

Stereo Review

MAY 1975 • ONE DOLLAR

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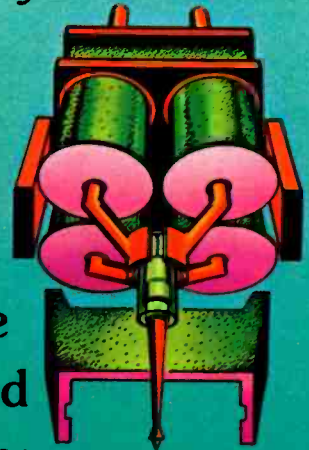
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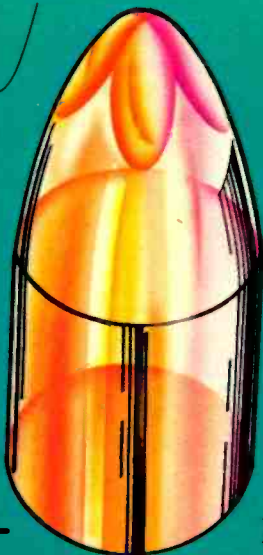


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MAY 1975 • VOLUME 34 • NUMBER 5

The Music

MILTON CROSS (1897-1975) <i>A memoir of one of the most famous voices in the world of opera</i>	FRANCIS ROBINSON	52
STEREO REVIEW THROWS A PARTY <i>Celebrating 1974's Record Awards and Mabel Mercer's Diamond Jubilee</i>		62
SHIRLEY VERRETT, SINGER <i>"Whether I'm ever going to call myself a soprano, I'm not quite sure"</i>	ROY HEMMING	64
THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET <i>After two decades of fine music making, a pause</i>	CHRIS ALBERTSON	66
JAMES LEVINE, NEW BATON AT THE MET <i>"... the best orchestra and chorus of any opera house in the world"</i>	SPEIGHT JENKINS	70
JIMMY BUFFETT AND THE GOOD LIFE <i>A contrived rusticity and a bit of wit are all the license you need</i>	WILLIAM ANDERSON	77
LITTLE STEVIE WRIGHT RETURNS <i>And with him maybe another round of good-time music</i>	STEVE SIMELS	84
VANGUARD'S SUPRAPHON RECORDINGS <i>That elusive Czech catalog finds yet another way to the market</i>	RICHARD FREED	102

The Equipment

NEW PRODUCTS <i>A roundup of the latest in high-fidelity equipment</i>		14
AUDIO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS <i>Advice on readers' technical problems</i>	LARRY KLEIN	25
AUDIO NEWS <i>Views and comment on recent developments</i>	LARRY KLEIN	28
AUDIO BASICS <i>Glossary of Technical Terms—18</i>	RALPH HODGES	30
TAPE HORIZONS <i>The Noise Nuisance</i>	CRAIG STARK	32
EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS <i>Hirsch-Houck Laboratory test results on the Marantz Model 3600 stereo preamplifier, Stanton 681EEE phono cartridge, Heath AA-1640 stereo power amplifier, and the Ferrograph "Super Seven" tape deck</i>	JULIAN D. HIRSCH	38
THE AMPLIFIER DEPARTMENT <i>Marking out a clear path among receivers, integrated units, and separates</i>	JULIAN D. HIRSCH	58

The Reviews

BEST RECORDINGS OF THE MONTH	73
POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES	78
CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES	94

The Regulars

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING	WILLIAM ANDERSON	4
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR		6
BOOKS RECEIVED	LOUISE GOOCH BOUNDAS	12
TECHNICAL TALK	JULIAN D. HIRSCH	37
THE SIMELS REPORT	STEVE SIMELS	50
GOING ON RECORD	JAMES GOODFRIEND	54
THE BASIC REPERTOIRE	MARTIN BOOKSPAN	56
CHOOSING SIDES	IRVING KOLODIN	92
ADVERTISERS' INDEX		108

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

WHO CARES?

You never know who's listening. Scene is a commuter train bound for one of Manhattan's bedroom suburbs one evening not long ago. The fourth hand of a pickup bridge game has just detrained for his little grey home in the West. The rubber broken up, North, South, and East are reduced to conversation. Introductions reveal that one is head of sales for a major American record company, another is a record collector (classical). Here is what they had to say to each other:

"Why," demanded the Classical Record Collector, "don't you ever put out a decent-sounding record? Every record of yours I've bought recently I've had to return for distortion, noise, scratches, and warps, but every European record I've bought has been just fine. If they can do it, why can't you?"

"Who," replied the Head of Sales, "says we *can't*?"

CRC: "Well, if you *can* do it, why don't you? It seems to me you'd want that market instead of leaving it open to the Europeans. There must be a lot of buyers like me. I have a big collection—over fifteen feet of classical records."

