the Stones the rock press has manifested lately. If you don't believe me, then check the recent *Creem* readers poll, in which "Goats Head Soup" placed first as Biggest Disappointment—and still finished fourth for Best Album, with *Angie* an easy winner for Best Single. What that bespeaks, corny as it sounds, is a very real love and concern for the Stones from the rock audience at large, and the film, if nothing else, presents some cogent reasons why. Soul Survivors, indeed. So go. More than once, if possible.



Compare this one minute test of frequency response from "Theme from Shaft" on "Scotch" low noise tape . . .



with this frequency response on new "Scotch" Special Classic Series tape. White marker bar above indicates one-third octave between 12,500 and 16,000 Hz.

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Example: Compare the one minute test of frequency response on the B & K Analyzer above. On the left, we used "Scotch" low noise tape in the Wollensak 8075. On the right, new "Scotch" Brand Special Classic Series tape in the 8075 brings you higher frequency re-

sponse in the 16,000 Hz range. A frequency response never before reached in 8-track sound that equals the finest cassette quality and approaches reel-to-reel quality.

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(A)

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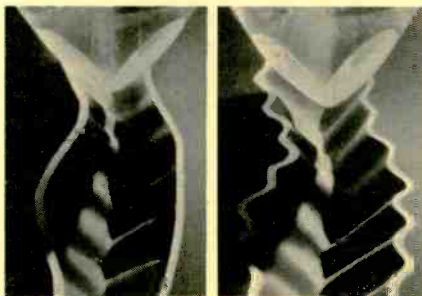
much greater than ever before. The left side of the groove possesses all of the information recorded on the left side of the room, and the right side likewise. The stereo signals for the front speakers are represented by the broad sweeps (figure B), and the special discrete high frequency tone carrier is represented by the wiggles on the same groove walls (figure C). This high frequency carrier centered at 30,000 Hz, demands a superior shaped stylus. The stylus must have low frequency tracking ability and high frequency tracing ability. In other words, it must possess traceAbility, Pickering's trademarked term for the ability to trace this difficult groove. The secret lies in the stylus assembly (and shape of the tip) which we call our Quadrahedral™ another Pickering exclusive which makes it

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(B)

(C)



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# THE BASIC REPERTOIRE • 171

By MARTIN BOOKSPAN

## BRUCH'S VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 1

THE fame of Max Bruch as a composer rests almost entirely on the first of his three concertos for violin and orchestra. A heady work in the great Romantic tradition, its composition occupied Bruch on and off for ten years, between 1857 and 1866. After the premiere, which took place in April 1866 in Coblenz, Germany (with Bruch himself conducting), the composer had many second thoughts about the music and undertook a nearly complete revision of the score. In the summer of 1866, after recasting it, he took the bold step of sending it to the reigning violinist of the time, Joseph Joachim, with a request for advice and criticism. The form, in particular, bothered Bruch: he was not at all certain that the highly rhapsodic music could be properly called a concerto.

Joachim returned the manuscript to Bruch with a great many suggestions—just as he was to do a decade later when Brahms asked him for suggestions concerning *his* violin concerto. To Bruch's question regarding the proper title for the work, Joachim replied that it was quite legitimate to label it a concerto: "I find that the title 'concerto' is fully justified; for a *Fantasia* [which Bruch had suggested as an alternative] the last two movements are too completely and symmetrically developed. The different sections are brought together in beautiful relationship, and yet—this is the principal thing—there is sufficient contrast." To further convince Bruch of the validity of the concerto designation, Joachim went on to point out that Ludwig Spohr called his much freer *Gesangsszene* ("In the form of a vocal scene") a concerto.

The revised version of the G Minor Concerto was first performed at an informal rehearsal in Hanover in October 1867, with Joachim as soloist and Bruch conducting. Three months later it was given its formal and official premiere in Bremen, and later that year it was published, with a dedication to Joachim. Some years later Bruch also dedicated his Third Violin Concerto to Joachim.

The First Concerto has an introductory section, and then the solo violin states the first principal theme of the first movement against a tremolo background. Underlining the priority of its role in Bruch's compositional scheme, the solo violin also first states the second theme. After a rather long quasi-de-



MAX BRUCH (1838-1920)

velopment section, the music of the introduction returns, and there is a short bridge section that leads to the slow movement. Three principal themes dominate the slow movement, marked *adagio*. One of them, stated at the outset by the solo violin over a hushed and muted accompaniment, has been called "a melodic glory of the nineteenth century." The last movement, *allegro energico*, opens with a brief prelude; the solo violin ushers in a rhythmic, march-like theme, and the orchestra introduces the contrasting lyrical second theme. There is a considerable development that works up to a vigorous and exciting concluding coda.

DURING the course of his distinguished career Yehudi Menuhin has made no fewer than *five* different recordings of the Bruch First Violin Concerto. His latest, with Sir Adrian Boult and the London Symphony Orchestra (Angel S 36920), is one of his most inspired re-

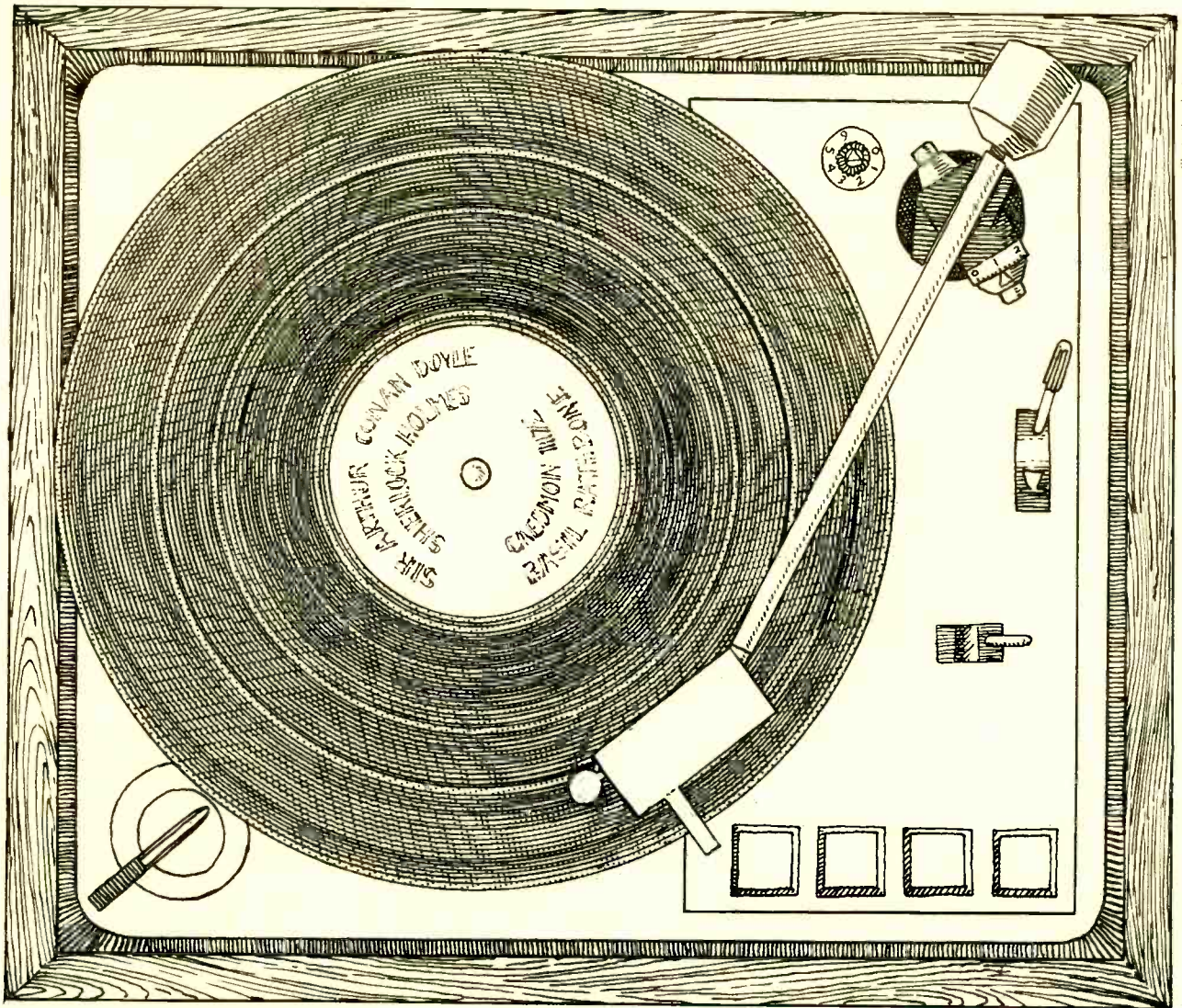
cordings ever. Both he and Boult bring a glowing warmth and dedication to the concerto that proves it to be a worthy companion of the greatest violin works in the literature—the concertos of Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn, and Elgar. The performance has breadth and a visionary quality, and the Angel production and engineering team has provided sound reproduction that is rich, full, and vibrant.

There are several among the other recorded performances that are also highly recommendable. The two most recent entries in the catalog are extremely satisfying performances from two of the younger violinists on the current concert scene: Kyung-Wha Chung (with Rudolf Kempe conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London CS 6795) and Itzhak Perlman (with André Previn conducting the London Symphony Orchestra, Angel S 36963). Both soloists bring blazing passion and commitment to their playing, both have superb conducting and orchestral support, and the recorded sound of both versions is up to the best contemporary standards. If I prefer the Perlman-Previn performance, it is because it displays a headier, unabashed, caution-thrown-to-the-winds Romanticism.

Four of the other available recordings are also notable. The Heifetz-Sargent version (RCA LSC 4011) has a special sheen and elegance to it, a security and assurance that are the essence of Heifetz at his best. Sargent is more the respectful follower than equal shaper (in contrast with both Boult and Previn in their conducting assignments), but this is in keeping with the overall attitude of the performance. The Ricci-Gamba (London CS 6010) and Stern-Ormandy (Columbia MS 7003) recordings also focus attention—in both performance and reproduction—on the virtuosity and brilliance of the respective solo violinists. The Laredo-Mitchell performance (RCA Victrola VICS 1033) is a smaller-scaled, more intimate account of the music than any of the other recommended versions, but it is nonetheless an estimable account that commands attention and respect.

Apparently there is only one available reel-to-reel performance—Ricci's (London L 80003). Even more than the disc equivalent, this performance on tape has an extroverted glow about it, owing to the spotlight microphoning of the solo violin. In the cassette field both the Perlman-Previn account (Angel 4XS 36963) and the Chung-Kempe version (London M 10266) easily win out over Igor Oistrakh's rather bland performance with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Oistrakh (Deutsche Grammophon 3580005).

\* 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. \*



Illustrations by Lincoln Perry

# All you need to know about **RECORD PLAYERS**

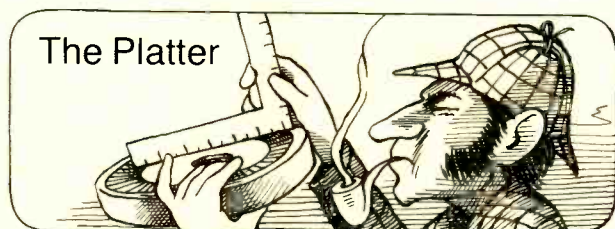
Julian Hirsch supplies the technical whys and wherefores, and Associate Technical Editor Ralph Hodges adds a gloss of buying guidance

**T**HE job a record player has to do appears to be so simple that one might wonder why it merits such special technological and design effort from equipment engineers. All the turntable need do is quietly rotate a record at a constant speed, usually  $33\frac{1}{3}$  or 45 rpm, and the tone arm's job is simply to support a cartridge in a given geometric relationship to the record surface in such a

way that the stylus exerts constant (and equal) force on the two walls of the V-shaped record groove as it is carried toward the center of the record.

If these basic requirements could be met as easily as they are stated, selecting a record player would be no problem at all. As you might expect, things are not quite that simple. Although no record player can be said to perform its function with *absolute*

perfection, in practical terms many of them are more than adequate for their assigned task. Nonetheless, each manufacturer goes to considerable expense to convince potential customers that *his* product offers unique advantages. To make an effective buying judgment, it is therefore helpful to understand exactly what is required of a record player, in what ways actual units may fall short of meeting these requirements, and the practical significance of the design and operating features of competing models.



The record is supported and turned by a *platter*, which is usually fitted with a rubber or plastic mat. Many mats contact the underside of a record over only a small area, through one or more raised ridges. Since it is necessary to support a record only at or near its circumference, some mats simply have three raised circles, for 7-, 10-, and 12-inch records, on the mat's surface. The less contact area, the less the likelihood of transferring dust and other foreign particles from the mat to the record.

The platter should, of course be *flat* (and so should the record, but that is another story). Any vertical "wobble" in the rotating platter will not only impair cartridge tracking, but may introduce a "wow" even if the record is flat and is played at a constant speed. A good platter is precision machined from a casting, usually of a magnesium or aluminum alloy, and is carefully affixed to whatever type of bearing assembly is employed. Sometimes the platter is made in two sections: a smaller inner hub that is driven (directly or otherwise) by the motor, and a larger outer ring which supports the record near the circumference and adds mass to the rotating system.

Although many people associate a high-mass turntable platter with low rumble and flutter, there is no necessary relationship between these factors. A relatively light platter driven by a small motor can have the same speed constancy (freedom from wow and flutter) as a heavier platter driven by a large motor. However, in general, the more expensive record players do have heavier platters.

Low-price record changers frequently use a stamped or drawn platter, which is lighter, has looser dimensional tolerances, and is less costly to manufacture than a machined casting. Some of these units *may* be quite satisfactory for a moderately priced music system, but they cannot be expected to match the more expensive players in freedom from rumble and flutter.

Today, almost all turntable platters are nonferrous, with only the cheapest being made from steel. Some phono cartridges have an appreciable external magnetic field, and this can cause an unexpected increase in vertical tracking force when a record is played on a steel turntable. On the other hand, the inexpensive magnetic and ceramic cartridges generally used with budget-price players will not usually interact with a steel platter.

● **ADVICE TO BUYERS:** The platters (or outer platter rings) of many turntables can be removed quite easily for inspection. This will enable you to judge the weight, if that is of special concern to you. Evidence that the platter has been rotationally balanced is often visible on the underside, in the form of little metal weights or asymmetrically drilled or punched holes. A practiced eye should also be able to discern whether the platter has been cast, drawn, or stamped. But usually it's not easy to tell much about how well a turntable will perform from its platter.

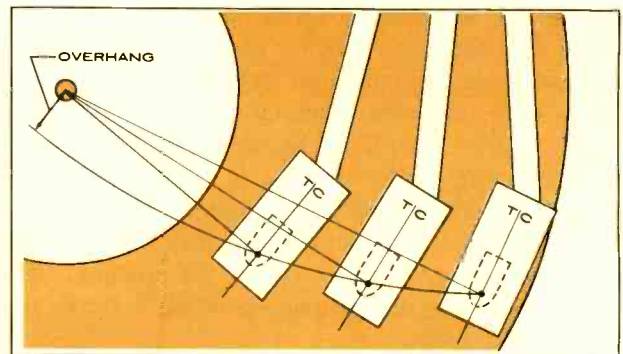
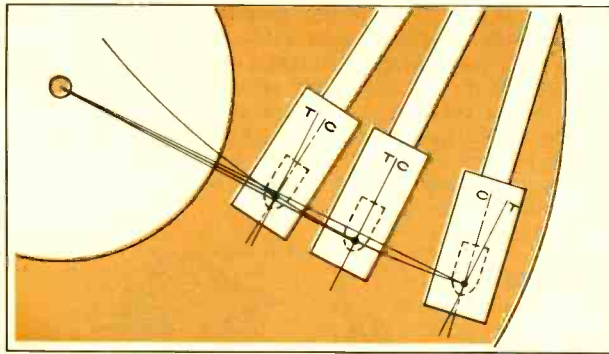


Several types of motors are in common use for turntables, including four-pole induction motors, hysteresis-synchronous motors, permanent-magnet synchronous motors, synchronous/induction motors, and servo-controlled d. c. or a. c. motors. The Hall-effect motors could be considered a subcategory of the servo motor. A synchronous motor operates at a constant speed over a wide range of line voltages and reasonable load variations. This does not assure that the record will turn at the *correct* speed, but merely that the speed will not change. Mechanical tolerances in the drive system can introduce a constant speed error, although this is usually negligibly small.

The speed of induction motors can be affected by power-line frequency and load changes and to a lesser degree by line voltage. However, these motors have good torque characteristics and are relatively inexpensive, making them the most popular choice in medium-price record players. The four-pole induction motor (operating from the 60-Hz a. c. line) turns at just under 1,800 rpm. A number of high-quality automatic turntables (that is, record changers of "high-fidelity" caliber) use induction/synchronous motors combining the starting and operating torque characteristics of the induction motor with the speed constancy of the synchronous motor.

"Rumble" is noise of very low frequency that is generated by mechanical vibration within the record player. When picked up by the phono cartridge and sent on to the amplifier, it can emerge (through speakers with bass response adequate to reproduce it) as a deep, low-hum accompaniment to any record played on the system. The major source of this rumble is the vibration of the motor, occurring at the rotation rate and its harmonics. For example, a 1,800-rpm motor can introduce 30-Hz rumble (1,800 revolutions per minute equals 30 revolutions per second) which might be audible through a good speaker system, and its multiples (60, 90, and 120 Hz) could be reproduced by almost *any* speaker. One method for eliminating audible rumble at its source is to use a low-speed, multipole motor. These typically operate from 200 to 600 rpm, and therefore have basic rumble rates from 3 to 10 Hz. These subsonic rumble components and their overtones are unlikely to be heard under any listening circumstances.

Obviously, since these motors run faster than the record-playing speed, they have to be geared down in some way. However, the ultimate in low-speed drive motors is the direct-drive system now used in several rather expen-



Figs. 1 and 2. The above diagrams show straight (left) and angled (right) tone arms playing a record. Tangency to the groove is achieved when the short, solid "tangent" lines (T) coincide with the center line (C) of the cartridge. The straight arm is properly tangent at only one point on the disc. The angled arm is able to maintain tangency with very little error over the full record side.

sive turntables. These use either multipole a. c. motors or special d. c. motors driven by solid-state electronic oscillators and servo amplifiers and operating directly at  $33\frac{1}{3}$  and 45 rpm. With basic rumble rates as low as 0.5 Hz, even the higher harmonics are well below the typical tone-arm/cartridge resonant frequency (10 Hz or so) and will never reach the amplifier, let alone the speakers. Although these direct-drive systems have a complex internal structure and associated electronic circuitry, their mechanical operating components have been reduced to the vanishing point (basically *one* moving part!). No vibration isolating mounts are used; the motor can safely be mounted directly on the base-plate chassis. Speed changes are entirely electrical, as are the vernier speed adjustments provided on these units. An intermediate form of turntable drive uses an electronically controlled motor operating at speeds from about 80 to 300 rpm and driving the platter through a conventional belt system.

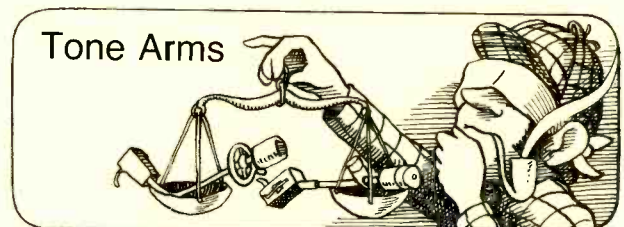
The transfer of rotational energy from the motor to the platter takes place in one of three ways: directly, through a flexible belt, or through a rubber "idler" wheel. Belt drives tend to reduce rumble and flutter (the belt isolates the motor vibration from the platter), but they have trouble transferring the torque necessary to operate a record-changing mechanism. Almost all automatic players therefore use an idler drive. In practice, a *good* idler drive can be nearly as good as a belt-drive system, although the rubber idler itself (an inexpensive item) may require more frequent replacement than a belt.

Changing the playing speed with any non-electronic system requires a motor shaft or an intermediate shaft with different diameters for each of the various speeds. The idler or belt is shifted mechanically to the appropriate part of the stepped shaft. The basic speeds of  $33\frac{1}{3}$  and 45 rpm are offered on all turntables. Some automatic record changers (usually the less expensive models) also have 78 rpm, and a few may still include  $16\frac{2}{3}$  rpm, for which there are virtually no records these days. Needless to say, these added speeds have no value to the great majority of users, who have only LP's or 45-rpm records in their collections.

Many high-quality turntables have vernier adjustments that permit varying the rotational speed several percentage points above and below the nominal speeds. This feature is of interest principally to those people who like to play an instrument to accompany a recorded performance, and who must therefore be able to adjust the record for exact pitch. Some of these units have illuminated

stroboscope markings, visible while a record is being played, which enable the user to adjust speed exactly.

● **ADVICE TO BUYERS:** A turntable should be quiet, smooth, and vibrationless in operation. Aside from making sure that the playing speeds you want are provided, you should also check the drive system used (belt, idler, or direct drive), since this will have a bearing on future maintenance. Work the speed-change switch and other controls several times to see that the turntable responds positively. The controls likely to be used while a record is playing should not jar the tone arm enough to cause jumping or groove skipping. If the turntable has a stroboscope indicator you can check to see that the speed doesn't change significantly under various playing conditions.



The vast majority of record players come with a tone arm already mounted, although a few expensive manual turntables are not so equipped, permitting you to choose among the several separate arms available. But whether the tone arm was built in by the manufacturer or mounted by you, the conditions governing its performance are the same. Usually the cartridge must be separately bought and installed by the user of *any* type of high-fidelity turntable, although a few record players—usually the more modestly priced automatic turntables in a manufacturer's line—are available with a cartridge already mounted.

The reason for the bent or curved shape of most tone arms is to keep the phono cartridge parallel to (or, more precisely, *tangent* to) the direction of the groove as it moves in toward the center of the record. Deviations from tangency give rise to a form of distortion that, while perhaps not as audibly serious as other types, is certainly worth getting rid of if possible. A straight arm pivoted at one end is geometrically incapable of achieving tangency except at one point on the record, and elsewhere it exhibits errors—called *lateral tracking-angle errors*—of considerable magnitude (see Figure 1). However, by forming an angle in the arm and carefully positioning it and the phono cartridge so that the arc described by the stylus "overhangs" the turntable spindle by a designated



amount, lateral tracking-angle error can be reduced to zero at two points on the record surface and limited to acceptably low values elsewhere (see Figure 2).

A few arms (see the Rabco devices and the new B & O player) achieve virtually perfect tangency with a motorized mechanism that drives the cartridge straight in toward the turntable spindle along a radius of the disc. As a side benefit, this also eliminates the "skating" force generated by the angular offset of conventional arms. However, these units are quite expensive and are not used in automatic record changers. An alternate arrangement is the sort of articulated tone arm used on some Garrard automatic players. It is pivoted at one end in the conventional manner, but the design is such that the angle of the cartridge holder changes as the arm moves across the record. Near-perfect tangency is the result, but the lateral friction of this type of arm may be higher because additional pivots are needed to alter the cartridge angle.

An error of only one-sixteenth of an inch in cartridge mounting, or in the arm-mounting position relative to the turntable center, can introduce enough tracking error to nullify the benefits of a good arm design. When installing either a tone arm on a motor board or a cartridge in a tone arm, use the templates or jigs supplied, and take the time to be as accurate as possible. Cartridge dimensions, including the distance from the stylus to the mounting holes, are not uniform throughout the industry. It is therefore necessary to provide a means for adjusting the cartridge forward or backward in the arm in order to achieve the lowest possible tracking error. There are usually slotted holes in the cartridge mounting shell by means of which the cartridge can be positioned longitudinally before the screws are tightened. A plastic jig is often supplied with the arm to locate the stylus correctly. Some turntables have a convenient post or index mark on the motor board for this purpose, together with an externally accessible screwdriver slot for moving the cartridge within the shell after it has been installed.

The friction in the tone arm pivots must be significantly lower than the forces exerted by the record on the stylus. Practically speaking, the pivot friction is unlikely to affect cartridge performance if it is less than 10 per cent of the vertical tracking force (the downward force of the stylus on the record-groove walls). All tone arms of reasonably good quality can meet this requirement with current cartridge designs. The actual pivot design may take various forms, including needle points, ball bearings, or knife edges. Some arms use a gimbal structure whose principal feature is the uniform freedom of movement it allows along different axes.

Most of today's tone-arm designs balance the mass of the arm and cartridge about the vertical axis by an adjustable counterweight in the back of the arm. Once the arm is "zero" balanced, the necessary vertical tracking force is added by a spring, another movable weight, or by a slight readjustment of the counterweight. All of these methods are equally effective. Some arms have rather impressive configurations of sliding weights on different axes to balance the arm so that the turntable can be tilted in any direction without affecting arm balance or stylus force (this is best accomplished when the vertical tracking force is provided by a spring). If your record player is to be operated in a yacht, airplane, or house trailer, this may be something to consider, but in most cases its importance is minimal.

The tone-arm (and cartridge) mass referred to the sty-

lus, together with the compliance of the stylus assembly, determines the low-frequency resonance of the arm. For minimum sensitivity to any possible record warp and full response to the lowest recorded program frequencies, this should fall into the 7- to 12-Hz range. Actually, there is little one can do about the frequency of this resonance other than to use a cartridge whose design is compatible with that of the arm. If common sense is applied, serious mistakes can be avoided. Do not try to use a new, expensive, high-compliance cartridge with an older, massive arm. Equally unwise would be the pairing of a low-price, stiff cartridge designed to track at 3 or 4 grams or higher with a low-mass, highly refined tone arm designed for the latest and most advanced cartridge designs. Some of the better record players and tone arms help to prevent this sort of mistake by having a vertical tracking-force adjustment limited to a maximum of 3 grams.

The accuracy of an arm's stylus-force calibration is often taken for granted, but my experience shows that many arms have errors of up to several tenths of a gram when balanced according to instructions. If you are operating a cartridge at 2 or 3 grams, this error is negligible, but at 1 gram it can be serious, especially if it is in the direction of too *little* tracking force. Always use an accurate external stylus gauge to set tracking force for a cartridge operating at less than about 1.5 grams.

● **ADVICE TO BUYERS:** Correct tracking force and proper mounting of the cartridge are crucial to the optimum performance of a tone arm. Try to familiarize yourself with these adjustments in the store, consulting the owner's manual (if available) to make sure the instructions are sufficiently clear and detailed. If at all possible, audition any turntable with the cartridge you are planning to use, and listen for any audible effects that might indicate record-warp instability or other problems with that arm-cartridge combination. Watching the stylus closely from the side as it plays a warped record is a good way to correlate any disturbances you hear with what is happening at the record surface.



The capacitance of the arm wiring and the cables connecting it to the amplifier is assuming greater importance with the advent of the CD-4 "discrete" four-channel record system. Most stereo cartridges are designed to give their flattest overall frequency response when loaded with from 250 to 350 picofarads (pF) capacitance (a typical range for most installations). However, there are certain cartridges that operate most effectively with 400 to 600 pF. If in doubt, check with the manufacturer.

Most magnetic cartridges designed for CD-4 service, on the other hand, require an absolute minimum of capacitance in order to maintain their output up to frequencies as high as 45,000 Hz. Special low-capacitance cables (about 50 pF) are supplied with some CD-4 demodulators to replace the usual audio cables from the tone arm. This still leaves the internal arm wiring to be considered, and many arms, especially if they were designed before CD-4 was introduced, have more than 100 pF in their

internal wiring. More recent designs, or the current production models of some well-established arms, may already have low-capacitance wiring or can be modified. If you are planning to go to CD-4, it might be wise to check with the manufacturer of your equipment on this matter. Our test reports on record players include a check of the wiring capacitance.

Even if you have a high-capacitance arm, CD-4 operation is still possible. There are several types of nonmagnetic CD-4 phono cartridges, and also at least one magnetic cartridge with low-inductance coils that does not require low-capacitance tone-arm and cable wiring.



Anti-skating devices are intended to compensate for the effect of friction between the stylus and the record in an offset arm. This friction adds a force tending to move the tone arm toward the center of the record, thus effectively increasing the stylus force against the inner groove wall and decreasing it against the outer wall. In other words, these skating forces add to and subtract from the vertical tracking force, in different directions. A cartridge operating near the lower limit of its useful range of force may have insufficient tracking force for the outer wall; the results can be heard as a shattering mistracking distortion in the right channel when playing heavily recorded passages.

In the absence of an anti-skating system, the vertical tracking force can be increased slightly to compensate for the effect. However, when the cartridge is to be operated at the lowest possible force, a good anti-skating system is a necessity. Its purpose is to supply an outward torque to the arm, equal and opposite to the skating force. Most arms have their anti-skating adjustment calibrated to match their tracking-force dials, since the two are related. Do not attach undue importance to these markings, although in most cases they are sufficiently accurate for their purpose and certainly better than nothing at all. There are so many variables affecting skating force (including stylus dimensions and shape, record material, tracking force, playing radius, recorded velocity, arm offset angle, and others) that precalibrated anti-skating adjustments can provide only a rough guide to the user.

One way to set anti-skating compensation is to play a record which is so heavily recorded as to mistrack and distort, and adjust the anti-skating until the distortion is equal in both channels. (STEREO REVIEW'S SR 12 test record has a suitable recorded passage and complete instructions for making the adjustment.) In the long run, this will ensure that record and stylus wear are equalized between the two channels. As has been implied, precise adjustment of the corrective anti-skating force is neither possible nor necessary, and therefore the manufacturer's recommended settings should usually serve.

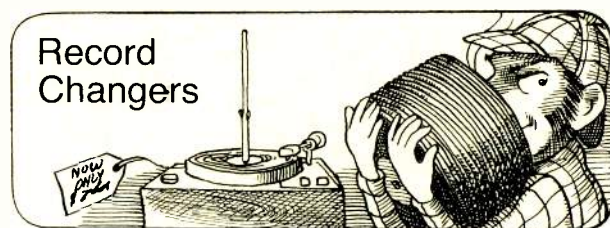
Successful anti-skating compensation methods include levers, hanging weights, springs, and magnetic repulsion. None appears to be fundamentally superior to the others.

Cueing, or placing the stylus in the desired record

groove, requires care, a certain amount of skill, and a well-designed finger lift on the tone arm. A heavy-handed technique may damage the delicate stylus structure, while too light a touch can permit the tone arm to escape your grasp and damage a record. Care and skill are within the user's control, but finger lifts vary widely in their usefulness. If the arm tends to "get away from you," possibly skittering across the record or dropping to its surface, the trouble may lie with a poorly designed finger lift.

Almost all record players and separate tone arms have a cueing lift device designed to raise and lower the pickup more gently than is usually possible by hand. Most have a damped descent, preventing an excessively rapid lowering to the record; the better ones are also damped during the lift (this prevents "bounce" that can sometimes shift the lateral position of the pickup). A common weakness of cueing systems is the tendency of the arm to drift toward the outside of the record during descent, under the influence of the anti-skating force. The better ones are free of this effect, but zeroing in on a precise portion of the record is usually easier by hand than with a cueing system, because of the difficulty of estimating the lateral position of the pickup when it is raised appreciably above the record surface.

● **ADVICE TO BUYERS:** Although most tone arms provide for some sort of anti-skating compensation, the effects of anti-skating—or lack of it—are rarely audible. Unless you are particularly charmed by the theoretical aspects of such features, it's probably wiser to be more concerned about the handling qualities and "feel" of a tone arm. Is the finger lift easy to use? Does the cueing function operate smoothly and without excessive "drift" when the arm is lowered or raised? Is the layout of the turntable such that there is easy physical and visual access to the arm when it is necessary to perform some delicate maneuver with it? In the long run, these purely practical considerations will probably prove more important in determining your ultimate satisfaction.



Although a record changer (or automatic turntable) is equipped with a special record-handling mechanism, this usually has no bearing on its basic performance as a record player. In most respects an automatic turntable can be considered simply a turntable and an integral arm installed together on a motorboard. Each of these components can be judged on its own merits, although the advantages of one must sometimes be balanced against the shortcomings of the other because the two are operationally inseparable.

The changer section of an automatic turntable really functions only at the beginning and end of a record. Near the end, the trip mechanism comes into play, usually by sensing the increased velocity of the pickup as it enters the eccentric groove around the label area. In most cases, the tone arm must apply some minimum sideways force to operate the trip mechanism. This force is scaled according to the normal range of tracking force for which the arm is designed, and in the better models it is a very small fraction of a gram. If the cartridge selected is suitable for the range of tracking forces recommended by the

### Test Record

THE STEREO REVIEW Model SR 12 Stereo Test Record has specially recorded bands for evaluating rumble, wow, and flutter without test instruments. It is a worthwhile investment, not only for testing a turntable in the showroom, but also because it permits you to check cartridge tracking with different stylus-force settings and to make an accurate adjustment of an arm's anti-skating device. Full instructions for using the SR 12 are supplied with the record, which is available for \$5.98 postpaid from Ziff-Davis Service Division, 595 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012.

automatic turntable manufacturer for his tone arm, the trip mechanism should never give any trouble.

The record stack on a changer (as many as six to ten discs) is usually supported entirely by the center spindle, which also contains the fingers and expanding collar used to release only the bottom record of a stack. The better players have interchangeable spindles: the tall automatic-play spindle that supports the record stack and a short manual or single-play spindle that rotates with the record. In every case, the longer automatic spindle is stationary, and many people are concerned that this might erode the record material around the center hole as the disc turns, enlarging the hole and perhaps permitting the record to shift off center on the platter. This may have been a problem in the days of 78-rpm records, which were made of shellac and were easily chipped or worn, but I doubt that any modern record changer will significantly wear the center hole of a vinyl record.

At one time it was widely suspected that changer mechanisms contributed to record-groove damage and wear. This supposedly happened because the change cycle dropped stationary records onto spinning ones, causing their grooved surfaces to grind together and imbed dust and similar debris in each other. While there was never any real evidence that this took place (the grooved portions of stacked records are kept from coming into contact by the greater thickness of material at the centers and outer edges of the discs), most manufacturers of automatic turntables have taken pains to make the changing cycles of their machines as gentle as possible. Today there is rarely reason to suspect normal changer operation of damaging discs in any way. However, it's certainly true that using the changer function of an automatic turntable prevents the cleaning of each disc side just before it is played, which many fastidious audiophiles prefer to do.

Record changers still are subject to occasional "hang-ups" of records on the dropping mechanism, usually because of out-of-tolerance record-hole or thickness dimensions. This fortunately rare occurrence is one of the small sacrifices one must make in exchange for what is considered by some to be the very considerable convenience of being able to play a number of records without interruption.

Several years ago, there was a world-wide standardization of the vertical tracking angle of phono cartridges. This is an angle determined by the internal geometry of the cartridge, as well as its mounting relative to the record surface. The effect of an appreciable vertical tracking angle error is to increase second-harmonic distortion, although errors of a few degrees are unlikely to produce audible effects.

Since the vertical tracking angle changes as the angle of

the tone arm to the record surface (as viewed from the side) changes, it varies during the playing of a stack of records. Manufacturers of automatic turntables recognized this "problem" and soon came up with a variety of "solutions." (The quotes are used because the "problem" is certainly the *least* of those affecting phonograph reproduction.) The typical solution involves permitting the operator to conveniently shift the vertical angle, switching it to the correct position for the center record of a stack in automatic operation or for a single record during single-play operation. This can be done either by moving the entire tone-arm pivot post up and down, or by simply tilting the cartridge forward or back on its mountings. Such features have another advantage in addition to their theoretical one. Certain cartridges are so shaped that the rear of their plastic bodies can contact the record under some playing conditions, and the extra "tilt" of the correction device can help the cartridge to avoid brushing against the record.

Even when playing single records, the automatic tone-arm indexing of a record changer can be a great convenience. Many people choose automatic turntables principally for that reason rather than because they habitually play stacks of records. The automatic single-play unit can often be an ideal solution in such a case. In effect, it does everything an automatic record changer does except change records! Pushing a lever or button starts the motor and indexes the arm, and after play is over the arm returns to rest and the motor shuts off.

There are several lesser degrees of automation in single-play turntables. Some, especially the less-expensive models, simply shut off without returning the arm to its rest. In general, there is as much variety in features, performance, and price among single-play automatic turntables as among record changers. Neither has any fundamental performance advantage, nor is there a clear division by price. Broadly speaking, you get what you pay for in either type. But of course you may find yourself paying a great deal more for a unit with only slight performance advantages.

● **ADVICE TO BUYERS:** Think hard about your record-playing habits before sacrificing any desirable turntable feature—even aesthetic appeal—for the sake of a changer mechanism that may never be used. Then, if a changer is still your choice, by all means run through a stack of records several times in the store, making sure that the number of records accommodated is sufficient, that the change cycle is gentle and not annoyingly long, and that there are no hang-ups in getting records on and off the spindle. Some automatic turntables are so designed that interrupting the change cycle—even grasping the arm when it is being indexed—will not harm the mechanism. This might be a feature worth looking into if there are small children around the house, or people who are uncomfortable with automatic devices.

### Performance Specifications



The principal performance specifications of a record player—rumble, wow, and flutter—must be carefully interpreted when comparing the ratings of competing units.

(Continued overleaf)

The various measurement techniques in current use can yield very different numerical test results on the same piece of record-playing equipment.

Rumble is measured as the low-frequency output of a phono cartridge playing a silent, unmodulated groove. It is expressed in decibels below a reference level—usually the output of the cartridge when it plays a groove recorded with a standard test tone through an RIAA equalizer. The basic measurement (unweighted) does not take into account the relative audibility of different rumble frequencies. For the same level, a 30-Hz rumble is far more audible than one at 20 Hz or lower frequencies. Rumble measurements are often *weighted* by reducing the effect of the frequencies below 500 Hz at a rate of 6 dB per octave of falling frequency to give a better correlation with subjective effects.

When comparing rumble measurements, be sure they were made in the same way. Unweighted rumble levels of -35 to -40 dB are typical of the better automatic and single-play turntables. A few of the best (usually those with the most sophisticated drive systems) can measure as low as -45 dB. Moderately priced record changers may have a rumble level of -25 to -30 dB, which does not disqualify them for use in a good music system. At a reasonable listening volume, with speakers whose response falls off below 50 Hz or so (and that includes most compact systems and many rather large ones), a -25-dB rumble level may not be noticeable.

Weighted rumble usually measures -50 dB or lower, with most good turntables being in the vicinity of -55 dB. The unique advantage of the direct-drive system, whose rumble is confined to subaudible frequencies, is illustrated by the fact that we have measured some of them (weighted) as being in the -63 to -66 dB range.

A similar situation exists with respect to the short-term inconstancies of platter speed called either wow or flutter (depending on the rate at which the speed wavers). The audibility of these phenomena is a function of their rate as well as their amplitude. Depending on the weighting curve of the measuring instrument and its other characteristics, the test results can vary over a wide range. Our own flutter measurements are essentially unweighted "rms" (the old NAB broadcast standard), and will usually produce somewhat higher numbers than those quoted for weighted measurements.

To further confuse the issue, individual listeners differ widely in their ability to detect—or to be annoyed by—flutter. Most audiophiles would not find 0.15 per cent flutter (as we measure it) particularly objectionable, unless it happened to occur at a low rate (wow). This percentage is typical of most of the best cassette recorders on the market, which are widely considered to achieve high-fidelity performance, as well as many of the medium-price automatic turntables. However, some critical listeners find even 0.1 per cent flutter quite noticeable, even though most people would consider it insignificant. The best turntables have flutter as low as 0.04 per cent, which is not likely to be detectable by any listener.

Most of the other record-player specifications and parameters (such as tracking error, pivot friction, arm resonance, anti-skating accuracy, etc.) have little or no effect on the *listening* quality of a record player much of the time. They are best judged subjectively, since measurements are either very difficult to make in a standardized manner, or they would not lend themselves to ready interpretation by the user.

● **ADVICE TO BUYERS:** The lack of standardization in rating systems and test procedures makes comparison of manufacturers' specifications a chancy thing. Therefore, along with test reports published in magazines such as this one, the shopper must depend upon in-store evaluations to determine the amounts of wow, flutter, and rumble in a turntable. Always use speakers with adequate bass response when listening for rumble. And again, try to use the phono cartridge you plan to buy since unfavorable tone-arm/cartridge combinations can generate spurious low-frequency signals or interact with the mechanical characteristics of a record in a way that may affect the performance of the rest of the system.



Although you will not be able to make any measurements on the turntables or arms on a dealer's shelves, there are a few simple operational checks that can help you to arrive at the right decision. Beforehand, it is a good idea to read a number of magazine equipment reviews to gain some background and general guidance, a "feeling" for the subject itself, even if you do not plan to buy one of the reviewed models. Basic questions such as cost, automatic *versus* non-automatic operation, and the like are matters of individual choice.

Unlike most audio components (the tape recorder being another exception), there is a close and direct relationship between a record player and its user. Regardless of how well it performs its basic functions, a record player that emits strange sounds, drops records with a resounding "thunk," or defies your best efforts to handle and use its tone arm without incurring stylus damage is not likely to prove satisfactory in the long run.

When you find a unit whose specifications and features appear to meet your requirements, practice *using* it in its various operating modes before coming to a final decision. Every record player has its own peculiar characteristics, as does every audiophile. Only grief can result from an incompatible pairing of the two.

It is easy to check the flutter and rumble of a turntable as it sits on the dealer's shelf. Take a copy of STEREO REVIEW's Model SR 12 Test Record to the store and use its special piano-recording section to evaluate the approximate flutter of a turntable. The quiet-groove band of this record is suitable for an audible rumble check, but you should also conduct a visual inspection of the speaker's woofer cone when playing this band at a rather high volume-control setting (and possibly with some bass boost provided by the tone controls as well). If you use a ported speaker system for the "visual rumble" test, it may reveal very low frequency rumble that might not be audible under showroom conditions. Try this test first with the best turntable on display (preferably one with direct drive) to establish the residual rumble levels in the record groove, and then try it out on the turntable you are considering buying.