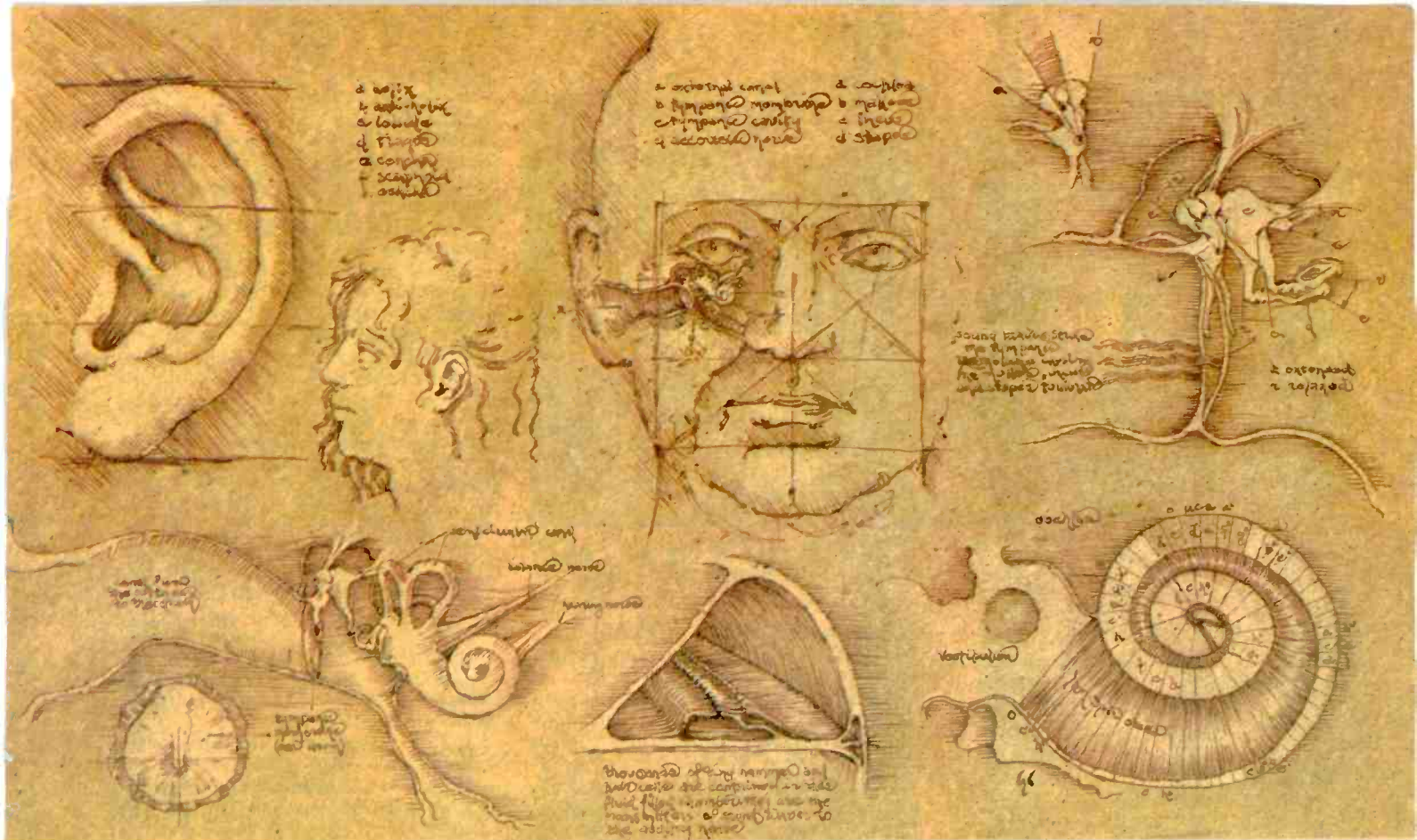
HOS: "Maybe, but there are a lot more record buyers who want popular music."

CRC: "I don't understand why I have to get lousy records because you don't care about the quality of your pop records. Don't you want the classical market at all?"

HOS: "It's not worth it to make the effort. Pop's where the money is, and record quality just isn't that important in that field. There isn't that much of a classical market, and we'd just as soon somebody else had it all. Who cares?"

Since CRC's apoplexy was less a reply than a response, I'd like to volunteer an answer to HOS's question: "Many more than you'd think." Each month over the past two years there has been a steadily growing number of reader complaints directed to this desk on the subject of the quality of American recordings. It has been our policy to encourage such buyers to complain loud, long, and often to both retailers and record manufacturers. Of late, however, some of those same readers have been coming back to report increasing difficulty in getting satisfaction on returns at the retail level and then of either no response or form-letter brush-offs from manufacturers (see "Who cares?" above). Which is why we commissioned an engineer with a small specialty pressing plant to write the article "How to Make Good Records" for last October's issue and why Associate Technical Editor Ralph Hodges has prepared a digest of the reader mail that resulted for this month's Letters.

One would hesitate to deny that among the rights and privileges of this great country of ours is the freedom to make just as shoddy a product as you like; you can sell it too, as long as it is not misrepresented and does no one bodily harm. It is, however, a hell of a way to make a buck, and it may also, for this particular market, be an outdated one. HOS's defense of low record quality rests on two points: (1) the pop market doesn't care, and (2) the classical market doesn't count. Well, as the Hodges digest reveals, popular buyers are now almost as disturbed about quality as classical buyers. HOS may have his sales figures to support him, but they are, after all, only his and not those of competitors here and abroad (record companies guard such data like state secrets, which they may well be). Then too, he might have some difficulty proving that his low classical sales are not *caused* by low quality, that his company is not therefore contributing to our balance-of-payments deficit. And finally, the classical/popular balance on the market is not laid down somewhere on gold tablets. It is a fluid thing, with some domestic producers even now detecting a significant shift toward classical among those important younger buyers. Policy on record quality is undoubtedly set by profit goals, but isn't it about time these were re-examined rather than merely reiterated? And while the re-examination is going on, may we be spared any further cluckings of dismay from some of these same quarters about how it is all the public's fault?



It's not your components that are getting worse, it's your ear that's getting better.

By better, we mean it's learned to pick up things in music that it was never able to before.

And that's why that system you bought may have sounded great a couple of months ago but doesn't sound so great today. The human ear, you see, is the most advanced sound receiver system in the world. Your eardrum is sensitive to one billionth of a centimeter. And it has a tiny bone called the incus that can vibrate up to 20,000 times a second.

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average value of a signal over a period of time rather than sudden changes within a short period.

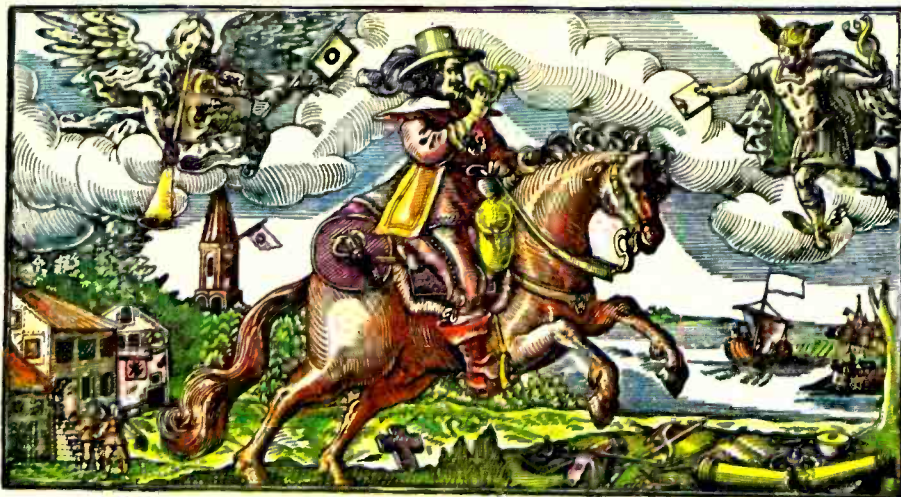
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CIRCLE NO. 33 ON READER SERVICE CARD



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How to Make Good Records

● The time scale in the world of publishing is not the one you want to use if you are (a) impatient, or (b) in a hurry. Last October we printed an article on the price/quality squeeze in record manufacturing. We called it "How to Make Good Records," and at the close author John Bittner, Jr. invited readers to communicate their views on the subject to him informally.

Well, you did—so many of you, in fact, that it was patently impossible to print all the correspondence. It was, instead, turned over to Associate Technical Editor Ralph Hodges, who counted, collated, read, reread, digested, and abstracted the lot (he had a few other things to do in the meantime as well, of course). He has now brought all that together in the digest that follows, and we have peremptorily appropriated this letters column to print it in the nature of a reply to all those who wrote in—and all those who didn't but intended to.

Without being exactly a call to arms, it is sufficiently plain-spoken that American record-company executives interested in this (one hopes) exasperating aspect of the marketing of their products may be inspired to give the whole matter somewhat more serious attention than they seem to have in the recent past. And perhaps one may even hope to see the day when domestic record manufacturers will actually be *competing* to see who can make the best pressings.—*Ed.*

IN June 1971, STEREO REVIEW ran an article titled "Record Defects," by John Earle, which provoked perhaps half a dozen letters from readers. This rather perplexed us, because we couldn't see how such an obviously inflammatory subject as phonograph-record flaws could fail to stir violent reactions. However, reader response—and admittedly we solicited it this time—to John Bittner's similar article last October so far numbers more than two hundred cards and letters, and they are still coming in. This is probably not a

sampling that would impress Roper or Gallup, but as these things go it is an exceptionally heavy response for a magazine article—all the more so since many readers sent not just notes but impassioned multi-page letters documenting their personal record-playing trials and tribulations.

What were the results? Well, only two readers declared themselves even provisionally satisfied ("good—but with room for improvement") with current record quality. The rest expressed varying degrees of upset, indignation, and outrage.

Of those who specified their musical preferences, thirty-seven were largely classical listeners and twenty-nine preferred pop music of one sort or another, indicating some change from the past tendency for classical enthusiasts to be *by far* the most numerous complainers about record quality. A substantial number of eclectics said that they actively enjoy both types of music, which, from our perhaps biased point of view, is heart-warming. All this diversity meant that a long list of labels came up for discussion, but a few names appeared over and over. With hardly a single exception, readers reserved their bitterest words for RCA pressings (although several writers noted that the RCA situation has been looking up very recently, about which more later). But Columbia also had its critics, and even Vanguard came in for a few snipes. Further, many classical buffs abominate the Angel product, and as many pop listeners feel the same way about Atlantic's. For some reason, however, there was not much comment on the other WEA (Warner-Elektra-Atlantic) labels. The most frequent complaints were about warps and surface noise, followed by scratches, abrasions, and dirt, and then poor recorded sound—various forms of distortion, inadequate or excessive levels, faulty equalization, restricted dynamics, too much echo chamber, etc. And for the more serious of these defects, many respondents indicated that they stubbornly return afflicted records. (In seventeen cases, insisting on better quality resulted in a 30 per cent or higher return rate for all record purchases.)

On the other hand, most readers generally liked the imports, with Deutsche Grammophon, Philips, Telefunken, and the British products regularly cited as good. Some felt, however, that all of these except Philips have been slipping recently (Philips received al-

most nothing but praise, with scarcely a bummer in the bunch). Thirty-two respondents said they now have a fixed policy of buying *only* imports or, when they are available, tapes. Others—nineteen in all—said they found some of the American budget labels such as Musical Heritage Society fully as reliable as the imports. (We will examine that later also.) In his article, Mr. Bittner asked how many readers would be willing to accept an increase in record prices *if* that increase bought a record of better quality. The affirmative answers numbered one hundred ninety-five (that's 84 per cent), with fifty-one of them saying they'd accept a price jump of a dollar or more, and many stating they'd pay *anything* they had to to get a high-quality record. Twenty-one of the respondents said no, either emphatically or because of reservations about the workability of the plan. (For example, several could foresee records improving marginally for a while after the price boost, and then slumping again, leaving nothing but the inflated price.) And past marketing experience has shown that go-it-alone price increases by one company—for whatever reason—lead to consumer resistance. The only way to put across such an increase is through "coincidental" decisions by most of the majors.

THE poll revealed two interesting things about the chronology of the record-quality situation. First, it appears that quality suffered its steepest decline quite recently. Seasoned collectors report that it was only about a year and a half ago that they started to find unacceptable discs in significant numbers. Second, widespread dissatisfaction with records is apparently tied in various ways to the boom in sales of high-fidelity components. Eighty-six of those responding felt that poor records negated, at least in part, the merits of their expensive and often recently acquired audio systems. Many remarked that they found their high-quality equipment made record defects more audible and therefore more annoying. Some believed they were being exploited by record companies producing discs for the owners of cheap record players who cannot hear the difference on such equipment. And, ironically, others were afraid that by insisting on better, costlier records *they* would be exploiting these same portable-phonograph owners, who *still* wouldn't hear the difference but who would have to pay for it anyway.

To what did the respondents attribute this sorry state of affairs? As it turned out, very



few of them saw the record-quality crisis as another manifestation of the Great Capitalist Conspiracy (or "the big rip-off," as one put it). Most were willing to consider the situation at face value, although a lot of concern was expressed about just what the profit picture of the recording industry might be (at least one writer noted the possibility of an unholy alliance between profiteering record companies and lax or corrupt record reviewers writing for this magazine and others!). Some felt that

(Continued on page 8)

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poor records are a further example of disintegrating societal values and the collapse of the tradition of craftsmanship. And one chap blamed it all on the Marxist class struggle between labor and management.

The profit issue raised so much comment that it's probably worth delving into a bit more deeply. As many respondents realize, the production of the naked vinyl disc is only *one* factor in a complex network of costs a record producer faces. And it is not, in most cases, even the most expensive one. Ignoring for the moment the intricacies of artists' contracts, union rates, promotional fees, and the rest, one could, if he wished to produce a record, get pressings from CBS at a cost of a little under 40 cents per 12-inch LP for a quantity of at least a thousand. (For larger quantities CBS will absorb part or all of the cost of cutting the lacquer, if you choose to have them do it, or make other price adjustments.) For this amount—which of course allows a reasonable profit for CBS—you get the disc in a plain paper sleeve. You still have to hustle around for special labels if you want them, and artwork and printing for the packaging. (The packaging can often far exceed the cost of the basic disc, as in numerous de luxe opera albums and even in some of the "soft-art" fantasies of certain pop record jackets.)