Any listening evaluation of a record player should be made with ancillary equipment at least as good as that you plan to use at home. The better it is, the more likely it will be to reveal the true character of the record player—its strong points as well as its weaknesses.



The Philadelphia on stage at the Hall of Nationalities in Peking. The banner reads "Welcome, Philadelphia Orchestra, U.S.A."

## THE PHILADELPHIA IN CHINA

Eugene Ormandy describes some of his musical adventures in the Far Eastern wonderland

By Roy Hemming

**E**UGENE ORMANDY looked baffled. "How can they say that? How can they attack Beethoven and Schubert as 'bourgeois composers' or 'German capitalist composers'?"

We were talking in his Philadelphia apartment, and he was reacting to the latest fierce attack in the Communist Chinese press on Western music generally, and on Beethoven and Schubert specifically. Just a few months earlier, Ormandy had led his Philadelphia Orchestra on an unusually cordial and successful good-will visit to mainland China, the first since before World War II by American cultural representatives.

"I'm really flabbergasted to think that *anyone* could call Beethoven, that great revolutionary, and Schubert, who literally starved to death, 'capitalist' or 'bourgeois' composers! I couldn't feel more disturbed by such a remark," said the maestro who has

led the Philadelphians since 1936 and who has long been one of the world's most popular conductors.

"Now, I don't want to get into politics. As a musician, I don't like to express opinions about politics. But after the way Madame Mao *herself* spoke to me and the orchestra in Peking, and even got me to change our program so we'd perform Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony. . . ." Ormandy paused and just shrugged without completing the sentence.

Ormandy's dismay was understandable, for Madame Mao—or, officially, Chiang Ching, the wife of Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the People's Republic of China—is widely regarded as a leading architect of China's cultural policy, especially in theater and music. But now the attack on Beethoven and Schubert in China's official press also implied criticism of those in authority who

had sanctioned the visits of the Philadelphia Orchestra, as well as those last year of the Vienna Philharmonic under conductor Claudio Abbado and the London Philharmonic under John Pritchard.

I asked Ormandy to tell me more about Madame Mao's request for Beethoven's *Pastoral*. "Understand, *she* didn't ask for it directly," Ormandy replied. "That's not the way they do things in China. It began when we were driving into Peking from the airport on our first night in China. My wife and I were the number-one car of the motorcade. That car!—it had the appearance of a hearse rather than a limousine, with dark curtains on the inside. We were all just dead from the long flight across the Pacific, and it was about thirty kilometers into Peking. It took an hour. We moved very slowly. There were eleven cars and five buses behind us—a real pro-



The Ormandys are greeted in Shanghai by Sheng Hsu-san, leading member of the Committee for Friendship with Foreign Nations. The aircraft is a Russian Ilyushin.

cession. Since it was night, we couldn't see much.

"We had just been driving along a short time when this young man, a very nice person who was sitting next to our chauffeur up front, turned around and began speaking to me in French. After a few pleasantries, he asked me what I thought of the Sixth Symphony of Beethoven—did I like it?"

"You mean the *Pastoral*?" I answered. "I like it very much."

"Then, why don't you play it for us?" he asked.

"Why didn't someone ask me?" I said. All I could remember was how impossible it had been to get the Chinese to tell us before we left [the United States] what they would like to hear us play. For some reason, the Chinese will not answer your letters! It's really frustrating. So we had made up eight different programs from which they could choose, and sent ahead all our music for those eight programs. The Beethoven *Pastoral* however, was not included on any of them.

"So I said to this young man: 'There are nine Beethoven symphonies, four Brahms, forty-one Mozart, and 104 Haydn. We are just not prepared to play them all!'"

"Everything became very quiet. We changed the subject. About ten kilometers later, he says to me 'So, you like the *Pastoral* Symphony?'"

"Yes, very much."

"Do you play it in Philadelphia?"

"Every three or four years, at least. It's not the most popular of all

the Beethoven symphonies, probably because it has a sudden, soft ending. But every symphony of Beethoven is a masterpiece."

"Would you play it?" he asked.

"I would have been happy to play it if you had asked for it earlier. But I have no music."

"Oh, we can get you the music."

"For 105 men?" I asked.

"We have two orchestras. We can get both sets. If you will play it, we will get you the music."

"He seemed so determined that I realized he was not speaking for himself—that someone higher up had put him up to this. Who this someone

was, I wasn't sure at this point. So I answered: 'Sure, I'll play it.' We had rehearsals scheduled in China anyway—union regulations. I told him that if he could get us the music for the next morning's rehearsal, we would play it.

"When I arrived for the rehearsal, our librarian rushed to me and said, 'Maestro, you should see this music! It's in a terrible state! It's badly photostated, and the bowings for the string instruments are different from one another, and certainly different from yours! The men will never be able to read it.'

"He was right. It was in a terrible state. But I felt we must go ahead. So I said to the orchestra: 'Gentlemen, you will see the *Pastoral* Symphony. Nobody told me who's asking for it. I've tried to find out but couldn't. But the inference is clear—somebody very high. Now, can you read the music?'"

"Then came the expected answer: 'We can't read it! The bowings are different from yours.' Now, you know, I'm very proud of my bowings. I make my own bowings for every composition I perform. Other conductors let the concertmaster do it, but I prefer to make them my way—for every instrumental group. My great predecessor, Leopold Stokowski [conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1912 to 1936], believed in free bowings. But it's been a principle of mine for forty years to have very exact bowings.

"So I said: 'Gentlemen, you're

The Shanghai sightseeing program included a visit to the Children's Palace. With Ormandy here are the Philadelphia's Board Chairman and Mrs. C. Wanton Balis, Jr.



always talking behind conductors' backs, and when I insist on certain bowings I know that behind *my* back you talk about how Stokowski let you use *free* bowings. Well, today you can play it for me with free bowings, just as you want. But play the music the way I conduct it!" So I won the argument, and they played it marvelously at rehearsal." Ormandy smiled impishly. "Actually, in Beethoven there are not too many changes of bowing anyway!"

"After the rehearsal, I agreed to make the *Pastoral* the first half of a program that would include on the second half an American work. William Schuman's *New England Triptych*, and a Chinese work, the *Yellow River Concerto*. We were never sure from night to night what program would be scheduled, so we kept all our music in one folder.

"One night I arrived for the concert and—I can still see it, still *feel* it—everything was hush-hush. Nobody would say *anything*. I said to a translator, 'What's going on?' He turned away, saying 'I don't know.' I thought to myself, 'Yes you do, and I do too.'

"A Chinese official came in and said to my wife, 'Mrs. Ormandy, would you please come with me?' As she left, I walked to the edge of the stage area and said, 'Children, this is it!'

"I looked out through a little hole in the curtain just as Madame Mao and my wife, the American Ambassador to China and his wife, and the rest of the official entourage, Chinese and

*Philadelphia Orchestra members pose in front of Peking's famous Summer Palace.*



*Cruising down the river (Whangpoo), the orchestra members are treated to one of a number of informal concerts of Chinese music they heard during their brief stay.*

American, walked in. Everybody in the audience applauded like mad. Madame Mao was wearing a Western evening dress, which people told me they had never seen her do before. She had worn it in our honor!

"And yes, that was the night we were asked to play the program that began with the *Pastoral* Symphony—so, you see, it was for *her*. After the concert she gave a little reception for all of us. She couldn't have been sweeter or more warm and talkative."

ORMANDY had related the tale with great relish—with every quote by every person a testament to his photographic memory both on the podium and off. Barely pausing to catch his breath, he went on:

"There's so *much* I can tell you about China. They showed us so many interesting things—the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Ming Tombs, farm communes, schools. And the food! We had twelve-course suppers after every concert. And we had the wonderful feeling that anybody can go out alone, safely, with nobody shadowing him—which is something I can't say about Russia, or at least couldn't say about Russia ten or fifteen years ago when we were there.

"We were particularly struck by the honesty of everybody. I must tell you about one experience. One of the ladies in our group decided she no longer needed a certain piece of feminine underwear she had brought with her, and which she didn't want to carry any further. So she just left it

in her hotel room the day we were moving on to Shanghai. We're all downstairs, gathering in the lobby to leave, when a sweet-faced attendant comes rushing down waving this piece of underwear and asks: 'Which lady forgot this?' The poor lady was so embarrassed—but that's how they are in China.

"They are also very bureaucratic and protocol-minded. I had to be in car number one each time. The chairman of the orchestra's board was in car number two, and our president in car number three. And don't you think they liked that. We're all such close friends and would have preferred to be together. It got so that the board chairman would say to me, 'Ormandy, Number One, get into that car! We're all waiting!' So our last day in China, I said to him: 'Tomorrow you'll be number one again when we're back home.' It was all very good-natured kidding on our part, but the Chinese take such arrangements very seriously."

Our conversation turned to the *Yellow River Concerto*, the Chinese work that Ormandy performed in China and then recorded for RCA Red Seal on his return to Philadelphia last fall. The composer is credited as "The Central Philharmonic Society of the People's Republic of China."

"I checked on that, as you can imagine," Ormandy said. "I asked Yin Cheng-chung, the excellent pianist who played the concerto with us in China, 'Tell me, what is this business of a *committee* as composer?' And



While in Peking, orchestra members were able to visit the Great Wall, symbol of China.

we both started to laugh. Finally he told me that the first version was composed by Hsien Hsing-hai, a Chinese who was killed in the war against Japan in the 1940's. He had written it as a cantata for chorus and organ, dedicated to Mao. Then Mr. Yin—who, by the way, won second prize in one of the Tchaikovsky competitions in Moscow—wrote a piano version. The conductor Li Teh-lun orchestrated it and turned it into a concerto. Mr. Yin told me that where they didn't know which way to go, he put in cadenzas. The concerto has more cadenzas than I've ever seen in one concerto in my life—and the whole piece only takes 21 minutes!

"So really, the concerto is the work of three men—a committee of two reworking the original composition of the man who died. I don't know about the pianist, but Mr. Li, the conductor who orchestrated it, is very close to some of the higher-ups—so I guess that for political reasons they say it was composed by a committee.

"It is Western music, by and large—no doubt about it. When we first played it at Saratoga, Paul Hume [critic for the *Washington Post*] called it a first cousin of the *Warsaw Concerto*, which I don't even know. I'd call it a melange of Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Liszt, Grieg, a little Chopin, *everybody!* I can't tell you whether it's typical of what they're writing in China, as I didn't get to hear that much. But John Pritchard knew about it, and Abbado was also asked to conduct it when he was there. So I would guess that maybe

this is it. We did see a ballet, *The White-Haired Lady*, which was written for a regular symphony orchestra and was just full of marches—a propaganda ballet. I was told it had been revived especially for us and is not performed often. I don't know *what* their other compositions are like."

As a good-will ambassador for Uncle Sam, Ormandy is certainly one of the most widely traveled of American conductors. He is especially proud that he and the Philadelphia Orchestra were the first to visit not only China but also the first to visit England after World War II, South America, and some of the countries of Eastern Europe. "We *should* have been the first in the Soviet Union

too," he sighs, "but there was a problem—a union problem."

Which tour has given him the greatest personal satisfaction? He answers without hesitation: "As much as I loved every one of them, and as much as each one gave us different musical and personal satisfactions, the trip to China remains the highlight. We met people as people, as music lovers, as lovers of the orchestra, as lovers of our country. There were *no* politics discussed. We stuck to music."

How, then, does he feel about artists who *have* taken political stands in recent years, like Solzhenitsyn (the dissident Russian author who was recently expelled from the Soviet Union) or Rostropovich (the Russian cellist who has been banned from making any foreign tours for supporting Solzhenitsyn)?

"Rostropovich is a freedom fighter," Ormandy said. "He's a great man. I love him dearly. But when I am with him or Richter or Kogan or other Soviet musicians, we don't discuss politics. I had one experience a few years ago, however, with one of the nicest, finest persons of them all. He happened to be in Vienna at the same time I was, playing and guest conducting. By now, you probably know who I mean. I said to him, 'When are you coming back to play for us in America?' He answered, 'When you get out of Viet Nam.' So I said, 'But I'm not in Viet Nam.' I have nothing to do with that. That's a political and military business.' He stood firm. 'When you get out of Viet Nam, then I will come.' Frankly, I don't think he was giving me *his* opinion. He was telling me what he was

Over refreshments, Ormandy chats with Mme. Mao Tse-tung following a Peking concert.







Pianist Yin Cheng-chung is congratulated by conductor Ormandy following a performance of the Yellow River Concerto in Peking.

told by his government or by Madame Furtseva [the Soviet Minister of Culture]. Yet all during the Viet Nam war, Madame Furtseva herself came over to the United States and made deals with various concert managers for any number of exchanges!"

Are cultural exchanges worth the time and effort, I asked? "Absolutely!" Ormandy replied. "From the first day that President Eisenhower invited me to the White House and said that we must do something to erase the image we had as a nation of machinery and dollars and no culture, I have believed in these exchanges. We have the greatest orchestras in the world, and now other countries know that we do."

Not only is Ormandy proud of his firsts as a traveling musical ambassador, but also of his many firsts on records. According to an RCA spokesman, only one other living musician, the German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, has made more recordings than Ormandy. Ormandy began recording in the early 1930's with the Minneapolis Symphony. "I forget which was actually first, the Second Symphony of Rachmaninoff or the Polka and Fugue from Weinberger's *Schwanda*. But one of these early ones was the first recording ever of Schoenberg's *Transfigured Night*."

Since 1936 all but one of Orman-

dy's recordings have been with the Philadelphians—first for RCA, then for Columbia, and since 1968 again for RCA. Even those critics who do not always agree with Ormandy's interpretations of particular works invariably praise him for the mastery with which he has maintained the technical standards of the Philadelphia Orchestra—among the highest if not the highest in the world today.

Ormandy is one of the few major conductors who regularly record works that some people call "light music" or "pops." "Why not?" asks Ormandy. "There are only two kinds of music for me: good music and bad music. Clemens Krauss [late conductor of the Vienna State Opera], who was a friend of mine, used to conduct a New Year's program in Vienna of Strauss waltzes and so forth. It was a tradition there. 'You should try it in America,' he told me. 'It will sell out.' We tried it in Philadelphia, and he was right. It is now an annual event here, too. We do the symphonic waltzes, not the um-da-da, um-da-da thing. My concertmaster came to me after a rehearsal for one of these programs and said, 'Did you ever think we would give a concert where the Mozart G Minor Symphony was the easiest number on the program?' And it's true! Just because something seems light or pleasant doesn't mean it's not difficult to play well."

Ormandy agrees that Americans are less rigid than Europeans in what they like to listen to. That led me to ask him which aspects of his art he himself now considers to be fully "American" in contrast to those which might still reflect his European boyhood and his student years in Hungary.

"That's so difficult to answer myself. When I play Bartók or Kodály or Dohnányi, for instance, I play it *their* way, the way they taught me when I was a student. But when I play American music, I *feel* American. And in my heart, in my soul, I'm an American. I chose this country when I was fourteen years old. From the day I arrived here, I knew I wanted someday to be a citizen."

Eugene Ormandy has long ago become more than just an American citizen. Few musicians have stood as tall on the entire American music scene for the past forty years as he has. It's only natural that as his adopted country gets ready for the bicentennial of American independence, Ormandy should be busy planning the role he and the Philadelphia Orchestra will play in it.

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Roy Hemming, a writer and editor with Scholastic International, is the author of *Discovering Music*, which is scheduled for fall publication by Four Winds Press.

# TOURING WITH MELANIE

A candid account of her recent  
UNICEF-sponsored European  
concert tour

By Robert Windeler



Neuharwood Records

As a little girl in New York's Borough of Queens and later in South Jersey, she had gone out on Halloween trick-or-treating for the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. As a grown-up composer and singer of international fame she had sung her own song *Peace Will Come* in the General Assembly of the United Nations to an audience of U.N. employees from around the world. And now here she is at Kennedy Airport in a long peasant dress, yellow and summery, and a big, floppy straw hat, about to emplane for a ten-nation, five-week, fifteen-concert tour for UNICEF.

I had been engaged by UNICEF to organize and manage the tour, which meant I would be touring with Melanie. A third member of our party was Ed Kelleher, a free-lance writer representing Melanie's management and record company. It was not, however, quite the economy package it looked like. The concert Melanie is very different from the recording-studio Melanie. In the studio she has all the technical facilities, musicians, and backup voices any other recording artist employs. But on tour it is not *just* Melanie and her guitar: we picked up a four-man sound, light, and production crew in London, and they usually traveled separately to be at the next engagement site ahead of us.

● *Essen*, our first stop, is Germany's equivalent of, say, Pittsburgh. Once you've seen the Mercedes factory, that's it. A lot of friendly people, a lot of smokestacks, and apparently a lot of money, but little to *do*. Melanie, a compulsive shopper who can spend forty-five minutes totally absorbed by an airport cigar stand, couldn't even find anything to buy. So, outwitting boredom, we fly to Berlin for a couple of days, attend a party given by the Mayor at Charlottenburg Palace, and find some good restaurants. We wander into East Berlin, get lost, and cause a small and temporary heart flutter in diplomatic quarters. Back in Essen, the myth of German efficiency, technical prowess, and organization is destroyed by the crew in charge of a continent-wide UNICEF telethon which Melanie is to headline from Essen and Sammy Davis from Berlin. But the show finally goes on, overtime by more than an hour, and raises \$350,000. And, thanks to the Eurovision and Intervision networks, it has prepared the way for the rest of Melanie's tour.

When the show is over Ed and I discover what we are on the tour for: keeping people physically away from Melanie. Her fans are multitudinous, warm, loyal, devoted, and, most of all, *persistent*. They are fond of presenting her with wine, flowers, and candles (because of her song *Lay Down*)—all of which she appreciates—but in the hundreds they can be thoughtless and oppressive. Throughout Europe Ed and I will be variously referred to as Melanie's bodyguards, her gorillas, or simply as her men. Although she wants and needs to see people, especially at the time of coming down from a concert, there is little time for anything more than dressing-room socializing—tomorrow is usually another city, another country.

● *Frankfurt*. We drive down from Essen along the Rhine, stopping occasionally to sample the wine and the scenery. An over-enthusiastic Frankfurt promoter has hired four German shepherd dogs for crowd control. We never actually see the dogs, but Melanie says she heard one barking. Frankfurt is familiar territory for Melanie, who was a star in Western Europe long before she became known at home in the U.S. The audience is already

on her side, familiar with much of the old music and ready to absorb the new. They are raptly attentive throughout the whole concert, which runs, as usual, for about two hours straight, without intermission.

A shopping spree. There is nothing Melanie won't wear, nothing that doesn't look good on her, so she is likely to buy anything in sight. "I was feeling guilty about not having sent anyone postcards, so I went to this stupid little children's shop and bought everyone little washcloths and towels with animals on them. It cost me more to send them home than they were worth!" In the spirit of things, a stand-up lunch (bratwurst and french fries) in Frankfurt's main square.

● **Vienna.** The concert in the nineteenth-century Musikhalle near the Opera is sold out—including two hundred extra seats on stage. Eighteen-hour days and all the traveling seem to be keeping our weight gains down to about two pounds a day, but Vienna proves to be a trial—all those pastries, chocolate, Sachertorte, everything *mit Schlag*. . . . Remembering *The Third Man*, we go to the Prater amusement park to ride the ferris wheel used in the movie, said to be the largest in the world. It's big, but also slow and *enclosed*. Melanie craves excitement, so we head for the bumper cars. We get in three separate ones and start bumping away—and a ten-year-old kid bumps Melanie, whose mouth hits the front of the car, breaking one front cap and most of the tooth under it. We race to a dentist for repairs, going back the next morning for a Brand New Tooth before heading for . . .

● **Hamburg.** We arrive very late, with only two hours to go until the concert. Another sellout, more seats on stage, and Melanie makes it through the two-hour performance even though the tooth bothers her. As in every other city on the tour, the Hamburg fans call out for *The Bicycle Song*. Melanie holds out as long as she can, but finally relents and gives them what they want.

● **Bucharest** turns out to be one of the physical and cultural extremes of the tour (the other is Phoenix, Arizona). For Melanie Ann Safka, whose father and husband are Ukrainian, it is a little like going home, since Rumania has a great deal in common culturally with the Ukraine next door. There are two sold-out concerts at the State Radio and Television Hall, an active black market in tickets (and in currency), and an audience starved for Western entertainers. There is official and individual affection for America and Americans, but we sense an air of repression and "internal security." Getting here was half the hassle: three separate airlines from Hamburg, the last one being Tarom, the Rumanian national airline, whose seats have about half the legroom of any other carrier.

Our small band's seventeen pieces of luggage have expanded to twenty (apart from eighteen different Bedouin wedding dresses, one for each concert and reception on the trip and all made of heavy velvets and the like, Melanie has also brought all manner of boots and clogs and has been adding such "necessities" as a fruit and vegetable juicer—used exactly once—at stops along the way). We whisk through customs formalities under the auspices of the Rumanian UNICEF committee (inexplicably linked to the Young Pioneers and the Party), but we're delayed at the airport anyway by Melanie's discovery of the hard-currency shop's blouses and hats.

Assorted bodyguards, chauffeurs, and French and Eng-

lish interpreters escort us to the Hotel Plaza Athenée (!) in downtown Bucharest. Despite its name and glamorous past, it is gloomy and darkly institutional but staffed with cheerful Italian maids. We're restricted to Bucharest's city limits, as much by Melanie's continuing trouble with her tooth as by government regulations. After the two concerts, however, we have a four-day break, time for sightseeing and for shopping. "These are my people," Melanie keeps saying (although, when we get to Yugoslavia, unlike Rumania a Slavic country, she decides that *they* are really her people). At five-four and favoring her Italian mother, she looks very like many of the Latin-looking Rumanians and is often taken for one.

As at other points on the tour, Melanie doesn't know quite what to expect when she gets on stage, isn't even sure the audience (which has paid a top of \$1.50 for tickets) knows who she is or what her music sounds like. She is overwhelmed when the audience calls out songs—even



Melanie Safka, the star, and Robert Windeler, the author, on a UNICEF tour, stop at (where else?) an airport, smilin' through.

some of her obscure ones—it wants sung. She ignores the repeated cries for *Ruby Tuesday* (as she will till the very end of the tour, preferring to sing another Rolling Stones song, *Wild Horses*, as the only number not her own). "Until I got out there, I had no reason to believe they knew who I was," she remarks later, "but from the first minute on it was like any other concert—maybe even better." At the end, the Communist Youth Organization presents her with large baskets of roses.

Because of government regulations we are not allowed to take the concert proceeds out of the country and back to the United Nations. Instead, they go to the local UNICEF committee to be spent in Rumania for medicines which will be sent to Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Our translator disappears one morning mysteriously without explanation after we had become very friendly. She is replaced by a fellow teacher of English at a Bucharest high school who had never worked as an interpreter before and didn't know why she was summoned. Inviting people to visit us in New York (even on an official diplomatic level) brings only vague smiles and

changes of subject. Teenage boys hang around our hotel hoping for a few words with Melanie, but our chauffeurs, bodyguards, and interpreters are ever present in the lobby, and the boys don't dare venture in, even when invited. Teenage girls, who would make up the bulk of Melanie's most ardent following in other places, don't even show up outside the hotel.

● *Yugoslavia*, by contrast, seems almost like Western Europe. Yugoslavs are free to come and go as they will, even as students, but life has become so good for them in recent years and their country is so beautiful that most of them return; Melanie's first concert is in Zagreb, an old city in the North, and the second is in Split, a seaside

cert in her live-performance history, Melanie rushes into her dressing room, sheds her Bedouin wedding dress and returns to the "hall" in a bathing suit. With most of the audience still filing out, she jumps in. We later agree that Melanie can claim to have made a big splash in Split.

● *Antwerp* tempts us with more mussels, more french fries (with mayonnaise), more chocolate—and proves to be the only concert of the tour that is a financial failure. Melanie's first big success had been in Amsterdam five and a half years before, and since cultural leadership in this Flemish-speaking part of Belgium comes from the Netherlands, she had expected a rather larger audience than the nine hundred who showed up at the Queen



Peter Cunningham

*Autograph signing is an invariable ritual after a Melanie concert; this one was at the Metropolitan Opera on her birthday.*

town on the Dalmatian Coast used to tourists, if not to Americans. Split is spectacularly beautiful and blessed with plentiful fresh seafood—squid, fish, and mussels—and good local wine. At the 4 p.m. soundcheck, a ritual in every city we touch, we discover that the "concert hall" is the hotel swimming pool with a platform built out over it and folding chairs arranged in rows around it. The sound is deadened by the water, and the sound system we transported over the Alps and through seven countries is useless in bolstering it. The audience, in furs and jewels, is obviously affluent and older than any other on the tour; they don't know or seem to care who Melanie is—they are there because this is one of the main social events of the season. Melanie says they are "dead," and nothing she does seems to bring them to life. After the shortest con-

Elisabeth Hall (capacity two thousand). Melanie may not know—or care—anything about ticket prices or where money is coming from or going, but she knows an empty hall when it reverberates around her.

● *Amsterdam's* Concertgebouw, two days later, is not much better: just about half its seats are filled. It is particularly disappointing because of her previous successes here, but it provides another excuse, if one were needed (Dutch food is superb), to lose ourselves in eating. Melanie makes halfhearted threats about going on a grape fast and cleaning out her system, but always relents at dinner time.

● *Copenhagen* is disappointing audience-wise too, but

there are real professionals running the local concert arrangements, and the hotel has not only saunas but the perfect masseuses Melanie has been searching for since Essen (where a burly masseur had arrived in her room, an embarrassed victim of the language barrier). But for some reason she does not like Copenhagen, its people, or its shopping. A trip to Elsinore and a splendid country smorgasbord in perfect weather leave her unmoved.

Because we change cities on an average of every other day, we almost never get to see the local press accounts of our visits. But rumors are now starting to catch up with us, most of them either invented or fostered by the press. The accident in Vienna has been misreported: it was written—and made the wires that way—that Melanie had broken *two* front teeth in a discotheque (we *did* visit a discotheque in Vienna just after the concert, but that was the night before the accident)

● **London**, because of these rumors, made us just a little leary—the London press corps is the most dogged in the world when it comes to gossip and scandal—but our concern was unfounded. The press was as soberly respectable as the place Melanie was to perform in—Royal Albert Hall, the largest so far and completely sold out. She sings without a break, accompanying herself on acoustic guitar (of Spanish design and Swedish manufacture), holding an audience of over 4,500 in the palm of her hand.

Melanie says very little on stage, even in English-speaking countries. Her few spoken words are discussions with the audience of what songs she should sing, a comment or two on their preferences. She warms up for each concert, first in her hotel room, then in her dressing room, but she never goes on stage knowing any more about the concert's shape than the first song she will sing; in Europe, it is often *Some Say*. The second song could be any one of her repertoire (she keeps the names of most of them taped to her guitar), and the third is often *The Nickel Song*.

"Every time I go on stage I swear I'm never going to sing *The Nickel Song* again," she says, "I've really gotten tired of it. But then I get to that point in the program, after a couple of serious songs, when the audience and I both need that kind of light ditty. And so I always end up doing it. I used to like *The Bicycle Song* before anybody else did, but after it became a hit I got tired of it too. But I have to sing it because that's what people know best after *Look What They Done to My Song*."

As a kind of thank you for past and present enthusiasm in England, Melanie sings *Ruby Tuesday* instead of *Wild Horses*, and she ends with *Ring the Living Bell*. The encores, as usual on the tour, are *Together Alone* and *Lay Down (Candles in the Rain)*—the full version, which takes eleven minutes. In the States, her fans used to bring candles to the concerts to light them at the start of the song and then form a procession to the stage. In Europe, thanks to fire laws and perhaps language barriers, there are no candles, but the song still brings dozens of devotees out of their seats and down to the stage.

● **Manchester**, England, means the Hard Rock, a discotheque with a live-concert stage and 3,500 jammed into its seats. Melanie sings well, but her voice starts to go toward the end, and in the car driving back to London in the early morning hours she is sure she's lost it. False alarm: a few hours' sleep and she is fine again. Up in the morning and a flight to . . .

● **Toronto**, where the weather is freezing. Melanie promptly goes to bed for twenty-four hours, getting up only in time to tape the television show she is scheduled for. The taping runs late, and we get to the Toronto airport two minutes before departure of the only plane that can possibly get us to Phoenix in time to make the last concert on the tour. Knowing that she *has* to make this plane, Melanie reverts to the resourceful traveler she had to be when she toured the continent all by herself carrying only her guitar and one carpetbag containing two performance dresses. The customs agents and the airline are persuaded to let her, Ed, and the guitar on, and I take a plane to Los Angeles and another back to Phoenix with the twenty pieces of luggage, wishing it was the old days.

● **Phoenix** is another country, the tenth and last on the tour, and a sun-drenched anticlimax. After the concert, none of us have the energy to leave; five weeks on the road have taken their toll. So now it's breakfast (late) *al fresco* every morning, several swims a day, and short expeditions to local points of interest. Our driver on a rock-hunting trip into the desert (in a long white limousine) thought Marty Robbins the only musician worth talking about. Challenged, he asked Melanie, "You some kinda singer or somethin'?" Told about *The Bicycle Song*, which had also been recorded by a girl country singer, he hedged: "You wrote that? You're all right then." He and his white limousine were quietly replaced the next morning.

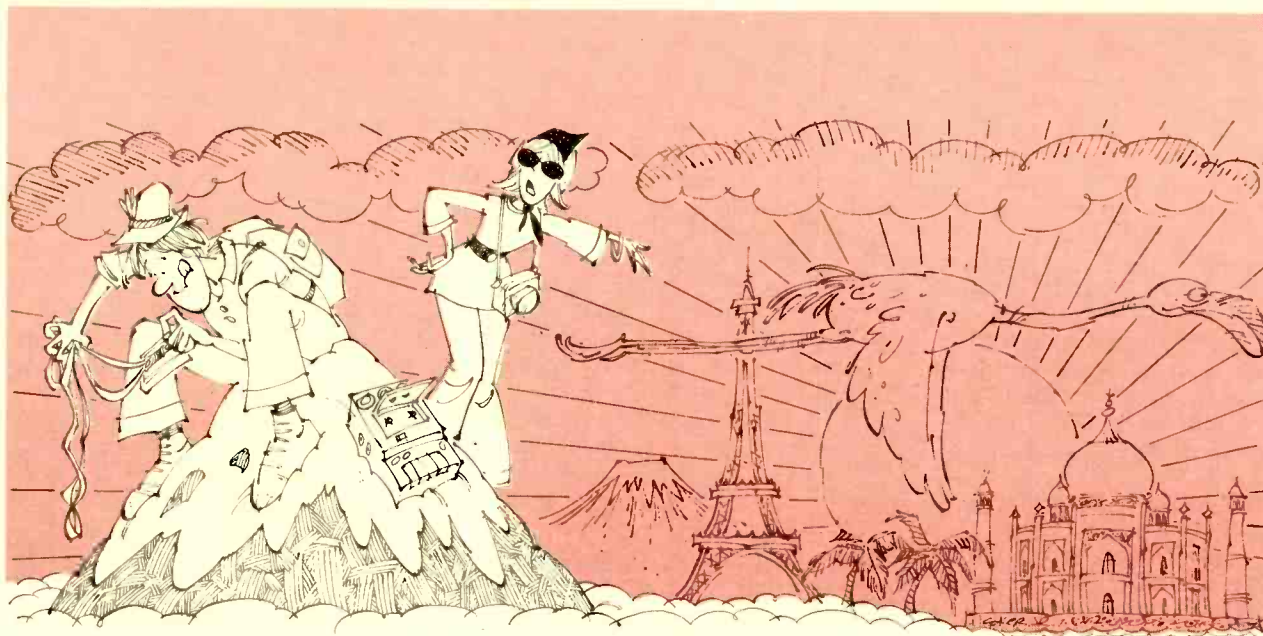
Rested, we split in different directions, Melanie going to Japan for several concerts, back again for Carnegie Hall, and then into seclusion for the adventure of motherhood (daughter Leilah was born October 3, 1973). Now it's on to New York's Lincoln Center and a new album [reviewed in this issue] of material she wrote during her confinement.

**I**N 1971 Melanie broke her contract with Buddah Records to form her own label, Neighborhood, with her husband Peter Schekeryk as president and producer. In her eight-year professional career Melanie has amassed a considerable fortune as both concert artist and recording star, but most of all as a writer. She says she has changed in those years: "I'm not nearly as bitter as I used to be. I'm much more tolerant of things that are going on around me. A lot of people come into contact with you for what they can get out of you. But I can stand the exploitation now and I know where it is—I don't have to keep looking for it anymore. It doesn't upset me or hurt me or take anything from me."

Popular music and lyrics have changed a great deal in those eight years too, she feels. "It's getting to be much less 'I've got to be free' and much more 'I love you; I need you.' My words are getting that way too. I write only what is happening around me; I don't start movements. There is a rest period going on, a real decline in energy as far as protest goes. There *was* incredible energy and a determination that things should change. It's as if there had been a secret battle somewhere, and nobody knows where or why, but we lost. I hope that something is going to get back on again."

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Robert Windeler, a Contributing Editor of *Stereo Review*, has also written articles for *People*, *Time*, and the *New York Times*, plus books on *Julie Andrews* and, most recently, *Mary Pickford*.



# TRAVELING WITH MUSIC

Out of his (sometimes) sad experience,  
Paul Kresh tells you how (and how not) to do it

“DID you pack the Chopin?” Emily was shouting from the other room. I was on my knees on the floor in the study, surrounded by piles of phonograph records. We were getting ready to leave that evening to spend a month on an island in the Caribbean, and I was thoroughly occupied in making the heavy decisions about what music we would take along. Emily likes to hear a little Chopin over a drink before dinner, and on our last trip I had left him out to make room for an extra record of Beethoven piano sonatas. But Emily prefers to take her Beethoven in the morning, preferably between the hours of breakfast and lunch, with the result that we had never gotten around to Beethoven at all the previous summer; usually we had been at the beach in the morning, or hunting in town for that special Spanish brandy someone wanted us to bring back for him.

“I’ll try to make room,” I shouted back, in answer to the Chopin question. But how? The vinyl-covered record case I had purchased for our trip could hold up to thirty-five albums; I had already jammed it as full as I could. What to eliminate? The Bruckner? The album of his Fourth Symphony took up three sides, with a Wagner program not really suitable for warm climates filling out side four. But I had read somewhere, in an article suggesting what

sort of music to take along on a trip to outer space, that complex, gigantic works, difficult to memorize, made the best sort of musical companions for a long journey. The Bruckner had to stay. How about Tchaikovsky? Did one really want to go in for all that sentimental, self-pitying stuff on a summer vacation? Maybe not . . . still, there were days. . . .

What about all those Impressionists? Our room on the island had a little terrace overlooking a bay, and I had visions of sitting there next to Emily some perfumed tropical evening when the scent of jasmine and honeysuckle is overpowering, listening to Debussy preludes or Falla’s *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* in a transport of dreamy delight. What to leave out, then? The couple of musical-comedy albums I had squeezed in as a concession to Emily’s request for “something lighter once in a while”? The Gershwin, for when I got homesick for New York? Certainly the Debussy and Delius were perfect for drowsy, relaxing afternoons after a full morning of sun and exercise. I pulled record after record from the case, and each pleaded with me not to eliminate its special and indispensable charms from our traveling library.

At that moment I came to a sudden and, as it turned out, rather costly conclusion. I would remove the albums from their jackets and pack them

in their inner sleeves only—thus making room for nearly a hundred records instead of the thirty-five you could force in complete with covers! Yet, in no time at all, I succeeded in adding so many operas, long symphonies suitable for space travel, and Mozart piano concertos to the collection, along with all three acts of Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* in case we craved a theatrical evening, that once again there was no room for the Chopin. With a wrench I eliminated two Tchaikovsky symphonies and squeezed in the two lovely Novaes recordings of the Chopin nocturnes somewhere between Chausson and Debussy. Before I could change my mind again, or Emily could think of another suggestion, I snapped the case closed. I then fastened the lock and carefully placed the tiny key to it in a little Doppel bag with my toilet articles, where it surprisingly turned up following an hour's search after we arrived at our destination.

Getting there that summer wasn't even nearly half the fun. In those days, the airlines still insisted on a forty-four-pound baggage limit for tourist-class Caribbean flights. Our phonograph at the time was a portable fitted into something that looked like a typewriter case. This cleverly designed object even had an extra white plastic speaker that could be removed and placed several feet away at the end of a thin wire for stereo listening. All set up, with the tone and volume controls carefully adjusted, it still didn't sound like much but it was certainly neat. Together with the record case, however, the weight of this paraphernalia came to more than fifty pounds when I stepped on our bathroom scale with the phonograph in one hand and the record case in the other (a bit of research that nearly ripped off one of my arms), subtracting my own weight to arrive at the total. I thought wildly of leaving all my clothes and traveling with only my camera and a bathing suit, but there were all those restaurants we wanted to try on the island, where, in those days, they required at least a jacket and sometimes even a tie.

**I** DON'T know when it was exactly that Emily and I decided we would take music along on our travels. It must have been sometime after the invention of the long-playing record because before that, with breakable shellac discs, each lasting no more than four minutes a side, one simply didn't think in such terms. I believe it was after we found out how little was to be expected from portable radios away from large cities. What might have clinched it was the hot day in July during a cross-country auto trip when we drove nearly eighty miles out of our way somewhere in the state of Indiana in order to hear the end of a Bach Mass that was being transmitted by a

not particularly powerful local university station which kept fading out unless you drove due south or stopped, turned off the motor, and endangered the car battery. But just imagine if you had the music programming under your own control! Since our first experiment, which involved about a dozen records and a viciously toothy little player that left its vinyl victims in no condition ever to be heard again, we have tried many methods and laid ourselves open for some curious experiences.

At that Caribbean hotel with the terrace where, one evening, we really did pass a dreamy half-hour listening to *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* while moonlight sparkled on the bay beyond, we found out how unwelcome is the music-lover away from home. There was a native steel band which used to shake the foundations of the building every night as it pounded out merengues and Calypso numbers for the delectation of guests who were learning to do the native dances, bellowing aloud as they forced their stomachs under poles stretched lower and lower for the "limbo." Try to read with that going on! We usually just gave up and went down and joined the festivities. The steel band went on playing tirelessly, audible a mile away, until nearly dawn sometimes, but nobody ever objected. Only when a gentle little Haydn quartet or a record of Schubert lieder was placed on our machine with the volume carefully kept to a whisper would a shout be heard to "turn that damned music down"—or a knock on the door would herald a rebuke directly from the management.

**O**NE summer we were on our way to Brazil aboard a freighter, a situation in which the hours during nights between ports pass slowly indeed, and a hundred records are not one too many. I tend to associate a piece of music with the place where I have heard it on the occasion when it most affected me, and I will never forget hearing Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony* one radiant afternoon as we ploughed through the South Atlantic—or listening to the *Bachianas Brasileiras* of Villa-Lobos on an evening when our ship sat in the Amazon River and we watched the bonfires and fireworks from shore as the local citizenry celebrated some patriotic occasion. We were traveling with a tiny Mercury portable then that could play on the ship's current or on its own batteries. (This machine had proved its worth during a trial run in the Virgin Islands when it kept right on playing on its batteries during the frequent outages then afflicting that locale. Sometimes it was the only thing on the island still functioning!) All down the coast of Brazil that little Mercury entertained us, reproducing, with no bass but a mel-

# CHOOSING A PORTABLE CASSETTE PLAYER

Your guide: Technical Editor Larry Klein

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IN buying a portable cassette player, it's safest to stick with a brand made by a manufacturer also known for his hi-fi components. The reason is simple: importers buy thousands of cassette players from small factories in the Far East, stick on an impressive-sounding "brand" label, such as Cassatron or Acculux, and then sell the machines in fast-turnover deals to discount houses and drug stores. A year later, when the unit develops troubles, neither the store (which has gone on to other one-shot deals) nor the importer (whom you probably can't find) is likely to be of help.

Now that I've convinced you to buy a JVC, Panasonic, Sony, Superscope, or similar *name-brand* unit, how much should you spend? Prices range from about \$16.95 to well over \$100. As with other audio equipment, in the portable cassette field you get just about what you pay for. The under-\$30 machines sound like pocket transistor radios, which is not surprising since their speakers and their power-output capabilities are about the same as those found in pocket transistor radios. As the price goes up, the built-in audio systems get better, and so do the speakers. For some reason, the size of the speaker, in and of itself, is no indication of how good the sound is going to be. The factor that does seem to correlate with sound quality is power output. This will range from about 200 milliwatts to about 1½ watts—the higher, the better.

To provide a standard of comparison, it would be worthwhile to listen to some of the larger, over-\$100 units. You may be pleasantly surprised by their tonal quality. You need not worry about higher output using up the batteries too fast, because the tape drive takes so much more power than the amplifier that this is not a factor worth considering. In any of these units, however, the louder you play, the greater the battery drain.

You should pay attention to the kind of batteries a cassette player uses. The longest life is provided by standard size D cells, but this gain is at the expense of greater weight. Most portables use C cells, which are a good compromise between weight and life. The so-called penlight cell (AA) has the shortest life of all, and machines that use them should be avoided, except for "pocket" portables.

To check the sonic qualities of a portable, use a well-recorded cassette (preferably one you have made yourself on your home deck, if you have one) with a good mixture of music that includes both high and low frequencies. Make sure to include some solo piano, guitar, or harp music. Avoid having a

salesman demonstrate a machine with its own demonstration cassette because these cassettes are carefully programmed *not* to reveal any playback faults that may exist. When making playback-quality judgments, it's best to operate the unit on batteries rather than on a.c.-line power if that's the way you will use it most of the time.