Obviously, if 40 cents is the base cost of the disc itself and \$5.98 the selling price, the producer should have quite a bit of flexibility in structuring his expenses. Why, for example, can't he allocate 45 cents to the manufacture of the disc and pare the nickel off his costs somewhere else—in the artwork, for example? That would give the consumer a better

record and deprive him of nothing but a little visual appeal (which he'd probably never miss), right? No, quite evidently wrong. It seems that in a typical pressing plant 40 cents (or some similar figure) is simply the price for producing *any* record, good or bad, and *there's usually no obvious way to spend that additional nickel to make a record better.* The disc-making process is complex; it wends its way through many stages, and involves a rare joint effort of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled hands. Even in the best of plants the process gets out of control from time to time, and it's not particularly unusual for problems to cure themselves before their causes can be discovered. This is not so much because the problems are ephemeral (although they sometimes may be), but because diagnosis is so chancy and time-consuming.

In such a situation it isn't reasonable to allot, say, 1½ cents more to plating, 2 cents more to parts inspection and tooling, 1 cent to pressing, and ½ cent to packing and expect an automatic 5-cent improvement in record quality. For the conditions prevailing at that moment, such money may be totally misspent. (It would, of course, be possible to rework the entire manufacturing process from the ground up, with attendant astronomical expenses in new plant, new equipment, worker training, and lost production during overhaul that I'll leave you to imagine.) If better records could be had so cheaply, it's certain that many in the industry itself would be clamoring for them. However, to paraphrase Mr. Bittner (in a conversation I had with him recently), it would be impractical if not impossible for any record manufacturer to produce, consistently

and *predictably*, more than *one* quality of record. A company might *wish*, for example, to permit itself to get deliberately sloppy with its pop discs in order to concentrate efforts on its classical product—perhaps to please discerning listeners or to satisfy a particular outside client. But, wish as it might, there isn't much it can do toward this end except use an inferior vinyl compound for the pop pressings. The rest of the manufacturing process is "locked in," for better or for worse, and everything gets the same treatment.

BUT right away we find contradictions in this viewpoint. For example, the Musical Heritage Society was lauded by many of the poll respondents for its high quality standards. Columbia was not. Yet Columbia presses much of the MHS product, or at least takes credit for doing so. Why the difference? Inspection procedures, during production and afterward, evidently account for a good deal of it. There are points along the production path—such as when the metal mothers are first played, or when test pressings become available for audition—where you can choose to be just a little tolerant or very stringent in your standards. And you can be picky about the quality of the final merchandise too. Inspection leads to rejection, and therefore to delays and increased costs. But there are valid economic reasons why MHS might be in a position to reject more strictly than Columbia can with its own product.

Musical Heritage Society is a small outfit that depends on an established mail-order clientele for sales. The music it produces (classical) is "immortal" in a marketing

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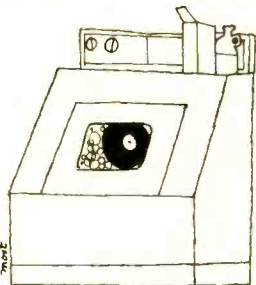
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sense—it won't go quickly out of style—and it therefore doesn't really move through cycles of rapid growth, peak demand, and quick decline as the greater proportion of pop music does. If customers really want an MHS record, they will probably want it just as much a month or a year hence as they do right now. The company therefore doesn't have to worry about its market evaporating overnight, and it can afford to take a little more time to get its product right. And CBS, since it values MHS as a client, will do what it can to keep that client. If that means a high rejection rate, so be it. MHS can afford the delay, and the added expenses are worked out somewhere



along the line. The Columbia classical division, on the other hand, is a captive client, and can expect no more consideration than any other division of the company. What is acceptable for pop records is pretty much the best Columbia classics can demand.

The large companies like Columbia and RCA are generally geared toward connecting with the Big (read pop) Hit, and they work under such pressures as "Get the record out in time for the write-up in *Billboard!*" or "Get the LP out while the single is still getting air play!" If the record is not in the stores at the time demand peaks, its sales moment may be over. It's customary for record plants to run at full capacity, and even beyond it, under these pressures. So the companies are naturally reluctant to junk a production run and start again if everything is not perfect. The recent vinyl shortage only aggravated this situation because under the hand-to-mouth conditions that prevailed not long ago, there was often not enough virgin vinyl in the house for another production run.

The scheduling factor is hard to evaluate in the context of record quality and corporate profits. Clearly a desire for maximum profit (which you get by being where the action is, and on time) is responsible for some poor records, but this side effect can't really be described as being "built into the system." However, it appears that the LP—still the primary source of high-fidelity music—has suffered from it. J. R. Taylor, jazz columnist for *The Village Voice*, points out that before 1958 the LP was a small factor in the high-volume record market, and all the hits were singles. Now most of the hits are LP's, and they are caught in the *carpe diem* crunch. The frantic pace of pop music and record-company attempts to keep up with it are probably responsible for much of the decline in record quality.

But there's another factor in the quality picture, one that has apparently helped rather than harmed. In 1958, when the LP was coming into its own, the stereo era was also just dawning, and some record companies moved heaven and earth to sustain quality and put the new medium over. Now we're in the midst of CD-4 and other four-channel developments, and gradually the same thing seems to

be happening. According to RCA, considerable effort has been spent in modifying production facilities to accommodate the new technology, and, unless I miss my guess, this accounts for the recent improvements that have been noticed in RCA records. Ordinarily a major record producer couldn't afford to interrupt operations for such changes. But in this and similar cases the potential rewards are too tempting—which may be a positive demonstration of the profit motive at work.

Another question poll respondents continually raised concerned review records: are the discs sent out to publications and radio stations really superior to what the consumer gets? We've all wondered about this from time to time, but our honest impression is that they are not. First of all, there are so many of them sent out for these purposes that they probably get the same sort of spot checking the ordinary run of discs gets. Often of late I've heard FM stations play records I own, but which seem to be much quieter (in respect to surface noise and mold grain) than my copies. Probably the discs aired by the station are review records, but then frequently so are mine! I suppose my copy just came from a different press using a different set of stampers. Or even from a different plant, since the large record companies have more than one plant, and their outputs often vary in quality. The ordinary record buyer suffers this problem in reverse. He returns a defective record for replacement and finds that the new copy has exactly the same fault in exactly the same place. He may be getting copies from the same set of stampers, and it's possible that every copy received by his particular store in that shipment will exhibit the identical flaw.