If for some reason you expect to be listening to tape while you are in motion, you should check the machines you are considering for tape-transport stability. With your test tape playing, swing the machine around or move it gently up and down to see whether you get a wow or flutter quality in the sound. Some players will probably be better than others in this regard, just as some machines will be better than others in speed stability and smoothness while at rest. Here's where the solo piano or guitar section of your test tape will be particularly helpful, since these instruments show up tape flutter or other speed irregularities.

There's an easy test for playback noise (hiss) in a machine. With the playback volume control set at a level that provides comfortable volume on the recorded material, listen for hiss in a blank section of tape. Some machines will be a lot hissier than others.

I am assuming that you will want your portable machine principally for playback of tapes made elsewhere rather than for recording and playing back its own material. However, some of the smaller and more expensive pocket-size machines will do a superb recording job with their built-in condenser mikes, even though their playback quality is quite limited. On the other hand, some of the larger machines which have better playback fidelity do not necessarily have quite the recording fidelity of some smaller units. Your choice depends on what your needs are.

There are several convenience features that may be important to you. For example, the tape counter found on the more expensive portables can be very handy if you've recorded a musical potpourri on a C-90 cassette and are trying to find a specific selection. You'll have to do the indexing in advance and on the specific machine you use for playback.

A battery-level indicator can be helpful in providing some idea of the amount of useful life left in a set of batteries. The standard carbon-zinc cells give some advance warning of voltage fall-off, but the more exotic long-life batteries tend to run out of juice rather suddenly. Better keep a set of spares with you at all times.

I don't see much advantage to rechargeable batteries for portables. If you want to invest in a rechargeable pack for your set, then keep a set of standard cells handy for use when the rechargeable runs out of juice. Recharging is *not* an instant process.

A tone control on a portable is a good idea—if it does anything worthwhile. Many such controls are only high-frequency filters, and the players they are built into seldom have an excess of highs to start with. When playing your test cassette, if the control can vary the sound from excessively bright to terribly dull, then you've found a good one because it will then be able to compensate properly for most cassettes recordings.

At present there's only one portable Dolby cassette unit available (it's a Sony), but that shouldn't stop you from buying Dolbyized tapes (or making them on your home deck) to play in your portable. If your cassette player lacks high-frequency response, the extra brightness injected by the Dolby encoding may add a bit of sorely needed sparkle. And if the sound is too bright, using the portable's tone control will tame it and simultaneously get rid of some hiss.

In addition to avoiding off-brand cassette machines (and, needless to say, cassette tapes), stay away from older models and used machines. Progress has been so rapid in cassette-machine design that a unit only four or five years old may be markedly inferior to a current model selling for the same price. For example, the better machines now have electronic regulators to prevent the operating speed from changing as the battery voltage falls. Older machines did not, and many an off-speed cassette recording was made because the user did not realize that the batteries were weak. In addition, normal wear and tear on the head and drive belts usually make a used machine a risky buy.

IF you are considering an AM/FM portable cassette machine such as the JVC unit shown on this month's cover, all the same recommendations apply. And, in addition, you will want to check the FM reception. The FM sound should be at least as good as that provided by your test cassette, and tuning should be easy and precise and not inclined to distortion. When we last did a test survey on FM portable radios, we found that the higher-price models had electrical performance that rivaled that of separate components, so you *can* get superb FM reception if the set has a well-designed tuner section. This reinforces my earlier recommendation that you buy a portable player put out by one of the companies that manufacture components, since they are the ones that have both the concern and the know-how to do the job right.



low mid-range, the sounds of tone poems and song recitals and symphonies and even T. S. Eliot reading his *Four Quartets*—for one soon learns that the best music need not be appropriate to the occasion in any *literal* sense. You don't have to take the *Grand Canyon Suite* to the Grand Canyon, and it is not really advisable to travel in Spain with Turina and Albéniz—that idiom soon begins to pall, as did the overdoses of Villa-Lobos (who has his ups and downs of inspiration over long stretches) on that South American sea voyage. But when we left our ship in Rio we were in for some unpleasant moments. The gentleman at customs, who had little patience with visitors not fluent in Portuguese and was of a skeptical turn of mind by profession, inspected my deadweight case holding the hundred phonograph records and simply refused to believe I was bringing these into Brazil purely for purposes of entertainment.

"You are going to sell these, Senhor," he coaxed insinuatingly, "no?"

"No," I insisted stubbornly. The customs man grimaced and began writing up a staggering bill for duty charges.

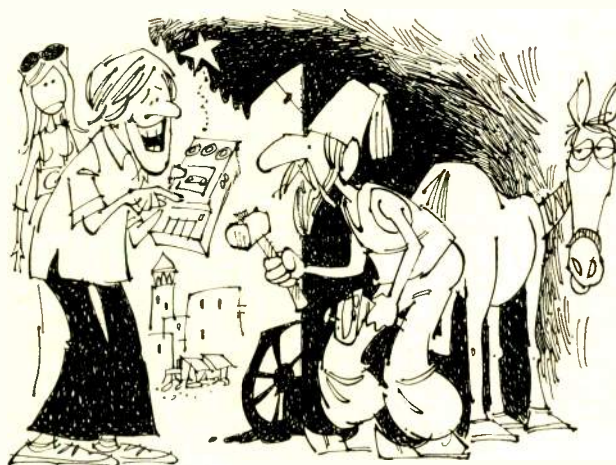
"Tell him you'll be glad to leave the case here and call for it when we go back," Emily advised. This suggestion was either a bit too complicated for his English or involved some technicality in Brazilian law of which we had not been apprised. Luckily a kindly lady official at the customs shed overheard the commotion and rushed to our rescue. As it happened, when we got home we found that the special new kind of plastic lining of the sleeves in which we had carefully placed each disc to avoid damage to its microgrooves had melted in the tropic dampness and oozed into those very grooves, ruining just about every record in the case. I tried to collect damages from the company that had issued this product, but they had gone out of business in the nick of time.

**B**UT refinements kept happening in the technology of musical travel. The Sharp Company came out with a tiny radio-phonograph (now withdrawn) complete with miniature second amplifier and speaker. It weighed little and was housed in a pretty leather case which fitted into still another case holding ten records in their jackets—or twenty without them. After a marvelous musical weekend on Block Island with this miracle of portability, I set it down for a moment outside Grand Central Station to hail a cab, and I never saw it again.

When the cassette was invented, Emily tried her best to prevent me from hearing about it. "There is no such thing as a cassette," she tried to tell me.

"And if there were, the player would break or the cassette would break somewhere in Siena, and there would be nobody who could repair it for you, and you would waste a whole day trying to get the machine fixed" (as I had been known to do with sick little phonographs I carried in my arms to uncomprehending local dealers in backwater towns of underdeveloped countries) "or worse, you'll try to get the *cassette* fixed. Forget it. We'll take along a little radio. There's plenty of music on FM all over Europe."

As it turned out, what we took along was a combination radio *and* cassette player. You could make your own tapes on it, or tape broadcasts with it, or play prerecorded tapes. All winter I stocked up on



prerecorded cassettes from record stores and spent what hours were left of my leisure manufacturing my own from my disc library on a cassette deck. Despite warnings from cognoscenti in the field, I insisted on using two-hour "C-120's," which were known to cut down on fidelity and had a tendency to snarl if anybody even *looked* at one of them the wrong way. I didn't care. I went on taping Brahms programs and Bach programs and, abandoning all caution, ventured into the hazardous realms of Schoenberg and Stravinsky and Honegger and Bartók and on to Elliott Carter. I also graciously made Emily a two-hour cassette of nothing but Chopin and spent days getting back from lunch late as I shopped for just the right player. We took this purchase (an extremely well-bred little Norelco with a highly useful tone control and a pure, if somewhat tubby, sound) and a box for the cassettes (of course I had found that a box meant to hold twelve will accommodate nearly thirty if you leave *their* little boxes home) all the way by air to Venice, marveling at the absence of weight or of charges for overweight, and plugged the new acquisition into a specially purchased adapter for European current,

waiting for music to transform our drab little hotel room into a concert hall. All that happened was a slightly acrid smell of burning rubber and a wisp of smoke that began to ascend from the back of the set as I dove forward, just in time, to disconnect it from the wall socket. They had sold me the wrong kind of converter. That summer I spent more time searching for "C" batteries (while Emily waited outside fuming over a missed day's sightseeing) than I am really happy to confess. But on our ship to the Greek Islands that summer we had music aplenty. We even had the satisfaction of listening to Manos Hadjidakis' *Lilacs Out of the Dead Land* as we docked in Piraeus at a time when the composer was banned from his own country. Once I even got as far as taping our guide as she snarled at our group to pay attention to her history lesson while showing us the ruins of Olympia, but the tape got stuck and I decided that this was really too much like work; we went back to playing music in our cabin. Emily bade me listen to the more advanced and dissonant stuff over an earphone, an injunction to which I responded (unconsciously, of course, not being a vindictive type) by accidentally erasing half of her Chopin program. (Emily *could* have made them erase-proof by removing the knock-out tabs, if she really cared.)

No matter what music you travel with on a trip like that, though, it always turns out to be largely the wrong thing when you get there. Last summer on a journey through Scandinavia I brought along all the symphonies of Sibelius miraculously caught in the space of two cassettes running two hours each. That proved to be entirely too much Sibelius, especially in Scandinavia, where you need a little something to warm you up as the day goes by. After the First and Second Symphonies, I started cheating, sneaking back to Vivaldi and William Walton.

"Who packed all this damned Ravel?" you may find yourself asking no one in particular, having thrown in the complete piano works of Ravel on a day when you were in that mood, only to find on arrival elsewhere that said mood has changed irrevocably and you are simply parched for Purcell.

The arrival on the market of a cassette labeled "C-180" (which plays for three hours straight!) has Emily about ready to give up on my sanity altogether. C-180's hiss at you unless you turn the treble down, and they have to be played with the volume all the way up to be heard at all, but think what you can get on one! I may be found almost any weekend, gibbering slightly, taping from records or off the air an entire opera onto *one* cassette, or all the orchestral works of Brahms, or, as I was able to manage recently, most of the late quartets of Beethoven. In vain I explain that I do not intend to lis-

ten to *all* these quartets at a single sitting; the cassette will be removed after a certain Beethoven quartet or Brahms symphony is played, and next time it is reinserted it will start on the *next* one. Why won't she understand?

"You have lost your mind," Emily, who has never been able to admit that there *is* such a word in English as Dolbyized, will observe very objectively, washing her hands of the whole situation. She knows well enough the far-off look that comes into my eye when a cassette is cooking on the recording equipment and I am pretending to read or watch a television show. The truth is, even though it is perfectly possible to turn down the volume and let a cassette pirate the material on records stacked up on your changer for a full hour and a half, my mind refuses to leave the matter alone while it's doing so; it *is* a little like cooking. I am sure that the final notes of the last movement of whatever it is will just not *fit* unless I am there to stand over the machine and help, or that I placed the records on the changer with side three ahead of side two. For hours on end I try to concentrate on other activities, but when a cassette is being made I just can't attend to anything else. Add to this the sight of me in some exotic foreign setting ignoring the scenery while I patiently wind a tape that has wrapped itself into the machinery back into its plastic shell with the aid of a fountain pen or the business end of a nail file and it is a wonder that Emily still goes anywhere with me at all.

**T**HEN, too, not content with merely taking off a record what is there in the order that it occurs, I have developed another mania—preparing little programs of the works of this composer or that, with an overture, sonata, symphony, suite, or what have you, duplicating everything in the concert hall but the coughs and applause. This is far more complicated and time-consuming than simply copying an album of Brahms or a Mahler symphony. And when it is all over, when I have played my little program pleurably and proudly, as I did in one resort hotel with paper-thin walls where we spent some days last fall, I find it quite easy to brazen out a "Good morning" when I encounter the couple across the hall on their way down to breakfast.

"*Lovely* music last night," the wife observes with a bitter little grimace, referring to my midnight orgy of *Erwartung*, *Pierrot Lunaire*, the *Gurrelieder*, and *Five Pieces for Mixed Men's Chorus*, as Emily pulls me gently away. I had forgotten to bring along the earphone that weekend, but doesn't *everybody* love Schoenberg? I guess there's just no pleasing some people.

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



CLASSICAL

SCHUMANN'S *FAUST*: A FRESH VIEW OF AN OLD SUBJECT

*A new London release unveils a great, neglected fresco of German Romanticism*

LIKE most of his fellow Romantics, Robert Schumann was fascinated by Goethe's *Faust*. He thought seriously about basing an opera on it, but, unlike certain other composers, he was unwilling to omit the monumental second part of Goethe's extraordinary conception. Indeed, when he did get around to a musical treatment of the subject, it was the mystical finale—the same redemption scene that Mahler set in his "Symphony of a Thousand"—which came first. Having, like Goethe himself, abandoned the idea of a staged realization, Schumann began by setting the last scene of Goethe's Part II as a meditative oratorio. Starting with the final chorus, which he composed in 1844, he worked back to the opening of the scene, completing it in 1849. He then turned to Part I, setting the Garden scene, Gretchen before the Mater Dolorosa, and the Cathedral scene with Gretchen and the Evil Spirit. Next came the opening of Part II (Ariel's invocation—corresponding to the Banks of the Elbe scene in Berlioz's *Damnation*), the extraordinary midnight scene with the four old women, and the death of Faust. Finally, in 1853, the overture was added to what had become seven *Scenes from Goethe's Faust*.

In spite of Schumann's uncertainty about the purpose and scope of his setting, and in spite of certain discrepancies between the action of his finale and everything that now pre-

cedes it, the oratorio *Faust* is one of Schumann's most successful large-scale works and, indeed, one of the great landmarks of German Romanticism. Curiously enough, the mystical qualities of the final scene are conveyed in the fresh, full-blown Romantic style we associate with Schumann's well-known early works; it is the later settings of the more conventional and popular early parts of the Goethe work that display psychological profundity as well as an originality and a dramatic power comparable to those found in Wagner. Joan Chissell suggests, in her notes with the just-released London recording of *Faust*, that Schumann was actually influenced by Wagner, but while this is a possibility, it must be remembered that Wagner had not yet (by the late

1840's) composed anything of his own quite as profound and deeply moving as the first two sections of Schumann's *Faust*.

The history of the work is curious. Schumann's reputation has always been largely in the hands of the anti-Wagnerites who, consistent with their Brahmsian view of things, promoted Schumann's early works and tended to regard his later music as inferior and decadent. The third part of Schumann's *Faust* was therefore highly praised while the earlier music, perhaps more powerful and striking to a modern audience, was not much liked. Schumann's *Faust* has, however, been "rediscovered," with great regularity, as the really remarkable masterpiece—



*Mephistopheles introduces himself to Faust*  
(Lithograph by Eugène Delacroix)

flawed but hardly the less impressive for that — that it is. Nevertheless, except for one rather widely circulated pirate recording, it has until now escaped the attention of the record companies. This situation has been rectified by, of all people, Benjamin Britten, who brought the work out at his Aldeburgh Festival in England with an excellent — almost, one might say, all-star — cast, and it is essentially this performance that is now being made available by London Records.

The singing in this notable set is first-rate — strong, passionate, and idiomatic — the choruses even managing to combine the best of the English choral tradition with a surprisingly convincing German Romantic spirit. The orchestra, while capable, is a bit less than totally convincing. Size may have something to do with it; Schumann's well-known shortcomings as an orchestrator may also be a factor. Britten, like most conductors, has apparently diddled with the orchestration and has, in fact, pushed the instrumental sound so far in the direction of clarity, delicacy, and careful balance that something characteristic — a certain forcefulness of delivery — has been sacrificed. Part of the problem may, I suspect, result from Britten's conducting style, which, like that of many composers (here I speak from personal experience) lacks rhythmic edge in the handling of instrumental parts. These comments do not, however, apply to the vocal lines nor, indeed, to the overall conception, which is deeply impressive.

We are so oriented to the purely instrumental achievements of Central European Romanticism that we tend to neglect the importance of vocal expression and, in particular, the genres of solo and choral singing with orchestra. Schumann was, in fact, a master of this rather neglected idiom, and, along with Berlioz, successfully made the transition from the old oratorio to the new dramatic symphony and symphonic song, genres cultivated in their various ways by Liszt, Brahms, Mahler, Strauss, Schoenberg, Berg, and others. The previously mentioned connection between Schumann's *Faust* and Mahler is therefore not merely coincidental but historical, and it is against such a larger background that we can at last see that Schumann's *Faust* is to be numbered among the greatest Romantic frescoes. This splendid recording ought to help bring the whole picture back into focus for a great many people.

*Eric Salzman*

**SCHUMANN:** *Faust*. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), Faust, Doctor Marianus; Elizabeth Harwood (soprano), Gretchen, a Penitent; John Shirley-Quirk (bass), Mephistopheles, Evil Spirit, Pater Seraphicus; Peter Pears (tenor), Ariel, Pater Ecstasticus; Jennifer Vyvyan

(soprano), Care, Angel; Felicity Palmer (soprano), Need, Magna Peccatrix; Pauline Stevens (contralto), Debt, Maria Aegyptiaca; Robert Lloyd (bass), Pater Profundus; others: Aldeburgh Festival Singers, Wandsworth School Choir, and English Chamber Orchestra. Benjamin Britten cond. LONDON OSA 12100 two discs \$11.96. ® K 412100 \$11.95, © J 512100 \$9.95.

## BÖHM'S BEETHOVEN: TOPS FOR THE NINTH

*A newly released Deutsche Grammophon disc emphasizes the work's straightforward humanity*

**K**ARL BÖHM's complete Beethoven symphony cycle, which I never got around to hearing, was released in a box a few years ago, but it was withdrawn recently, together with Deutsche Grammophon's big packages of symphonies by Haydn, Schubert, Dvořák, *et al.* The only components of the Böhm Beethoven set released on their own up to now were Nos. 5 and 6. Both are filled with the conductor's unmanufactured vitality and are roundly satisfying in the way his solid (if sometimes unexciting) musicianship ensures, but neither of them (nor the Ninth he did for Philips in the Fifties) could have prepared the listener for the sheer glory of the Ninth just released. I have no hesitation in placing this performance at the very head of my list for this

*KARL BÖHM: a faultless sense of proportion*





GALLAGHER & LYLE: *never too sweet, never too sour*

work—not only of recordings currently available, but of those going all the way back to the old Weingartner 78's with the same orchestra and chorus (and the unforgettable bass Richard Mayr).

Böhm does not turn the Ninth into any solemn rite in this reading. As in his *Fidelio*, he avoids any overlay of monumentalism that would obscure the essentially straightforward humanity of the work, and neither (it goes without saying) does he indulge in any frenzied hotting-up in the name of Dionysus. His tempos throughout are so comfortable and convincing as to evoke that old phrase “the rightness of inevitability,” and from the first *fortissimo* outburst in the opening movement there is no doubt of his realizing all the drama inherent in the score—or of his sustaining a faultless sense of proportion. The scherzo is stunningly effective, because it is allowed to breathe instead of being pounded into a virtuoso piece, and the “natural breathing” in the slow movement makes it possible for all the elements to coalesce with an air of dignified spontaneity quite unparalleled in my listening experience. The finale is a dream. The great orchestra has never sounded better, the chorus (evidently a big one) has been galvanized to an extraordinary level of enthusiasm, and the four soloists are absolutely first-rate, the contributions of Ridderbusch and Jones being especially distinguished.

Happily, the performance of the accompanying Eighth Symphony is an outstandingly good one too, and Deutsche Grammophon has been thoughtful enough to package these two discs in a space-saving gatefold container. If there is anything to complain about, it can only be the dreadfully unflattering photograph of Böhm on the cover; on the verge of his

eightieth birthday (August 28), it is sorry treatment for the finest recording in which Böhm or the Ninth has yet been presented. *Richard Freed*

**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 8, in F Major, Op. 93; Symphony No. 9, in D Minor, Op. 125.* Gwyneth Jones (soprano); Tatiana Troyanos (mezzo-soprano); Jess Thomas (tenor); Karl Ridderbusch (bass); Vienna State Opera Concert Chorus; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 073 two discs \$15.96.

## POPULAR

### NEATO & KEENO ARE GALLAGHER & LYLE

*“Seeds” is an album with no important flaws by a duo with reliable musical instincts*

GALLAGHER AND LYLE were formerly part of a rock band whose name escapes me and will not be looked up [’twas McGuinness Flint—*Ed.*] because I’m keeping track of enough names as it is—not to mention addresses, phone numbers, shoe sizes, and batting averages—and anyway their settling into a duet seems as natural as pairing off steak and potatoes. This is so not simply because they play well together, but because together they seem to be among the lucky few born—as opposed to made—pop-music complements.

They ably convey to the listener an assurance that they have the Ultimate Resource—reliable instincts—and even a poor song and an unrehearsed arrangement can amount to something when one has that. But they *don’t* parade poor songs: “Seeds,” their latest from A & M, is an album with no important weaknesses. I think the earlier one, “Willie and the Lapdog,” is even better *sounding* than this new one (it’s got more air and contrast in it), but “Seeds” benefits from having a lighter thematic obligation laid on it. Too, the denser sound still has holes in the places where holes are vital, and so does not cover up the grit and the jangle when they need to be heard.

Acoustic guitars, an accordion, harmonicas, and two-part vocal harmonies are the essentials for the Gallagher and Lyle style. Various other things, including strings and the lovely sound of a steel-bodied dobro (confusingly labeled on the jacket because a comma is omitted between “Martin 12-string” and “steel dobro”), are added where it is deemed fun to so do—one of the nice things about the album is that the musicians seem to be having a

good time. The songs' melodies are better than their words (those who like being moralized at will perhaps like the lyrics better than I do), and the songs are in no way great, just good and tuneful. The performances are never too sweet, never too sour. The quality is so uniform and the song sequencing so intelligently done that I think of it as one forty-minute chunk of music. And I also think it is neat-keen all the way.

Noel Coppage

**GALLAGHER & LYLE:** *Seeds*. Benny Gallagher and Graham Lyle (vocals and instrumentals); Bruce Rowland (percussion); Jimmy Jewel (sax); other musicians. *Country Morning; A Misspent Youth; I Believe in You; Sleepyhead; Layna; The Clearings; Remember Then; Seeds of Change; Shine a Light; Randolph and Me; Cape Cod Houses; Seeds*. A & M SP-3605 \$6.98.

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## SING OUT, ANGELA!

*Listen to RCA's London-cast recording—you may find you need another Gypsy after all*

ANGELA LANSBURY in a London original-cast recording of *Gypsy* while Ethel Merman is still holding the stage (and the catalog) with her 1959 model? It sounded to me suspiciously like a glut on the market, supererogation, or simple redundancy. Well, my apprehension was unwarranted. *Gypsy* on disc with Angela Lansbury is not only terrific; in a few small ways it's almost better than the version from Broadway, and if you don't mind having two *Gypsies* in your show collection, this new one is well worth acquiring even if you own the other.

Taking the part of Gypsy Rose Lee's ambitious mother, Miss Lansbury has fitted herself out with a tough New York accent and a bellow almost as big as Merman's, overhauling the role in the process to suit her own considerable talent. From her first "Sing out, Louise!" as her daughters try out for a kiddie show, to the final heartbreaking monologue, Miss Lansbury is as loud and interfering and irresistible a maternal archetype as the most exacting comparison shopper might demand. As Herbie, the Seattle candy salesman, Barrie Ingham is so convincing you'd never guess he's spent most of his time on the London stage playing Shakespeare. Zan Charisse is superb as Gypsy herself, especially in the big strip-tease number *Let Me Entertain You*. And there are other pleasant surprises. I never thought I'd hear *All I Need Is the Girl* performed



ANGELA LANSBURY: loud, interfering, and irresistible

again with all the tension and glitter that Paul Wallace brought to it on Broadway, but you can practically see the reconstructed Jerome Robbins choreography when Andrew Norman sails into that tour de force; even his London accent fails to short-circuit the electricity of the event.

Then too, recording technique has been sneaking ahead since the Columbia recording was made in 1959, and the up-to-date RCA sound is astonishingly alive. Arthur Laurents, the author of the book, personally directed this London revival at the Piccadilly Theatre last year, and he has succeeded in eliciting a stunning production from all involved. The Jule Styne music and Stephen Sondheim lyrics come across as fresh as new-cut flowers.

It may be—it just *may* be—that Miss Lansbury's approach to her role is a mite studied and synthetically achieved compared with Miss Merman's natural assumption of a part that was written for her. Then again, I could be reading that reservation in after the fact. In any case, this is a performance that certainly thrilled me as I listened, and the album is unreservedly recommended.

Paul Kresh

**GYPSY (Jule Styne-Stephen Sondheim)**. Original London-cast recording. Angela Lansbury, Barrie Ingham, Bonnie Langford, Zan Charisse, Andrew Norman, Kelly Wilson, Judy Cannon, Valerie Walsh (vocals); orchestra and chorus, Richard Leonard cond. RCA LBL1-5004 \$6.98, ⓑ LBS1-5004 \$7.95, © LBK1-5004 \$7.95.



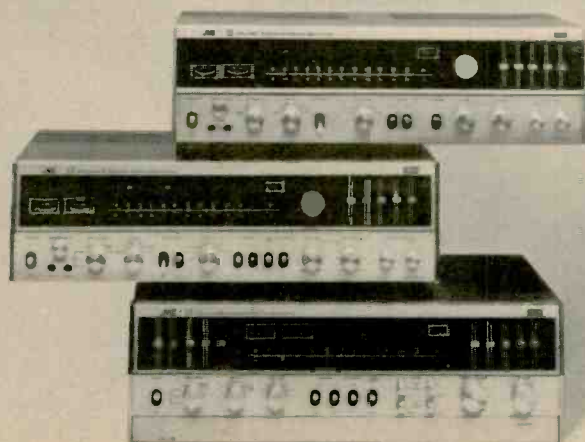
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# POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

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

**BURT BACHARACH:** *Living Together*. Burt Bacharach (piano and vocals); orchestra. *Something Big; I Come to You; Lost Horizon; Reflections*; and six others. A & M SP 3527 \$5.98.

Performance: **Real suave**  
Recording: **Good**

This is, if the breed still exists, the perfect album for the Mr. Suave who reads *Playboy*, has furnished his "pad" as close to one of its dream apartments as possible (concealed speakers behind the water bed and a Forest Lawn lighting system), and who needs some "hip" background music while he tries to "make out" with a Sandy or a Kim or a Dusty. Mr. Suave primes his love with spiked Acapulco Sunrises, and, as Bacharach huskily sings and plays ten of his own compositions, she tells him a dramatic tale of her rapid rise from car hop to stewardess on Air Des Moines (Ambassador Service on the Des Moines-Butte flight), whose moral is that, even with an amazing dexterity at defrosting the Shato Breahn Steak Dinner, warding off fanny pinchers, keeping a sharp eye out for potential skyjackers, and all the while smiling a cheery smile for everybody, life isn't easy for a beautiful girl who has to spend most of her salary on clothes to keep up appearances.

A cluck of sympathy is due at this point, as is Bacharach's rendition of *Monterey Peninsula*, which can turn the talk to Southern California, the place which everyone knows is where the real action is at. While he pours

another drink for her, eight ounces of tequila to one shot of orange juice, she can hum along with one of Burt's deeper efforts, *Reflections*, as she adjusts her new fall in the mirror on the ceiling. Surreptitiously trying to fish an un-



DAVID BROMBERG  
*Making no big deal of it*

glued eyelash out of her drink, she attempts to divert him with the news that she's crazy about Burt Bacharach's music because he looks so much like a young Cary Grant and that they play a lot of his tapes on Air Des Moines, "specially on the Ambassador flight where you get a more swingin' crowd."

Gut-level communication should have set in by the time *Lost Horizon* is playing, and he can carelessly drop the "in" item that Columbia Pictures nearly went bankrupt on that flick, and she confides that Burt Reynolds, sorry, she meant Burt Bacharach ("Say, what's in this drink?"), always arouses the animal instinct in her.

By the time the last track is playing all that can be heard is Burt's sexy murmur over his glossy piano stylings, female snores, and the scratch of a pen drafting yet another anguished letter to the *Playboy Advisor*. P.R.

**BACHMAN-TURNER OVERDRIVE: II.** Randy Bachman (vocals, lead guitar); C. F. Turner (vocals, bass); Tim Bachman (vocals, second lead guitar); Rob Bachman (drums, percussion). *Blown; Welcome Home; Stone-gates; Let It Ride*; and four others. MERCURY SRM-1-696 \$5.98, ⓑ MC8-1-696 \$6.98, ⓒ MCR4-1-696 \$6.98.

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

Bachman-Turner Overdrive is a tight group featuring two brothers who both play lead guitar but aren't too competitive or too deferential to each other. The vocals, shared by the Bachmans and bassist C. F. Turner, have plenty of bravura, and the band comes on like a commando unit.

Randy Bachman has been quoted as saying, "We are totally into a basic type of 'beat' rock and roll." Well, not quite. Every now and then Bachman's better instincts overpower him, and he begins to write material that reflects the quality of some of the tunes he did with the Guess Who when he was their captain. The closest he gets here is *Welcome Home*, which is the best piece on the album. The verses are light and floating, the chorus heavy and hard. It ends with a tasty jazz guitar flight. Bachman-Turner Overdrive could do more of that kind of thing if they wanted to, but the band is happy and successful playing left hook/right cross style. Too bad; they're capable of much more. J.V.

**DAVID BROMBERG: Wanted Dead or Alive.** David Bromberg (vocals, guitars); Tony Markellis (bass); Neil Rossi, Jay Ungar (fiddles); John Payne (reeds, woodwinds); Peter Ecklund (horns); other musicians. *The Holdup; Someone Else's Blues; Danger Man; Main Street Moan; Send Me to the Lectric Chair*; and four others. COLUMBIA KC 32717 \$5.98, ⓑ CA 32717 \$6.98, ⓒ CT 32717 \$6.98.

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

David Bromberg plays guitar with the delicacy and precision of a diamond cutter, and sings with the delicacy and precision of a bull in a china shop. He plays it light and loose

## 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.

here, has some laughs, and easily hits some formidable licks, making it all the better by making no big deal of it—but I truly wish he weren't such a lousy singer. Fortunately, some of these songs were written for and by lousy singers, including David himself. The best of his own, or the funniest anyway, is *Someone Else's Blues*: "I don't owe anyone any money/All my cavities are filled/If I pulled my hand outa my pocket too fast, I might drop a couple of fifty-dollar bills." And there's a freshness and spontaneity about the album that serves it well, David having the nerve to throw saxophones, clarinets, horns, and country fiddles all together and let them congeal into his own blues band sound. John Payne's clarinet and sax work is pretty funky, and Andy Statman takes a mandolin break that's positively spacey. Everything sounds slightly disorganized except Bromberg's guitar playing, but that's all right if you can take the vocals. N.C.

**ROY BUCHANAN: *That's What I Am Here For*.** Roy Buchanan (guitar, vocals); Dick Heintze (keyboards, clarinet); Billy Price (vocals); John Harrison (bass); Robbie Magruder (drums). *My Baby Says She's Gonna Leave Me; Hey Joe; Home Is Where I Lost Her; Rodney's Song; That's What I Am Here For*; and four others. POLYDOR PD 6020 \$4.98.

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

It's awfully hard to say where the line is, but I think Roy Buchanan crosses it here, and demonstrates flash for flash's sake. His understanding of the electric guitar is broad and deep, and his ability to completely dominate the instrument is probably unique, but the main idea still should be to interpret the song. The band's new vocalist, Billy Price, helps with that in a raw but competent way, and Dick Heintze's keyboard work continues to be exemplary, but I think Buchanan overplays. Some selections, such as *Rodney's Song*, are stretched out much too long for their frail bones and have much more decoration and embellishment hung on them than they can take. *Voices* is the tightest piece, but where the others have frail skeletons, this one has rickets. Buchanan does some marvelous stuff in it anyway, as he has in the following one. *Please Don't Turn Me Away*, in which his accompaniment work on the bass strings is sneaky and perfect, and in which he doesn't get carried away until the very end. Guitar freaks will find enough small segments of perfect something-or-other to keep themselves high for a month, but the album *could* have done a little better by the general listener. N.C.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

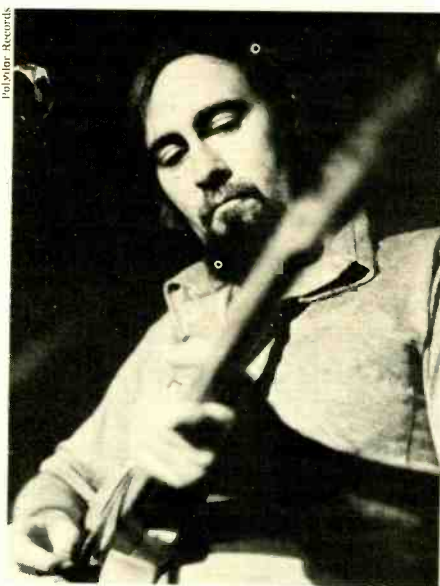
**JIMMY BUFFETT: *Living and Dying in 3/4 Time*.** Jimmy Buffett (vocals, guitar); instrumental and vocal accompaniment. *Pencil Thin Mustache; Saxaphones; Bahama Fear; Come Monday; Brand New Country Star*; and six others. DUNHILL DSD-50132 \$5.98. © C 8023-50132 \$6.98.

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

Jimmy Buffett's new album is as funny and as perceptive as his last one. Being a Buffett fan, as I am, isn't easy if you don't enjoy macabre comedy. The album cover will tip you off as to

whether or not you'll enjoy his work; on the front it pictures him sitting on the deck of a sinking boat named "Good Luck," while on the back a huge and vicious-looking shark grins toothily and expectantly out at you. A sick joke? Well, perhaps, but then I've never been considered particularly healthy anyway.

The two funniest efforts on this album are *Pencil Thin Mustache*, in which Buffett meditates on all the advantages that would be his if only he had one of those hirsute adornments in the style of William Powell and other matinee idols of Hollywood in the Thirties, and *Brand New Country Star*, which is a hilarious description of those down-home shrewdies who perform out of Nashville when they aren't opening their own chains of bowling alleys or fast-food stores on a national scale. *West Nashville Grand Ballroom Gown* is another fine piece of impertinence, and Buffett



ROY BUCHANAN

*Unique understanding of the electric guitar*

performs it, as he does all of his material, with a detached sass that I find irresistible.

Buffett is an unusual and very gifted performer—probably not to everyone's taste, but most certainly to mine. P.R.

**CHI COLTRANE: *Let It Ride*.** Chi Coltrane (vocals, piano); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Hallelujah; Let It Ride; Fly-Away Bluebird; Short'nin' Bread; Feather My Bed; Who Ever Told You*; and four others. COLUMBIA KC 32463 \$5.98. © CA 32463 \$6.98. © CT 32463 \$6.98.

Performance: **Frenzied**  
Recording: **Very Good**

This might have been a very good album if Chi Coltrane hadn't produced it. It is very difficult even for the most confident artist to be behind the control board and in front of the mike simultaneously. True, some artists have pulled it off, but producing oneself can—and often does—backfire.

It's a shame Coltrane tried to do too much, because the lady *has* talent. She writes well, plays good piano, and has a voice that rocks and coos. But here everything is so overdone that it gets embarrassing. She plays too hard, sings too hard (often going flat), produces too hard, and is backed up by some high-powered singers (among them the volatile Merry Clayton) whose enthusiasm soon becomes

noise. The album is an irritating failure, because every once in a while there's a well-done vocal phrase, a nice bit of arranging, or a piano run that shows what could have been accomplished—but then it's back to charge-the-blockhouse-take-no-prisoners hysteria. I hope Miss Coltrane leaves the producing to someone else next time, thus freeing herself to concentrate on performance. It's bully for her to be passionate, but wasteful to be frenzied. J.V.

**RON DAVIES: *U.F.O.*** Ron Davies (vocals, guitar, harmonica); orchestra. *Flapjack; Misty Roses; Shadows; I Wonder; It's a Lie*; and four others. A & M SP 4400 \$5.98.

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

This is a mild and at times diverting album. Ron Davies' voice is close to nonexistent, but he plays good guitar and reliable harmonica. He wrote everything here with the exception of *Misty Roses*, which is by Tim Hardin and, ironically, calls forth Davies' best performance. I did admire *Flapjack*, a song about a hooker named Buckwheat who suffers from a sudden attack of Liberation and leaves Mr. Flapjack, only to come back quickly promising him yet another Cadillac if only he consents to exploit her again. It is a wry, well-observed piece of work. Most of the other tracks, however, are aimlessly lethargic, particularly something called *Lay Down Your Burden*, which has all the weary stolidity of one of those ladies with shopping bags to whom you give your seat on the bus more out of guilt than gallantry. P.R.

**EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER: *Brain Salad Surgery*.** Keith Emerson (keyboards); Greg Lake (vocals, bass, guitars); Carl Palmer (drums). *Jerusalem; Toccata; Still . . . You Turn Me On; Benny the Bouncer; Karn Evil 9*. MANTICORE MC 66669 \$5.98, © TP 66669 \$6.98, © CS 66669 \$6.98.

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

The packaging of this album is like one of those Chinese puzzles, and after spending five minutes getting the disc out of the sleeve I snarled (I snarl sometimes), "By Neptune's toothcomb, this record had better be worth it!"

It's not, really. Emerson, Lake & Palmer (for convenience, EL&P from here on in) play a kind of Baroque-rock, dominated by Emerson's organ. But you might as well call the style "conservatory-rock," since most of its players are graduates of or fugitives from music schools. The trouble with conservatory-rock groups is that, like jazz-rock groups, they studiously avoid having any fun and are pretentious from the word go. There is one song here, *Benny the Bouncer*, where EL&P loosen up a bit, but the rest of the album is pretty dull. *Toccata*, an adaptation of a piano concerto by Alberto Ginastera, is a misfire: they try to see how loud they can play it and throw in a drum solo (listed as a "percussion movement") that is meaningless clunka-ta-boom stuff. *Karn Evil 9*, which takes up part of side one and all of side two, is a hash of gurgles and beeps from Emerson's keyboards fraught with portentous vocals. Perhaps this type of show-off music, touted as being "meaningful" or "opening new vistas," is meant to be listened to while drugged. It certainly sounds silly when the listener isn't.

(Continued on page 84)

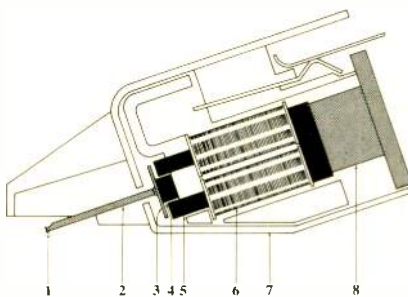
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JULY 1974

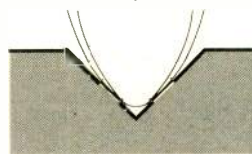
The effective tip mass is .22mg. Extensive testing has shown that the effective tip mass (ETM) of a cartridge is the factor most directly related to record and stylus wear. It has also been demonstrated that record wear due to high ETM is most severe in the high frequencies; obviously then, a high ETM is a substantial problem with CD-4 high frequency modulations. The integrated manufacturing method used to produce the MMC 6000 contributes to the extremely low ETM of .22mg, and a tip resonance point of over 50,000 Hz.

**It tracks at 1 gram.** The MMC 6000's low vertical tracking force (VTF), greatly reduced ETM, and compliance rating of  $30 \times 10^{-4}$ , create an optimum relationship between those factors of a cartridge which have the greatest effect on performance. VTF, effective tip mass, and compliance should never be evaluated singly; the most critical task within cartridge design is establishing their ideal interrelationship. Therefore you should consider the 1 gram tracking force of the MMC 6000 as just one result of a superior cartridge design. While VTF is often a reliable parameter of overall quality, its relationship to record wear is secondary when compared to the ETM. It should be understood that at high frequency modulation the forces applied to the groove walls are several hundred times as great as the VTF. And to a large extent then, these forces determine record wear and are directly related to effective tip mass.

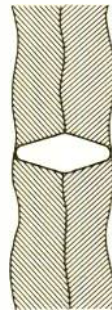
**It features a Pramanik stylus.** The MMC 6000 utilizes a multi-radial diamond developed by cartridge engineer, S. K. Pramanik of Bang & Olufsen. The unique shape of the diamond was developed to obtain maximum contact with the groove walls along its vertical axis and minimum contact along its horizontal axis. The increased contact along the vertical axis reduces record and stylus wear by significantly lowering the amount of force applied

Multi-radial Pramanik diamond\*

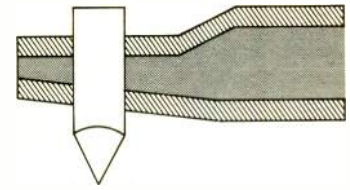
Improved surface contact along the vertical axis ↓



Improved point contact on the horizontal axis →

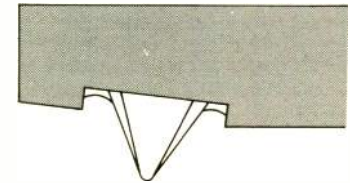


per unit of surface. The minimum contact along the horizontal axis guarantees the extremely accurate tracing of the CD-4 high frequency modulations between 20,000 and 45,000 Hz. As opposed to normal diamond styli, only the very tip of the Pramanik diamond is mounted on the can-



Usual pressed-through mounting of shanked naked diamond ↑

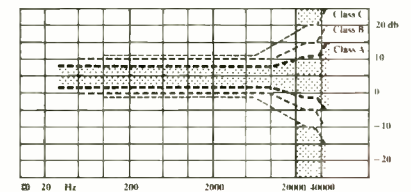
Pramanik diamond\* tip mounted to beryllium cantilever. ↓



tilever. This procedure and the beryllium cantilever, stiffer and lighter than commonly used aluminum, further reduces the ETM of the MMC 6000.