GETTING back to the original proposition: what effect could a higher price have on improving record quality? That, as they say, is a good question. More money could be devoted to better inspection with immediately discernible results. John Bittner says that it is customary in many plants to have the press operator perform the final inspection on the disc. Bad as this seems, it's even worse when you consider that many press operators are paid on a piecework basis and that they lose money for every disc they reject. Certainly there's room for improvement here, but we must realize that bringing it about would at least mean paying (1) a generous, stabilized salary to the press operators, (2) new salaries to a crew of final inspectors, and (3) a rather impressive figure to cover the costs of a higher rejection rate. The additional cost might not be totally unbearable, but it wouldn't be small, and it isn't even readily calculable.

Other proposals include making it possible for record companies to send some of their pressing projects overseas for the superior processing that seems to be available there. The added expense this would entail, while not easy to predict, would probably boost record prices by more than a dollar at least. Alternatively, suppose the quality-conscious record companies formed a cartel and set up their own processing and pressing plant? The initial expense is the great impediment, although there would also be problems in setting up new distribution channels.

In short, if better records are not forthcoming under the present system, some more revolutionary approach would seem to be called for. Perhaps, as a proposal coming from con-

(Continued on page 10)

"THE BEST TURNTABLE IN THE WORLD"



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Hi Fi Stereo Buyers Guide

"The turntable is almost impervious to jarring or bumping."

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H.W., Birmingham, Ala.

"The best turntable in the world."

H.M., Honolulu, Hawaii

The 598 III comes complete with walnut base, plexiglass dust cover, and the world's finest cartridge (4000 D/III). List price \$399.95. It plays any stereo or 4-channel records at tracking forces so low you can't wear out your records. Write for your free full color Empire catalogue:

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sumers rather than manufacturers, the idea of trading off a price increase for improved quality will inspire record companies to explore new avenues of their own for improvement. At least one alternative—a consumer record boycott—is a “sterile solution,” as one of the poll respondents so eloquently put it. But it should not be necessary to remind American record producers that the country’s car buyers were not long in finding other suppliers when Detroit persisted in ignoring their wants. Pop-music buyers may have nowhere else to go, but classical ones surely do. —R.H.

The Cabaret Doris Day

● I greatly enjoyed Robert Connolly’s article on cabaret (February), but I feel some mention should have been made of Doris Day. For a time, she was one of the best of the intimate singers, as shown on two early Columbia records now out of print: “Day Dreams” (L624), and “Day by Night” (L1053/CS 8089). Unfortunately, Miss Day is now represented in the catalog by a Greatest Hits album, most of which is done in the gimmicky “Mitch Miller” style that reigned supreme at Columbia during her tenure there. But even in that album, the cabaret style comes through in the few songs she was allowed to do straight.

BRUCE ADAMS
Hempstead, N.Y.

London Graffito

● Managing Editor William Livingstone’s London graffito (March) is great, marvelous, fantastic!! It must be the most perfect bit of humor ever put to public wall. It alone would

justify Mr. Livingstone’s trip to London and my eleven years’ subscription to STEREO REVIEW. Let’s repeat it here for the benefit of those who missed it:

“To Do is to Be!” —Descartes

“To Be is to Do!” —Sartre

“Dooby, dooby, doo!” —Sinatra

P.M. THOMPSON
Croton on Hudson, N.Y.

● Having just read William Livingstone’s article about the International Piano Library benefit in London, I am wondering where I could get W. F. E. Bach’s *Das Dreyblatt* for six hands at one piano. Could you find out where I could get a copy or who the publisher is?

JAY ENGQUIST
Fairmont, Minn.

Das Dreyblatt is included in a volume called Music of the Bach Family, an Anthology, compiled by Karl Geiringer and published in 1955 by the Harvard University Press.

Mabel Mercer Madness

● My heartiest compliments to William Livingstone and STEREO REVIEW for a most timely and entertaining feature on Mabel Mercer (February). I first heard Mabel Mercer on 78-rpm records during my college days when my comrades were praising the hip style of Anita O’Day. I fell madly in love with Mabel and spent vacations in New York where I heard her two and, on at least one occasion, three times a week.

I was privileged to meet this lady when she came South to tape a television show for ETV

along with Bobby Short. A very fond memory is the honor I had of driving her to church where she attended Mass. There has never been anyone like her, and I can think of no one to whom her mantle should fall if she ever retires.

HARRY DOUGLAS SMITH
Atlanta, Ga.

Record Insurance

● In response to the questions Scott Edwards raised in his February letter, I suggest the following: In the January 11, 1975, issue of *Saturday Review*, there is a calendar of music festivals around the world. On the question of the assessment of records by insurance companies, State Farm Insurance has agreed without question to a valuation of \$2.50 per record for my 13,000-LP record collection, regardless of age. This is part of my regular property insurance.

ALEXANDER BELINFANTE
Oshkosh, Wis.

Salsa

● I am very pleased to have read a well written, though long overdue, article on Latin music by John Storm Roberts (March). I particularly appreciated the reviewing of Ismael Quintana, who has worked a lifetime without the recognition he so richly deserves. STEREO REVIEW has done three things by reviewing salsa recordings: guided the Latin community in the selection of salsa records; influenced Latin artists to create better performances; and set a high standard of recording quality.

TEO RODRIGUEZ
Bronx, N.Y.

SECRETS FROM THE AUDIO FILE

Wanna dirty recording?



ADVICE FROM: Hugh B. Davies, recording engineer, Capitol Records, Inc.

PROBLEM: No one wants dirty recordings. They sound flat, dull, lifeless. The problem could be all in your heads. Dirty, Dirty, Dirty. Oxide shedding of 20 millionths of an inch—an invisible film no thicker than a fingerprint—can affect cassette performance by as much as 6 db at 10 KHz. If you record dirty and play back dirty, you could lose as much as 12 db.

RECORDING TIP: Keep a clean machine. Inspect and gently clean recording heads, capstan and pinch roller before recording. Every time. Clean them every 4 to 10 hours of playback time. The safest cleaner is isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab. It’s cheap. Sold at drugstores. And, because it dissolves away deposits instead of scraping, you can’t clean too often. To move the cassette heads forward for easy cleaning, fool the machine into thinking it’s playing. Press the “play” button (and interlock, if machine has one).