**It meets the Class A criteria.**

The RCA/JVC rating system for CD-4 cartridges  
Every MMC 6000 has a Class A rating.



Discrete 4-channel sound became a reality through the work of the RCA/JVC joint development team. Accordingly, RCA/JVC engineers established criteria by which the performance and 4-channel capabilities of cartridges could be evaluated. Their rating system includes four classes: A, B, C, and D, class A being the highest and class D considered as unacceptable. The class A rating is given to only those cartridges with a frequency response varying no more than  $\pm 10$ dB between 20,000 and 40,000 Hz, with channel separation better than 14dB at 30,000 Hz, and more than 1mV output. Every MMC 6000 cartridge meets or exceeds these specifications. As proof of each unit's level of performance, the MMC 6000 comes with its own calibration card and frequency response curve. The calibration card states the output voltage, channel separation, and the balance between channels. The frequency response curve is produced for each channel on a Bruel and Kjaer level recorder and shows the performance levels from 20 to 45,000 Hz.

**Bang & Olufsen**

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2271 Devon Ave.  
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CIRCLE NO. 5 ON READER SERVICE CARD



MURRAY CLOSE/ART & LIGHTING, INC.

changes first take shape. I mean, Peoria is no place to go for instruction about next year's skirt lengths.

Jim Croce—ironically, as I see it—was killed in an airplane crash. It was a small, light, private plane, and something went wrong during the take-off attempt. By then his time was so valuable to so many people that he had to hurry, to fly, but no matter: he still knew where to find his source people when he was on the ground, and he had already gleaned a vast wealth of research impressions down there.

He represented himself as one who had been among the real people down there, out there, the interior people who, by sheer numbers, define what America is like, even as New York and California define what it probably *will* be like. Croce's first problem—with me, and I assume with others, since cynicism is a legitimate survival item for anyone who spends much time downwind of the music business—was in making that representation believed . . . making one believe he really could have been in the poolroom when Big Jim Walker got cut . . . that he really knew someone like Bud Leroy Brown . . . that he actually could have spent some time in a telephone booth with a crumpled Dear John letter in his fist. The music biz is knitted together with image fabrications, some of them pretty damned clever, and the conclusion that Jim Croce was for real had to be computed from intangibles, the half-perceived impressions slanting in from odd angles, while suspicion met his direct efforts to communicate through his words and music, and a hulking skepticism interfered with the effect they tried to make.

Croce *was* telling the truth, though: he knew how to use a pool cue, too, and he *did* love to watch such stuff as the roller derby and the soap operas on television. He meant it when he wrote *New York's Not My Home*—“Lived there 'bout a year and never once felt at home,” even though an approximation of that could have been (no doubt has been) written by the sort of market-savvy hack who puts down New York when there's a demand for such put-downs but wouldn't be pried out of his Greenwich Village apartment—would, in fact, go bonkers if he had to live out among the hicks he finds so praiseworthy while the country-comforts boomlet lasts in the songwriting game. Croce left small clues, indirect clues, that confirmed he was different. Pasted together, they vaguely outline a fragment of an attitude, but that's enough.

The hero of *Operator*, for example, was caught in the changing times, wanting to be Modern about the fact that “She's livin' in L. A./With my best old ex-friend Ray,” but having to admit that it hurt, even if that admission tainted his standing among the liberal and liberated. Croce portrays this person's frustration with such graphic realism and such uncanny economy that I believe he actually *knew* the feeling. Economy—of language or musical interval—probably is the most difficult quality for a songwriter to manage when he is not quite sure what he is talking about. It is in subtle ways such as this that Jim Croce won over some cynics.

“Jim always *wanted* to be a roughneck,” Tommy West has said, “but he wasn't really.” Croce's function in the rough nightspots

## WANTED FOR TELLING THE TRUTH: JIM CROCE

An appreciation by Noel Coppage



**J**IM CROCE was one of the voices of America, a spokesman for some real people who live out there somewhere, or just about everywhere. Tommy West, his friend and producer, says Croce always carried a notebook in his pocket and would record “good lines” wherever he heard them. And Croce himself told interviewers he also carried a tape recorder in his various vehicles in case an idea for a song came to him while he was out amongst people—including the times when he was making his living the way they were, with his hands; he was, among other things, a construction worker and a truck driver during the thirty years he lived. I hesitate to say that Woody Guthrie got on the same side of the tools as *his* sources too, for it will inevitably be read that I am comparing the two artistically,

which would be foolish. But an important distinction *can* be made—as long as we've come this far—between the way Croce, Guthrie, Jimmy Rodgers, Leadbelly, and, yes, Mark Twain did their ramblin' 'round and the way most modern journalists, musical or not, do *their* ramblin' 'round. When the old boys and Croce talked of roaming the country's byways, they meant *at ground level*. One sees and hears all sorts of things down there that don't penetrate the hide of a streaking jetliner four miles above the fray.

Jetliners are handy, though, when a fellow has an assignment an editor or producer is itchy about; they're great for whipping from one coast to the other, and that can help a journalist piece together the earliest possible insight into what turn the society might take next by putting him in places where social

was not so much slugging and being slugged as keeping track of the sluggers, looking and listening, taking the measure of the patterns and cadences, digesting it all so as to report the essence of it. Had he misunderstood it all, got it all wrong, the people he got it from would have exposed him. What actually happened was they loved him: he was enormously popular almost immediately—not the first time he tried to make a career in music but the second time. The first time, back about the turn of the decade, resulted in the Capitol album he made with Ingrid, his wife, entitled “Another Day, Another Town.” It was a flop commercially (although the re-release on Pickwick may not be one now), and Croce temporarily abandoned professional music in favor of physical labor.

No one could have imagined a better apprenticeship; it led to his successful string of roughnecks-I-have-known songs, starting with *You Don't Mess Around with Jim*, and it apparently led Croce to a full understanding of that eternal advisory bulletin for writers: Write What You Know. The songs in “Another Day, Another Town” compare to those in the later albums as a sophomore coed's notions about life and romance compare to a forty-year-old barmaid's ideas about same, as a rookie's idea of the National League compares to Henry Aaron's. The lyrics were honest enough, but they glossed over the parts Croce would later color in boldly, and they made pretty safe assumptions when they did become specific. They were passable lyrics, promising, but almost as academic as the later ones were down-to-earth. The album's melodies did not jibe, either, with the vision Croce was to develop. The tunes of “Another Day” conjure regularly with the lilting prettiness of folk songs, which is to say they sound more British than American—if one agrees that Croce invented some American melodies later, as *I am* suggesting. A poolroom brawl is not very pretty, and one has to keep that in mind when scoring a song about such mayhem. One might also wonder if a lonely young soldier stuck somewhere, let's say, in the Godforsaken Bible Belt with a Dear John letter dancing behind his eyes wouldn't need a more sentimental scoring of his plight than might occur to a writer insulated by radical chic, the new morality, movers and shakers, tastemakers, and other attractions in the most up-to-date places.

Croce, working his way back from those places, saw “Rapid Roy” lettered on the fading husk of a junked racing jalopy. He had his notebook and his tape recorder handy. Croce, watching the kind of television program one of his characters might like, saw a mean blockbuster of a woman elbowing other women over the rail of a roller-game track: scribble, scribble, plinkety-plink. The main bulk of America is not all that glamorous, but it is colorful in even its most everyday items—such as ten-speed tractor-trailer trucks, which certainly are common enough. The difference between Croce and less successful observers is like the difference between looking and glancing. Croce looked at the common stuff and saw the wildness in it.

Of course, his very best song, *Operator*, involved, one supposes, an inverted kind of

looking—but it has some sociology in it too. It is at once sentimental and reticent about showing sentiment, both of which are dated stances—dated, but still widely accepted and practiced by the unfashionable majority. It is an engaging song, cultural politics aside, having enough of a wrinkle in melody and meter (try singing along with the record, keeping up with Croce in the chorus) to hang in there something like the way a Chinese puzzle does, the mind wanting to get it right before laying it aside—but then the words, which are more important, don't seem to wear out either. They say just enough.

Croce never wrote a finer ballad, but he wrote some other fine ones (examples: *Alabama Rain*, *Lover's Cross*, *Age*, which he recorded twice, in his and Ingrid's album and in his last one, and, of course, *The Hard Way Every Time*), most of them so nicely crafted that I'm halfway persuaded he could have become as important for his reflective think (or “feel”) pieces as he was for his reports from the bars and poolrooms.

But he kept refining those field reports, too. The rocker *Top Hat Bar and Grille* did quite a job for the pacing of the “I Got a Name” album without drawing the focus away from quieter, better songs, and *Workin' at the Car Wash Blues* had inspired verses where the roughneck songs might have made do with a good line or two. One such verse goes: “You know a man of my ability/He should be smokin' on a big cigar/ But till I get myself straight/I guess I'll just have to wait/In my rubber suit, rubbin' these cars.”

His performing got much smoother, too. Blessed with an easily identifiable sound, a metallic, edgy voice with a hint of a burr in it (his speaking voice was somewhat softer), he was a more versatile vocalist than a one-time listener would predict. He did miss a few notes in that very first album, though, and Ingrid, bless her heart, missed a few more. Croce's friend, Maury Muehleisen, who died in the crash with Croce, played a warm, tight, sympathetic acoustic lead guitar and the backup keyed to him. The back-

**JIM AND INGRID CROCE:** *Another Day, Another Town*. Jim Croce (vocals, guitar); Ingrid Croce (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Another Day, Another Town; Vespers; Big Wheel; Age; What Do People Do; Just Another Day; What the Hell; The Man That Is Me; Spin, Spin, Spin*. Pickwick SPC 3332 \$1.98.

**JIM CROCE:** *You Don't Mess Around with Jim*. Jim Croce (vocals, guitar); Maury Muehleisen (guitar); Gary Chester (drums); Tommy West (keyboards); Joe Macho (bass); other musicians. *You Don't Mess Around with Jim; Tomorrow's Gonna Be a Brighter Day; New York's Not My Home; Hard Time Losin' Man; Photographs and Memories; Walkin' Back to Georgia; Operator; Time in a Bottle; Rapid Roy (the Stock Car Boy); Box #10; A Long Time Ago; Hey Tomorrow*. ABC ABCX-756 \$5.98. Ⓜ ABC 0022-756G \$6.95, Ⓜ ABC 8756 \$6.95. © ABC 5756 \$6.95.

**JIM CROCE:** *Life and Times*. Jim Croce

ing never fought with Croce's lyrics and never showed off much in the brief spaces allowed for breaks, but it always sounded good, almost never erred in the amount of air it left in the arrangements. The band did arrange songs, to the degree that the songs would stand for it—in *These Dreams* (in “Life and Times”) they added strings of near-symphonic tonnage and it worked out rather well. A curious thing about Croce's songs, though, was that they almost never had a bridge. Croce liked choruses, strong, insistent ones, and the repetition inherent in them. That meant an instrumentalist had to play it tight, since so much time was going to be taken up with vocals.

CROCE was not thinking of bridges, I imagine, when he wrote *The Hard Way Every Time*. Fate, quirky these last several years, arranged for that to be the last song one normally plays in his last album, having Croce leave the world with the words, “I wouldn't have done it any other way.” That may be an unsettling coincidence, like the one in which Hank Williams wrote *I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive* and then died, but the point Croce was making was that he learned everything the hard way. Confirmation of that lined his face and crackled in his voice, but the real proof of it was in the grace he had. It is useless to speculate about what else he might have done, what other ways he might have tried, and it is sheer folly to try, this soon after the shock of his death, to compare him with Rodgers or Guthrie or other voices of America—one does hear the rattle of such bandwagons being hitched up, but one who has seen death exploited before expects that. But Croce did appear to be graceful enough to make several changes without the common accompanying identity crises; he suffered no “sophomore jinx,” didn't become immobilized in trying to top himself (or that killer line, “meaner than a junkyard dog”), didn't compete with his own past. According to the most trustworthy accounts, and the most trustworthy gut assessments, Croce learned, the hard way, to live in the present. Now his music does.

(vocals, guitar); Maury Muehleisen (guitar); Tommy West (keyboards); Gary Chester (drums); Joe Macho (bass); other musicians. *One Less Set of Footsteps; Roller Derby Queen; Dreamin' Again; Careful Man; Alabama Rain; A Good Time Man like Me Ain't Got No Business (Singin' the Blues); Next Time, This Time; Bad, Bad Leroy Brown; These Dreams; Speedball Tucker; It Doesn't Have to Be That Way*. ABC ABCX-769 \$5.98, Ⓜ ABC 8022-769M \$6.95, © ABC 5022-769M \$6.95.

**JIM CROCE:** *I Got a Name*. Jim Croce (vocals, guitar); Maury Muehleisen (guitar); Joe Macho (bass); Tommy West (keyboards); Rick Marotta (drums); other musicians. *I Got a Name; Lover's Cross; Five Short Minutes; Age; Workin' at the Car Wash Blues; I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song; Salon and Saloon; Thursday; Top Hat Bar and Grille; Recently; The Hard Way Every Time*. ABC ABCX-797 \$5.98. Ⓜ ABC 8022-797M \$6.95. © ABC 5022-797M \$6.95.

The theme of the album seems to be that Evil Lurks. EL&P illustrate their point in opening the proceedings with *Jerusalem*, that hoary old English hymn with its righteous sentiments about steamrolling holiness over "England's green and pleasant land" (it is comparable to *Onward Christian Soldiers* over here). If they had simply taken some of the more bellicose and necrophilic hymns available, following the idea that much of Eastern and Western religious music teeters on a very thin line between spirituality and deviltry, they might have made a very interesting album. As it is, they sound like toddlers playing rhinoceros; their music is huffy-puffy and wasteful. J.V.

**DAVID ESSEX:** *Rock On*. David Essex (vocals); orchestra. *Rock On*; *Lamplighter*; *On and On*; *Ocean Girl*; and seven others.



FAMILY:  
drinking to a final,  
brilliant album.  
Left to right,  
Rob Townsend, Tony  
Ashton, Jim Cregan,  
Roger Chapman, and  
Charlie Whitney

COLUMBIA KC 32560 \$5.98, Ⓢ CA 32560 \$6.98, Ⓢ CT 32560 \$6.98.

Performance: **Poor**  
Recording: **Fair**

David Essex has had some success in England in the role of Jesus in *Godspell* and as the composer-performer of a hit single, *Rock On*. I listened to the latter on this album, and my conclusion is that if this what the English consider music then they are in the dark for more reasons than an Energy Crisis. Essex is so bad that you can't even laugh at such things as *Lamplighter*—"Shine on mee (grunt-grunt). Shine on mee (grunt-grunt)"—only cringe. In *Turn Me Loose* he attempts soul, and the result is early Elvis out of Amos 'n' Andy. Jeff Wayne is the alleged perpetrator of the arranging, conducting, and production, all of which leave me speechless. If only they had left David Essex that way. P.R.

**FACES:** *Live Coast to Coast/Overture and Beginners*. Rod Stewart (vocals); Ian McLagan (keyboards); Ron Wood (guitar); Kenny Jones (drums); Tetsu Yamauchi (bass). *It's All Over Now*; *Cut Across Shorty*; *Too Bad/Every Picture Tells a Story*; *Angel*; *Stay with Me*; and four others. MERCURY SRM-1-697 \$5.98.

Performance: **Ragged**  
Recording: **Fair to good**

This isn't exactly a disgrace, but it sure is mediocre. We're into the last cut on one side before all the members of the band seem glad to be with us. Before that, there's an inglo-

rious amount of padding (albeit bombastic at times), some evidence that Rod Stewart has sung *Cut Across Shorty* too many times, and more proof that *It's All Over Now* is interesting only the way the Stones do it. Ron Wood's guitar playing is the least disciplined thing about a self-indulgent album. He plays tastefully in *Stay with Me*, even beautifully in *I Wish It Would Rain*, the album's most satisfying selection, but with more energy than imagination everywhere else. A slow blues attempt, *I'd Rather Go Blind*, might have clicked in the studio, but doesn't here, partly because Stewart seems too conscious of the audience and partly because Wood's approach to the song seems ambivalent. But there are worse albums available. N.C.

**FAIRPORT CONVENTION:** *Nine*. Fairport Convention (vocals and instrumentals). *The*

*Hexamshire Lass*; *Polly on the Shore*; *The Brilliancy Medley and Cherokee Shuffle*; *To Althea from Prison*; and five others. A&M SP-3603 \$5.98.

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

Fairport is improving again, thanks in part to the subtle power in the voice of Trevor Lucas and the maturity Jerry Donahue is showing on guitar. But, ironically, the good they do makes Fairport appear to miss Sandy Denny all the more, for Lucas and Donahue came to Fairport from Fotheringay, the one-shot group Sandy formed after she left Fairport. (Got that?) There's no replacing Sandy, but grafting what's left of the Fotheringay sound onto what's left of the old Fairport sound is not a bad idea. Dave Swarbrick's fiddle, viola, and mandolin, Dave Pegg's mandolin and bass, and Dave Mattacks' crisp drumming and occasional keyboards blend very nicely indeed with Donahue's laconic, chiming lead and Lucas' rhythm guitar. And they've gone back to digging out old ballads instead of trying to write everything themselves, and there's not much wrong with the material. The voices of Lucas and Swarbrick don't blend, however, and the band still needs some clear and classy vocals to cut the scratchiness of whiskey baritones and squeaky fiddles. But don't let that keep you from hearing their performance of Lucas' *Bring 'em Down*. N.C.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**FAMILY:** *It's Only a Movie*. Roger Chapman

(vocals); Jim Cregan (bass); Tony Ashton (keyboards); Charlie Whitney (guitar); Rob Townsend (drums). *It's Only a Movie*; *Leroy*; *Buffet Tea for Two*; *Boom Bang*; *Boots 'n' Roots*; and four others. UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA 181-F \$4.98, Ⓢ UA-EA 181-G \$6.98.

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

There's good and bad news about this album. Bad news first: it's Family's last. After years of being one of England's best-loved groups without being one of her best-selling ones, the band has broken up. (They made only a few American tours, including a notable booking at the departed Fillmore East.)

Now the good news: this is a brilliant album. The arrangements are outstanding, the instrumental performances are topflight, and the vocals are models of restrained swing. There is uniform quality throughout the album, but *Buffet Tea for Two* is especially notable. A variation on John Entwhistle's *My Wife*, in which the spouse is homicidal, Family's *Buffet* is about a man escaping a dull mate and a stifling life. The horn riff from Entwhistle's recording is used, but the tempo is slowed and the riff is modulated so that by the end of the performance Family has pulled off a little symphony.

The horn and string arrangements are by Del Newman, and they are super. The band is (was) really fine, especially Tony Ashton's piano and Charlie Whitney's guitar. Roger Chapman's vocals are fluid and flexible; he has a frantic vibrato that is effectively applied to "crisis points" in the songs. Whitney and Chapman wrote the material, which is better than average. But what makes the album so valuable is the minute attention to detail in the arrangements—Family is (was) very careful about texturing and coloring, which made the tunes more interesting for them to play and makes them more interesting for us to hear. Family was more than a rock-and-roll band, and their talents and qualities turn this album into a phonographic cabaret revue. I wish they were still around. We can't afford, in these dull times, to lose good bands. J.V.

**ALICE FAYE:** *Greatest Hits*. Alice Faye (vocals); orchestra. *Moonlight Bay*; *Never Say No*; *This Year's Kisses*; *You'll Never Know*; and eight others. STANYAN 10072 \$5.98 (from Stanyan Record Co., 8440 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90069).

Performance: **She's At It Again**  
Recording: **Fair**

*Alice Faye?* That's right, Alice Faye. Look, if Ruby and Debbie and Alexis and Patsy can bring olde Broadway to stooped ovations with their efforts in revivals, then why not dear, sweet Alice? Currently she is warming up (and over) in another waxwork resuscitation destined, after a long tour, to open in the Big Apple and to be known as *Good News*. Can't wait. Aside from her pleading baritone voice, her tic-like wink, and her ample décolletage, she has always brought a refreshing touch of morbidity to her roles. Always on the verge of tears, she could invest a line—any line—with a lachrymal momentousness that suggested Anna Karenina ordering extra onions for her beloved Vronski.

This album is a re-release from Rod McKuen's nostalgia factory, recorded some time in the Sixties for Reprise, and Alice wends her way through some of her screen biggies.

such as *You'll Never Know*, *You Can't Have Everything*, and *Rose of Washington Square*, while-the-band-plays-on. Alice obviously loves her work, and her fans will love it too as she scoops around the lyrics, stays courageously on key, and projects her special brand of Mother Courage Goes to Hollywood.

The liner notes by Richard Oliver are as chunky as the object of their admiration. He traces Darryl Zanuck's success with a string of blonde musical stars starting with Shirley Temple (are you listening, Nabokov?) and continuing through Grable, June Haver, Mitzi Gaynor, Alice, of course, and finally Monroe. Anne Baxter once said that Zanuck divided all females into two groups, "broad and librarians," which tells you more about Zanuck than you really want to know but also shows the kind of tough-minded good humor it must have taken for a woman like Alice Faye to survive in that atmosphere. She did, and in her time, I suppose, provided a lot of entertainment for Depression audiences. For sure we don't have anyone like her in films during the present Depression, but then Alice would never have been starring on Broadway in those days either. They hadn't heard of plastic yet. P.R.

**JOSÉ FELICIANO:** *For My Love . . . Mother Music*. José Feliciano (vocals, guitar); orchestra. *World Without Music; The Gypsy; Shoo-Fly; Dirty Work; Stoney Heart*; and five others. RCA APL1-0266 \$5.98. © APS1-0266 \$6.98, © APK1-0266 \$6.98.

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

No more knocks on Feliciano. I have only regret that a once big talent has let his performances become so ragged, so careless, and so rote-like. He still plays the guitar with instinctual passion, but the performing instrument of his voice sounds as hollow and echoing as an empty Vegas night club. Too bad. P.R.

**GALLAGHER & LYLE:** *Seeds* (see Best of the Month, page 75)

**JAMES GRIFFEN:** *Breakin' Up Is Easy*. James Griffen (vocals); orchestra. *Someday; Father and Son; Lifeline; Only Now; She Knows*; and five others. POLYDOR PD 6018 \$5.98, © 8F 6018 \$6.98, © CF 6018 \$6.98.

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

James Griffen has cooked up a heavy stew of routine ideas and feelings in this album, and it turns out to be The Heartburn Special. *Father and Son* is as turgid as a Hardy novel, and *Breakin' Up Is Easy* is pure pop plastic. There's intricate and highly professional production work here, but it's wasted. For what Griffen has to offer in the way of anything new, a one-string banjo would have been quite sufficient. P.R.

**PAUL HAMPTON:** *Rest Home for Children*. Paul Hampton (vocals); orchestra. *Crazy Maurice; Rats with Lists; Mercy Merci; Cosmopolitan Magazine*; and seven others. CRESTED BUTTE CB 702 \$5.98.

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

Paul Hampton's songs have a bitter edge to them. *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, for instance, is about two typical readers, lonely women in their thirties trying to follow all that advice

about how to achieve a swinging life style but spending most of their spare time together because no men ever call them. It is a very short song, about a minute and a half, but it makes its point with almost savage brutality. Hampton's best performance here is the funny-sad *Gordon Entertaining Nightly*, in which "Gordon," who plays piano and sings in a little lounge off a hotel lobby, confides he doesn't plan to stay long because he knows that producers will soon be flocking around him with offers, and besides he has big Hollywood connections: a friend of his is a personal friend of Vic Damone's chauffeur. This story of small-time show biz rings all too true, the saga of a born loser, with his pathetic Pal Joey bravado, who is convinced that it's all a matter of connections. It is a hauntingly effective "slice of life," and alone worth the price of the record. If Hampton could work consistently on this level he might be a welcome satiric talent, but though such lighter efforts as *Crazy Maurice* and *Your Basic Skaters Waltz* are entertaining enough, I still get an uncomfortable impression of darkness threading its way through everything Hampton does. P.R.

**HOT TUNA:** *The Phosphorescent Rat*. Jorma Kaukonen (guitar, vocals); Jack Casady (bass); Sammy Piazza (drums). *I See the Light; Letter to the North Star; Easy Now; Corners Without Exits; Day to Day Out the Window Blues; In the Kingdom; Seaweed Strut*; and three others. GRUNT BFL1-0348 \$5.98, © BFS1-0348 \$6.98, © BFK1-0348 \$6.98.

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

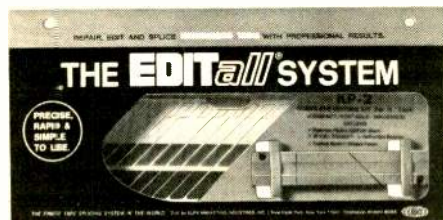
This album tests you with a buffer of contrived ugliness, starting with a title that sounds like a Zappa castoff and a rotten array of fifth-rate graphics messing up the jacket covers, and running on into a selection of songs that seem to be mostly models of a single brand, as if all their parts are interchangeable. If you can get past that, you'll find some instrumentals that are purely motivated, and Jorma Kaukonen's vocals are smoother and more effective than ever before. At times I think his big electric screech style on the guitar is a bit suffocating, but he seems to be trying to mitigate that—here he even includes a nice acoustic solo. Jack Casady is fine, as usual, and Sammy Piazza is sharper than usual, so the music seems to hit a groove and just roll along mindlessly. And very late at night it can be worth something to my kind of listener. N.C.

**JOBRIATH.** Jobriath (vocals); orchestra. *Movie Queen; Blow Away; Inside; Rock of Ages; Be Still*; and six others. ELEKTRA 75070 \$5.98, © ET 85070 \$6.98, © TC 55070 \$6.98.

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

Imagine my chagrin. There I was sitting in my drawing room, eating *marrons glacés* and smoking Turkish cigarettes (carefully keeping them away from my Hermès dressing gown) while Woo Wu, my Oriental manservant, played *La Plus que Lente* for me on the lucite baby grand—just feeling sublimely decadent—when suddenly there was a terrible clatter at the bottom of my garden. I wasn't surprised. I'd had a suspicion that there was (Continued on page 87)

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Play, play it again!  
**THE MOVIES:  
 WARNER'S  
 FIRST  
 FIFTY YEARS**

Reviewed by Leonard Maltin

Dooley Wilson and  
 Humphrey Bogart  
 in *Casablanca*



WARNER BROS. PICTURES

FILM BUFFS are fussy people, but they are not fussy without good reason. Someone, it appears, is always tampering with their beloved movies, editing them for TV, showing worn-out prints of them in hard-to-get-to theaters, printing obvious misinformation about them in books, and subjecting them to other assaults too indecent or too numerous to mention. A dyed-in-the-wool film buff therefore approaches a project like Warner Brothers' new "Fifty Years of Film" and its companion album "Fifty Years of Film Music" with considerable trepidation, with no little confidence that they will prove to be merely more of the same. In this case the fear is unfounded, however, for these six records have been assembled with all the taste, intelligence, and apparent love for their subject that have been missing from all the other "tributes." There is virtually no editorializing on the discs—each excerpt is permitted to speak for itself—and the subjective decisions that were made (choosing particular sequences and omitting others) are bound, I think, to coincide with the feelings of most devotees of the Hollywood product. They do, at least, with mine.

The producers were blessed, of course, with one great advantage: one might almost stick pins into a listing of Warner Brothers films and come up with a creditable selection, and how would it be possible to choose excerpts from a film such as *The Maltese Falcon* and not find wonderful dialogue? "Fifty Years of Film" provides excerpts from some seventy-five movies, choice bits that range from memorable one-liners or whole speeches (John Garfield's "They . . . tossed a coin" in *Four Daughters*, Pat O'Brien's pep-talk from *Knute Rockne*) to *Reader's Digest*-y condensations of such real classics and personal favorites as *Little Caesar*, *The Public Enemy*, *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, and *Casablanca*. The sound-montages are in each case such expertly edited manipulations of memorable highlights that they easily manage to capture the flavor of the entire film.

It is amazing how well most of this material plays in audio form, from a duel in *Robin Hood* ("Your sword, Gisbourne!") to Ruby

Keeler's clumsy-sounding (don't hate me) tap dance in *42nd Street*. The unbearable tension of Grace Kelly's attempted killing in *Dial M for Murder* is conveyed almost entirely by Dmitri Tiomkin's pulsating music, assisted by some appropriate obligato gasps from the actress. Some of the more recent choices, however, *Bonnie and Clyde* and especially *The Wild Bunch*, have nothing to offer aurally. Of the newer selections, only *Days of Wine and Roses* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* match the earlier films in their ability to conjure up the proper visualizations to go with good dialogue and strong performances.

"Fifty Years of Film Music" combines soundtrack scores, songs, and production numbers with equally felicitous results. In an age when the violin is nearly extinct on movie soundtracks, it is a particular delight to fill the ear with the magnificent suites composed by Erich Korngold for *Robin Hood* and *King's Row*—music evocative of the widest possible range of emotions, and beautifully orchestrated and performed as well. Max Steiner's *Now, Voyager* and *Adventures of Don Juan*, Alex North's *Streetcar Named Desire*, Franz Waxman's *The Nun's Story*, and Dmitri Tiomkin's *The High and the Mighty* are among the memorable scores excerpted here from their original soundtrack recordings, and the fidelity is excellent. (One's appreciation of this music is greatly enhanced, I might add, by Rudy Behlmer's superb notes and comments, both on the album jackets and within the handsome booklet that accompanies the set.)

Songs range from Louis Armstrong's vibrant instrumental and vocal on *Jeepers Creepers* (from *Hollywood Hotel*) to Judy Garland's throbbing *The Man That Got Away* (from *A Star Is Born*), but the bulk of the music is drawn from the great Busby Berkeley extravaganzas of the Thirties. These famous musical numbers raise a problem, however, for reproducing them in their entirety would require that as much as fifteen minutes be devoted to playing (or singing) one song over and over—they were originally performed to accompany Berkeley's lengthy parades of costumes and elaborations of close-order drill. All the numbers

included here are therefore edited vocals from the original soundtracks. In some cases, the handiwork is impeccable (*By a Waterfall* and *The Lullaby of Broadway*). In others, the editing is somewhat disconcerting, especially to someone who is familiar with the originals. For example, Al Jolson sings the verse to *About a Quarter to Nine* in one key, then abruptly switches to another key for the chorus while a corps of dancers suddenly begins to tap behind him. This is because the verse has been attached to Jolson's final chorus of the song, and the repetition and the modulated setup of the production number have been omitted.

MUSICAL excerpts on the "Film" set are often even more abrupt than this, fading in or out and denying the listener the pleasure of hearing the excerpt in its entirety. To be shortchanged on the minor-chord finale of *Remember My Forgotten Man*, for example, is a shame. The only example of out-and-out cheating in the entire set, however, is Dooley Wilson's singing of *As Time Goes By*. From the *Casablanca* soundtrack, Ingrid Bergman prompts him to sing the tune, and then the album switches to a separate studio recording Wilson must have made for commercial release in the Forties. He does not sing the song all the way through in one sitting during the film, nor is he accompanied by bass and drums as he is on this version. It's really surprising that the editors of an album otherwise so distinguished for its integrity and intelligence would try to foist this off as a piece of the real film.

But this is only minor carping about a major success. Both "Fifty Years of Film" and "Fifty Years of Film Music" are certain to gladden the hearts of those fussy film buffs, as well as to provide nostalgic and often compelling listening for anyone who simply enjoys vintage films and film music. The vices here are few, the virtues too many to enumerate: it's the next best thing to having the films themselves. Or, as Bette Davis put it in *Now, Voyager*, "Don't let's ask for the moon; we have the stars!"

**FIFTY YEARS OF FILM.** Excerpts from the original soundtracks of *Don Juan*; *The Jazz Singer*; *The Lights of New York*; *My Man*; *Little Caesar*; *The Public Enemy*; *42nd Street*; *Dangerous*; *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*; *Gold Diggers of 1933*; *Captain Blood*; *The Story of Louis Pasteur*; *The Green Pastures*; *Jezebel*; *Four Daughters*; *Dark Victory*; *Angels with Dirty Faces*; *Boy Meets Girl*; *Hollywood Hotel*; *The Maltese Falcon*; *They Drive by Night*; *High Sierra*; and fifty-four others. WARNER BROS. 3XX 2737 \$12.98.

**FIFTY YEARS OF FILM MUSIC.** Excerpts from the original soundtracks of *Casablanca*; *A Star Is Born*; *Going Places*; *Pete Kelly's Blues*; *The Young at Heart*; *Calamity Jane*; *Young Man with a Horn*; *Rhapsody in Blue*; *Camelot*; *Night and Day*; *The Music Man*; *Mame*; *Yankee Doodle Dandy*; *Gold Diggers of 1933*; *Go into Your Dance*; *Garden of the Moon*; *Dames*; *Twenty Million Sweethearts*; *Footlight Parade*; *Melody for Two*; *The Sea Hawk*; *King's Row*; *The Adventures of Robin Hood*; and fourteen others. WARNER BROS. 3XX 2736 \$12.98.



something odd going on down there for some time. I hurried down, and instead of finding the expected gamblers, there was only Jobriath's album with a clipping from *Newsweek* stuck on it. In the clip Jobriath describes himself as a "true fairy," and his manager, some person named Jerry Brandt, is quoted as saying: "The energy force today comes from homosexuals and Puerto Ricans. I see Jobriath as a combination Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Nureyev, Dietrich, Marceau and astronaut."

Seething with excitement, I returned to the drawing room and insisted that Woo Wu stop playing *Limehouse Blues* (what a fit of sulks ensued!) so that I could listen to Jobriath. Well! Strictly *entre nous*, the album is—you'll pardon the expression—a bust. The Brandt person has put all sorts of tricky effects into the production: it must have been fabulously expensive (I mean Jobriath *did* receive a \$300,000 contract), but it tries so terribly *hard* for effect that I had an unkind attack of giggles. Jobriath sounds like he is trying to imitate that Jagger person, and his songs—such as *Earthling*, all about someone from another planet talking to an Earth person and finishing with, "Say, what's a nice little being like you doin' on a dump like this?" (even I've heard *that* one before)—are just plain dumb. There are a few songs here that I will have the good taste *not* to mention. Suffice it to say that the lyrics are a *scandale*. And vocally, Marcel Marceau's act sounds better. If the Brandt person is successful in his campaign to make a star out of Jobriath, then heaven knows what the consequences will be! Dietrich indeed!!

Well, I got things back to normal. I took out my old Ethel Merman, Portia Nelson, and Gertrude Lawrence records, and I'm having a positively gorgeous time with them. P.R.

**JERRY LEE LEWIS:** *Southern Roots*. Jerry Lee Lewis (vocals, piano); instrumental accompaniment. *Meat Man; When a Man Loves a Woman; Hold On, I'm Coming; Just a Little Bit; Born to Be a Loser*; and five others. MERCURY SRM-1-690 \$5.98.

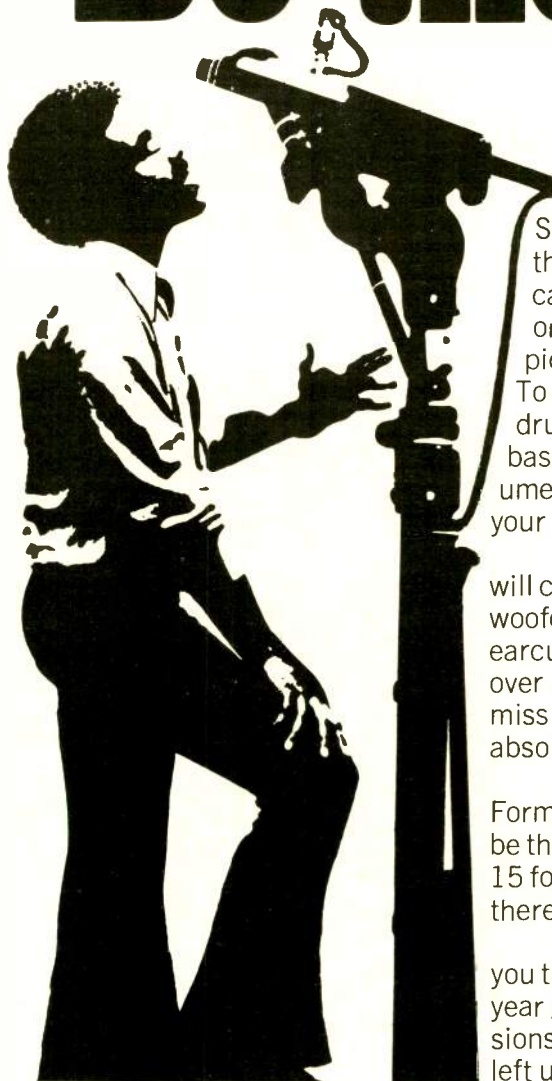
Performance: **Phony**  
Recording: **Very good**

I remember, as a small boy, seeing Ted Lewis on television, with his battered top hat and his then all-girl orchestra, playing a few notes on the clarinet, pointing it at the audience and asking "Is ev-rybody hap-py?" I asked my father about this strange fellow. "In the 1920's," said my wise *père* (who once led a jazz band), "Lewis had a good group. There was some good jazz and a little corn. Now it's no jazz and all corn."

I fear Jerry Lee Lewis is a parallel. Lewis started out as one of Sam Phillips' stable of Sun Records artists, which at one time included, besides Lewis, Johnny Cash, Charlie Rich, Carl Perkins, and Elvis Presley. Everybody remembers Lewis' hits from the late 1950's—*Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On*, *Great Balls of Fire*, *Breathless*—they were beaty, crude, and funny. He made what was then considered a scandalous marriage, and disappeared from the pop lists, surfacing some years later as a successful country artist. Coaxed back to rock-and-roll, he is now being merchandised as a kind of grand dirty old man of country-rock; he had a hit with his last album, which I enjoyed. It was recorded in London, where he hoo-rah'd with eager young British disciples.

But the trouble with *this* album is that Lewis doesn't really participate. He sings at

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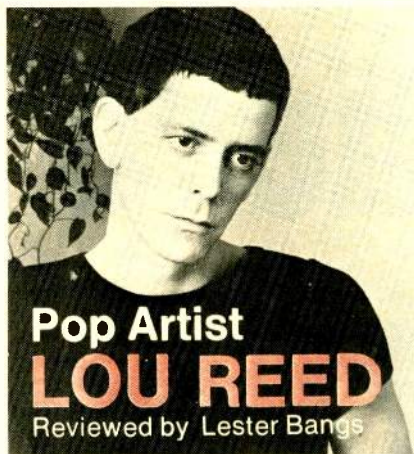
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that long-dreamed-of chart hit about a year ago with *Walk on the Wild Side*, and "Transformer" was something of a sales phenomenon, so RCA had to get something out quick to ensure that Lou wouldn't slip from the public mind and be stigmatized as a one-shot cult item. Which is not to say that this latest disc is any fast-buck plate of schlock. Granted, the general understanding when any rock act releases a live album is that they don't have enough fresh material for a studio shot, and since live rock performances have become a sort of totem, any live recording is bound to clean up, which explains why most of them are so godawful.

But "Rock 'n' Roll Animal" is solid through and through. This is primarily because Lou has replaced the dreadful pubescent garage band he toted around the country last year with a superb quintet made up of some of the most outstanding journeymen in rock today. Guitarists Dick Wagner and, especially, Steve Hunter are two of the finest musicians to come out of the Detroit scene of the late Sixties. It was their driving Clapton-derived lines that ultimately saved the last three Alice Cooper albums, as well as infusing the rare "up" moments of "Berlin" with a primal rock-and-roll power that much of Lou's recent music has lacked. Here they absolutely shine; in truth, they're the stars of the album. Hunter has devised a whole new extended intro for the master's classic *Sweet Jane* that must have delighted Lou with the way it substitutes a bright clarity for his customary sullen murk. Similarly, *White Light/White Heat*, while lacking the smoky-subway density of the original, has a big, churning drive that could serve as a definition of rock-as-macho-aggression, and it allows Lou to cut loose with some of the most growlingly alive singing he's displayed in ages. There is a precision, a cleanliness, and a sense of, well, joy to the instrumental work here that all but exorcises the dolefulness out of even *Heroin*. It kicks Lou's spirits up to the point that in *Lady Day* he literally shouts, out of some perverse sort of oddball triumph, the ever-enjoyable line "A bathroom in the hall!"

**R**UMOR has it that Lou is planning to come up with a set of "optimistic songs" for his next studio effort. It should come as no surprise, since of all living rock stars he particularly exults in contradicting his previous postures as violently as possible. Those who remember the apparently anesthetized fat man lumbering around the country with a bottle of Johnny Walker Black in his hand last spring were also hardly surprised to see, on the cover of "Rock 'n' Roll Animal" (or on the nation's stages during his recent, unfortunately truncated, tour), a pipecleaner-thin harlequin with cropped hair and black lipstick writhing adrenalized to the point of whiplash. Greater devotion to his art hath no other pop-star extant.

**LOU REED: *Rock 'n' Roll Animal*.** Lou Reed (vocals); Steve Hunter, Dick Wagner (guitars); Ray Colcord (keyboards); Pentti Glan (drums); Prakash John (bass). *Sweet Jane*; *Heroin*; *White Light/White Heat*; *Lady Day*; *Rock 'n' Roll*. RCA APL1-0472 \$5.98, Ⓣ APS1-0472 \$6.95, Ⓣ APK1-0472 \$6.95.

songs, clowns around, and tries to live up to his moniker of "The Killer." He appears to *deign* to record, and thereby misses the sense of some great songs completely, refuses to get involved with the superb backing given him by the cream of Memphis musicians, and betrays the title of the album. He isn't going back home, he's just exercising his ego.

Lewis' failure to get off his high horse and swing with the present company is even more distressing when you consider just who that present company is: Carl Perkins and Steve Cropper on guitar, Al Jackson Jr. on drums, Duck Dunn on bass (the last three from the MG's), the wonderful trumpeter-arranger Wayne Jackson and the Memphis Horns, who worked with Otis Redding (and whose arrangements, copied note for note from Box Tops recordings, helped Presley's comeback), Augie Meyer on Vox organ (he from the Sir Douglas band), and a passel of other worthies. King Lewis cannot afford to squander the talents of such noble squires, else us peasants will get restive and his empire will fall. J.V.

**MELANIE: *Madrugada*.** Melanie Safka (vocals and guitar; instrumental accompaniment). *Love to Lose Again*; *Lover's Cross*; *Pretty Boy Floyd*; *Wild Horses*; and six others. NEIGHBORHOOD NRS 48001 \$6.98, Ⓣ 8151-48001 C \$7.95, Ⓣ 5151-48001 C \$7.95.

Performance: **Misguided**  
Recording: **Competent**

Melanie has always been something of an anomaly on the American music scene. She is, basically, very much more a European kind of an artist than an American one, a chanteuse rather than any sort of logical product of an American folk, rock, or pop tradition. That she feels otherwise about herself is only one of the many ambiguities that haunt her performing personality and her career. In fact, when Melanie is at her most appealing the ambiguity is 90 per cent of the message.

A large part of it resides in her voice, her phrasing and accentuation, and the way she uses declamation. The sum total of the sound threads a line between childlike innocence and very mature Lotte Lenya, dipping first one way and then the other. Occasional over-emphases bring forth the sound of childish idiocy on the one hand, and a very scary, Pirate Jenny-like psychotic quality on the other. It is this tenuous balance between the young and the old, the innocent and the jaded, the normal and the abnormal that lends fascination to her interpretations of her own and others' songs. That, and the fact that some of the songs have a certain quality in themselves and that the arrangements she has received have often been exceedingly fine—and exceedingly European in style, one might add.

Left to her own devices on stage, with nothing more than her own guitar, Melanie abruptly descends to the artistic level of a lovable teddy bear, something that has gotten her an audience of quite another sort—those who are not yet old enough to even spell "ambiguity." Given a song of a strongly rural American character, she wanders around the unfamiliar scenery like Marlene Dietrich in a Western, sometimes finding, through immigrant's eyes, points of meaning and accentuation that have escaped the natives—as in *Carolina in My Mind*—and sometimes merely getting lost. Placed in the setting of choral complexities and driving rhythms—as in *Lay Down (Candles in the Rain)*—her personality re-

**P**OP ART is, among other things, the marketing of images, and any Pop Artist who wants to maintain his success will make it his business to come up with a slightly new image of himself each season to keep his fans diverted. Lou Reed likes to keep 'em guessing as much or more than anybody, and even though he has only two basic personas to play with, he alternates them with an obsessive regularity that has by now about reached the level of pathology. He will *tell* you that most of his work is not autobiographical, that his songs are about an entirely made-up cast of Warholian characters, but a careful consideration of the body of his recorded work (as well as his extreme changes of physical appearance from year to year) suggests otherwise.

In his first solo album Lou seemed almost sedate, playing the happily, heterosexually settled man-in-love only intermittently beset by the inevitable tensions of having to live in New York City. But the power of rock as Theater of Ambiguity was increasing daily, and his response was to go to England, whence he returned with "Transformer," an album full of chic decadence (Valium, amphetamines, and "why don't you swallow razor blades?") and homosexually oriented material produced by David Bowie, that kingpin of andro-rock. Note also that where photos from the first-solo-album connubial-bliss period depicted him as an almost faceless scowl in a Jean Genet "prisoner" haircut, he was now parading around in platform shoes and stark, heavy make-up.

But he was having fun, and so were we. By the time of release of his intended tour de force, "Berlin," Lou had gotten a little fat, and an understandable vanity kept him hovering in the background, letting the elegantly twisted hero and heroine of his songs stand as the current extension of his psyche. But "Berlin," in attempting to resolve the conflicts in the erogenous DMZ defined by the albums "Lou Reed" and "Transformer," succeeded only in being so relentlessly grim that it either depressed sensitive people to the point of fantasizing violence against him or reduced the more resilient jaded (whom, of all audiences, Reed should have understood) to fits of helpless laughter. "Berlin" was an epic bummer that was understood so well that nobody, including its creator, could long stand to listen to it. It bombed on the market, and that is why we have, so hot on its heels, the new "Rock 'n' Roll Animal."

Let it be remembered that Lou did have

cedes and she becomes a mere adjunct of the arrangement. But in her own kind of little-girl/Piaf/Enya understated accusation (*Citiest People* or even *Look What They Done to My Song*) she can be a great popular artist.

The truth is probably that she is a natural, largely unthinking performer. Placed in any given setting, she will do what she will do, and whether the results are embarrassingly puerile or intensely affecting depends mostly upon the setting. Her past records are a succession of low points and high points, occasionally a song breaking through for reasons other than those given, but most of the successes coming about through the proper confluence of subject matter, attitude, musical simplicity, tasteful arrangement, and that peculiar and appealing persona carried by her voice.

Her latest record, "Madrugada," is, alas, a low point. I don't know if someone has told her that she is a profound songwriter and interpreter, but she exhibits most of the characteristics of someone who has just had profundity thrust upon her. That is to say, she sounds merely pretentious. The melodic interest of her own songs here is not high. One of them, *The Actress*, manages to get off the ground, but not terribly far, and Jim Croce's *Lover's Cross* has a certain appeal in the performance. But what happens to such songs as Randy Newman's *I Think It's Going to Rain Today* and Woody Guthrie's *Pretty Boy Floyd* (*Pretty Boy Floyd?* Melanie?) is of no artistic benefit to anyone. The arrangements, for perhaps the first time, are truly tasteless. Vapid harmonic meanderings are substituted for the true chordal basis of the tunes, rendering them spineless and without the ability to progress. Pretentious blitherings and ditherings obtrude everywhere, and endings are dragged out so unmercifully that one gets the feeling there simply wasn't sufficient material for the disc and everything had to be stretched out to make up the time. Yet the men who did the arrangements (Ron Frangipane and Roger Kellaway) have done beautiful work in the past. Strange.

I suppose one might put the blame on Peter Schekeryk. He produced the album and he is (if you did not already know) Melanie's husband. I don't know anything more about him than that, but if his wife is not really interested in finding out who and what she is and making rational decisions about what she should sing and how, it seems to me that the task falls naturally to him. The next album may be a masterpiece, but why must we leave these things to chance? *James Goodfriend*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**MOTT THE HOOPLE:** *The Hoople*. Ariel Bender (guitar); Dale Griffin (drums); Ian Hunter (vocals, guitar); Overend Watts (bass); Morgan Fisher (keyboards). *The Golden Age of Rock 'n' Roll*; *Marionette*; *Alice*; *Crash Street Kids*; *Born Late '58*; *Trudi's Song*; *Pearl 'n' Roy (England)*; *Through the Looking Glass*; *Roll Away the Stone*. COLUMBIA PC 32871 \$6.98, Ⓢ PCA 32871 \$7.98, Ⓒ PCT 32871 \$7.98.

Performance: **Hot stuff**  
Recording: **Very good**

Mott the Hoople's new album begins with some quietly majestic piano chords (synthetic Rachmaninoff by way of Rosie and the Originals) while the backup gospel chorus sings ethereal "ooohhs." Then a breathtakingly

sincere, unquestionably American voice intones, à la Alan Freed: "Ladies and gentlemen, the Golden Age of Rock-and-Roll." At that point the piano begins the buildup from *Twist and Shout*, and the whole thing segues suddenly to the full band, augmented by Little Richard-styled saxes, pounding away as if possessed. That's jive, certainly, but it is also suspiciously like genius, and even though it's not the kind of pace Mott can sustain for any length of time, it should give you a pretty good idea of what this record is about.

Overall, it's slicker and more assured than anything they've ever done; Mott is at the top of the heap finally (as of this writing, they're about to do a week on Broadway), and if their ruminations from that lofty pinnacle come off somehow as a bit strident, especially when compared with the magnificent gut-wrenchings of their earlier *Ballad of Mott the Hoople*,



MOTT THE HOOPLE

*Live that sounds suspiciously like genius*

that's only to be expected. These boys are stars now—though, all things considered, it hasn't gone to their heads too badly. Of course, Ian Hunter is beginning to take himself just a wee bit too seriously; his *Marionette*, for example, although a brilliantly constructed and performed song, teeters ever so slightly on the edge of self-parody. Mick Ralphs' soulful guitar and plaintive vocals are sorely missed; his replacement is competent but faceless, and the result is more weight on Ian than I, for one, prefer. Still, this remains a band that, for all its overreaching, truly believes in rock-and-roll, and there are fewer and fewer of those around these days. Not quite the masterpiece they intended perhaps, but one of the handful of records released so far this year that really matter. Get it.

*Steve Simels*

**RICK NELSON & THE STONE CANYON BAND:** *Windfall*. Rick Nelson (vocals, guitar); Tom Brumley (steel guitar); Dennis Larden (lead guitar); J. DeWitt White (bass); Ty Grimes (drums). *Don't Leave Me Here*; *Legacy*; *Someone to Love*; *Wild Nights in Tulsa*; *I Don't Want to Be Lonely Tonight*; *Windfall*; and four others. MCA-383 \$5.98.

Performance: **Satisfying**  
Recording: **Clean**

Now here is a remarkable thing. If before

hearing "Windfall" you read the lyrics that are printed on the cover you would probably let out a resigned sigh over the banality of it all and contemplate ways of recycling the vinyl. Add to the banal lyrics the most pedestrian of tunes (except for *Don't Leave Me Here*, which has some nice changes), and what are we left with? The performances! How Nelson and the Stone Canyon Band work this miraculous transformation is beyond me, but the arrangements, musicianship, and vocal delivery are entirely charming, graceful, and subtle.

I have never heard an album where a band, by its own decision (Stone Canyon and Nelson wrote all the material), had so little to work with and yet made it come off so well. Nelson has never sounded better. Since he formed the Stone Canyon Band he has been quietly earnest in his music, always reaching for something he either could not quite get or secretly never thought he would. But with this album he and his band have got it knocked. I never thought I'd be saying this when I started, but I really like it. *J.V.*

**THE NEW YORK DOLLS:** *Too Much Too Soon*. David JoHansen (vocals and harp); Johnny Thunders (guitar); Syl Sylvain (guitar); Arthur Kane (bass); Jerry Nolan (drums). *Babylon*; *Stranded in the Jungle*; *Who Are the Mystery Girls*; *Showdown: It's Too Late*; *Puss 'n' Boots*; *Chatterbox*; *Bad Detective*; *Don't Start Me Talkin'*; *Human Being*. MERCURY SRM-1-1001 \$6.98, Ⓢ MC8-1-706 \$6.98, Ⓒ MCR4-1-706 \$6.98.

Performance: **Amusing**  
Recording: **Clean**

Almost everyone I know who really likes the Dolls attributes it to their attitude, and I would have to agree. I like their attitude too; I just wish I liked their music a little bit more. This new album doesn't answer any of the questions posed by their debut disc (like can they write? sing? play?), and the production by New York legend and schlock-meister Shadow Morton doesn't help clarify the situation any. The guitars don't roar the way Todd Rundgren allowed them to last time out, although the backup chicks he's added on some of the numbers are a nice touch, providing a much more effective background for lead singer David JoHansen's sort of, uh, limited vocals. More tellingly, however, the originals are simply more of the same; there's been absolutely no growth since *Personality Crisis*.

All that aside, I have to admit that the moldy oldies the boys have dredged up here are absolutely fantastic. *Stranded in the Jungle*, in particular, which is one of the oldest rock songs extant, is done to perfection, with lots of exotic percussion à la Martin Denny and Johnny Weismuller, and sung by JoHansen in a hilariously accurate re-creation of the early-Fifties New York black vocal style; *Bad Detective*, with the guitars playing *Chinatown* and a J. Arthur Rank gong coming in at the finale, is one of the funniest rock tracks I've heard in quite some time.

So what can you say about the Dolls? I have no idea whether they're any good at all, but they're entertaining as hell, and if JoHansen ever decides to stop imitating himself, he might just turn out to be an interesting singer. Against my better judgment, I sort of like this record. A lot, in fact. *Steve Simels*

**ELVIS PRESLEY:** *Elvis—A Legendary Performer, Volume 1*. Elvis Presley (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *That's All Right*;

*I Love You Because; Heartbreak Hotel; Don't Be Cruel; Love Me Tender; Trying to Get to You;* and six others. RCA CPL-1-0341 \$7.98, Ⓢ CPS-1-0341 \$7.98, Ⓢ CPK-1-0341 \$7.98.

Performance: **Spotty**  
Recording: **Variable**

Before you rush out to buy this album in the belief that it's a genuine collection of Presley's early performances, be advised: it is little more than a re-re-repackaging of his previous "golden hits" albums, gussied up with a picture booklet. Some of the tracks are live performances, probably out-takes from his 1969 TV special. The vocals are good—Presley never did a bad vocal even on his often abysmal material—but these performances just don't have the same emotional content the originals had.

*That's All Right*, his first single, made for the small Sun label in Memphis in 1954, is included, and so is the previously unissued *I Love You Because*, also done for Sun. Hearing the boyish innocence and instinctive savvy of an eighteen-year-old Presley is a treat; besides, he swung in his Sun sessions as he's seldom swung again. If one side of the album had been made up of Sun cuts it would have been a real collector's item.

Further quibbles: why—since *Heartbreak Hotel* is included—didn't RCA give us the originals of *I Want You, I Need You, I Love You, Hound Dog, It's Now or Never*, and *I Beg of You*? Instead we get stuff like *Tonight's All Right for Love* from the soundtrack of *G.I. Blues* (1960), never released, according to the annotation, "in English speaking countries." From the pizza-pie mandolin arrangement, my guess is the song was probably released as a single via RCA Italiana. No doubt the Romans rejoiced, but there's little to celebrate in having material the label didn't think was good enough to be issued here touted now as a historical gift. This album is phony. J.V.

**TODD RUNDGREN:** *Todd*. Todd Rundgren (vocals, guitar, synthesizer); instrumental accompaniment. *I Think You Know; The Spark of Life; An Elpee's Worth of Toons; Lord Chancellor's Nightmare Song; The Last Ride; Everybody's Going to Heaven/King Kong Reggae; Useless Begging; Izzat Love?; Heavy Metal Kids; Don't You Ever Learn;* and seven others. BEARSVILLE 2 BR 6952 two discs \$9.98, Ⓢ J 86952 \$9.97, Ⓢ J 56952 \$9.97.

Performance: **Occasionally brilliant**  
Recording: **Good**

Todd Rundgren is one of those talented people who like to exercise their talents while standing back to watch themselves do it. He is not quite convinced he can bring it off. He hasn't made up his mind what he does best or likes doing most—hit-parade pop-rock, electronic gimerackery with synthesizers, or "meaningful" songs. There are samples of each in this two-disc set, which, like so many others, should have been boiled down to one disc.

Rundgren is an adventurer in the best sense of the word; he has a sense of showmanship not unlike Orson Welles' in his great days (though he is not as morose and not a genius). But, like Welles, he harbors a secret fear that he has no talent. His saving grace is a sense of humor; despite his often noisy production, some of his wonderful lines come through. In

*An Elpee's Worth of Toons*, a self-mocking song that is also a challenge to the audience, we get: "A man would simply have to be as mad as a hatter/To try and change the world with a plastic platter/There's something at the heart of it that's simply awful/A man who makes a living off a plastic waffle." *Heavy Metal Kids, Number 1 Lowest Common Denominator*, and *Everybody's Going to Heaven/King Kong Reggae* also contain some memorable writing.

These are the high spots of the album. Unfortunately, there are also some instrumentals, which are worthless: beeps, squawks, keening, and belly-rumbles from synthesizers squeezed or fattened in the studio mix—Rundgren beating us over the head with his engineering abilities. Few artists would have the imagination to include Gilbert and Sullivan's *Lord Chancellor's Nightmare Song*,



SEALS AND CROFTS  
*Details lovingly attended to*

but Rundgren botches the mix, burying the words in pounds of sound and making the inclusion pointless. *A Dream Goes On Forever, Useless Begging*, and *Izzat Love* are done in his hit-parade style. *I Think You Know* is also in that style, but I discount it because of its melodic similarity to *Something I'll Remember*, a fine ballad by Buddy Buie and J. R. Cobb of Atlanta, recorded by the Classics IV some five years ago.

Still, he is an interesting figure, this Rundgren. A young man in a hurry and a man to watch. J.V.

**MERL SAUNDERS/JERRY GARCIA:** *Live at Keystone*. Merl Saunders (keyboards); Jerry Garcia (guitar, vocals); John Kahn (bass); Bill Vitt (drums). *Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers; Space; My Funny Valentine; That's All Right, Mama;* and six others. FANTASY F-79002 two discs \$7.98, Ⓢ N 8160-79002 \$8.95.

Performance: **Gracias, Garcia**  
Recording: **Slightly lopsided**

This album was recorded before an audience in Berkeley, California, last summer, and, although the quartet's four members share equal billing, it was clearly Jerry Garcia's show from beginning to end. The foursome expertly renders a varied repertoire ranging

from songs by Arthur Crudup and Bob Dylan to a standard by Rodgers and Hart. Garcia plays better than I ever heard him play with the Grateful Dead, but I am less enthusiastic about his singing. Saunders' keyboard work—which could have been more prominent in the mix—lacks imagination, but he is capable of generating a blues feeling that complements Garcia's playing nicely. And, really, Garcia's singing isn't all that bad—you get your money's worth of good sounds with this one. C.A.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SEALS AND CROFTS:** *Unborn Child*. Jim Seals (vocals, guitar); Dash Crofts (vocals, mandolin); other musicians. *Windflowers; Desert People; 29 Years from Texas; Big Mac; Rachel;* and six others. WARNER BROS. W2761 \$5.98, Ⓢ T383 \$6.98, Ⓢ C383 \$6.98.

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

I don't personally like this as much as I wish I did, but I know it is good. Seals and Crofts are sophisticated musicians and skilled craftsmen, and one of the best things about the album is how details are lovingly attended to. What bothers me is their Boy Scout seriousness about it all—their music is starting to affect me like a dress shirt with a stiff collar that has to stay buttoned at the neck all the time.

But *Windflowers* is truly beautiful, one of the most dazzling opening songs I've heard on an album in a long time, and the vocal and instrumental work throughout is exceptional—two-part harmonies that soar above inspired and single-minded runs on Crofts' mandolin and unbelievably clean and understanding strums on Seals' acoustic guitar, backed by some restrained and brilliant strums on Louis Shelton's electric guitar. The title song's message is anti-abortion propaganda, pure and simple, but it is delivered gently and poetically inside a layered, meaty melody—and hard-working liberals like me can like the song while disagreeing with the tract it could be prosaically reduced to. But *Dance by the Light of the Moon* seems ill at ease with its meter and with the arbitrary, superficial rocking that scatters its ending, and *Big Mac*, while cleverly titled and worded to suggest both the trucking and hamburgering of America's interior, has an innocence *über alles* attitude that just about pinpoints what it is about Seals and Crofts that is getting to me. Does have a great line, though: "Headlights playin' like an old theater/If I don't go now I can't go later."

So much good music from these guys *has* to be cherished, but I cannot help holding with Voltaire or whoever it was who said that life is desperate but not serious, and music, at least occasionally, should try to reflect that. N.C.

**SINGERS UNLIMITED:** *Try to Remember*. Singers Unlimited (vocals). *Both Sides Now; Lullaby; Michelle; Emily;* and six others. BASF MB 20903 \$5.98.

Performance: **Eventually boring**  
Recording: **Good**

Gene Puerling, founder and one of the original members of the Hi-Lo's, a popular group of the Fifties, brought this new four-voice chorus together in 1967 and named it Singers Unlimited. Everything is done *a cappella* by the three men (Puerling, Don Shelton, and

Len Dresslar) and one woman (Bonnie Herman). Puerling's orchestration of voices, electronic equipment, and lavish multitracking often shows imagination and taste, as in *Michelle* or *Both Sides Now*. But all techniques seem pretty well exhausted by the end of side one, and side two degenerates into background music of the kind heard on recordings made years ago when the musician's union was on strike and pop singers were backed up by just such choruses instead of instrumentalists. It was only barely satisfactory as an emergency measure then, and simply updating it, in recording complexity, for today doesn't make it much more interesting.

The album was recorded, for some strange reason, in Germany, and it's rather more fussy and sonically soft than one might expect from the land of precision. But then I guess I do tend to think in clichés. *P.R.*

**STRAWBS: *Hero and Heroine*.** Strawbs (vocals and instrumentals). *Autumn; Sad Young Man; Just Love; Shine on Silver Sun; Hero and Heroine; Midnight Sun; Out in the Cold;* and three others. A&M SP-3607 \$5.98.

Performance: **Oops!-infested**  
Recording: **Excellent**

No, I say unto Strawbs, no, dash it, you missed by *that* much. You should listen to the Captain in those old submarine movies, I tell them; he isn't saying "Steady as she goes" just to kill time or to impress the layman with sea talk.

Strawbs, in their last couple of albums, seemed almost to have arrived at a special sound of their own, a delicate thing in the cramped confines of English mellotron folk-rock, where you can't hiccup into your synthesizer without sounding like half a dozen other, more famous bands. But an unsteady hand here at the last minute has them sounding like Genesis and Yes and the others noted for their festering-adenoids vocals and vague lyrics—when they aren't overcorrecting and copping altogether too many licks from the Moody Blues. There have been some personnel changes, but that can't account for this thematically sticky, pretty-in-spots-but-unsatisfying near miss, since David Cousins and Dave Lambert still seem to be at the helm. But of course, seeing as how they at first set a course for bluegrass (when they were called the Strawberry Hill Boys), maybe they've long ago converted the old tiller wheel into an instrument for some kind of roulette. Anyway, one gets a nice multi-tiered, rococo rush of arrangement now and then while listening to this album and imagining Strawbs back at the navigation charts. *N.C.*

**TANYA TUCKER: *Would You Lay with Me (In a Field of Stone)*.** Tanya Tucker (vocals); orchestra. *Bed of Roses; Why Me, Lord; No Man's Land; Let Me Be There;* and seven others. COLUMBIA KC 32744 \$5.98. © CA 32744 \$6.98. © CT 32744 \$6.98.

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

For a young and pretty girl, Tanya Tucker shawr does worry 'bout thangs an awful lot. She drones through such things as *What If We Were Running Out of Love* and *Bed of Roses* in a c-&-w style so ripe that it makes Dolly Parton sound like Arlene Francis. Aside from exaggerated diction and a tendency to weep vocally, Tucker is a good enough singer, and for the audiences who en-

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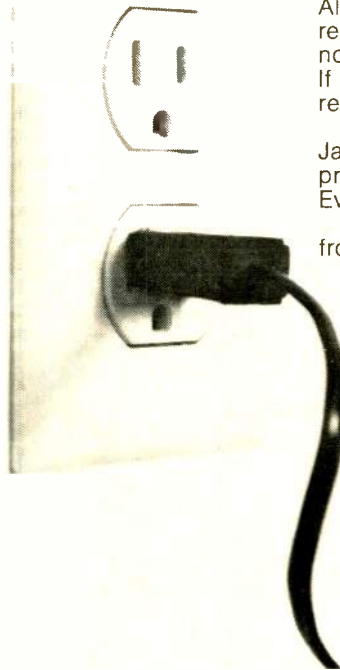
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joy this kind of Nashville cryathon. I guess her album will serve its purpose. For me, c-&-w is entertaining only when it is rowdy and ribald and rude. P.R.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**PAUL WILLIAMS:** *Here Comes Inspiration*. Paul Williams (vocals); orchestra. *You Know Me; Born to Fly; Inspiration; Driftwood*; and eight others. A&M SP-3606 \$5.98, Ⓞ 8T-4410 \$6.98, Ⓞ CS-4410 \$6.98.

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

Looking and sounding like Rumpelstiltskin at his slyest, Paul Williams has created an enormously engaging new album. His work varies from the send-up of *Nilsson Sings Newman* to the self-parody of *You Know Me* ("I know I'm no Cole Porter/I'm noticeably shorter") to the lovely lyricism of *Driftwood* and *Rainy Days and Mondays*. In each mood he conveys a distinct personality and a unique view of life. His strongest song is *Dream Away*, in which everything comes together so completely that I take it to be a deeply personal statement as to just *why* he composes and performs. "And are songs a place to keep those words of love/That we couldn't say?/When there's no room left to live inside ourselves/Do we dream away?" Never heard it said better. P.R.

**JOHNNY WINTER:** *Saints and Sinners*. Johnny Winter (guitar, vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Stone County; Blinded by Love; Thirty Days; Stray Cat Blues; Bad Luck Situation; Hurtin' So Bad*; and four others. COLUMBIA KC 32715 \$5.98, Ⓞ CA 32715 \$6.98, Ⓞ CT 32715 \$6.98, Ⓞ CAQ 32715 \$7.98.

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

Johnny Winter is the Texas guitarist who never lived up to his late-Sixties billing as the Greatest Rock Guitarist of Them All. Granted that it was probably impossible to make good on the overblown promises made for him by his admirers and business associates, Winter today is still not much more than a technically facile musician with a good, brawling vocal style. He has recorded oodles of albums, and he tours constantly because he is a "star," but that seems to me to be much like the emcee of a TV quiz show appearing in a summer stock production of, say, *Barefoot in the Park*.

Winter shows good taste, however, in his selection of material. Here there are such standards as Chuck Berry's *Thirty Days*, Larry Williams' *Boney Maroney*, and Leiber-Stoller's *Riot in Cell Block No. 9*, as well as Allen Toussaint's *Blinded by Love*, Van Morrison's *Feedback on Highway 101*, and Jagger-Richards' *Stray Cat Blues*, which are contemporary. Winter has also contributed a few of his own tunes, which aren't bad. The performances are delivered with gusto, and Rick Derringer's production is sturdy. I wish I could muster up more enthusiasm for Winter, his brother Edgar, and Derringer as musicians, since they are all pleasant and friendly fellows in person, but I can't. Ya heard one superstar, ya heard 'em all. J.V.

**YES:** *Tales from Topographic Oceans*. Yes (vocals and instrumentals). *The Revealing Science of God; The Remembering; The An-*

*cient; Ritual*. ATLANTIC SD 2-908 two discs \$9.98, Ⓞ TP-908 \$9.97, Ⓞ CS-908 \$9.97.

Performance: **Far routes**  
Recording: **Very good**

Hot-air ballooning is one of the things I've tried for the blahs now and then, which means that in some (in this case appropriately) round-about way I should connect with Yes. So I'm waiting. I hope it isn't going to hurt. Yes, I'm told, hired a hot-air balloon to hang around the arena and spice up some of their appearances, so we must have something in common. So far, though, I'm waiting for the point of Yes to become clear to me. I can be as amazed as the next person that so few guys could make so much sound, in such . . . dramatic outbursts. I'm also properly dazzled at the lyrics, which may only *seem* to be double-talk (this "four-movement" program was in-



PAUL WILLIAMS  
*A unique view of life, never said better*

spired by the four-part Shastric Scriptures, and one's speculation about what Yes can do with that gets well out of hand before one even starts to listen or struggle with the blinding white-on-black printed lyrics). At the moment, it still seems to me that the lines run to funny lengths, and syllables are bent in ways they don't seem to enjoy at all. Neither do I hear much dedication to the improvement of chord progressions in all that sound. The planning and programming, the coordination, the juxtaposition of instrument timbres is impressive indeed, but, like what happens with the lyrics, I can't see any great beauty in how it all fits together. Maybe . . . maybe if I hadn't heard about Maharaj Ji getting that Rolls-Royce. . . . N.C.

#### COLLECTIONS

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BEN BAGLEY'S FRANK LOESSER RE-VISITED.** Blossom Dearie, Johnny Desmond, Rhonda Fleming, Madeline Kahn, Bibi Osterwald, Gloria Swanson, and Margaret Whiting (vocals); orchestra. Dick Hyman arr. PAINTED SMILES PS 1359 \$5.98 (from Painted Smiles Records, 1860 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

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

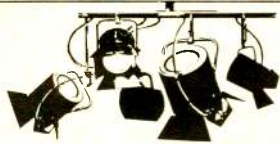
This is the sixteenth release on the Painted

Smiles label in a series that has become an extended and obvious labor of love for Ben Bagley. He probably knows more about the golden era of the Broadway musical than anyone else around, and his string of albums has brought back many valuable but little-known songs by the great popular composers (Gershwin, Porter, Rodgers, Arlen, etc.). All of his productions are witty and cleverly cast, and, for all their often superficial camp, always respect the composers' intentions. True, this new collection, honoring Frank Loesser, does have liner notes by Bagley that read like Ronald Firbank adrift in Sardi's, and Bagley has persuaded Gloria Swanson to chirp through *They're Either Too Young or Too Old*, which she does surprisingly well, and let Rhonda Fleming loose on *Kiss the Boys Goodbye*, which unsurprisingly she doesn't do so well—all to fine campy effect. But the album is still a genuine tribute to a man and his work. Bagley knew Loesser, and there is a serious spot in the notes about Loesser's personal kindness when Bagley was stricken with tuberculosis which is quite touching. Equally as touching is the fine voice of Margaret Whiting singing the classic *Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year* or the wistful charm of Blossom Dearie singing *Three Cornered Tune*, a song dropped out of town from the original production of *Guys and Dolls*. There's no kidding around at all on these tracks, only very good musicians performing very good songs, and they are worth buying the album for. P.R.

**THE BAROQUE CONNECTION.** Paris Opera Orchestra, Michel Ganot cond. *Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head; Here's to You; Once Upon a Time in the West; Love Story; Midnight Cowboy*; and five others. ANGEL S-37000 \$5.98, Ⓞ 8XS-37000 \$6.98, Ⓞ 4XS-37000 \$6.98.

Performance: **Bad trip**  
Recording: **Very good**

The rapprochement between popular music and the classics has brought about some interesting hybrid forms, and it has become almost a commonplace to hear harpsichords twanging away among the electric guitars and booming percussion of a rock band. This attempt by the Paris Opera Orchestra to dress up movie themes in brocaded coats and satin britches, however, is pretty much of a fiasco. Paul de Senneville, Olivier Toussaint, Michel Ganot, and Bernard Gerard obviously have labored like dogs over their arrangements for this elaborate practical joke, and the members of the Paris Opera Orchestra under M. Ganot's baton play away glitteringly, but the joke falls flat. It is neither a rewarding musical experience to hear *Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head* interpreted "in the zestful interplay and contrasts of piano, horn and strings," as Karolyne Gee accounts for it in her liner notes, nor an amusingly comic one. Lai's theme from *Love Story* is excruciatingly sticky enough without decorating it in the "shimmering elegance" of Corelli. The themes from *Midnight Cowboy*, *Goldfinger*, and *Here's to You* were doing fine on their own, thank you, and Morricone's music for *Once Upon a Time in the West* did not need an Ondes Martenot (a Baroque instrument?) to make it effective. As for John Lennon and Paul McCartney's *Let It Be*, the advice that ought to have been followed is quite plainly apparent in the title. Much as it tries, "The Baroque Connection" simply never connects. P.K.



## THEATER • FILMS

**CATCH MY SOUL** (Jack Good). Original-soundtrack recording. Richie Havens. Lance Le Gault. Tony Joe White. Season Hubley. others (vocals); orchestra. METROMEDIA BML1-0176 \$5.98. ⓑ BMS1-0176 \$6.98. Ⓒ BMK1-0176 \$6.98.

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

Are you ready for a modern version of *Othello* that begins, "In the waters of the Rio Grande in Northern New Mexico a travelling evangelist, Othello, is baptizing the members of a local commune. . . ."? Well, ready or not, here comes *Catch My Soul*, an effort so ludicrous on records that the film just might be the comedy hit of the year. How Richie Havens or Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett ever got involved in this mess is a matter between them and their agents. Jack Good did most of the songs in collaboration with whoever performs them, probably so that the blame could be spread around. Sample titles: *Chug A Lug* (*The Drinking Song*), *Lust of the Blood*, *Tickle His Fancy*. Getting the idea?

This album only whetted my appetite for the inevitable new version of *Hamlet*, set in the Continental Baths and starring Holly Woodlawn. *P.R.*

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**NOËL COWARD/THE GREAT SHOWS**. *Bitter-Sweet*; *Operette*; *Ace of Clubs*; *Conversation Piece*; *Cavalcade*. Selections from original-cast recordings. MONMOUTH-EVERGREEN MES/7062-3 two discs \$9.98.

Performance: **Imperishable**  
Recording: **Variable**

Considering my enthusiasm for this release, my review of it should run to at least five thousand words, but since I'm thought garrulous enough as it is, and since Sir Noël himself recommended being "curt, clear and concise," I'll just single out some random delights. For example, the magical glamour of Yvonne Printemps' acting and singing in *Conversation Piece*. Coward wrote it for her, and it remains on this recording an absolute triumph of style, wit, and grace.

Then there are the classic performances from *Bitter-Sweet*: Peggy Wood and George Metaxa with *I'll See You Again* and *Dear Little Cafe*, and Ivy St. Helier singing *If Love Were All* at what seems a fast clip to modern ears—until you realize that life is indeed "very rough and tumble/For a humble disease."

Best of all, maybe because I'd never heard it before, is *Operette*. Here is the improbable, high-camp Fritzi Massary (probably the first Viennese Bombshell) waltzing through *They Call Me Countess Mitzi* ("und I ken't imachin vy") and confiding to a chorus of girls in the title song. "In regonstruktink my career for

you/I muzt make one tink clear for you/Be unter no mizapprehenzion/I do not inten to mention/who my loverz dey are. . . ." The cover photo of her is priceless. *Ace of Clubs*, with its rich score that includes *Sail Away*, *Josephine*, and *Nothing Can Last Forever*, is marvelous too. Finally, there's Coward himself with a medley of songs from *Cavalcade*.

As I listened to these records, I realized that Coward's blithe spirit is as alive today as when they were recorded. And even though I don't have a fireplace mantel, I thought I could see him standing there by it, just as Elvira did in the play, cynically amused at my rapture. *P.R.*

**GYPSY** (see Best of the Month, page 76)

**BARBRA STREISAND: *Barbra Streisand and Other Musical Instruments***. Barbra Streisand (vocals); orchestra. *I Got Rhythm*; *Come Back to Me*; *Glad to Be Unhappy*; *The Sweetest Sounds*; and ten others. COLUMBIA KC 32655 \$5.98. ⓑ CA 32655 \$6.98. Ⓒ CT 32655 \$6.98.

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

This is the original soundtrack for Streisand's late TV special, and I am of two minds about it. The bad news is that it is fussy and elaborate, and often tries too hard to be "different," utilizing some ethnic instruments (Japanese, African, Turkish, etc.) as a sort of thematic background, and taking a (too) whimsical side trip into the sounds of household appliances. The orchestrations by Ken and Mitzie Welch are extremely florid. And, finally, though the project was no doubt planned with a total "concept," the recording seems uncohesive and at times fragmented.

The good news is that Streisand has never been in better voice or dramatic fettle, and that even if she chose to sing with a washboard and jug band she would still be the most compelling actress-singer of our time. What other star as solidly established as she would bother to attempt doing something like this? Obviously, only an artist who has firmly kept her eye on the horizon and has never been satisfied to offer her audiences the plummy kind of self-idolatry ("I'm here—love me!") that disfigures the work of a Liza Minnelli or a Bette Midler or, sad to say, the recent Sinatra TV "comeback." And certainly, only a kid from Brooklyn who has always had the guts of a burglar would attempt Schubert's *Auf dem Wasser zu Singen*, and only she could turn it into such a personal triumph. It may not be *echt* Schubert, and Schwarzkopf need not take to the hills, but it is pure music by a great talent who transforms anything she touches. She is, of course, the ultimate perfectionist, and her rehearsal hours have been known to make strong men weep, conductors collapse, and directors retire for a month or two in the country. But one of her gifts is the ability to make it all seem like improvisation. In this recording she seems as spontaneous as ever; but the production sags around her.

The recorded sound is gorgeous, with an expansive luster that captures every last damned Pakistani tree bell and Armenian tumbak. Streisand's next project is said to be a new version of *The Merry Widow* directed by Ingmar Bergman. As Hanna Glawari she ought to give a performance that will be talked about well into the next century. *P.R.*

(Continued overleaf)



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# COSMOPOLITAN J\*A\*Z\*Z

Reviewed by Chris Albertson

EVER since the introduction of the long-playing record, with its potential for simple and convenient reissue of older material, it has been Europe rather than the United States that has most effectively exploited that potential. Despite the fact that recent years have seen a certain increase in domestic releases of vault material, many American jazz collectors still look to European sources to fill in particular gaps in their collections, and, ironic as it may seem, Columbia Records is now importing from *Holland* reissues of its own recordings—actually Dutch editions of the French CBS reissue series called “*Aimez-vous le Jazz*.” Rather cosmopolitan for such distinctly *American* music.

The series, thirty-one albums of which have thus far been released here, runs the gamut from Armstrong in the Twenties to Miles in the Sixties, and reinstates in the American catalog many items that shouldn't have been missing in the first place. There are discs by Fats Waller, Benny Goodman, Sidney Bechet, Duke Ellington, and Cab Calloway, among others. A fair sampling of these riches—albums by Art Tatum, Teddy Wilson, Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet with the Clarence Williams Blue Five, Miles Davis, and Duke Ellington—is reviewed here; others will be reviewed later as single albums. The technical quality of the series is not always worthy of CBS—and this is especially true of the pre-tape items such as the Teddy Wilson sides, inexcusably marred by thumps and ticks which could have been removed or minimized—but the selections are for the most part well chosen.

These five albums are quite diverse, and, with the possible exception of the Ellington set, which is weak, it would be hard to rate one above the other. However, within the broad perspective of recorded jazz, the sides by the Clarence Williams Blue Five would have to be considered the most significant. This is New Orleans jazz of the highest order, classic studies in collective improvisation richly sprinkled with outstanding solos and interplay by Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet, two masters of the genre at the peak of perfection. There are also numerous vocals by Eva Taylor (Mrs. Clarence Williams), a vaudeville player who gets no credit on the sleeve and whose lyrics are more interesting than her voice.

The Teddy Wilson album consists of all the piano solos he recorded between 1935 and 1937, when he was under contract to Brunswick. There is also an additional take of *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, but, in terms of reissues, eleven tracks (as opposed to sixteen in the Clarence Williams and Ellington sets) is a skimpy offering, and I do wish producer Henri Renaud had added at least three of the many unreissued selections by the Wilson band that are at his disposal. Nevertheless, Teddy Wilson is perhaps the ultimate swing pianist, and these solos—some of which have previously appeared on LP—are among his finest, so the

collection is still worth every cent of what you have to pay for the album.

I have never heard a Tatum record that was less than very good. Though less interesting (because it is more ordinary) than the Grammy and STEREO REVIEW award-winning Onyx release, this is an excellent example of the kind of playing that earned Art Tatum his prominence in the annals of jazz. Nine selections are from a 1949 Gene Norman “Just Jazz” concert, and three are from the 1933 Brunswick session that marked his recording debut. It's standard Tatum repertoire imbued with a freshness that reminds us that nothing Art Tatum ever played was *really* standard. The recording is excellent mono.

The Ellington collection contains eleven tracks of 1947 vintage and five from 1951, the latter without Johnny Hodges, who had just left to form his own band. These were not Ellington's best years—in fact, the early Fifties were probably his least interesting period—but several items do merit reissue either because they are good (*Hy'a Sue* and *Turquoise Cloud*) or simply because they lend continuity to the catalog of available Ellingtonia. The technical quality is generally good.

One side of the Miles Davis set is still available in this country on Columbia's “Miles and Monk at Newport” album, three other selections are from a 1958 (not 1956, as indicated on the album cover) sextet date, and the remaining track stems from a 1961 session at the Blackhawk in San Francisco. This is all great Miles in formidable company, the kind of stuff Columbia *could* have kept in its catalog proudly.

**LOUIS ARMSTRONG/SIDNEY BECHET:** *With the Clarence Williams Blue Five*. Louis Armstrong (cornet); Sidney Bechet (soprano saxophone, sarrusophone); Buster Bailey (soprano saxophone, clarinet); Charlie Irvis and Charlie Green (trombones); Eva Taylor (vocals); others. *Texas Moaner Blues; Wild Cat Blues; Coal Cart Blues; Pickin' On Your Baby*; and twelve others. CBS 63092 (No. 14) \$6.98.

**TEDDY WILSON:** *The Teddy Wilson Piano Solos*. Teddy Wilson (piano). *Liza; Every Now and Then; Rosetta; Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea (two takes)*; and six others. CBS 62876 (No. 8) \$6.98.

**ART TATUM:** *An Art Tatum Concert*. Art Tatum (piano). *I Know That You Know; Yesterdays; Humoresque; Tatum Pole Boogie*; and eight others. CBS 62615 (No. 2) \$6.98.

**DUKE ELLINGTON:** *Monologue*. Duke Ellington and His Orchestra. *Three Cent Stomp; Hy'a Sue; Snada; Women; Sultry Serenade*; and eleven others. CBS 63563 (No. 20) \$6.98.

**MILES DAVIS:** *The Miles Davis Sextet and Quintet/Miles at Newport*. Miles Davis (trumpet); with two groups, including John Coltrane and Hank Mobley (tenor saxophones); Cannonball Adderley (alto saxophone); Bill Evans and Wynton Kelly (pianos); Paul Chambers (bass); Jimmy Cobb (drums). *Ah Leu Cha; Two Bass Hit; On Green Dolphin Street (two versions)*; and four others. CBS 63417 (No. 17) \$6.98.