TAPE TIP: Those problem deposits are oxide debris from your recording tape. Switch to The Music Tape by Capitol. Its heavy duty binder prevents oxide shedding. So there’s less gunk. (No bunk.)

When you record ordinary things, use an ordinary tape. But when you record music, record on

the music tapeTM
cassette • cartridge • open reel
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CIRCLE NO. 4 ON READER SERVICE CARD

MODEL 301



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The Bose Model 301. The first and only system to offer the spaciousness and clarity of a Direct/Reflecting loudspeaker with the convenience and beauty of a bookshelf enclosure. Speaker design and performance from the same engineering that produced the internationally famous Bose 901® and 501 speaker systems.

The Bose Model 301 began as a unique engineering challenge: create a small, low cost Direct/Reflecting loudspeaker with maximum flexibility of placement and truly exceptional sound. The end result incorporates three significant developments not available in any conventional speaker:

- **Asymmetrical Design:** each Model 301 radiates a different spatial pattern to the left and right side of the room, providing stereo reproduction that expands beyond the spacing of the speakers. Consequently, each speaker of a stereo pair is constructed as a mirror image of the other.
- **A Direct Energy Control:** a control located at the top of the cabinet allows you to select the proportion of direct to reflected sound at high frequencies to produce the optimum spatial characteristics for your particular room.

- **A Dual Frequency Crossover Network:** a new approach to crossover design separates transition frequencies of the woofer and tweeter to provide an overlap in frequency response of over one octave. This technique minimizes localization of sound to the woofer or tweeter alone, and produces unusually smooth response through the middle frequencies.

Each of these developments solves a particular problem associated with designing a small, low cost Direct/Reflecting loudspeaker. Now you can enjoy the "sense of presence" that only a Direct/Reflecting speaker can offer. Stereo reproduction that expands beyond the spacing of your speakers to accurately place the sound of instruments across the entire breadth of your listening room.

The new Bose Model 301 Direct/Reflecting Loudspeaker. A sound quality that you will find extraordinary from so compact a speaker and at so low a price.

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In fact, since we introduced MRX₂ Oxide, a lot of other ferric tapes have been scrambling to find something to beat it.

• Nobody has.



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BOOKS RECEIVED

Compiled by
LOUISE GOOCH BOUNDAS

● *Discovering Music*, by Roy Hemming. Four Winds Press, New York (1974), 379 pp., \$12.95.

Roy Hemming's introduction to recorded classical music is well written, well organized, and exceedingly useful. The book is divided into three sections: "Where to Start," a series of interviews with performers, including their recommendations of what music to start with; "Fifty Composers and Their Major Works," with short descriptions of the works and recommended recordings of them; and "Major Music-Makers on Discs and Tapes," short biographies and major recordings of performers from Claudio Abbado to Paul Zukofsky. A few excerpts from the first section were published in *STEREO REVIEW* in January 1974 as "Expert Advice for Classical Rookies." Be advised, though, that *Discovering Music* is not just for novices—surely nobody ever stops "discovering music," and this book is packed with useful information as well.

● *The Complete Encyclopedia of Popular Music and Jazz, 1900-1950*, by Roger D. Kinkle. Arlington House Publishers, 81 Centre Avenue, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10801 (1974), four volumes, 2,644 pp., \$75.

The enormity of the project these four volumes represent is staggering. The books are not exactly something to tuck away in your pocket to read on the train, or even to display on the coffee table—they're handsome, but not glossy, and there are no photographs. But this encyclopedia contains an incredible amount of information, it's marvelous for browsing, and you should have access to it if you have a serious interest in popular music and jazz in the first half of this century. A library must. (There may be some price advantage in joining the Nostalgia Book Club; if you're thinking about purchasing this set, write to the publisher for information.)

● *Billion Dollar Baby*, by Bob Greene. Atheneum, New York (1974), 364 pp., \$10.

This is an entertaining, almost *Innocents Abroad* account of life on the road with a major rock act (in this case Alice Cooper), written by a young journalist from *Newsweek* with the perspective of a long-time rock fan. Although it lacks the drama of Richard Elman's and Robert Greenfield's accounts of the 1972 Stones' American tour, it's highly readable and one of the most revealing looks yet at the inner workings of the music biz.

● *Clive: Inside the Record Business*, by Clive Davis. William Morrow & Co., Inc., New York (1975), 300 pp., \$8.95.

There is scarcely a page in this book that can be said to be about *music*, but what a mine of fascinating lore about signings and contracts and hits and agents and charts and airplay and money, money, money. A delightfully dirty book.

West German precision by PE is a greater value than ever

West Germany's craftsmen have a well-earned reputation for building turntables with superb engineering, costly materials, careful manufacturing and clean functional design.

Music lovers have known this for years, and as a result, West German turntables are more popular than any other, although they are not inexpensive.

Except for PE, whose prices begin at little more than those of ordinary record changers.

At \$119.95, the PE 3044 has a low-mass counterbalanced tonearm that can track flawlessly at as low as 1.5 grams. And it offers such precision features as variable pitch control and cue control viscous damped in both directions.

Furthermore, each of the higher priced PE models offers additional precision features that make it highly competitive in its respective price class. For example:

The 3046 and 3048 offer die-cast, dynamically-balanced platters; rotating single-play spindles; and separate anti-skating scales for different stylus types.

As for the top of the line, the 3060, Hirsch-Houck Labs reported in Stereo

Review: "The performance of the PE 3060 belongs in the top rank of automatic turntables."

To appreciate PE turntables in terms of performance, visit your authorized PE dealer and compare them with others priced well above them. You'll see what makes each PE the best automatic turntable at its price and the best value.

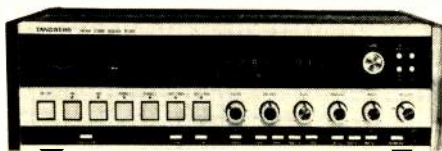


Impro Industries, Inc., 120 Hartford Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10553

CIRCLE NO. 55 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Tandberg TR-2075 AM/FM Stereo Receiver

The new Model TR-2075 receiver is the premier unit in Tandberg's line of electronic products. Construction is entirely modular, with all internal subassemblies mounted on plug-in circuit boards. Input switching, for two phono and two tape sources as well as tuner programs, is accomplished electronically by means of light-touch pushbuttons that also illuminate light-emitting diodes to show the program source selected. In conjunction with the tape inputs, there are outputs to provide recording signals to the tape machines as well as pushbuttons to permit dub-



bing from either one to the other. A third tape jack on the front panel, functioning as either an input or an output, can provide a recording signal processed by all the receiver's tone and level controls when a PREAMP REC pushbutton is depressed (the button also serves as an audio-muting switch, reducing the receiver's output at the speaker terminals by 30 dB).

The TR-2075 has bass and treble controls spanning a range of ± 15 dB at 50 and 10,000 Hz, respectively, and a mid-range tone control with a range of ± 7 dB at 1,000 Hz. Operating at frequencies of 70 and 8,000 Hz, respectively, are a low-cut filter and two high-cut filters. The low filter and one of the high filters have 12-dB-per-octave slopes; the second high filter has a 6-dB-per-octave slope, and it can be used together with the other filter for a total slope of 18 dB per octave. The switchable loudness compensation introduces a maximum boost of 12 dB at 50 Hz. The front panel has two stereo-headphone jacks.

The receiver's amplifiers are rated at 75 watts per channel, both channels driven into 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000 Hz. At or below rated output, harmonic distortion is 0.15 per cent or less, and intermodulation distortion has a 0.1 per cent maximum. The output damping factor is at least 60 over the full audio range. Signal-to-noise ratios are 84 dB for the high-level inputs, 68 dB for the phono inputs. One of the phono inputs is adjustable in sensitivity, as are both the main tape inputs. Overload of the non-adjustable phono input occurs at 80 millivolts.

The IHF FM sensitivity is typically 1.6 microvolts, with 50-dB quieting occurring at 3 microvolts. The ultimate signal-to-noise ratio of the FM section is 70 dB in mono, 68 dB in stereo. Alternate-channel selectivity is 80 dB, image rejection is 70 dB, and i.f. and spurious-response rejection are both 95 dB. The capture ratio is 0.9 dB. Stereo separation is at least 40 dB over the range of 60 to 10,000 Hz; distortion in mono is 0.2 per cent (0.3 per cent in stereo). Signal-strength and channel-center meters are located in the dial area. The signal-strength meter can be switched to read the

output of the highest channel of the amplifier section. The Tandberg TR-2075 comes in a wood cabinet; dimensions are $20\frac{1}{8} \times 6 \times 12\frac{7}{8}$ inches; weight is 27 pounds. Price: \$1,000.

Circle 115 on reader service card

KLH Model Sixty Turntable

The Research X Division of KLH has brought out the company's first separate turntable, a two-speed ($33\frac{1}{3}$ and 45 rpm), semi-automatic unit employing belt drive for its $3\frac{1}{2}$ pound, 12-inch aluminum platter. The automatic features of the turntable involve the tone-arm cueing, which is electronically activated through a viscous damped mechanism. Pushbuttons on the motorboard operate the cueing, which also comes into play at the end of a record to lift the arm from the record surface automatically. The turntable motor is simultaneously shut off. Both shut-off and tone-arm lift are triggered photoelectrically.

The Model Sixty's platter and tone arm are fixed to a sub-frame within the base, and float on a damped suspension for isolation from external shock and vibration. Tracking force, continuously variable from 0.5 to 4 grams, is set by means of a weight that slides along the arm shaft. There is also a string-and-weight anti-skating mechanism. The turntable motor



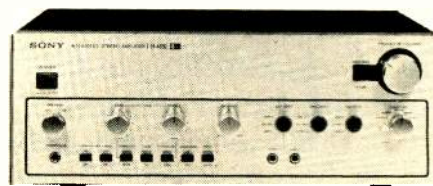
operates at 300 rpm to place any rumble-causing vibration below the audible frequency range. Specifications include 0.09 per cent wow and flutter, and a rumble level of -58 dB (RRI.L weighting). The effective length of the tone arm is 9 inches. The base of the Model Sixty is finished in walnut veneer, and a hinged transparent dust cover is included. Overall dimensions are $17 \times 13\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Price: \$149.95.

Circle 116 on reader service card

Sony Model TA-4650 Integrated Stereo Amplifier

One of the first Sony components to feature the recently developed vertical field-effect power transistors (V-FET's) is the TA-4650

integrated amplifier, rated at a continuous output of 30 watts per channel into 8 ohms, both channels driven simultaneously. This rating is for any frequency from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with less than 0.1 per cent harmonic or intermodulation distortion. The V-FET power-output stages are directly coupled to the speaker systems; in the preamplifier sections of the amplifier, combinations of FET's and bipolar transistors are used. The control facilities of the TA-4650 include independent dubbing and tape-monitor switching for two stereo tape decks and for two external signal processors such as an equalizer or four-channel matrix decoder. One of the processors can be connected directly to phone-type jacks on



the front panel. The tone controls are variable in the frequencies at which they take effect, with a choice of 500 or 250 Hz provided for the bass control and 2,500 or 5,000 Hz for the treble control. A pushbutton completely bypasses the tone controls when desired.

The large volume control can have its maximum position preset by a rotatable detent concentric with the knob. Right beside it is a -20 -dB muting switch for brief listening interruptions. Two pairs of speakers can be accommodated, and front-panel switching activates either one or both. There are two auxiliary and two phono inputs (input impedance is 47,000 ohms for both phono circuits) plus a tuner input. Loudness compensation and mono/stereo mode are switchable.

Signal-to-noise ratios for the TA-4650 are 90 dB at the high-level inputs and 70 dB at the phono inputs. The preamplifier outputs and power-amplifier inputs are connected by rear-panel jumpers that can be removed to permit the insertion of signal processors in the signal path or the substitution of other preamplifiers or power amplifiers. Amplifier dimensions are $16\frac{7}{8} \times 6\frac{5}{8} \times 12\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Price: \$400.

Circle 117 on reader service card

Garrard Zero 100SB Turntable

The Model 100SB from Garrard is a single-play version of the well-known Zero 100 automatic turntable; it employs belt drive instead of the idler system of the automatic player. The tone arm is identical, retaining the pivoted cartridge shell that is automatically adjusted to maintain tangency to the record groove throughout a record side. A sliding weight sets the tracking force, and the anti-skating is magnetic, calibrated separately for spherical and elliptical styli. The platter of the 100SB is cast of zinc alloy with a diameter of $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It is belt-driven by Garrard's

(Continued on page 20)

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Here are two fascinating home-learning adventures that say, "Don't envy the man with skills in electronics... become one!"