# JAZZ



**DAVE ALEXANDER:** *The Dirt on the Ground*. Dave Alexander (piano, vocals); Larry Murdo (bass); Mickey Durio (drums). *St. James Infirmary; Cold Feeling; Strange Woman; Blue Tumbleweed*; and six others. ARHOOLE 1071 \$5.98 (available by mail from Arhoolie Records, Box 9195, Berkeley, Calif. 94709).

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

According to this album's liner notes, Dave Alexander made his first recordings because his wife almost killed him in a shooting. Just like that. This explanation doesn't seem quite logical, but it *is* fortunate that her aim was bad, because Alexander is good.

Now in his mid-thirties, Alexander grew up in Texas and moved to Oakland, California, in the late Fifties. His early musical interest centered around Muddy Waters, B.B. King, and Ray Charles, but it is obvious that he has also listened to those who came before and that his taste is not limited to blues.

In his piano playing, Alexander exhibits the rollicking funk of barrelhouseers, the delicacy of Jimmy Yancey, and the sophistication of swing-era pianists. His voice boasts no outstanding qualities, but it is good and reliable. Better still is his writing, except for a horrid cowboy song from which the album takes its title.

This is Dave Alexander's second album. Not having heard his previous one, “The Rattler” (Arhoolie 1067), I cannot make a comparison, but I hope he makes more and I pray that he eliminates or replaces his drummer.

C.A.

**RON CARTER:** *All Blues*. Ron Carter (acoustic and piccolo bass); Joe Henderson (tenor saxophone); Roland Hanna, Richard Tee (piano); Billy Cobham (percussion). *A Feeling; Rufus; 117 Special; All Blues; Will You Still Be Mine; Light Blue*. CTI CTI 6037 \$5.98.

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

Side one of my reviewer's copy of this album sounds as if someone might have danced on it in high heels, but underneath that scratchy sound there is music worthy of the CTI label. No violins or subtle brass this time, just Ron Carter's full-bodied acoustic bass, walking, skipping, and jogging in estimable company through a program of good, unpretentious music. Side two is more of the same, sans scratches, which I hope are peculiar to my copy. This is a soulful album of no-nonsense music played by men who know their craft.

C.A.

**JOHN COLTRANE:** *Concert in Japan*. John Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders (tenor and



Yamaha saxophones, bass clarinet, percussion); Alice Coltrane (piano); Jimmy Garrison (bass); Rashied Ali (drums). *Leo: Peace on Earth*. IMPULSE Ⓜ AS-9246-2 two discs \$6.98.

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

There seems to be no end to John Coltrane's recorded legacy, but in his case (unlike Charlie Parker's) the bottom has not yet been scraped. This set of previously unreleased recordings stems from a Tokyo radio broadcast of a Koseinenkin Hall concert on July 22, 1966. The technical quality is good, even in plain old mono.

The music (*Peace on Earth* is inexplicably programmed between parts two and three of *Leo*) is a mixture of the beautiful and the boring. There is an extraordinary rapport between Coltrane, Garrison, and Ali, though Garrison's driving bass is not done justice by the recording engineer. Pharoah Sanders has his moments, but he is dwarfed by his leader. Alice Coltrane is unobtrusive, but her solo—on *Leo*—has the annoying monotony of a dripping faucet. Clearly a star by default, Mrs. Coltrane would better serve her late husband's memory if, instead of riding on his coat-tails as a performer, she used her position to help further the careers of unrecognized talent. It is not her playing that has made her better known than Cecil Taylor!

On the whole, this is a good Coltrane album, but I recommend that you check out some of his other fifty-five currently available albums before buying this one. C.A.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**RUTH ETTING: *Hello, Baby***. Ruth Etting (vocals): various orchestras. *'Deed I Do: Body and Soul; Guilty; Hello, Baby; Glad Rag Doll*; and nine others. BIOGRAPH BLP-C11 \$5.98.

Performance: **Classic**  
Recording: **Antique**

Among the many effects of the energy crisis and the resulting shortage of vinyl is the fact that it will limit the number of releases like this one by a small but committed record company. Biograph has already reissued over one hundred classic pop recordings, from ragtime to jazz and blues, of interest to a select, and (sad to say) small audience. Are we facing an era flooded with pre-fab commercial sure things released by the big-money, big-clout companies while the delights of a Ma Rainey or an Ivie Anderson languish in the vaults for lack of recording plastic?

But here, at least for a while, we can relish the art of a singer with a very unusual career. In the late Twenties and early Thirties Ruth Etting was a star on records, well-known on Broadway and in films. At the time of her success she was thought of principally as a show-biz commodity not markedly different from many others. But Etting was unique. As you listen to her here, and as the high-pitched, immensely poignant, and always true voice spins through such things as *'Deed I Do* or *Ain't Misbehavin'*, you realize that she was years ahead of her time in microphone technique and a master of phrasing and acting ability. I suppose the best description I can give of the voice is that it falls somewhere between those of Helen Morgan and Mildred Bailey. She was able to avoid the teary histrionics of Morgan and yet deliver the same dramatic

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impact, and she brushed a melody as lightly and richly as Bailey without becoming musically lazy.

Etting is a singer still well worth listening to, and I know at least one current superstar who used to play her records over and over and who still bears traces of the Etting style when she wants to make simple and direct contact through song. I think you'll be surprised in several ways—and pleased—when you hear this one, in spite of the antique sound. *P.R.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**GIL EVANS:** *Svengali*. Gil Evans (keyboards); orchestra. Gil Evans arr. and cond. *Thoroughbred; Blues in Orbit; Summertime; Cry of Hunger; Eleven; Zee Zee*. ATLANTIC SD 1643 \$5.98, © M81643 \$6.98. © M51643 \$6.98.

Performance: **The master's touch**  
Recording: **Excellent**

Few arrangers are able to command a large orchestra the way Gil Evans does. Most big-band arrangers in the jazz field base their values on louder-than-life brass, but Evans does not, and when he borrows from the past it is from his own past.

Journeing through an interesting collection of compositions by himself, George Russell, Miles Davis, Gershwin, and tenorman Billy Harper, Evans creates a tapestry of rich tonal textures, full of short, imaginative strokes that in other hands could very easily fall into the category of gimmicks. There is also ample room for solos, but they, too, are neatly woven into the Evans fabric. Evans' innovative arrangements for the Claude Thornhill orchestra of the Forties have yet to be fully appreciated, and thirty years later he continues to be way ahead of his time. *C.A.*

**ROLAND HANNA:** *Sir Elf*. Roland Hanna (piano). *Yours Is My Heart Alone; Killing Me Softly with His Song; There Is No Greater Love; Bye Bye Blackbird*; and four others. CHOICE CRS 1003 \$5.98 (available by mail from Choice Records, 245 Tilley Place, Sea Cliff, N.Y. 11579).

Performance: **Soothing solos**  
Recording: **Very good**

Roland Hanna's piano has been heard in various settings over the past twenty years or so—with the Benny Goodman band, Charles Mingus' group, and, in recent years, the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis band. He has also recorded and appeared in clubs with his own trio, and with this album he makes his solo debut.

Classically trained and Garner-inspired, Hanna displays both these elements in this set of eight thoroughly pleasant, impressionistic piano improvisations. The album won't turn anybody's head around, but Hanna is a fine technician with a tasteful, creative musical style, and he makes many worthwhile statements here. *C.A.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**COLEMAN HAWKINS:** *The Hawk Flies*. Coleman Hawkins (tenor saxophone); with various groups including Fats Navarro (trumpet); J. J. Johnson (trombone); Milt Jackson (vibraphone); Thelonious Monk, Hank Jones (piano); Curly Russell, Oscar Pettiford, Wilbur Ware (bass); Max Roach, Art Blakey, Kenny Clarke, Jo Jones, Denzil

Best (drums). *On the Bean; Driftin' on a Reed; Bean and the Boys (two takes); Laura; Ruby, My Dear*; and fourteen others. MILESTONE M-47015 two discs \$6.98.

Performance: **Beautiful Bean**  
Recording: **Very good**

Coleman Hawkins was one of the finest, most innovative performers in the history of American music, an artist whose incalculable influence reaches far beyond the boundaries of jazz. Adolphe Sax invented the saxophone, but it was Hawkins who first explored its full possibilities and turned it into an instrument of the highest artistic expression.

When Hawkins died, five years ago, he left a rich recorded legacy: barely distinguishable as an obscure member of Mamie Smith's Jazz Hounds; blossoming and exploding (alongside young Louis Armstrong) in the trail-blazing



Ruth Etting, with composer Harold Arlen (at piano) and lyricist Ted Koehler

mid-Twenties Fletcher Henderson orchestra: raising the level of musicianship in Europe during a five-year stay; returning in 1939 and recapturing his throne from Lester Young with *Body and Soul*, a masterpiece of improvisatory art; championing a new direction in jazz, be-bop, as he arranges the recording debut of twenty-four-year-old Thelonious Monk.

The 1944 recordings with Monk by no means ended Hawkins' recording career: it is with these historic recordings that this album begins. Originally issued on the small Joe Davis label, they happily reappeared in 1970 on a Prestige album along with some 1946 Sonora sides by an all-star octet and a 1949 Paris session from the Vogue catalog. All these tracks are included in this Milestone set, which delves even further into the Hawkins legacy by way of some remarkable 1957 small-band items from the Riverside archives and comes full circle with *Ruby, My Dear*, a track from that same year which reunited Hawkins and Monk.

Collectively, these recordings form an outstanding sample of Coleman Hawkins' artistry, and, as if the music itself weren't enough, the album features an excellent portrait of the great tenorman written by Dan Morgenstern. One of the finest liner notes I have read, it is a compelling, personal vignette of a man who

capped his years of artistic triumph with a final period of apathy, bitterness, and, one suspects, loneliness. *C.A.*

**DICK HAYMES:** *Dick Haymes Comes Home!* Dick Haymes (vocals); orchestra. *Maybe Sunday; Me and Bobby McGee; Let Me Love You; You'll Never Never Know*; and nine others. DAYBREAK DR-2016 \$5.98.

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

This is Dick Haymes' first album in fifteen years, and it was recorded live at the Coconut Grove in Los Angeles on the first leg of a comeback attempt last year that quickly fizzled. From what I can tell, Haymes is in very good voice, and he's not singing any differently than he ever did. As he glides through a medley of his past successes—*Little White Lies, Mam'selle, and Love Walked In*—I confess I feel a pang or three of nostalgia. As to why the comeback never really caught fire, I think it is simply a case of his being out of the country for so long that his fans almost completely forgot him. Returning is always risky for a one-time teen idol (remember that, Alice!). Sinatra's audiences grew old along with him, and Elvis' seem happy to do the same. Haymes, who was almost as popular as Sinatra in the same era, is unfortunately still projecting a "boy singer" personality. The recording is the kind of live job that has all the warm ambiance of an empty aircraft hangar. *P.R.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA:** *Between Nothingness and Eternity*. John McLaughlin (guitar); Jan Hammer (piano and Moog); Jerry Goodman (violin); Rick Laird (bass); Billy Cobham (drums). *Trilogy; Sister Andrea; Dream*. COLUMBIA KC 32766 \$5.98, © CA 32766 \$6.98. © CT 32766 \$6.98.

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

I have never had anything but the highest praise for John McLaughlin and his Mahavishnu Orchestra. Here they are again, recorded last summer during a concert in New York's Central Park, and they're producing a sound that must surely have stopped a few muggers in their tracks. Against the propulsive rhythm of Rick Laird's bass and Billy Cobham's phenomenal percussion work, McLaughlin, Hammer, and Goodman spew out their ideas with a force that must have penetrated the night air and traveled through the open windows of surrounding apartments. It is all so expertly and imaginatively performed that repeated listening to what was captured on record increases rather than dims one's initial awe.

It used to be fashionable among jazz followers to regard rock as something less than music, but groups like the Mahavishnu Orchestra are clearly an outgrowth of rock, and they may well have rescued jazz from its post-Coltrane doldrums. *C.A.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**FLIP PHILLIPS:** *Flip in Florida*. Flip Phillips (tenor saxophone, bass clarinet); Tom Howard (piano); Eddie Schwager (bass); Pete Helman (drums). *Sweet Georgia Brown; Satin Doll; Miss Thing; Nuages; Round Midnight*; and five others. ONYX ORI 214 \$5.98

(available by mail from Onyx, 160 West 71st Street, New York, N.Y. 10024).

Performance: **Excellent Flip sides**  
Recording: **Very good**

Flip Phillips became enormously popular for his frenetic, foot-stomping tenor solos in the heyday of Jazz at the Philharmonic, but the tenor sax that screamed *Perdido* night after night and whipped concert audiences into orgasmic frenzy always had another side to it, a side that could speak the mellifluous language of Coleman Hawkins or Lester Young.

Before he joined JATP, Flip Phillips had worked with various little-known groups in the New York area: in 1940 he played clarinet with Frankie Newton's band at 52nd Street's famous Kelly's Stables; he was with the bands of Red Norvo, Wingy Manone, and Benny Goodman in the early Forties, and he became a vital member of the Woody Herman band during its most artistically satisfying period, 1944 to 1946. But since leaving JATP in 1954, Phillips has made only sporadic appearances on the jazz scene.

This album, recorded in 1963, originally appeared on the Sue label, but it was never promoted, and it soon became a collector's item. Out of JATP's commercial bondage, Phillips expresses himself eloquently. The rhythm section—comprising local Florida musicians—keeps things light and swinging as the true Phillips talent unfolds in three exquisite pieces featuring his bass clarinet, two bows to Lester Young (*Miss Thing*, a Basie composition written for female impersonator Rubberlegs Williams, and his own *I Remember Lester*), and mellow, buttery readings of Monk's *Round Midnight* and Django Reinhardt's fragile *Nuages*. A strong, gratifying album. C.A.

**SARAH VAUGHAN:** *Sarah Vaughan, Volume II*. Sarah Vaughan (vocals); Teddy Wilson Quartet; Ted Dale, George Auld, Richard Maltby, and George Treadwell orchestras. *It's You or No One; What a Difference a Day Makes; Tenderly; Time After Time; Gentleman Friend*; and five others. EVEREST ARCHIVE OF JAZZ AND FOLK MUSIC FS 271 \$5.98.

Performance: **Vintage Vaughan**  
Recording: **Distorted dubs**

Sarah Vaughan made these recordings for the Musicraft label in 1946 and 1947, and they have appeared on numerous labels since then. But considering the heights she reached on later recordings and the extraordinary quality of her current output, these early efforts are strictly for the collector. On *What a Difference a Day Makes* and *Gentleman Friend*, the accompaniment is provided by a quartet consisting of Jimmy Jones, John Collins, Al McKibbin, and Kenny Clarke. These, and the two Teddy Wilson Quartet sides, *Time After Time* and *September Song* (with Remo Palmieri and Charlie Ventura), are the only selections that don't sound dated.

The technical quality of this reissue is very sloppy, as is the packaging—the brief liner notes are a paraphrase of Leonard Feather's *Encyclopedia of Jazz* (a quotation from Feather appears to be badly written because a passage revealing the Musicraft origins of these recordings has been removed from the middle of a sentence). That, plus the fact that neither the orchestras nor any of the personnel are identified, makes the motivation behind this reissue somewhat suspect. C.A.

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# CHOOSING SIDES

By IRVING KOLODIN



## SPIRITUALS SPIRITUALIZED

**T**HERE'S A MEETING HERE TONIGHT," a phrase taken from the opening line of the first of fifteen spirituals superbly sung by Martina Arroyo with massed choral voices directed by Dorothy Maynor, is more than an apt title for a new Angel recording (S 36072). The words celebrate not only a meeting at a place of people impelled to raise joyous voices, but a meeting in time of two particular people whose voices together symbolize what has happened in civil rights to correct uncivil wrongs over the last few decades.

It brings together the emotional force of Arroyo, one of today's established personalities of opera, concert, TV, and whatever else she may choose to do, with that of Maynor, one of yesterday's celebrities—but only of the concert stage, because other avenues of expression were not open to her. Out of this "meeting" emerges a ringing affirmation of the progress that has been made from generation to generation toward the goal of black self-identification—which is closer at hand than before, but still far from attained.

Maynor, as is well known locally, some time ago put the ability, the intelligence, and the determination that made her a great artist to work on behalf of gifted youngsters in what is called the Harlem School of the Arts. Its headquarters are in New York's St. James Presbyterian Church, of which her husband, the Reverend Shelby Rooks, is pastor. It is the combined choirs of these two entities which participate, under her direction, with such distinction on this disc.

Arroyo, who was born in New York at about the same time Maynor was finding her first fame at Tanglewood in the late Thirties, has come to her present prominence by anything but a well-paved path. Like so many others who couldn't take the risk of a "career" without some form of regular income to fall back on, she trained to be a teacher and taught in a high school for a year before being diverted into case work for the City of New York's Welfare Department. A wealth of voice and her own kind of determination brought recognition from the Regional Auditions of the Metropolitan Opera's National Council at a crucial point for her somewhat fragmented musical involvements. But even as one who considered her vocal endowment "superior" when I heard her Carnegie Hall debut in a 1958 concert version of Pizzetti's *Murder in the Cathedral*, I could only specu-

late on what she might amount to fifteen years later.

The struggle to the prominence she now enjoys, including succeeding Metropolitan opening nights in 1971 (*Il Trovatore*) and 1972 (*Don Carlo*) may have affected her personally or infected her artistically, but if so, the results are not visible to the impersonal eye. In any case, success has not deflected her from fidelity to the objectives to which she originally addressed herself nor—to judge from what she does on this disc—has it imparted the least bit of pretension to her as a performer.

It is one of the joys of "There's a Meeting Here Tonight" that it bypasses all the excesses and artifices that have sometimes been visited on this priceless musical heritage. No Strauss-like orchestra, brazen trumpets, or throbbing organ pipes for Maynor and Arroyo! They have put their faith in the vibrant purity of a *cappella* performance, and it re-

sounds with inimitable effect in traditional versions of *Little David*, *Play on Your Harp*, *My Lord*, *What a Morning*, *Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit*, *On My Journey* (the last two somewhat amended by Leonard de Paur), and a dozen others. Several spots well chosen for the interpolation of solo voices other than Arroyo's have been assigned to such fine young singers as Betty Lane, Priscilla Baskerville, Mervin Wallace, and T. Ray Lawrence. Prevaillingly, the issue is joined on the soaring solo strength of Arroyo and the firmly phrased support evolved by Maynor. It is an issue whose triumphant outcome is never the least in doubt for the first measure of *There's a Meeting Here Tonight* to the last of *I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray*.

For my part, I feel I have derived a closer contact with the essential Arroyo from what she does here than from all the Leonoras and Elisabettas, the Donna Annas and the Butterflies I have heard her do in the opera house. Not that any of these were in the least discreditable: they were, indeed, almost uniformly highly creditable. But, through usage and custom, there has been deposited on the surface of such conventionalized characters an overlay of veneer, of lacquer, of theatrical shellac that tends to make the impersonation of them more alike than individual. To make an inner identity apparent through the voice alone is a feat that few achieve.

Here, however, such an inner identity is present, distinct, and unmistakable in every sound Arroyo produces. Whether in the high-spirited *Little David*, *Play on Your Harp* or the hymn-like *There Is a Balm in Gilead*, the rhythmically complex *My Lord*, *What a Morning*, or the sustained *Steal Away to Jesus*, she is instinctively a total participant. There is a wealth of cultivated skill at work in the warm lows and the gleaming highs of her range. But one is never consciously reminded of such cultivation in her phraseology, her enunciation, or her relationship to the choirs. She is not—let us all be thankful!—performing, interpreting, or re-creating, in some styl-

*Shown here during playback at the New York recording sessions last November for the album "There's a Meeting Here Tonight" are soloist Martina Arroyo, Angel producer George Sponhaltz, and Dorothy Maynor, who directed the combined choirs in the program of spirituals.*



ized application of those terms. She is *responding*, in a surpassingly natural and direct way, to the material as it moves her—and the way it moves her is, in a readily applicable phrase, right on!

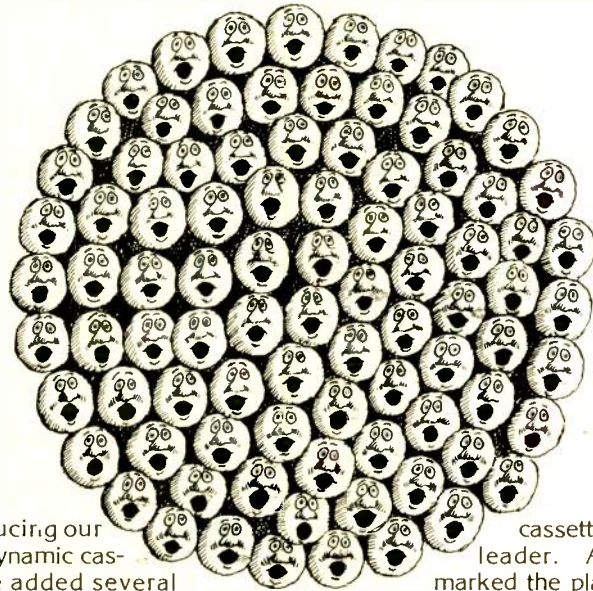
Taken altogether, Arroyo's results put her in the grand succession of those predecessors whose response was of much the same order. Roland Hayes astonished the unbelieving critics of the Continent with his singing of Wolf's *Benedict die Sel'ge Mutter* and Schubert's *Lied im Grünen*, but here at home I remember most, as a high-school student, the simplicity and the power he imparted to *Bye and Bye* or *He Never Said a Mumberlin' Word*. Paul Robeson had the natural aptitude as well as the vocal richness to arrest the attention with an off-stage spiritual in O'Neill's *All God's Chillun' Got Wings* even before he became known as a concert-hall favorite. And with Marian Anderson, no matter how many times one heard her sing the words, one believed that *she* believed "He's got the whole world in His hands."

There is a pseudo-theology in the Black Power community to the effect that spirituals are inherently part of the "slave culture," an outcropping of the "white man's image" of African inferiority. At best, they might therefore—in such a view—be condoned as "message songs," as codes for communication when other means were not prudent. The well-defined evidence of oppression cannot be denied: the effects of a time and a place on what are called "spirituals" are all too evident. But if it is possible for a fair-minded white of this generation to be ashamed of the oppression, it should be possible for a fair-minded black to accept these musical results as an expression of something noble in those who gave utterance to them.

**I**T should be noted that in addition to the anonymous individuals responsible for these utterances, the recordings recall a succession of well-known, highly articulate musicians who were doing their work well before "black music" projects were organized. In the order of credits for the materials with which they are identified, they include the accomplished R. Nathaniel Dett (whose *Juba Dance* was performed and recorded by Percy Grainger, among others, when few knew the color of the man who composed it or even that he was born in Canada) and the highly qualified Henry T. Burleigh (a soloist for years at St. Thomas' Church in New York). It was Burleigh who compensated Antonin Dvořák for some of the education he received at the National Conservatory (during the time the Czech composer, a visitor to America, was its president) by singing to him melodies of spirituals; echoes of which found their way into the *New World Symphony* and others of his works of that period.

As Miss Maynor wisely writes in her portion of the liner notes, entitled "The Negro Spiritual," the mingled sources from which it is derived "elevates this music above the provincial, bringing it to a level where it may be understood and cherished by all, whatever their race or history, who have been forced to stand up to oppression, affliction, and death . . . what comes through is the universal cry for freedom." As this takes in a fairly inclusive portion of the globe's inhabitants, Arroyo is much to be commended in joining her influence to Maynor's on the side of the longer view, however much some opportunistic hard-liners of today might urge otherwise.

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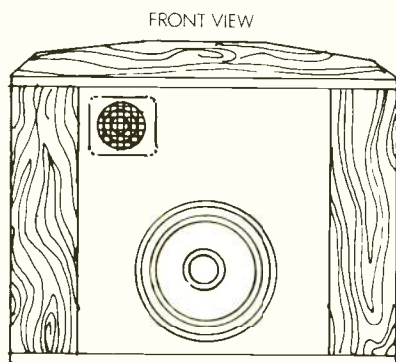
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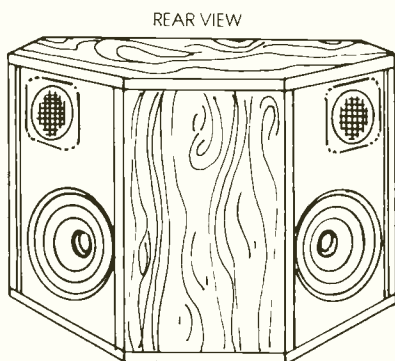
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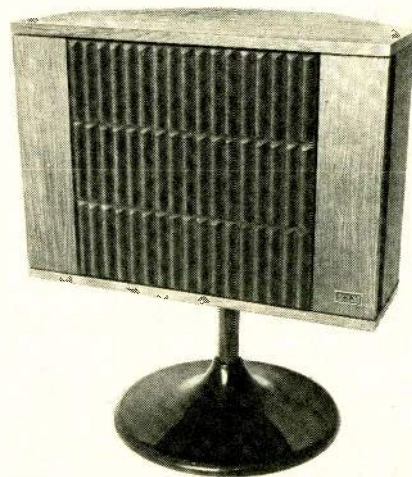
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# CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

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

**BACH, J. S.:** *Three Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord; Concerto in C Minor for Violin and Oboe; Concerto in D Minor for Two Violins* (see Collections—Pablo Casals)

might have been a good idea for London to offer a word or two on Uri Segal, whose name is bound to be new to most collectors.) An uncommonly satisfying account in every respect. R.F.

*ta No. 7, in D Major, Op. 10, No. 3.* Vladimir Ashkenazy (piano). LONDON CS-6821 \$5.98.

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

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BEETHOVEN:** *Concerto No. 5, in E-flat Major, for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 73* ("Emperor"). Rudolf Firkusny (piano); New Philharmonia Orchestra, Uri Segal cond. LONDON SPC 21097 \$5.98, Ⓜ M 95097 \$6.98. Ⓞ M 94097 \$6.98.

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

No one brings more authority to this music than Firkusny; his remake of the "Emperor" is not only most welcome in its own right, but even more successful, in terms of solo-orchestral balance, than the excellent version he recorded with William Steinberg and the Pittsburgh Symphony for Capitol back in the Fifties. It is the same straightforward interpretation, supremely assured, unaffectedly communicative in its unlabored blend of grandeur, dignity, tension, and poetry. The ideal meshing of solo and orchestral elements suggests a long-ripened mutuality of approach on the part of the pianist and the conductor—who may not, in fact, have collaborated at all prior to the sessions that produced this recording, one of the most natural-sounding yet in London's Phase 4 series. (The producer and engineers get credits on the disc labels: it



URI SEGAL

*Conductor of a highly successful "Emperor"*

To hear the big three Soviet piano virtuosos in directly competitive recorded performances of the Beethoven *Appassionata* is a formidable and exciting experience. Because of price differences, however, these recordings are not exactly competitive, and, interestingly, I rate them in exact inverse order to their cost.

Despite a somewhat hard and over-brilliant piano sound and a prevalence of respiratory ailments in the audience, the Richter disc, stemming from a June 1960 public performance, is for me the most exciting of the lot. (It was available at one time on a Soviet pressing as MK 1550.) After a lovingly played reading of what is perhaps the finest Haydn keyboard work from that master's *Sturm und Drang* period, Richter cuts loose on the Beethoven with the sort of performance that the composer himself might have given before an intimate group of bewildered hearers. Though Richter's 1961 studio recording in stereo, made in the U.S. and still available on the RCA Victrola label, differs little in basic conception from the Russian concert performance, it certainly is not endowed with the overwhelming spontaneity and urgency of communication that makes the Westminster issue something unique, despite its sonic crudities, a cover a little less than tasteful, and (on my review copy) reversed labels. At \$4.98 it's still a good buy, and it's a remarkable musical experience at any price.

At the opposite pole from the Richter disc is that of Emil Gilels, whose mechanical proficiency and dazzling virtuosity I have always respected, but whose performance style I have found too hard, especially in the Viennese Classical and Romantic repertoire. The present Deutsche Grammophon disc does little to change my opinion. Gilels plays the delightful Sixth Sonata like a ruthlessly efficient machine, and the humor of the sparkling finale seems to elude the man completely. His reading of the *Appassionata* is impressive, but it has neither the animal vitality of Richter's nor the heart of Vladimir Ashkenazy's.

Like almost everything I have heard of

### Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓞ = eight-track stereo cartridge
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- Ⓞ = 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.

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BEETHOVEN:** *Piano Sonata No. 23, in F Minor, Op. 57* ("Appassionata"). **HAYDN:** *Piano Sonata No. 20, in C Minor.* Sviatoslav Richter (piano). WESTMINSTER Ⓜ WGM-8256 \$4.98.

Performance: **Exciting**  
Recording: **Live, mono, 1960**

**BEETHOVEN:** *Piano Sonata No. 23, in F Minor, Op. 57* ("Appassionata"); *Piano Sonata No. 5, in F Major, Op. 10, No. 2.* Emil Gilels (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 406 \$7.98.

Performance: **Fierce and hard**  
Recording: **Good**

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BEETHOVEN:** *Piano Sonata No. 23, in F Minor, Op. 57* ("Appassionata"); *Piano Sonata*

Ashkenazy on discs in recent years, his pairing of the Beethoven D Major Sonata and the *Appassionata* is richly satisfying in terms of programming, musicianship, and recorded sound. I particularly like his reading of the beautiful slow movement of the D Major. His *Appassionata* strikes a middle ground between Richter's uninhibited approach and Gilels' carefully studied one, and the end result is excellent, due in no small measure to the full-bodied piano sound achieved by the London engineering staff. Of course, there are a dozen other excellent readings of the *Appassionata* from which to choose, chiefly paired with other popular Beethoven sonatas. Of these three recordings, however, the one I would not like to do without is Richter's—a purely personal enthusiasm, no doubt, but my choice nevertheless.

D.H.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 8, in F Major, Op. 93; Symphony No. 9, in D Minor, Op. 125* (see Best of the Month, page 74)

**BEETHOVEN:** *Three Duets for Clarinet and Bassoon (G. 147): No. 1, in C Major; No. 2, in F Major; No. 3, in B-flat Major.* Michele Zukovsky (clarinet); David Breidenthal (bassoon). AVANT AV-1011 \$5.98.

Performance: **Neat and piquant**  
Recording: **Excellent**

Major Beethoven works these are not, being in essence nicely crafted *Gebrauchsmusik* by a young chap in his twenties trying to get a foothold in the professional music world of Vienna. They *are*, however, highly effective vehicles for the two instruments and good fun in the listening, especially in the well-defined stereo placement (clarinet on the left, bassoon on the right), which makes the most of Beethoven's lively counterpoint.

The performances by Los Angeles Philharmonic players are neat and precise as can be, with a suitable "dry wine" type of recorded sound. My only criticism of this disc is that its playing time is exceedingly short—a bare twenty-nine minutes—for the price; there is a \$2.98 Turnabout issue (with excellent French players) that gets all three duets on one side and the complete Septet on the other.

D.H.

**BELLINI:** *Opera Excerpts. Norma: Meco all'altar di Venere (Act 1). La Sonnambula: Reggimi, o buona madre: Tutto è sciolto (Act II). I Puritani: Scenes from Act III.* Barry Morell (tenor); Mimi Mattei (soprano); Yuko Tsuji (mezzo-soprano); Edgardo Stivan (tenor); Walker Wyatt (baritone); Leopold Spitzer (bass); Vienna Academy Chamber Chorus; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Argeo Quadri cond. RCA ARL 1-0135 \$5.98.

Performance: **A bit heavy**  
Recording: **Average**

There is no lack of complete recordings of Bellini's three best-known operas. A program of excerpts of this kind would make sense only if it captured an exceptional *bel canto* stylist. That Barry Morell is not, though he does put forward an earnest and intermittently pleasurable effort. As a matter of fact, tenors capable of rendering justice to Bellini are far too few these days for us to treat Morell's achievement lightly. He has a certain idiomatic grasp as well as the high range needed for the *Norma* and *I Puritani* scenes (though the two high D's of the latter cause him some discomfort). What he lacks is the elegance for the right turning of a Bellini phrase, the command

of a smooth legato—qualities sorely needed for the melancholy music of *La Sonnambula's* Elvino.

The *Norma* scene is uncut, the *La Sonnambula* episode is streamlined with a certain musical logic, but the way the bleeding chunk of *I Puritani's* third act is served up makes no sense to me at all. The tenor receives fair support from his singer colleagues, routine assistance from conductor and orchestra, and somewhat less than optimum results from his technical producers.

G.J.

**BERLIOZ:** *Nuits d'Été; Three Songs* (see Collections—Eleanor Steber)

**BRAHMS:** *Two Rhapsodies, Op. 79; Fantasies (Three Capriccios and Four Intermezzos), Op. 116; Three Intermezzos, Op. 117.* Jörg Demus (piano). MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS



CLAUDIO ARRAU  
*Aristocratic Chopin interpretations*

1686 \$3.50 (plus 75¢ shipping, from Musical Heritage Society Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

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

So far, Walter Klien, on Vox, and the late Julius Katchen, on London, are the only pianists to have recorded all the keyboard works of Brahms. This is the first volume in a projected integral series by Jörg Demus, and in the dozen works on this disc he is more than good competition for the other two. He seems, in fact, even more at home in Brahms than in his admirable Schumann cycle for MHS; it is an auspicious beginning. The packaging of these works in the complete groupings devised by the composer is an eminently sensible procedure, and prospective purchasers may be assured that all three groups are complete on the disc, despite the labeling (on both the disc label and the jacket liner) which lists only the first six of the seven pieces in Op. 116: the final band on side two is in fact the unlisted Capriccio in D Minor (No. 7); the Intermezzo in E Major (No. 6) actually appears in the preceding band, along with No. 5 in E Minor.

R.F.

**BRUCH:** *Violin Concerto No. 1, in G Minor* (see The Basic Repertoire, page 51)

**BURGMÜLLER:** *Sonata in F Minor, Op. 8.*  
**MENDELSSOHN:** *Andante con Variazioni,*

*Op. 82; Variations Serieuses, Op. 54.* Adrian Ruiz (piano). GENESIS GS 1018 \$5.98.

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

The composer of this sonata was not Johann Friedrich Franz Burgmüller (1806-1874), who wrote the ballet *La Péri*, but his tragically short-lived younger brother Norbert (1810-1836), whom Mendelssohn so admired and whose songs are sometimes referred to in articles on his period. His very substantial Sonata in F Minor gives a good indication of what it was that commanded Schumann's admiration, for it is filled with original ideas and is certainly several cuts above most of the "treasures" unearthed in the unflagging Romantic Revival. The two Mendelssohn works make an appropriate coupling for it; Op. 82 is a slighter work than the familiar Op. 54 but a most agreeable one. As in his earlier Genesis recordings, Adrian Ruiz displays a real commitment to his "rediscovered" repertoire as well as the technical facility to meet all its challenges, and he benefits from a piano sound which is itself an enticement.

R.F.

**CHOPIN:** *Variations on "Là ci darem la mano," Op. 2; Fantasy on Polish Airs, Op. 13; Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise Brillante in E-flat, Op. 22.* Claudio Arrau (piano); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Eliahu Inbal cond. PHILIPS 6500 422 \$6.98.

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

Chopin's early variations on a theme from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*—the variations that impelled Schumann to his "Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!"—are now available in a properly updated recorded performance; the companion pieces on this disc are available in other excellent recordings, notably Artur Schnabel's, but coupled with other Chopin repertoire. So, as an all-in-one package of Chopin's shorter works for piano and orchestra (the only one missing is the Op. 14 *Krakowiak*), this Philips offering is very attractive.

Except in its beautifully crafted piano writing, the "Là ci darem" Variations are not characteristic Chopin, and it is hard to see why Schumann should have become so excited about them. The Op. 13 Fantasy, however, if no major masterpiece, is fresh and beguiling.

Performance and recording are the thing here, though, and Arrau is in fine fettle, his playing lyrical and unforced. The key to his interpretive approach throughout lies in his treatment of the Op. 22 Polonaise, which is a fascinatingly ruminative performance rather than mere rhythm and glitter, so that Chopin's melodic lines and their imaginative decoration are the primary elements. Eliahu Inbal contributes a suitably warm-hued orchestral accompaniment, and Philips' recorded sound is excellent.

D.H.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**DANDRIEU:** *Selections from Premier Livre d'Orgue.* **DU MAGE:** *Livre d'Orgue.* Frank Taylor (Fisk organ of the Old West Church, Boston). ELYSÉE SD 1001 \$5.95 (available from Elysée Editions, 88 Lowell Road, Wellesley, Mass. 02181).

Performance: **Excellent**  
Recording: **Extraordinarily successful**

This superb disc combines the eight brief pieces that make up the only volume of organ



music (1708) known to have been written by Pierre Du Mage (1674-1751) with a selection of organ pieces by Jean-François Dandrieu (d. 1740). They make an effective contrast, for Du Mage is the sterner of the two, and rather grander, but Dandrieu's Italianate influences provide an entertaining counterbalance through a more folk-like (bagpipe and hunting horn imitations) atmosphere. Frank Taylor reveals an excellent understanding of the stylistic requirements of this music—not surprising, since he was a student of the late Melville Smith, who was a specialist in this repertoire. (A great deal of the jacket annotation concerns itself with Smith's influence on Taylor and on Charles Fisk, who built the organ Taylor plays here. I too came under Smith's guidance and also owe him a debt.)

Taylor has an exceptional feel for these works: he understands the intricacies of the style, including the *notes inégales* rhythmic freedoms, and he does a superb job of bringing the music to life. I would love to hear him do the two Couperin organ Masses sometime. His technical and affective expertise is attractively set forth on the 1971 organ modeled after an Andreas Silbermann instrument at Marmoutier. With its strong configuration of reeds and furniture stops, this beautifully balanced instrument is an ideal French organ, and the record *must* be heard by any lover of organ music. The sound reproduction is excellent, too; the sides are deliberately short (totaling under thirty-seven minutes), the overall level is lower than usual, and the disc is as clean as a whistle, providing as full-range, as colorful, and as well-balanced a sound as any organ record I have heard.

Elysée, a new company, is to be congratulated for such an outstanding first recording. I.K.

**DAQUIN: *Nouveau Livre de Noël*.** E. Power Biggs (Flentrop organ of the Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University). COLUMBIA M 32735 \$5.98.

Performance: **Worthy reissue**  
Recording: **Excellent**

Over a dozen years old, this recording of Louis Claude Daquin's charming *Noëls* was an impressive-sounding organ disc when Columbia first released it as MS 6167, and this is a welcome reissue. The popular French Christmas tunes which Daquin subjected to variations treatment in the first half of the eighteenth century need not be restricted to seasonal hearings: they may not have the expressive depth of Couperin's organ works, but they are admirably entertaining, especially when played on such a fine organ and with such excellent choice of registration—when echo effects are demanded, for instance—as they are here. Interpretively Mr. Biggs does well with these works, although perhaps a slightly less measured approach and some *notes inégales* might have added a bit to the gaiety of the music. I.K.

**DU MAGE: *Livre d'Orgue*** (see DANDRIEU)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**FALLA: *El Amor Brujo*.** WAGNER-STOKOWSKI: *Tristan und Isolde—Love Music from Acts 2 and 3.* Shirley Verrett (mezzo-

soprano, in Falla); Philadelphia Orchestra. Leopold Stokowski cond. ODYSSEY Y 32368 \$2.98.

Performance: **Super-Stokowski**  
Recording: **Vivid**

Despite my reservations regarding Stokowski's handling of the *Tristan* music (he has recorded five versions of his "symphonic synthesis" over a thirty-year period, three of them with the Philadelphia Orchestra), I cannot possibly withhold the "special merit" rating from this extraordinary pair of performances recorded in 1960 with the orchestra that the maestro made into one of the world's greatest during his twenty-five-year conductorship (1912-1938).

Although the orchestral tone, as remastered from the Columbia original for the Odyssey reissue, is a little leaner than that of the RCA Victor issues of the Thirties, the *Tristan* music emerges as white-hot as ever, whether or not one cares for this particular styling. But it is the Falla *El Amor Brujo*, one of the great recorded performances, that really makes this disc. Shirley Verrett, then at the start of her career, brings to Falla's gypsy girl a fine tincturing of blues timbre. The Philadelphians are razor-sharp in rhythmic response, unerring in their projection of every subtlety of phrasing and color written into Falla's superb score, and the music is just hair-raising at moments of dramatic climax. The legendary Stokowski magic is at its most potent throughout the whole of this side. Apart from a slightly too close miking of Miss Verrett's solos, Columbia's 1960 recording ranks with today's best. I  
(Continued on page 106)

## Andre Kostelanetz: the Maestro.

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# Columbia launches its **BLACK COMPOSERS SERIES**

Reviewed by J. S. Roberts

*At the announcement ceremonies:  
l. to r., George Walker,  
Ulysses Kay, Roque Cordero,  
Oscar Brand, and Paul Freeman.*



COLUMBIA RECORDS has just released the first four records in a projected series devoted to music by black composers. Not jazz, but serious symphonic music. The names of the composers involved range from the familiar (Ulysses Kay, for example) to the almost forgotten (Samuel Coleridge-Taylor), to the totally unfamiliar (Joseph Boulogne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges, whose full name is given nowhere on the record devoted to his music).

The Black Composers Series grew out of an agreement with the Afro-American Music Opportunities Association, which was organized by C. Edward Thomas, and whose artistic director is Paul Freeman, associate conductor of the Detroit Symphony and now principal guest conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic as well. Dr. Dominique-René de Lerma, who founded the Black Music Center at Indiana University, Bloomington, is chief consultant for the series. The AAMOA's aim is to support a broad spectrum of activities—not necessarily symphonic—relating to black music and musicians. Clearly, this aim has a good deal to do with the whole black consciousness movement. And like that movement, it is a reaction to a major distortion in American cultural attitudes.

The general assumption that black American musical talent belongs in a box marked Jazz/Blues/Soul/Gospel may have taken a beating from the increasing numbers of fine black symphonic musicians, but as for composers, the canard is still alive and kicking. Extended works have been taken seriously by the listening public, provided they wear the label "jazz," however uncomfortably. Even "mixed" works, such as Ornette Coleman's *Skies of America*, come in for a rather bemused respect these days. But straight symphonic writing, light or heavy? No way.

Such facts have to affect judgments on the Black Composers Series. The main considerations *ought* to be musical, but they simply aren't. Standing well in front of every other consideration is the fact that works by black composers, past or present, are mostly unavailable on discs, and when they are available they are generally ignored. If this

*John Storm Roberts, former Editor of Africa Report, is the author of Black Music of Two Worlds (Praeger, 1972), just republished in paperback (William Morrow).*

were not so, the series wouldn't exist, and there's no use trying to fudge that fact.

In truth, the series *does* stand up musically, provided one doesn't demand only the greatest heights of music, which are no more present here than in the large majority of recordings of any Western music. The composers represented are all interesting in one way or another, and the performances are uniformly fine. Also, the compilers' choices are good for a number of nonmusical reasons, which is as it should be in this kind of anthology.

First of all, there is some historical perspective in the inclusion of the eighteenth-century Chevalier de Saint-Georges (who was born in Guadeloupe and died in Paris) and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, who spanned the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There is also a good deal of stylistic variety among the four more or less contemporary composers: William Grant Still, possibly the best known of the six, refers a good deal to popular melody and harmonic practice; Roque Cordero uses Panamanian popular forms, such as the *mejorana*, in his *Eight Miniatures*, but his violin concerto, like the works by Kay and Walker, is basically international-modern.

**T**HIS variety certainly indicates the use of more than purely musical criteria. But such decisions are at the root of most anthologies, and here, perhaps more than anywhere else, they are justified. The Chevalier de Saint-Georges was hardly a major figure in pre-Classical music. But he was a talented and craftsmanlike amateur (and colonel of a black French regiment, dancer, poet, actor, and violinist) and quite as interesting musically as many of the much-recorded composers of his time. The fact that he has had no listing in Schwann until this time might justify the entire AAMOA venture in itself.

A cheering aspect of the Columbia series is that the compilers have apparently refused to hew to an over-narrow conceptual line. It might have been tempting to include *only* works (such as Still's *Afro-American Symphony*) with a specifically "black element." But this would have been merely a way of distorting the reality—which is that black composers come in all musical and cultural-ideological shapes and sizes.

The fact that these four albums are only a third or less of the project as presently planned makes it difficult to comment on the

choices made. I feel a certain imbalance in what is inevitably going to be seen, however unfairly, as a self-contained, self-explanatory unit of four records. I think it might have been wise to include one nineteenth-century American (U.S., that is) in the first set, even though there are very few. I would have liked to see a piece reflecting black American reactions to African music—an available example is Still's *Ennanga* (named after a kind of East African zither; it is available on Orion 7278). More serious, perhaps, in a set that is *not* confined to music of the United States, is the lack of any example of the important and exciting work being done by a handful of young *African* composers, such as Nigeria's Akin Euba, in combining African and European musical instruments and procedures. In all, then, the set falls awkwardly between a commitment to U.S. black composers and a fully thought-out pan-Africanist approach. But then, any anthology has practical as well as conceptual considerations, and the Black Composers Series has obviously taken into account the realities of marketing. Later issues may well adjust the balance of the series as a whole.

A more important question is whether the whole idea of separate releases of the music of black composers isn't a new form of "ghettoization," however much it has been supported and developed by blacks themselves. The dilemma has been summed up by the black pianist Natalie Hinderas, who once wrote: "... our black composers need no apology, no defense, no explanation, no patronizing. They need performance." She then went on to quote Hale Smith: "Place our music not on all-black programs. . . . We don't even have to be called black. When we stand for our bows, that fact will become clear when it should: *after* the work has made its own impact." Amen! But, ironically, Ms. Hinderas was writing in the notes to an album of piano music by black composers (Desto DC 7102/3). Desto also has an orchestral album, "The Black Composer in America" (DC 7107), and the current reality is most powerfully summed up in her *second* sentence.

A perusal of Schwann reveals just seventeen listings for black composers, and many of these are not whole discs but single pieces in collections. All are modern, and all (until the Columbia set) are on smaller labels, frequently specialized labels unknown to most people. Composers Recordings Inc. has in-

cluded music by black composers on several albums of contemporary *American* music. This is admirable. But, paradoxically, it doesn't help a black composer who wants to be heard by a wide *black* audience, since black contemporary-music buffs are a minority of a minority of a minority. Educators want "black series," for they are trying to get to blacks who are just not *into* contemporary music. The problem is a complicated one, but it seems to me that most objections to specifically black cultural projects stem from various layers of collective insecurity. Would anyone question a set of Celtic-American music? I doubt it. And the argument of prior neglect seems to overwhelm all others. But the main value of the Columbia series is in no sense negative or reactive. Aside from the fact that American blacks want such series, and should have them, this one is worthwhile in its own right, musically, educationally, and socially.

**I** gather that later issues in the series will include a Requiem by the Brazilian composer Nuñez Garcia, who died in 1830, and also explore "blackstream" American music—music deliberately linked to the black experience—more deeply. I hope the collection will in time present a picture of the whole spectrum of black composition, including both the diaspora and Africa. I hope too that the compilers will go on avoiding the temptation to impose their own musical or ideological beliefs on the selection. The importance, as well as the *power* inherent in a major series like this—and the very limited outlets for alternative viewpoints—imposes the responsibility to be as open as possible. And I hope above all that the cultural climate will change in such a way that there will be, in the future, no need for such series except as ancient history.

**CHEVALIER DE SAINT-GEORGES:** *Symphonic Concertante, in G Major, Op. 13; Symphony No. 1, in G Major, Op. 11, No. 1; Scena, from "Ernestine."* Miriam Fried and Jaime Laredo (violins, in *Concertante*); Faye Robinson (soprano, in *Scena*); London Symphony Orchestra, Paul Freeman cond. *String Quartet No. 1, in C Major, Op. 1, No. 1.* Juilliard Quartet. COLUMBIA M 32781 \$5.98.

**WILLIAM GRANT STILL:** *Afro-American Symphony; Two Arias from "Highway 1, USA."* William Brown (tenor, in *Highway*); London Symphony Orchestra, Paul Freeman cond. **SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR:** *Danse Negre; Onaway!; Awake, Beloved, from "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast."* William Brown (tenor, in *Onaway!*); London Symphony Orchestra, Paul Freeman cond. COLUMBIA M 32782 \$5.98.

**ULYSSES SIMPSON KAY:** *Markings.* **GEORGE THEOPHILUS WALKER:** *Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra.* Denis Wick (trombone, in *Concerto*); London Symphony Orchestra, Paul Freeman cond. COLUMBIA M 32783 \$5.98.

**ROQUE CORDERO:** *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra; Eight Miniatures.* Sanford Allen (violin, in *Concerto*); Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Freeman cond. COLUMBIA M 32784 \$5.98.

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must report, however, that the *Tristan* side of my review copy suffers from pitch fluctuation, a result of off-center pressing. D.H.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**FANSHAWE: *African Sanctus*.** Valerie Hill, Patricia Clarke (sopranos); Gary Kettel, Terry Emery, Mustapha Tettey Addy (percussion); Tony Campo, Martin Kershaw, Alan Parker (guitars); Gerry Butler (organ); Harold Lester (piano); Ambrosian Singers, John McCarthy dir.; African recordings taped in Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya by David Fanshawe. PHILIPS 6558 001 \$5.98.

Performance: **Anglo-African spectacular**  
Recording: **Amazing**

There have been so many Masses from Africa recorded in recent years that one gets the feeling sometimes that all they do these days in the Congo and Chad and Tanzania is cut records of African versions of the Mass—though the headlines from that continent report otherwise. This one comes with a red band around the package proclaiming itself "Africa's heart-beat captured by a musical Livingstone." Yet David Fanshawe, the composer and explorer responsible for the whole production, is *really* a remarkable fellow, and his efforts "to fuse different peoples and their music into a tightly knit unit of energy and praise" cannot be dismissed as a quixotic adventure.

Now, it must be understood that Mr. Fanshawe is one of these intrepid Englishmen in the tradition of the Empire who think nothing of undertaking journeys to the "dark continent" by foot, donkey, camel, paddle-steamer, or whatever, straight into places most of us would rather read about in travel books. But instead of keeping a journal of his excursion, Fanshawe chose to turn his energies to location recording: calls to prayer in Cairo, Glorias in Luxor, Sudanese courtship dances, Equatorial rainsongs, and war drums in the Egyptian desert. Finally, the indomitable Fanshawe returned with all this native African music to London, where he mixed it in with other music he composed himself to create his *African Sanctus*. It must have driven his engineer Peter Olliff crazy to put it all together, but the results are impressive. The Sanctus itself is matched to a "bwala" dance from Uganda, the Kyrie to a call to prayer recorded in Cairo, the Gloria to Egyptian wedding music taped in Luxor, and so on.

The music for the Latin texts and the orchestral passages are by Fanshawe himself. They are performed with consummate artistry by the Ambrosian Singers under choral director John McCarthy with accompaniment on piano, organ, guitar and percussion. How well Fanshawe's western-style, unselfconsciously dramatic music works with the clapping, shouting, murmuring, and singing on the tapes he made on his journeys is simply amazing. The resulting disc is something of a heroic triumph, if only in terms of production, although it's quite fascinating musically as well. But the real hero, I suspect, is engineer Olliff, who knows not only how to balance the most complex passages of sound but exactly what to do with a set of stereo controls to create the feeling of space rolling out against an infinite horizon. The album comes with a complete text in Latin and English, descriptions of the African material, color photographs, and a map of the indefatigable composer's African travels. P.K.

**HAYDN: *Piano Sonata No. 20, in C Minor*** (see BEETHOVEN)

**HINDEMITH: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* (1940). MIHÁLY: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* (1953).** Miklós Perényi (cello); Hungarian Radio and Television Orchestra, György Lehel cond. HUNGAROTON LPX 11556 \$5.98.

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

Hindemith's popularity has hardly grown in the decade since his death, but that such a work as the Cello Concerto should remain so utterly unknown is little short of astonishing. It is never performed in concert, and the only previous recording of it was on a Supraphon mono disc (Tortelier with Ančerl and the Czech Philharmonic) which enjoyed only lim-



DAVID FANSHAWE  
*The intrepid traveler as composer*

ited circulation in this country about fifteen years ago. It is a very substantial composition; Walton thought enough of its moving slow movement to compose a set of orchestral variations on its theme, and the good-natured march finale has characteristics in common with both *Der Schwanendreher*, composed five years earlier, and the *Weber-Metamorphoses* which followed in 1943. If its first movement is a little thin, Hindemith's Cello Concerto nevertheless intrigues the listener with its unexpected rhythmic changes and declamatory passages for the soloist.

By way of contrast, it is the first movement, titled *Poema*, that is the most attractive segment of the Concerto by the Hungarian Mihály, who is now fifty-six. It is an unabashedly Romantic piece, expansive and evocative in the manner of Bartók's "night music." The ensuing *Ballada* and *Capriccio* are cut from the same Bartókian cloth, but have too much of a derivative stamp to match the appeal of the *Poema*, which, I suspect, could stand very well on its own.

Miklós Perényi, only twenty-six now but a veteran of fifteen years on the European concert and competition circuit, makes the strongest case for both works. His tone is big and rich, but not fat; his manner is supple, elegant, and highly communicative. The orchestral playing is polished and sympathetic, the sound quite good. R.F.

**JANÁČEK: *In the Mist; Sonata* (October 1, 1905); *On an Overgrown Path* (Series I).** Eva Bernathová (piano). MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1659 \$3.50 (plus 75¢ shipping charge, from Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

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

On its own terms, as a convenient and economical package of Janáček's most important works for solo piano, this is not an unattractive proposition. The French-made (Erato) recording presents the Czech pianist in a good light, though some of the rougher edges are smoothed away in her playing. Rudolf Firkusny's two-disc Janáček collection for Deutsche Grammophon (2707 055), however, is a tough act to follow. In addition to his superior performances of these three works, Firkusny also plays the less familiar second series from *On an Overgrown Path*, the *Zdenka Variations*, and, with members of the Bavarian Radio Orchestra under Rafael Kubelik, both of Janáček's concerted works for piano (*Capriccio* and *Concertino*). R.F.

**KHACHATURIAN: *Gayaneh Suite; Masquerade Suite*.** Philharmonia Orchestra, Aram Khachaturian cond. SERAPHIM 60226 \$3.49.

Performance: **First-rate**  
Recording: **Good 1955 mono**

Besides the justly popular *Sabre Dance*, Soviet-Armenian composer Aram Khachaturian's *Gayaneh Suite* includes seven other numbers of the thirty-seven that make up his colorful ballet, set in a collective farm: *Dance of the Young Maidens*, *Ayasha's Awakening and Dance*, *Lullaby*, *Gayaneh's Adagio*, *Lezghinka*, *Lyrical Dance*, and *Dance of the Old Men and Women*. The performance is spirited and more carefully nuanced than those on most of the half-dozen or so stereo versions currently available. Together with the highly effective Piano Concerto of 1936, the *Gayaneh* score contains some of Khachaturian's freshest music, and it is good to have it even partially documented in his own reading. The *Masquerade Suite*, including three pieces excerpted from incidental music for a Lermontov play, holds up considerably less well in both manner and substance. The mono sonics of almost twenty years' vintage, however, are still really quite fine. A good buy at \$2.98. D.H.

**KIRCHNER: *Lily*.** Diane Hoagland (soprano); Columbia Chamber Soloists, Leon Kirchner cond. *String Quartet No. 2*. Lenox String Quartet. COLUMBIA M 32740 \$5.98.

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

*Lily* is a self-contained scene from a larger theater work-in-progress by Leon Kirchner based on Saul Bellow's *Henderson the Rain King*. One associates Kirchner's music with the kind of intense, free expressionism—out of Schoenberg by way of Kirchner's teacher Roger Sessions—represented here by the Second String Quartet of 1958. But *Lily* has a wider range of ideas. Bellow's hero has gone into the rain forest looking for "the way to live," and we hear a curious sequence of voices: an exotic princess singing in an unknown tongue, Henderson's wife Lily crooning a suburban lullaby, and Henderson himself in his middle-aged, self-pitying, dou-

ble-bourbon-on-the-rocks stupor. All of this is surrounded by the lush, colorful sounds of an exotic aural rain forest. Kirchner himself speaks the part of Henderson while his wife Gertrude sings Lily's not-so-siren song; Diane Hoagland is ravishing as the voice of the princess. Although the disparate character of the whole does not add up to a conventional musical unity, the scene is undeniably effective and even moving—the contrast between the lushness of the outer sections and the tawdriness of Henderson's and Lily's misery is a not-ineffective commentary all by itself. Moreover, the performance and the recording are excellent.

The String Quartet on the reverse side is so typically "modern music"—excellently written and superbly performed—that I really wonder whether it will appeal to the same kind of listener that would be interested in *Lily*. Perhaps, though, it would be to the advantage of both kinds of listener to follow Kirchner's rather striking metamorphosis between 1958 and 1973! E.S.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**LUTOSLAWSKI:** *Concerto for Orchestra; Funeral Music; Venetian Games*. Warsaw National Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Witold Rowicki cond. PHILIPS 6500 628 \$6.98.

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

These three performances were issued on a domestically pressed Philips disc (PHS900-159) seven years ago, but they have not been available here since Philips switched to imports for its "classical product." It is good to have them back, particularly since there is no other recording of *Venetian Games*, the most recent (1961) and most intriguing of the three works (colorful effects and a discreet fling with aleatory techniques). Witold Rowicki's tempos in the outer movements of the *Concerto* are broader than those favored by Seiji Ozawa on Angel or the late Paul Kletzki on London—presumably with some authority, since the work is dedicated to him; in any event, he invests it with a certain warmth and personality both of the other conductors miss. All three pieces are persuasively projected, and the Warsaw Symphony comes through much more impressively than on the old domestic pressing of the same recordings. The rich sound of the strings in the *Funeral Music* (in memory of Bartók) is especially handsome here. R.F.

**MENDELSSOHN:** *Piano Variations* (see BERGMÜLLER)

**MIHÁLY:** *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* (see HINDEMITH)

**MINKUS:** *Don Quixote*. Elizabethan Trust Melbourne Orchestra, John Lanchbery arr. and cond. ANGEL S-37008 \$5.98.

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

*Don Quixote*, in various productions, has been one of the enduring classics of Russian ballet for more than a hundred years: surely no other dance work has flourished so long with such totally undistinguished music. John Lanchbery, who feels quite differently about this score, made this arrangement for Nureyev's Vienna production of 1966: "I adapted it

to the lighter story-line which Nureyev wanted, wrote a few new numbers, brushed up all that we thought worth saving, but above all set out by completely re-orchestrating the whole work." In 1970 Nureyev did *Don Quixote* with the Australian Ballet, and that production was filmed, with Lanchbery conducting his own version of the Minkus score. Herewith the soundtrack. The performance is good, and so is the sound, but all the "brushing up" in the world can't make this stuff worth listening to without the visual attraction of the dancing. R.F.

**MOZART:** *Piano Concertos Nos. 9 and 22; Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat Major* (see Collections—Pablo Casals)

**PROKOFIEV:** *Cello Sonata in C Major, Op. 119.* **WARD-STEINMAN:** *Duo for Cello and*



JORGE BOLET  
*Rachmaninoff with élan, style, and grace*

*Piano.* Edgar Lustgarten (cello): John Williams (piano). ORION 74141 \$6.98.

Performance: **Brilliant and pointed**  
Recording: **Good**

Edgar Lustgarten, one of the most brilliant young cello players of the NBC Symphony back in the glorious days of the Forties with Arturo Toscanini, has long been a resident of the West Coast. He is still one of the best cellists around, and his interpretation of Prokofiev's late and predominantly lyrical C Major Sonata has considerable rhythmic vitality and effectively pointed phrasing.

Mr. Lustgarten himself commissioned the other work on this disc in the middle Sixties. David Ward-Steinman, who was born in Louisiana in 1936 and now lives in San Diego, has been represented on the CRI and Contemporary Composer's Guild labels by songs and piano works. But the Duo for Cello and Piano (it also exists in an orchestral version as the Concerto for Cello) is the most ambitious of his instrumental works yet recorded. To judge from this music, Ward-Steinman is relatively conservative-eclectic in his stylistic persuasions, but a thorough master of the art and craft of composition. The solo-instrument writing is virtuosic to the highest degree, and in the very fine slow movement—inspired by the paintings of Mark Rothko—Ward-Steinman exhibits a remarkable command of both

timbral and harmonic coloration in his handling of tone clusters. Pianist John Williams plays his exacting role in both works with great fluency and brilliance. The recorded sound is generally excellent, if a bit hard in the upper keyboard register. D.H.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**RACHMANINOFF:** *Piano Transcriptions of Works by Other Composers.* **Kreisler:** *Liebessfreud; Liebesleid.* **Tchaikovsky:** *Lullaby, Op. 16, No. 1.* **Bizet:** *Minuet from "L'Arlésienne" Suite No. 1.* **Rimsky-Korsakoff:** *The Flight of the Bumblebee from "Tsar Saltan."* **Mendelssohn:** *Scherzo from "A Midsummer Night's Dream."* **Bach:** *Preludio from Violin Partita No. 3, in E Major (BWV 1003).* **Moussorgsky:** *Hopak from "The Fair at Sorochinsk."* **RACHMANINOFF:** *Polka de V. R.; Prelude in G-flat Major, Op. 23, No. 10; Prelude in G-sharp Minor, Op. 32, No. 12.* Jorge Bolet (piano). RCA ARL1-0357 \$5.98, Ⓟ ARS1-0357 \$6.98, Ⓞ ARK1-0357 \$6.98.

Performance: **Grand style**  
Recording: **Excellent**

This recording is labeled "Great Rachmaninoff Transcriptions" even though it includes two Rachmaninoff preludes as well as a polka that also seems to be an original composition. Nevertheless, it is Rachmaninoff's skill as a transcriber that is the principal subject matter here, and, if this sort of thing pleases you, the album ought to please you very much.

The Rachmaninoff transcriptions are, of course, late examples of a very old genre. The idea essentially is to give a personal interpretation of familiar music. In a freer and easier musical culture—the Baroque period or pop music today—the personal performer's interpretation of well-known or standard literature is taken for granted. With the nineteenth-century domination of musical culture by the composer and the written score, matters become a little more complicated, and a formal, written arrangement is necessary. It was Franz Liszt who turned the transcription into a finished art form (although not all of his transcriptions are of equal artistic value), and a high point of complexity—virtuosity mingled with an intellectual, analytic approach—was achieved at the turn of the century by Godowsky and Busoni. For many years, no great virtuoso could appear in public without some sample of his personal transcription style, if not his own compositional skill. When Rachmaninoff began to concertize after the First World War, he prepared his arrangements almost as a matter of course, and, as in other musical matters, these now seem like the tail end of a grand tradition.

The Rachmaninoff transcriptions are all exceptionally well made. They are difficult enough but not merely virtuosic or show-offy for their own sake; musical values are always prominent. What is lacking is the reinterpretive element that makes the Liszt and Busoni transcriptions often come across as original works in their own right. The poetic and "serious" pieces are grouped on side one; they elicit a certain amount of admiration. The fancy numbers and chestnuts are on side two; they evoke smiles and dreams of that camp world of pure, endless encores.

Bolet's playing is so effortless and essentially musical that he never seems to be showing off. Perhaps he should make it sound harder.

(Continued on page 109)

# THE ERICH WOLFGANG KORNGOLD STORY

A screenplay for a symphony

By Paul Kresh



RCA Records

soaring scales on the strings, the genius is sent off for further study while gigue-like rhythms persist to suggest his longing for a normal life out-of-doors with wholesome companions. To tranquil, lyrical passages he is seen composing, in calm succession, an overture, a sinfionietta, a violin sonata, two piano sonatas, and a piano trio. A march-like motif announces the pleasure of the Emperor Franz Josef (Lewis Stone in a beard) over a performance of the hero's dance pantomime, written at the age of eleven. The Empress (Maria Ouspenskaya) warns Erich, in a touching little palace scene, that he must always compose "from what is in your heart."

Calendar leaves spin away to the sound of soft flutes, and Korngold at twenty (Cornel Wilde) is emerging from the premiere of his latest opera in Vienna when his eyes catch sight of the girl of his dreams (Priscilla Lane). Then the clarinet motif returns as Alma Mahler softly enters the troubled young man's room and rocks him to sleep. Next, to the accompaniment of a tarantella-like allegro, Alma and the girl who is to become Erich Wolfgang's wife are merrily visiting the Vienna Zoo arm-in-arm with him. When Alma stops at a drinking fountain, Erich pursues the younger woman past the bear cages to music of remarkable kinetic energy and proposes to her in the monkey house. Alma departs in high dudgeon as the scherzo ends.

In the adagio, the composer dreams of his own funeral, but he wakes to find himself in Hollywood, California, with his wife, his sons, his father, mother, and brothers, as well as a contract in his hands (from Jack Warner, played by "Cuddles" Sakal) to help support them. The hero is still not happy, however, and the work goes but slowly (as does the adagio). At the impassioned climax, our protagonist is elated to learn that he has just been engaged to compose improvements on Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* music for Max Reinhardt's movie, and the episode ends serenely.

FOR the finale, we fade in on the laws of Griffith Park in Los Angeles, where the entire Korngold family is at play, flying kites and enjoying a festive Sunday picnic to life-asserting rhythms. Later they visit the planetarium where, pensive under the artificial stars, Wolfgang resolves to give up composing scores for Bette Davis movies and live up to the promise of his *Wunderkind*-hood. He begins work at once on his symphony, writing from what is in his heart, while the ghost of Mahler stands over him and nods in time to a processional passage, symbolizing a posthumous recording offer from RCA, and the orchestra comes in for a final, affirming chord. Mr. Kempe and his Munich musicians give it everything they've got.

**KORNGOLD:** *Symphony in F-sharp Major, Op. 40.* Munich Philharmonic Orchestra. Rudolf Kempe cond. RCA ARL 1-0443 \$5.98.

**KORNGOLD:** *Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35; Much Ado About Nothing, Incidental Music; Theme and Variations, Op. 42.* Ulf Hoelscher (violin); Stuttgart Radio Orchestra. Willy Mattes cond. ANGEL S36999 \$5.98.

CHAMPIONS of the music of Erich Wolfgang Korngold have been telling me for so many years what I was missing by judging the man only on his movie scores that I could scarcely wait to hear the new RCA and Angel recordings of his symphony and violin concerto. Even before I opened the albums, just reading the encomiums to the *Symphony in F-sharp Major* by Nicholas Slonimsky (on RCA) and to the other works by Rory Guy (on Angel) made me blush for shame over the injustices I patently had perpetrated against the memory of this great man by describing with tongue in cheek, instead of awed reverence, the lush productions of his Hollywood years, the film scores for Bette Davis movies and for such action epics as *The Sea Hawk*.

I took the bit in my teeth, however, opened the packages, and went on to listen to the records. They proved rather less momentous a listening experience than their admirers made them out to be. Mr. Korngold, a child prodigy who at the age of ten made Mahler exclaim "Genius!" after he had played a cantata for him, and whom critics compared to Mozart in his adolescence, strikes me, after listening to several hours of his "serious" music, as a gifted composer with an excellent sense of form and a marvelous grasp of orchestral techniques, but one who never found a way to turn the riches of his musical endowments into works worthy of his ambitions. They turn out to be more corn, as it were, than gold.

Consider the *Violin Concerto in D*. Composed for the concert stage in 1945, it makes use of themes from four Hollywood movies: *Anthony Adverse*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex*, and one called *Another Dawn* that I haven't yet caught on the Late Show. Now, there is no reason in the world why any composer shouldn't draw on his own earlier themes as often as he wishes. The trouble is that, along with the themes, the aura of the oversized sound stage is pulled along as well, to hang over this music like a Technicolor sunset. Even discounting the lushness of soloist Ulf Hoelscher's shamelessly sweet rendition (I never heard the Heifetz version, so I still have that thrill in store), the three movements, classic as they may be

in form and brilliantly as they are orchestrated, lack the focus, direction, and wit of, say, William Walton's *Violin Concerto*, of which the Korngold work is at times reminiscent. Passages that are fascinating in themselves sprawl and spill over until we are awash in a heaving sea of self-pity and self-indulgence—back amid the swells of scores like the one for *The Sea Hawk*, in fact—to end up deluded, unfulfilled, and not a little seasick. The composer promises much and goes on promising until the violinist has drained the last dregs of emotionality from his instrument's tortured strings and the orchestra has spent its force in a riot of overstatement. When it is all over, no real musical communication seems to have taken place. Further, the work as a whole seems curiously old-fashioned.

The *Theme and Variations*, a far neater, more tailored affair composed in 1955, two years before Korngold's death, is winning in a courtly way, yet it too is nearly smothered beneath an excess of instrumental whipped cream. The music for *Much Ado About Nothing*, composed way back in 1918, is all Teutonic charm and Viennese grace with a Richard Strauss accent. But even this engaging suite conveys little of the effervescent spirit of the play it was written to decorate—the acerbic, bickering scenes between Beatrice and Benedick, for example, or the rollicking nature of Shakespearian comedy in general.

As for Mr. Korngold's symphony, I am working on a scenario to go with it, and I offer herewith a brief outline for Hollywood's consideration. As I conceive it, *The Erich Wolfgang Korngold Story* opens with credits flashed on the screen, superimposed over scenes from the Moravian childhood of the *Wunderkind*, busy composing songs and waltzes while the other children are out ice-skating. The clarinet introduction will serve nicely for this. Then the camera pans in on Alma Mahler (Bette Davis), about to introduce young Korngold (Kirby Furlong, who played the nephew in the movie of *Mame*) at the age of nine to Gustav (James Mason). The boy plays his cantata on the piano. "A genius!" Mahler exclaims as he paces the length and breadth of the music room. Amid

One actually misses a certain element of showmanship, even a sense of strain and effort! It's all very elegant and controlled, spun off with great clarity, *élan*, style, and grace, not too involved but with perfect skill and taste. Good piano sound. E.S.

**RACHMANINOFF:** *The Bells, Op. 35; Three Russian Songs, Op. 41.* Phyllis Curtin (soprano); George Shirley (tenor); Michael Devlin (baritone); Temple University Choirs. Robert Page dir.; Philadelphia Orchestra. Eugene Ormandy cond. RCA ARL1-0193 \$5.98.

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

Rachmaninoff once declared *The Bells* to be his favorite among his compositions: it is a choice in which many listeners might concur if only they had opportunities to hear the work occasionally, for it has everything one wants in such a piece—drama, color, the most effective contrasts, and an uncharacteristic but welcome conciseness. This is the second opportunity Ormandy has provided on records, surpassing his earlier effort on Columbia by virtue of a stronger vocal contingent (both solo and choral) as well as RCA's sumptuous new sonics. Kiril Kondrashin has also given us a fine statement of the work, available on both Everest 3251 and Melodiya/Angel SR-40114, but the Russian soprano and baritone are outclassed by Curtin and Devlin even more strikingly than the Moscow Philharmonic is by the Philadelphians, and American listeners will surely prefer to hear the work sung in English. Moreover, there is no second work on the Kondrashin disc, while the Russian songs constitute an irresistible bonus.

The only disappointing factor is RCA's failure to provide printed texts. Following the Poe original in the case of *The Bells* will not do, for, as Clair Van Ausdall points out in his exceptional program notes, Konstantin Balmont, whose Russian version Rachmaninoff used, did not simply translate Poe but more or less wrote his own poem based on Poe's: what is sung here is Fanny Copeland's English translation of the Balmont version. The title of the third of the Three Russian Songs, probably the most ingratiating piece Rachmaninoff ever wrote, *looks* hopelessly clumsy in Kurt Schindler's translation—*Quickly, Quickly, from My Cheeks the Powder Off*—but in performance it works beautifully. These adorable songs were written for the Philadelphia Orchestra, and, like *The Bells*, they have never been presented more persuasively than they are here. R.F.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SAINT-SAËNS:** *Samson et Dalila.* Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano), Dalila; James King (tenor), Samson; Bernd Weigl (baritone), High Priest of Dagon; Alexander Malta (bass), Abimelech; Richard Kogel (bass), Old Hebrew; Heinrich Weber (tenor), Messenger; Albert Gassner (tenor), First Philistine; Peter Schraner (bass), Second Philistine. Bavarian Broadcasting Chorus and Orchestra. Giuseppe Patané cond. EURODISC 86 977 XR three discs \$20.94.

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

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number of operatic recordings of varying interest, has now brought forth a good alternative to the only other *Samson et Dalila* in the catalog (Angel S-3639, with Rita Gorr and Jon Vickers, Georges Prêtre conducting, released about ten years ago). The new set offers no sonic improvements: in fact, its somewhat compressed and over-reverberant sound tends to amplify the voices and obscure certain orchestral details. I was also disappointed by the engineers' failure to create the illusion of the approaching storm in the second act, clearly indicated in the score.

The singing, however, is consistently good. I cannot think of a better Dalila at the moment than Christa Ludwig, and she is in top form here, particularly in the opening aria of the second act, "*Amour! viens aider ma faiblesse.*" Perhaps Rita Gorr could move more comfortably through the low-lying tessitura, but Miss Ludwig's singing is richer-toned and more sultry, and that is what Dalila is about. It is hard to choose between the two Samsons. Both Jon Vickers and James King sing the role with dignity and conviction, and neither is an overwhelmingly appealing vocalist. There is more spontaneity in King's performance, if also a little more audible effort. Bernd Weikl is impressive as the High Priest, but the engineering makes his vocal timbre sound unnatural much of the time. All the supporting singers are good.

Giuseppe Patané's musical direction is somewhat wanting in vigor and incisiveness. The choral passages—in the first act in particular—could have more presence and textual definition. There is no denying the overall superiority of the earlier Angel set as an au-

thentic French production, but Eurodisc has done remarkably well in producing a French opera without French ingredients. *G.J.*

**SCHUBERT: *Four Impromptus, Op. 90 (D. 899); Sonata in A Minor, Op. 42 (D. 845).*** Carol Rosenberger (piano). DELOS DEL 15313 \$5.98.

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

Together with simultaneously released recordings of the Chopin preludes and a Szymanowski recital, this disc serves to introduce to the recording medium Detroit-born Carol Rosenberger, a pianist who over the last few years has been making a considerable name for herself here as well as in Europe. To judge from her Schubert, Ms. Rosenberger is a player of sure technical equipment and a rather appealing interpretive directness. In eschewing any kind of sentimentality here, she sometimes comes close to missing some of the gracious, *gemütlich* qualities of the sonata and the earlier set of Impromptus. Her drive in the sonata's fast movements does not allow for much flowing lyricism, even in the contrasted second themes (as in the first movement), although slower sections are played with a more appropriate singing quality and even, at times, with a welcome lilt. I can appreciate the pianist's Classically oriented concept, but I would have preferred a less dry, more dynamically modulated tonal approach to these scores, as well as more attention to line. The piano sound is very clean but also shallow, and my review disc was afflicted with some flutter-producing minor warps. *I.K.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SCHUBERT: *Goethe Songs. Four "Mignon" Lieder (D. 321, D. 877, Nos. 2, 3, 4); Die Liebende schreibt, Op. 165, No. 1 (D. 673); Nähe des Geliebten, Op. 5, No. 2 (D. 162); Heidenröslein, Op. 3, No. 3 (D. 257); Liebhaber in allen Gestalten (D. 558).*** Elly Ameling (soprano); Dalton Baldwin (piano). *Three Gesänge des Harfners (D. 478, 479, 480); Der Sänger, Op. 117 (D. 149); Erbkönig, Op. 1 (D. 328); Ganymed, Op. 19, No. 3 (D. 544).* Hermann Prey (baritone); Karl Engel (piano). PHILIPS 6500 515 \$6.98.

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

Goethe didn't really like Schubert's settings of his poetry. The poet liked to think of himself as a classicist, and he preferred simple, strophic settings without too much accompaniment. Schubert's songs must have seemed to him quite symphonic, sophisticated, not especially vocal, too impassioned and Romantic, and, in some cases, obviously mistaken as to the poet's intentions.

But in a profound way Goethe was wrong, and for the non-German-speaking world, at least, a great deal of his lyric poetry survives because Schubert set it. Schubert was not exactly the only composer to set Goethe's poetry, but he certainly set a lot of it—over seventy songs, and he had permission for none of them! The range is rather remarkable, from the folk-like *Heidenröslein* (which has in fact achieved the status of a folk song) to the dramatic intensity of the *Erbkönig*. Schubert not only strengthened and elaborat-



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ed the piano part of his songs and used colorful, Romantic harmony; he also introduced elements of instrumental Classicism into the vocal lines. In doing so, he actually created something quite new and rather removed from the folk-like or Italianate style that had dominated vocal music until his time. This aspect of Schubert's songs, not generally recognized, connects him quite closely with the later nineteenth century and, in fact, with Wagner. It also makes it almost impossible to sing Schubert effectively with an Italianate tone production. A clean, supple, focused, almost vibratoless sound is necessary, with the intensity transferred from the vocal quality to the nuances of phrasing, dynamics, and rhythm.

All this is a roundabout way of explaining why Elly Ameling and, to a scarcely lesser degree, Hermann Prey are ideal Schubert singers. They both have vocal instruments that can only be described as gorgeously simple, they both sing the most natural and beautiful phrases in the world, and they both have perfect control of the endless expressive nuances that arise at the point where language and melody meet. Both pianists are excellent, and the sound is good. This is an outstanding recording. *E.S.*

**SCHUBERT: Sonata in G Major, Op. 78 (D. 894); Sonata in C Major ("Unfinished," D. 840).** Alfred Brendel (piano). Philips 6500 416 \$6.98.

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

Alfred Brendel continues to define his own standards, in Schubert as in Beethoven, and

offers two distinguished performances on this disc. He is awesomely persuasive in the C Major Sonata, a performance both more stirring and more subtly controlled than his recently deleted Vanguard version. In the G Major he is expansive without *longueurs*, allowing himself a little liberty here and there (as when he shifts gears in the Menuetto to take the trio at a slower tempo) and giving both lyricism and drama their due. Most listeners will applaud his decision to omit the exposition repeat in the first movement.

At this level of music-making, comparisons are rather beside the point, but I can't help observing that, remarkable as Brendel's performance is, there are moments in it that tend to seem earthbound beside the recent London recording by Vladimir Ashkenazy (CS 6820). Ashkenazy not only takes the first-movement repeat but adopts a slightly slower tempo, yet he never allows one's interest to lag, and he is more scrupulous about his accompaniment figures. His phrasing in the Menuetto is more natural, and his basic tempo for that movement is comfortable enough to obviate the gear-shifting Brendel finds necessary. In the finale Ashkenazy is actually a bit faster than Brendel—and also much lighter—providing a more effective contrast with the preceding movements: a dancing finale, bathed in sunlight. For me, Ashkenazy's is an irresistible performance of the G Major, but Brendel's carries its own distinction—and it has that outstanding account of the C Major with it. Sonically both discs are first-rate. *R.F.*

**SCHUBERT: Songs. Der Vater mit dem Kind; Im Haine; Der zürnende Barde; Am See;**

*Leiden der Trennung; Der Zwerg; Wehmut; Herrn Joseph Spaur; Totengräbers Heimweh; Der blinde Knabe; Der Jüngling auf dem Hügel; Grablied; Abendstern; Auflösung; Der Knabe in der Wiege; Der Strom; Der Jüngling und der Tod.* Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone); Gerald Moore (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 347 \$6.98.

**SCHUBERT: Trios. Der Hochzeitsbraten; Die Advokaten; Punschlied; Cantate zum Geburtstag des Sängers Johann Michael Vogl; Cantate zum fünfzigjährigen Geburtstag Salieris; Verschwunden sind die Schmerzen; Trinklied.** Elly Ameling (soprano); Peter Schreier and Horst R. Laubenthal (tenors); Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone); Gerald Moore (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 361 \$6.98.

Performances: **Trios better**  
Recordings: **Both excellent**

These two discs explore quite unfamiliar corners of Franz Schubert's voluminous vocal legacy. The first disc is aptly titled "Schubert and His Friends," but since no annotations whatever are enclosed, the title is not likely to communicate much to most potential buyers. The "friends" are the poets, ten intimates of Schubert, who are responsible for the seventeen song lyrics on the disc. These were the members of the "inner circle," the participants in the famous Schubertiads, young Bohemians and convivial drinking companions of the easy-living, ever-youthful Franz.

They were talented, these ten poets, but not extraordinarily so. Just the same, they provided Schubert with texts for some exceptional

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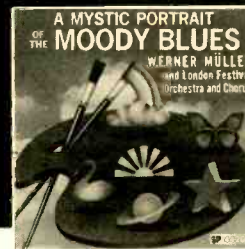
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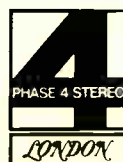
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## Another "GOLDEN AGE"

The Metropolitan Opera  
on Columbia Records  
Reviewed by Eric Salzman



THE economic realities of American musical life have never been very favorable for the production of large-scale operatic recordings, and the history of opera on records in America is a brief one. By far the most ambitious project of its kind was the Metropolitan Opera series recorded and issued by Columbia between 1947 and the middle Fifties. The recordings have recently been reissued by Columbia Masterworks on the Odyssey label, and those reviewed here are four of the original eight albums, which included nine operas in all—three of them in English.

No one would think of 1947 or 1951 as a Golden Age at the Met, but these recordings are like old photographs of the *grande dame*: not so beautiful and sexy any more, but still very much alive. There is a surprising predominance of American singers in the casts. The single outstanding figure is, without question, Richard Tucker, then in the very prime of his voice. Tucker scores again and again in these recordings—he is in at least five of them—and the singing is always strong and musical. Later on, Tucker seems to have succumbed to tenoritis, but in these performances he is relatively unaffected by that dread disease, spinning vocal lines of great and simple intensity and beauty.

On the whole, the men fare better than the women, partly because men's voices were better captured by the recording technology of the day and partly because rich, sensuous female voices were not much in evidence at the time. It comes as a bit of a shock to find the young James McCracken singing a *comprimario* role (in *Lucia*), but it does suggest the high quality of the male casting.

The best female singing is in *Hansel and Gretel*: Risé Stevens, Nadine Connor, Claramae Turner, and the indefatigable Thelma Votipka. This is altogether a surprisingly serious, elevating, and thoroughly Wagnerian reading, under Max Rudolf, of the original Engelbert Humperdinck's single claim to fame. Even in the rather cutesy English translation, *Hansel and Gretel* emerges as a real, if minor, masterpiece. For contemporary listeners, it takes on many of the dimensions of sophistication and naïveté that we associate with a somewhat later and much greater composer: Gustav Mahler. Mahler no doubt conducted this opera and must have been influenced by its striking combination of folk-like ideas and complex harmonic and orchestral development. All of which suggests that someone should try a thoroughly contemporary staging of the work.

The *Bohème* has lots of character and not too much (but enough) sentiment. Bidú Sayão, I'm given to understand, did not much like the set—she is said to have come to New York for what she thought were going to be rehearsals and found herself in a

recording session! The *Lucia di Lammermoor* is, on the whole, excellent, with Tucker at his best and the kind of coloratura singing that made Lily Pons' name literally a household word (she's a little too chirpy for my taste, but no matter). Fausto Cleva's direction is full of energy and a really skillful sense of pacing and proportion, but I find all the finicky little cuts extremely annoying and damaging to the work (the fact that many of them are "traditional" doesn't make them work any better). At any rate, the whole, such as it is, fits onto four record sides.

The *Fledermaus* recording is the Garson Kanin-Howard Dietz version minus most of the spoken dialogue. I've always found it (and still find it) a piece of damned tomfoolery: dreadful English lyrics camped up with a collection of absurdly misplaced, ridiculously miscast accents. Embarrassing low camp and the one flop in the series.

On the whole, the recordings are good. The singers are favored, but that was obviously necessary in those pre-stereo days. The remastering is quite skillfully managed; there are one or two awkward patches (possibly between 78-rpm sides from pre-LP originals). The albums contain standard Metropolitan Opera librettos but are otherwise devoid of supplementary information.

**HUMPERDINCK: *Hansel and Gretel*.** Risé Stevens (mezzo-soprano), Hansel; Nadine Connor (soprano), Gretel; Thelma Votipka (mezzo-soprano), Witch and Sandman; John Brownlee (baritone), Father; Claramae Turner (mezzo-soprano), Mother; Lillian Raymondi (soprano), Dew Fairy; Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association, Max Rudolf cond. ODYSSEY Y2 32546 two discs \$5.98.

**PUCCHINI: *La Bohème*.** Bidú Sayão (soprano), Mimì; Richard Tucker (tenor), Rodolfo; Salvatore Baccaloni (bass), Benoit and Alcindoro; Mimi Benzell (soprano), Musetta; Francesco Valentino (baritone), Marcello; George Cehanovsky (baritone), Schaunard; Lodovico Oliviero (tenor), Parpignol; Nicola Moscona (bass), Colline; Lawrence Davidson (bass), Sergeant; Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association, Giuseppe Antonicecchi cond. ODYSSEY Y2 32364 two discs \$5.98.

**DONIZETTI: *Lucia di Lammermoor*.** Lily Pons (soprano), Lucia; Richard Tucker (tenor), Edgardo; Frank Guarrera (baritone), Enrico; Thelma Votipka (mezzo-soprano), Alisa; Thomas Hayward (tenor), Arturo; James McCracken (tenor), Normanno; Norman Scott (bass), Raimondo; Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association, Fausto Cleva cond. ODYSSEY Y2 32361 two discs \$5.98.

**STRAUSS: *Die Fledermaus*.** Lily Pons (soprano), Adele; Ljuba Welitsch (soprano), Rosalinda; Richard Tucker (tenor), Alfred; Charles Kullman (tenor), Gabriel von Eisenstein; Martha Lipton (mezzo-soprano), Prince Orlofsky; John Brownlee (baritone), Doctor Falke; Clifford Harvuot (tenor), Frank; Paul Franke (baritone), Doctor Blinde; Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association, Eugene Ormandy cond. ODYSSEY Y2 32666 two discs \$5.98.

songs, among them Jacob Nikolaus Craigher's *Die junge Nonne*, and Johann Mayrhofer's *Lied eines Schiffers an die Dioskuren* and *Nachtviolen*. The seventeen songs included here are on a lower plane, but surely not without interest. *Am See* (text by Bruchmann), *Abendstern* (Mayrhofer), and *Der Jüngling und der Tod* (Spaun), for instance, are almost topflight Schubert. Of the rest, *Der Zwerg* combines a weird and unpleasant text with a musical treatment of uncommonly compelling power, while *Der blinde Knabe* is maudlin and simplistic in both text and music. The entire collection, culled from Deutsche Grammophon's monumental two-volume collection of Schubert songs, makes sense as a group, but I recommend it only to those who own at least one hundred other Schubert songs. Fischer-Dieskau is delightful in the serene and playful songs, but rough-toned and effortful when the tessitura moves out of his effective range.

The trios are not available elsewhere, and, while the musical significance of the disc is hardly greater, the overall results are more pleasing here. Again, there are no notes (though full texts are provided with both discs), so a bit of background is needed. There are two long trios: the birthday cantata for Vogl (a famous baritone interpreter of Schubert songs) and *Der Hochzeitsbraten*. The former, a pleasant strophic affair, is somewhat overlong and takes itself too seriously. The latter is an engaging little song in the folk idiom, with dance-like and yodel-like sections, involving two youthful poachers and a stern but forgiving gamekeeper. The Salieri cantata and the two drinking songs are short and sweet, *Verschwunden* is a bit of patriotic fluff *a cappella*, and *Die Advokaten* is a cleverly written but pointless trifle, the authenticity of which was questioned by Schubert scholar Alfred Einstein.

Many of these trios, especially those written for three male voices, were intended for "the inner circle," and this explains the relatively undemanding vocal writing. But the performances here are nothing short of virtuosic on the part of all concerned, and even the commonplace inspirations are raised to an uncommon level. G.J.

**SCHUMANN: *Faust*** (see Best of the Month, page 73)

**SCHUMANN: *Lieder*** (see Collections—Harold Enns)

**SIMONS: *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*.** Lou Gilbert (narrator); Paul Dunkel (flute); Netty Simons (piano); violin orchestra, Richard Dufallo cond. *Set of Poems for Children*. Barbara Britton (reciter); string and wind octet, Edwin London cond. *Puddintame*. Barbara Britten, Lou Gilbert (speakers); Jean-Charles François, Ron George (percussion). COMPOSERS RECORDINGS, INC. CRI SD 309 \$5.95.

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

Since this collection of pieces composed by Netty Simons during the last twenty years is headed "Music for Young Listeners," I should perhaps disqualify myself from reviewing it. Curmudgeon that I am, I think the most attractive part of the package is Judith Lerner's cover design. *The Pied Piper's* music is strictly incidental to the narration, which includes many rapidly spoken passages filled with words unfamiliar to the work's intended

audiences. The *Set of Poems* (verses by James Stephens, Robert Louis Stevenson, Carl Sandburg, and Christina Rossetti) strikes me as a little too *Pierrot Lunaire*-ishly contrived for its simple burden, and *Puddintame* is an embarrassingly cutesy sequence of laughter and limericks (with the little "Puddintame" quatrain separating the latter). The musical performances, supervised by the composer, must be regarded as authentic as well as expert, and the sound is very good indeed. One missing item which might have made for a more effective presentation is a printed text for the "young listeners" to read as they listen; it could have been inserted in the empty half of the gatefold album. R.F.

**STRAVINSKY: *Le Sacre du Printemps*.** London Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernard Haitink cond. PHILIPS 6500 482 \$6.98.

Performance: **Carefully controlled**  
Recording: **Very good**

*Le Sacre du Printemps*, it seems to me, stands in the hierarchy of twentieth-century music where Beethoven's *Eroica* stood in that of the nineteenth—as both a shattering breakthrough and in itself a creative achievement of truly heroic proportions. And, as with Beethoven's monumental classic, the attitude toward *Le Sacre* has now reached the point where conductors like to tinker with tempos and phrasing—as if Stravinsky's own recording had not provided sufficient guidelines. While I am no believer in slavish imitation, neither do I go along with the super-refinement of a Karajan or the super-sensuousness of a Bernstein.

Bernard Haitink's reading, too, has shortcomings. It is lacking somewhat in drive and dynamic range throughout the first half—he clearly revels in the play of line and color in the early pages—and the second half moves along a bit too briskly to make an impact comparable to that Stravinsky's reading makes. In general, the performance seems to be meticulously controlled with the objective of achieving maximum clarity of texture and timbre—this with the full cooperation of the Philips engineering staff. On *this* level it is extraordinarily successful. Haitink's is the only recorded version of *Le Sacre* I have encountered (I admit I have not heard them all) where the complex timpani figures in the latter pages of Part I emerge as clearly defined pitches and rhythm rather than as amorphous rumble with combination tones obscuring fundamentals. The definitive recorded version of *Le Sacre* is still Stravinsky's own. I feel, but this Philips disc does further illuminate certain facets of the music, if only by virtue of its superb clarity of detail. D.H.

**THEODORAKIS: *Seven Songs of Lorca; Four Epitaphs for Solo Guitar; Three Songs*.** Maria Farandouri (vocals); John Williams (guitar). COLUMBIA M 32686 \$5.98.

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

Mikis Theodorakis, now forty-nine, was a young student when he was arrested for resistance activities by the forces occupying Greece during World War II. During the Greek Civil War he joined with the partisans and was jailed again, this time in an island prison. When freed he went to Paris, studied music at the Paris Conservatoire, spent seven years composing symphonies, sonatas, suites, and ballet music. Back in Greece in 1960, he started a folk orchestra and the Athens Little

Symphony and began to write a new kind of modern Greek music with libertarian sentiments that got his songs banned from the state-operated radio. Deeply involved in left-wing politics, he was again imprisoned after the military coup in 1967. Finally, this proud man, unvanquished though his health was broken, was released and sent into exile in 1970.

Theodorakis started setting the seven songs from Lorca's cycle of poems just one month before the Greek colonels took over. The poems, translated into Greek by Odysseas Elytis, are fierce lyrics of death and the capture of rebels during the Spanish Civil War. How apt these poems of lament must have seemed then to the bitter Theodorakis, and how piercing the grief of his music for them!

Maria Farandouri performs with fervor to the icy accompaniment of John Williams' guitar. Yet the score itself seems at times almost too placid and phlegmatic for the powerful Lorca texts, and the heavy voice of Farandouri somewhat stolid for the assignment.

Miss Farandouri also lifts that voice plaintively for three other Theodorakis songs in this album. One, a setting for a passage from Brendan Behan's *The Hostage*, became the theme music of the movie *Z*. Another is a song of compassion for the torment of a girl named Silva who was imprisoned in 1967 at the same time as the composer, and the third is *The One Who Was Taken by the Road*, a parable, perhaps, of laws misapplied to the conditions of life.

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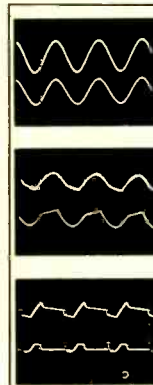
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in the concert are the *Epitaphs* for solo guitar, based on a Greek poet's tribute to the strikers brutally machine-gunned by the police of Salonika back in 1936. They have a poignancy that expresses without words the spirit the composer seems to have been striving for in the songs. P.K.

**WAGNER-STOKOWSKI:** *Love Music from Tristan und Isolde* (see FALLA)

**WARD-STEINMAN:** *Duo for Cello and Piano* (see PROKOFIEV)

**WOLF:** *Lieder* (see Collections—Harold Enns)

#### COLLECTIONS

**JULIAN BREAM:** *Guitar Recital*. Bennett: *Concerto for Guitar and Chamber Orchestra*. Rawsthorne: *Elegy*. Walton: *Five Bagatelles for Guitar*. Berkeley: *Theme and Variations*. Julian Bream (guitar); Melos Ensemble of London, David Atherton cond. (in Concerto). RCA ARL1-0049 \$5.98.

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

This is a pleasant collection of recent English guitar music. All but one of the pieces (Lennox Berkeley's *Theme and Variations*) were written for Julian Bream, and all exploit the instrument effectively, especially as revealed by the master. Only Richard Rodney Bennett's *Concerto* could be considered "modern" music, but even his mellifluous kind of romantic expressionism fits right in with the historical and romantic nature of the instrument, Bream's personal style, and the character of this disc. Otherwise, the music is highly varied, ranging from William Walton's neo-salon Iberian-style pieces and the virtuosic Berkeley music to the intense Alan Rawsthorne work, left unfinished at the composer's death and completed by Bream. Everything is beautifully played, of course, and very well recorded in RCA's usual larger-than-life sound. E.S.

**PABLO CASALS:** *The Prades and Perpignan Festivals*. J. S. Bach: *Three Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord (BWV 1027-1029)*. Pablo Casals (cello); Paul Baumgartner (piano). *Concerto in C Minor for Violin and Oboe (BWV 1060)*; *Concerto in D Minor for Two Violins (BWV 1043)*. Isaac Stern (violin); Marcel Tabuteau (oboe); Alexander Schneider (violin); Prades Festival Orchestra. Pablo Casals cond. Mozart: *Piano Concerto No. 9, in E-flat Major (K. 271)*; *Piano Concerto No. 22, in E-flat Major (K. 482)*. Myra Hess (piano, in K. 271); Rudolf Serkin (piano, in K. 482); Perpignan Festival Orchestra. Pablo Casals cond. *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat Major (K. 364)*. Isaac Stern (violin); William Primrose (viola); Perpignan Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals cond. Schumann: *Trio No. 1, in D Minor, Op. 63*. Alexander Schneider (violin); Pablo Casals (cello); Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). Brahms: *Sextet No. 1, in B-flat Major, Op. 18*. Isaac Stern and Alexander Schneider (violins); Milton Katims and Milton Thomas (violas); Pablo Casals and Madeline Foley (cellos). COLUMBIA Ⓜ M5X 32768 five discs \$19.95.

Performance: **Collector's item**  
Recording: **Fair to good**

This five-record anthology was extracted from the 1950 and 1952 Prades Festivals and

the 1951 Perpignan Festival, recordings of which were once available as three separate Columbia sets but have not been in the catalog for some years. In 1950 the famed cellist-conductor had just ended his self-imposed musical silence in France, having been persuaded by Alexander Schneider to perform in public once again after approximately a decade of protest again the politics of his native Spain. The first year's festival was all Bach, the second was primarily Mozart, and the third involved a variety of chamber-music masterpieces. The performances chosen for inclusion in this reissue are, with almost no exceptions, excellent ones, and they admirably reveal their subject as an interpreter of singular musical ardor and involvement.

The Bach renditions are the least satisfactory stylistically, for Casals was firmly committed to a Romantically oriented approach. The



JULIAN BREAM  
*Beautifully played English guitar music*

emotional temperature of the Bach concertos and sonatas may come to some as welcome relief from the expressively cool interpretations of a later generation of players, but the long-line phrasing and cavalier attitude toward ornamentation and even tempo are a far cry from the best Baroque to be heard today. Casals, of course, was not one to change from the style to which he was so firmly attached, and one should listen to his Bach with that in mind. The Mozart is quite another story, and all three pieces are exemplary, deeply felt, and yet classically conceived interpretations. The two Romantic pieces, the Schumann Trio and the Brahms Sextet, are splendid examples of Casals as chamber-music player; the works surge with nineteenth-century abandon, and, although the playing (as with all these performances) is not always the epitome of polish and precision, the spirit of the ensembles is admirable.

Sonically, of course, these recordings are not ideal, the constriction in the Bach concertos being perhaps the hardest to overlook; yet, all the performances are listenable. Pablo Casals as man and musician is what this album is about, and he is complemented by some superb musicians—Hess, Serkin, Tabuteau, Stern, Schneider, Primrose—in these historical documents. Altogether, then, this is a valuable memento. I.K.

**PLACIDO DOMINGO:** *La Voce d'Oro*. Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana: Viva il vino spumeggiante*. Gounod: *Faust: Salut! De-*

*meure chaste et pure. Roméo et Juliette: Ah! Lève-toi, soleil. Verdi: Rigoletto: Questa o quella. La Forza del Destino: O tu che in seno agli angeli. Un Ballo in Maschera: Di' tu se fedele il flutto m'aspetta. Ciléa: Adriana Lecouvreur: L'anima ho stanca. Puccini: Turandot: Non piangere. Liù. La Fanciulla del West: Or son sei mesi. Gianni Schicchi: Firenze è come un albero fiorito. Bizet: Les Pêcheurs de Perles: Je crois entendre encore. Placido Domingo (tenor); John Alldis Choir; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Nello Santi cond. RCA ARL 1-0048 \$5.98. Ⓜ ARS1-0048 \$6.98, Ⓞ ARK1-0048 \$6.98.*

Performance: **Mostly very good**  
Recording: **Very good**

There are only a handful of singers who can provide a New York operagoer with an occasional thrill in this shortage-ridden year of 1974, and Placido Domingo is one of them. The consistent tonal beauty and meticulous phrasing he offers in the present recital actually justify the title "La Voce d'Oro" bestowed with a modesty characteristic of RCA's merchandising efforts.

Domingo attains true distinction in his arias from *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Turandot*, and *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, and, as a matter of fact, he is never less than good. My reservations—aside from a few instances where his singing sounds forced with virtually no reserve behind it—relate to the singer's bland textual projection. He displays a certain indifference to consonants, singing in streams of sound that lack firm definition. But the sound is a joy to the ear.

The excellence of much of the singing is ill served by the conductor's frequently draggy pacing and by a general lack of intensity and spontaneity. A studio-like slickness hangs over the enterprise, and it seems to me that dramatic involvement is in short supply. The recorded sound is rich and clear. G.J.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**HAROLD ENNS:** *Schumann and Wolf Lieder*. Schumann: *Aus den östlichen Rosen; Freisinn; Jasminenstrauch; Aufträge; Meine Rose; Hochländers Abschied; Erstes Grün; Belsazar*. Wolf: *Harfenspieler Lieder; Three Michelangelo Lieder*. Harold Enns (bass-baritone); Peggy Sheffield (piano). ORION ORS 74146 \$5.98.

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

Harold Enns, a Californian, made his record debut in a Schubert/Brahms recital (Orion 7040) that I recall having reviewed here very favorably some time ago. He now returns with another impressive display of his gifts—which include, by the way, imaginative program-making. Everything in this recital commands interest, yet the songs are not easy to come by on records, not even the three songs from Schumann's once familiar song cycle, *Myrthen*, Op. 25.

Enns possesses a voice of impressive volume, which he controls with great sensitivity over an extensive range of moods and dynamics. The theatrical elements of his art are effectively utilized in *Belsazar*, though in my opinion it could use an even more dramatic approach. The three *Harfenspieler* and the three *Michelangelo* songs of Hugo Wolf are all tragic in mood and call for a big sound and large-scale commitment. To the artist's credit, his renditions are worthy of the standard es-

established for this music by Herbert Janssen and Alexander Kipnis.

Peggy Sheffield's piano accompaniments are fine, if a shade self-effacing. Whether by accident or design, the *Harfenspieler* songs are placed on *both* sides of the disc. G.J.

**DIETRICH FISCHER-DIESKAU: Sonnets of Petrarch. Reichard: Canzon, s'al dolce loco; Erano i capei d'oro; Più volte già dal bel sembiante; O poggi, o valli, o fiumi; Di tempo in tempo; Or ch'il ciel. Schubert: Apollo, lebet noch dein hold Verlangen; Allein, nachdenklich, gelähmt; Nunmehr, da Himmel, Erde schweigt. Liszt: Benedetto sia 'l giorno; Pace non trovo; L'vidi in terra angelici costumi. Pfitzner: Voll jener sisse. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone); Jörg Demus (piano); Gerald Moore (piano, in Schubert only). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 332 \$7.98.**

Performance: **Uneven**  
Recording: **Fair to good**

Leave it to Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau to come up with the unusual! But, though my admiration for the eminent baritone's imagination and untiring enterprise is boundless, I must regretfully note that this is not a successful collection on several counts. Its musical content, certainly, is modest at best.

Johann Friedrich Reichard (1752-1814) was a Prussian composer and musician who for a while held the position of court conductor to Frederick the Great. He was an influential man of academic bent and was said to have been critical and mostly unappreciative of the efforts of his younger contemporary Mozart. It had to be that way, for Reichard's settings of his six Petrarch songs (only three of which are sonnets, by the way) are virtually devoid of inspiration, with forgettable vocal lines and repetitive piano accompaniments Mozart would have discarded in childhood. For two of his songs, Schubert chose a kind of recitative style, which was not his métier. The third, *Nunmehr, da Himmel*, is the best of the group. As for the single Pfitzner entry, it is a plodding Teutonic overlay on Florentine fancy.

Only the Liszt settings do justice to Petrarch's poetry. (Liszt wrote piano-solo versions of these same settings, and in that form they are better known.) About ten years ago, Fischer-Dieskau recorded the three Liszt settings, also with Demus accompanying (Deutsche Grammophon 138 793, deleted), with a sustained tonal beauty and natural expressiveness he cannot match in this new edition. There are some exquisite touches, like the last line of *Pace non trovo*, with its pianissimo beautifully sustained, but the singing line is too often broken up by explosive attacks, rough dynamic contrasts, and exaggerated expressive devices. Inexplicably for music of such pianistic associations, Demus' sensitive accompaniments have insufficient presence.

I should add that Fischer-Dieskau makes a dedicated effort on behalf of the Reichard, Schubert, and Pfitzner songs, but even his great interpretive art is defeated by the material. The disc has curio value, but otherwise it is a disappointment. G.J.

**HEINZ HOLLIGER: Oboe Recital. Huber: Noctes Inelligibilis Lucis. Berio: Sequenza VII. Lehmann: Spiele. Holliger: Trio. Castiglioni: Alef. Křenek: Vier Stücke. Heinz Holliger (oboe, English horn); Ursula Holliger (harp); Serge Collot (viola); Jürg Wytenbach**

(harpsichord, piano). PHILIPS 6500 202 \$6.98.

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

Heinz Holliger is a remarkable oboist and all-around musician, and this record is full of interesting music. But I must say that the omnibus record—in particular the omnibus avant-garde record—is the least rewarding of recording packages. A record is *not* a recital, where variety and multiplicity are desirable. A disc is an object that one brings into one's home for pleasure and edification. Huber-Berio-Lehmann-Holliger-Castiglioni-Křenek is an astonishing survey of European oboe music in the Sixties but not easy to sort out.

In one sense, this record could be viewed as an essay in the extension of human performance possibilities—the beginnings of a reaction both to traditional performance limitations and the challenge of electronic music. Certainly Holliger belongs to that remarkable group of European and American performing musicians who, working in close collaboration with composers, created a lively new performance style that made a deep impact on new music. Holliger is an exceptional case because he himself is an excellent composer as well as an outstanding performer. His own Trio, for oboe, English horn, viola, and harp, is rich and full of character. The most memorable piece on the record is the Berio *Sequenza VII* for oboe solo, which has an unexplained pedal or resonance tone that the oboe moves away from and then approaches. I'm not sure how to judge the musical quality of the rest—or, as I've said, even quite how to sort it out. When Holliger hits those ethereal double overtones or seemingly plays in two registers at once, one can only gasp in astonishment. That might be recommendation enough. The sound is excellent. E.S.

**LAWRENCE JOHNSON: Guitar Recital. Sor: Sonata in C Minor, Op. 25; Sicilienne, Op. 33; Vivace, Op. 34. Milano: Fantasia in E Minor. Bach: Prelude and Fugue from Lute Suite in C Minor (BWV 997). Duarte: Prelude No. 1, Op. 13. Lawrence Johnson (guitar). CLASSIC RECORDINGS FOR GUITAR CRG 1 \$5.00 (postpaid from CRG Records, 153 Wellington Avenue, Rochester, N.Y. 14611; foreign orders \$6.50 postpaid).**

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

CRG announces itself as "an independent company dedicated to recording mostly previously unrecorded literature for the classic guitar, lute and vihuela." This initial release includes the first recording of any complete sonata by Sor, as well as disc premieres for the two other Sor pieces, the Fantasia by Francesco da Milano (not to be confused with Luis Milán), and the sole contemporary item, the Prelude by John Duarte. Splitting a work whose total timing is only twenty-six minutes (the Sonata) by putting its three-minute finale on side two strikes me as a gratuitous inconvenience, and the packaging is crude, but the program is an interesting one (the little Sor *Vivace* is a real winner), and Johnson is an adept performer. The sound is close-up but exceptionally realistic, the surfaces beautifully silent. Guitar aficionados may order this one with confidence and perhaps look forward to more from this source. R.F.

(Continued on page 118)



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*A la recherche...*  
Mlle. Berberian and M. Canino

## Paul Kresh reviews a few SONGS MY MOTHER NEVER HEARD OF together with a selection of well-polished chestnuts drawn from the lately somewhat neglected vocal and keyboard treasuries



BACK when every other kid on West 177th Street in Washington Heights was struggling through Brahms' *Lullaby* on the piano, my parents got it into their heads that my particular punishment ought to be lessons on the violin. This resulted in some bitter altercations with a wild-haired tutor named Mr. Schnittman on the proper length for a nine-year-old's fingernails, as well as a serious loss to the block's softball team, but the family ultimately was treated to so complete a rendition of *The Wearin' o' the Green* that the soloist was abruptly absolved from further study.

By the time I got around to being interested in learning to play the piano retardedly in my thirties, they were no longer favoring Brahms' *Lullaby*, and my teacher, a rather advanced type, decided to start me off with Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*, a choice which resulted once again in the loss to the world of a major concert artist. Furthermore, with only Bartók to practice, I never did learn how to play Brahms' *Lullaby*, or Beethoven's *Für Elise*, or even Debussy's *Girl with the Flaxen Hair*. But Morton Estrin obviously did learn them, along with *Rustle of Spring*, Massenet's *Elegy*, and other old reliables, and he plays dozens of such pieces in the

course of two handsomely decorated albums from Connoisseur Society.

How this is going to bring back the era of home music-making Eric Salzman seems to be hankering after in his album notes I am not quite sure, but it does make for pleasant listening, and the smooth performances should serve to discourage any would-be piano students who happen to overhear them. As for those who listen to music because they love it more than because they have to learn it, Mr. Estrin's ways with these works, it must be said, are expert enough but never particularly distinguished or inspired. His *Girl with the Flaxen Hair* is a singularly pale specimen, his Mendelssohn *May Breezes* are on the doldrums side, and his *Happy Farmer* didn't sound especially happy to me. Still, you'll find that it all goes by serenely, and the recorded sound is marvelous, especially in quadraphonic.

Myself, I tended to miss those stumbling passages in the Paderewski Minuet in G that Shirley upstairs used to send echoing down the dumbwaiter to our apartment. For many years I thought they were part of the piece! Certainly they were part of growing up and of the natural antipathy I took for granted between the classics and the young. Aside

from Shirley's way with this music, I find Philippe Entremont's approach (he plays several of the same items in his three-record set "*Clair de Lune—The World's Favorite Piano Music*" on the Columbia label) more congenial and illuminating. Where Estrin's *Träumerei* and *Für Elise*, for example, strike me as almost perfunctory, Entremont is broader, dreamier, and more polished.

Singing, when I was growing up, was something else again. My father was partial to the self-trained soprano of Amelita Galli-Curci, which he listened to on old Victor records until my mother threatened to smash them over his head, but the reigning composer on West 177th Street was Franz Lehár, with Victor Herbert a close runner-up. My mother was a great admirer of Jeanette MacDonald, whom she had once been told she vaguely looked like, and she used to have her long hair set in ringlets so as to resemble the MGM songbird more closely. Often she would wave flirtatiously at her own ringleted image in the bedroom mirror while performing the housework, her rather reedy soprano raised cheerily in the *Neapolitan Street Song* or *Vilia*. My father could pick out *The Merry Widow Waltz* on his sister Anna's West Bronx baby grand, but he never added anything else to his repertoire. And nobody in our family had ever even heard of Reynaldo Hahn.

As for me, it was expected that I would excel as a vocalist after my debut in an operetta at P.S. 173 where I appeared in a bumblebee costume to harangue the flowers in an ornate aria for alto, but my voice changed shortly afterwards and I was forced to drop out of the glee-club competition after four months spent practicing the alto part in a limp-feathered choral version of Saint-Saëns' *The Swan*. (They lost, anyway.)

OBVIOUSLY, Joan Sutherland's musical background was somewhat different from all that. Like the people in Victoria de los Angeles' home town in Spain, who tell admiring visitors "You should have heard the mother," Miss Sutherland describes her own mother's voice as "phenomenal." In London's "Songs My Mother Taught Me," she sings sixteen selections she learned at home, and makes every one of them sound like a masterpiece. Miss Sutherland, who has never been in better voice, sings every number in its original language—French, German, English, and, in the case of *Mary of Argyll*, in a Scots accent she says would have drawn jeers from her maternal parent—all accomplishments unheard of in the Washington Heights of the Twenties. The record is beautiful beyond defining. Whether it is in Hahn's *Si Mes Vers Avaient des Ailes*, or Mendelssohn's *On Wings of Song*, or even *Solvejg's Song* from Grieg's *Peer Gynt* music (at the approach of which I usually cringe), that lovely, full-throated soprano goes floating voluptuously as a nightingale's to enrich the air it graces.

Douglas Gamley's exquisite orchestral arrangements, played by the New Philharmonia under the baton of the singer's husband Richard Bonyngé, consistently enhance the whole. In one of the songs—Delibes' *Le Rossignol*—Miss Sutherland actually *does* turn into a nightingale, offering a series of spectacular trills and ornithological effects I am sure could fool any mem-

ber of the species, if not a Chinese emperor. She also makes a pretty good cuckoo in Abt's *Der Kuckuck*. And her considerable operatic resources are displayed in such big numbers as Liszt's *Oh! Quand Je Dors*. The program concludes, all stops out, with Delibes' *Les Filles de Cadiz*, one of those items that probably could be added to Carmen's arias in the Bizet opera and nobody the wiser.

Miss Sutherland sings her concert straight, and it's a thrilling one. Cathy Berberian, on the other hand, is on vacation from all that modern music composers like John Cage and her own husband Luciano Berio write for her, out to have a field day with the same sort of salon pieces in "Cathy Berberian at the Edinburgh Festival." It is a program she has performed at Town Hall in New York and elsewhere, and this RCA recording of it has just been released in England. If RCA has any sense, it will rush it into vinyl on this side of the pond pronto; enthusiastic legions will otherwise be pestering the nation's import shops and tipping our balance of payments.

**M**ISS Berberian, a woman I thought could only declaim *Sprechstimme* and giggle weirdly through passages of Ligeti, sets out to reduce the Messrs. Hahn, Delibes, and Saint-Saëns to ashes, but in the process she reveals a soprano voice with a marvelous affinity for the material she is spoofing. As Alan Rich pointed out in *New York* magazine, "she planned the evening as a re-creation of the sort of salon Marcel Proust might have attended at Mme. Verdurin's home." Pictured on the album cover amid a setting of potted palms, wearing an Erté violet satin gown and a cookie-shaped tiara set amid tight blond curls, she offers a program which is in fact subtitled "à la recherche de la musique perdue—or from the sublime to the ridiculous." When she gets hold of *Les Filles de Cadiz*, it turns into the pseudo-Spanish travesty you might all along have suspected it was before Miss Sutherland made you take those Spanish ladies to heart. When she tackles the song about skeletons on which Saint-Saëns based his *Danse Macabre*, or the words certain E. K. Gripenkerl set to Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, or a sentimental impressionist song by Hahn, Miss Berberian lets the air out of each inflated tire in turn and reduces it to a limp length of musical rubber.

My playmates on 177th Street would have appreciated this, since we were brought up to regard all salon concerts featuring sopranos in evening gowns as scenes fit only for Marx Brothers movies—a decadent aspect of the phony European cultural landscape our parents or grandparents had fled along with the pogroms. Only Beatrice Lillie has rivaled the hilarity of Miss Berberian's treatment of *There Are Fairies at the Bottom of Our Garden*—accomplished, by the way, without a single leer or lisp. Pretending all the while that she is singing for an audience in the Paris of 1900, the singer also proves—in a couple of Offenbach numbers, for example, and in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Nightingale Enslaved by the Rose*, that she can deal vocally with material of the period as well as any singer alive. She has been supported from Bruno Canino, a pianist with an ambitious twinkle in his fingers to match

the one in the singer's luscious voice. Her introductory remarks, as she launches into her "German group" and her "Russian group," for example, could assure her, when her voice goes, a successful career anywhere as a stand-up comedienne (Anna Russell, move over!), and her English-schoolgirl treatment of *Nymphs and Shepherds Come Away* might conceivably spell finis to the singing of music in female academies throughout Great Britain. But the whole program is a joy, right up to the chilling finale *My Father's a Drunkard and Mother Is Dead* ("We were so happy till Father drank rum/Then all our sorrows and troubles begun.") I wonder what my own family, who were wary enough about the return of near beer under F.D.R., would have made of *that*. And I wonder too when we are going to get to hear Miss Berberian in a serious program of art songs of the kind her remarkably flexible and expressive voice seems to be sighing for.

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**THE MUSIC OF ISRAEL:** *In Commemoration of Her Twenty-Fifth Anniversary.* **Ben-Haim:** *Five Pieces for Piano, Op. 34, Nos. 1, 3, 5; Three Songs Without Words for Cello and Piano.* **Stutschewsky:** *Six Israeli Melodies for Cello and Piano.* **Starer:** *Three Israeli Sketches for Piano.* **Partos:** *Yiskor (In Memoriam) for Viola and Piano.* **Binder:** *To a Lily of Sharon—Dance with Variations for Piano.* **Rigai:** *Israel Sings, Rhapsody No. 2 for Piano; The Walls of Jerusalem.* **Avidom:** *Concertino for Violin and Piano.* **Rappoport (arr. Gold):** *Jerusalem.* **Hofman:** *The Wells of Salvation.* **Miron:** *Fly, Wind.* **Zeira:** *A Song of Joy.* **Netzer:** *Return, Never to Depart.* **Brik:** *Come to Me, My Shepherdess.* **Wilensky:** *A Song of Rain; Cradle Song.* **Louis Danto (tenor):** *Amiram Rigai (piano); Albert Catell (cello); Edward Gold (piano); David Sackson (violin, viola).* **MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1653/54** two discs \$7.00 (plus 75¢ mailing charge from the Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Mostly good**  
Recording: **Good**

At first hearing, the sheer variety of musical language encountered throughout the four sides of this album is a bit bewildering. But two major strains soon become apparent, one representing the sophisticated Central European tradition, the other representing the attempt to achieve a synthesis between this tradition and the existing musical-ethnic tradition—specifically, the Yemenite tradition—of the Middle East.

Both strains are evident in Paul Ben-Haim's work, pieces of which are scattered singly throughout the album. *Five Pieces for Piano* are essentially European, whereas the *Songs Without Words* are distinctly more Mediterranean-Eastern in their idiom. Oedon Partos, in his best-known work, *Yiskor*, comes closest, I feel, to achieving a viable synthesis of East and West—not altogether surprising in view of his training under Kodály. Menahem Avidom's *Concertino* is a fairly lightweight piece in mixed style, but it does have some highly effective solo-violin writing in the introduction to the final movement. I find Robert Starer's *Israeli Sketches* the most highly finished and effective of all the instrumental works in the album, thanks in large measure to Amiram Rigai's sparkling piano playing. Rigai's own *Rhapsody No. 2* is deliberately more populist in style, evoking as it does the embattled and militant aspects of Israel's recent past and present. Among the songs, done very sensitively for the most part by tenor Louis Danto, I was really charmed by Moshe Wilensky's *A Song of Rain*, a truly delectable vignette in a Near Eastern idiom. The unaccompanied *Come to Me, My Shepherdess* by Ester Brik is another gem.

In general, the quality of performance is high throughout the four record sides, though I must say that David Sackson is far more successful as a violinist than he is in tackling the demanding solo viola part of Partos' *Yiskor*. I am unhappy also with the decision to program the Ben-Haim pieces separately instead of playing each set together as a unit. But I am sure that these will be only minor reservations for those whose interest in this set is chiefly in Israel and its still evolving cultural identity. For, when they are viewed objectively, the works do indeed indicate development rather than definitive musical achievement. *D.H.*

**ELEANOR STEBER:** *Live at the Continental Baths.* **Mozart:** *Idomeneo; Zeffiretti lusigniere. The Magic Flute; Ach, ich fühl's. Così Fan Tutte; Come scoglio.* **Charpentier:** *Louise; Depuis le jour.* **Puccini:** *La Bohème; Quando m'en va. Massenet: Manon; Scene and Gavotte.* **Sieczynski:** *Wien, du Stadt meiner Träume.* **Fields-Kreisler:** *Stars in My Eyes.* **Ross-Lehár:** *The Merry Widow; Vilia; Merry Widow Waltz.* **Puccini:** *Tosca; Vissi d'arte.* **Eleanor Steber (soprano); Edwin Bittcliffe (piano); Joseph Rabb (violin). RCA ARD 1-0436 \$5.98.**

Performance: **Blush-making**  
Recording: **Wobbly**

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BERLIOZ:** *Nuits d'Été, Op. 7; La Captive, Op. 12; Le Jeune Pâtre Breton, Op. 13, No. 4; Zaïde, Op. 19, No. 1.* **Eleanor Steber (soprano); Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos cond. (in Nuits), Jean Morel cond. ODYSSEY Y 32360 \$2.98.**

Performance: **Best of Berlioz**  
Recording: **Excellent repressing**

Bringing opera singers out of retirement and encouraging them to perform arias no longer within their reach is a form of cruelty that may require a special organization to keep it from happening—maybe an American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Fading Divas. I suppose it was irresistible to Miss Steber, on the financial level if not the artistic, to accept an invitation to perform before a throng of half-naked admirers in black ties and black towels at Steve Ostrow's Continental Baths in New York.

A campier occasion would be difficult to imagine. Mr. Ostrow introduces his guest to the cheering throng. She calls the baths "another outlook for serious music." Then, in the stifling humidity, she raises her voice bravely to sing the Mozart arias that made her famous. Tremulous and forced notes mar her beautifully conceived but dismally ragged treatments of passages from *Idomeneo*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Così Fan Tutte*. She blames the humidity and "Mr. Mozart's dislike for women singers," and goes on to wreck the supremely difficult "*Depuis le jour*" aria from Charpentier's *Louise*. Miss Steber moves on to other operatic heroines, introducing each number with entertaining remarks, then floundering amid a plethora of unmanageable musical difficulties. The singer is better able to control the lighter portions of the program—*Stars in My Eyes*, *Vienna*, *City of My Dreams*, songs from *The Merry Widow*—but here Joseph Rabb's accompanying violin seems to melt in the darkness like a Dali watch. Then the singer goes down to defeat amid the final wreckage of "*Vissi d'arte*."

If you want to know what Eleanor Steber sounded like while she was still becoming a legend, I commend to you the recent Odyssey re-release of her historic 1953 recording of Berlioz's *Nuits d'Été*. The voice is so rich, the musical line so breathakingly sustained, the timbre of the soprano so ringingly clear and effortless against the superb accompaniments that subsequent performances have been hard-put to measure up to this one. As if all that weren't enough, you also get her splendid treatments of three earlier Berlioz songs for soprano and orchestra. With this disc you even get a complete text in French and English. The translations are fairly dismal, but at least you know where you are. *P.K.*



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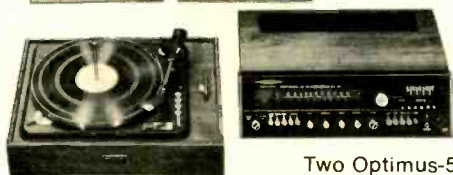
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SR-774

# TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



## JUST FOR FUN

LAST month I suggested a number of significant nonmusical applications for a tape recorder: reading for the blind, religious services for shut-ins, preserving a record of childrens' developing voices, etc. There are many less serious uses for which any of the large number of small, battery-operated cassette machines with built-in microphone and automatic record-level controls are suitable. These include interviewing (without scaring your subject), taking down inventories, dictating letters, getting Grandma's unwritten recipes, and analyzing (and self-criticizing) sales presentations. But, vacation being near at hand, this is a good time to think about using your tape recorder to have a bit of fun.

Perhaps the first use that comes to mind is collecting on tape the really choice "cuts" from comedy albums—Bill Cosby, Beyond the Fringe, Flanders and Swann, and so forth. Even the best humorist can get tiring if you listen to him through both sides of a disc, but by splicing together the funniest material from several comedy records you can produce your own collection that may be more entertaining to you than the originals were.

If you're willing to get out your tape splicer, however, network newscasts and radio commercials offer a field of fun limited only by your imagination and editing skill. While genuine "bloopers" are rare, the consistent rhythm and intonation of nationally known broadcasters simply invites interspersing words or sentences from one story into those taken from another—with hilarious results. The more distinctive and familiar the voice, of course, the better; but when collecting the "raw material," be sure to use the same recording level and tape type, so your splicing won't be obvious. Putting together parts of different advertising slogans (usually with ribald intent!) can be equally funny, even if you can't always keep the same voice and volume.

The best humor, however, is usually

the result of making people laugh at themselves. A sure way to achieve this involves nothing more than using a three-head recorder (one that can play back the sound an instant *after* it has been recorded), microphones, and a pair of tight-fitting headphones.

To set up your victim, turn down the loudspeakers, seat him comfortably before the mikes, and make sure he's wearing the headphones snugly. Put your recorder in the "source" position initially so he can hear you (and himself) through the microphones. Then, as you start recording, explain that you've got to "get a level" on his voice, and ask him to recite "Mary had a little lamb," or the Pledge of Allegiance, or read a selection from any book that's handy. Then, his confidence assured and your record level set, flip the machine to "playback" as you continue to record.

The result will be astounding. Because of the slight time delay (about a tenth of a second) as the tape passes from the record to the playback head, the subject will hear mostly an "echo" of his own voice. Since we normally control our speech (diction, intonation, volume) using the instant feedback provided by our ears, the monitor-head delay provides misinformation about what is coming out of our mouths—which we then unconsciously try to compensate for. The result may make the victim sound as though he were suffering from some type of stammering aphasia.

This trick has been the highlight of many an evening in my home, though there are some strong-willed people who can successfully ignore the delayed sound of their own voices. However, if someone who has passed the "test" tries to tell you that it is because of the superior quality of his mind, you've got the perfect put-down. Casually mention that psychologists have used this sort of delayed feedback as a diagnostic tool to detect autistic children. They always beat the machine, though normal kids don't! Have fun!

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