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I. AUDIO/ELECTRONICS

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Understanding today's audio technology requires practical experience with high caliber equipment. And with the Bell & Howell amplifier and tuner, you've got the technological tools you need to gain the knowledge and skills that could open up opportunities for



you in the audio field. Of course, we cannot offer assurance of income opportunities.

The sophisticated amplifier gives you the circuitry you need to conduct the comprehensive experiments necessary to master audio technology. Like signal tracing low level circuits, troubleshooting high power amplifier stages, and checking the operation of tone control circuits.

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The tuner you build has both superior performance specs and state-of-the-art features such as: all solid state, FET front end for superior sensitivity, crystal IF filters for wide bandwidth, and a superior stereo multiplex circuit for excellent stereo separation.

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But make no mistake. This learn-at-home program is not just about 4-channel sound. It covers the full range of electronic fundamentals leading to understanding audio technology. So when you finish, you'll have the occupational skills to become a full-service technician, with the ability to work on the full range of audio equipment such as tape recorders, cassette players, FM antennas, and commercial sound systems. Get complete information on this unique program by checking the appropriate box on the card—mail it today!



† Cabinets and speakers available at extra cost.

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Electro-Lab® electronics training system. It includes a special design console that enables you to assemble test circuits. A digital multimeter for accurately measuring voltage, current and resistance. And a solid-state "triggered sweep" oscilloscope which will allow you to analyze the functioning of tiny integrated circuits. Putting these instruments together will give you experience in wiring, soldering and assembling. Then, further on, you'll use the lab equipment for experience in electronic testing, troubleshooting and circuit analyzing.

We try to give more personal attention than other learn-at-home programs.

Both of these programs are designed so that you can proceed through them smoothly, step by step. However, should you ever run into a rough spot, we'll be there to help. While many schools make you mail in your questions, we have a Toll-Free Phone-In Assistance Service for questions that can't wait. Bell & Howell Schools also holds In-Person "Help Sessions" in 50 major cities at



various times throughout the year. There you can talk shop with your instructors and fellow students and receive additional assistance.

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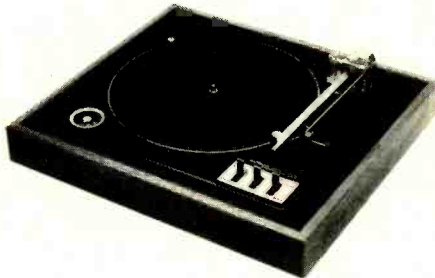
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Circle 118 on reader service card

AR's Demonstration Record

A 12-inch stereo disc with musical selections suitable for evaluating stereo systems is available from Acoustic Research. Entitled "The Sound of Musical Instruments," the record draws on the catalogs of Connoisseur Society, Everest, and particularly Ensayo Records, a company noted for the consistently high quality of its releases. Some selections were produced especially for this record by Ensayo.

The disc features various instruments—piano, flute, cello, and organ, among others—



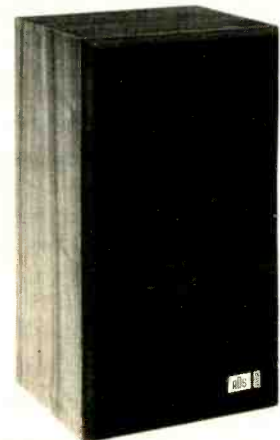
playing either unaccompanied or in small ensembles. Often the mixing is deliberately close and nonreverberant to further expose the sound of the instrument. The AR record costs \$5, including postage and handling, and it is available from: Acoustic Research, Dept. SR, 10 American Drive, Norwood, Mass. 02062. Planned subsequent releases will feature larger musical forces as well as a variety of popular music.

Circle 119 on reader service card

The ADS Speaker Systems

The line of speaker systems from Analog & Digital Systems, which also sells the Braun loudspeakers, now encompasses five models, most of which employ the same drivers in different configurations. The basic ADS drivers are a 1-inch soft-dome tweeter with a response extending to 25,000 Hz and a 2-inch soft-dome mid-range, both with heavy magnet structures, plus 7- and 8-inch woofers.

The smallest ADS system, the L400, contains the tweeter and a 7-inch woofer in a sealed cabinet of 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Crossover between the two drivers occurs at 1,500 Hz. The next largest system, the L500 (shown), measures 20 x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches and substitutes an 8-inch woofer, also crossing over to the dome tweeter at 1,500 Hz. The Model L700 (21 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches) employs two 7-inch woofers with the tweeter,



while the L710 is identical except for the addition of the ADS mid-range, operating in conjunction with the tweeter and woofers with crossover frequencies of 550 and 4,000 Hz. The largest system, the L810 (25 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches), has two 8-inch woofers together with the mid-range and tweeter; it employs the same crossover frequencies.

The major differences between the five systems involve low-frequency responses and power-handling capabilities. All have minimum impedances of 4 ohms and efficiencies providing between 85- and 88-dB sound-pressure levels at a distance of 10 feet with 2-watt inputs. Frequency responses extend to 30 (L400) or 20 (L810) Hz in the bass, and up to 25,000 Hz. All the ADS systems have natural walnut cabinets (sealed) with removable black double-knit grille cloths (beige cloths are also available on all but the L400). Prices: L400, \$89.50; L500, \$129.50; L700, \$169.50; L710, \$235; L810, \$320. A black metal stand is available for the L810 at \$37.50. (Prices higher in the West.)

Circle 120 on reader service card

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE: Recent fluctuations in the value of the dollar will have an effect on the price of merchandise imported into this country. So, please be aware that the prices quoted in this issue may be subject to change.



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*For a description of this research see the article "Sound Recording and Reproduction" published in Technology Review (M.I.T.) Vol. 75, No. 7, June '73. Reprints are available from BOSE for fifty cents.

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From front to rear: Dual 1229Q, \$269.95; Dual 1228, \$199.95; Dual 1226, \$169.95; Dual 1225, \$139.95.

How to decide which turntable you really want from all those available.

(Including ours.)

More than 75 record players are listed in a current directory of audio components, and a typical dealer may display a dozen or more. Which may make it a little more difficult than ever for you to decide which one you really want. Perhaps what follows will help.

Quality and reliability are essential.

The very least you should require of a record player is the assurance that its tonearm can track flawlessly with the most sensitive cartridges available, and that its drive system will introduce no audible rumble, wow, or flutter.

Remember, your record player is the only component that physically handles your records, so to compromise with quality here can risk damage to your precious record collection and produce sounds which were never recorded.

Manual or automatic, single-play or multi-play?

Although you should not compromise with quality, you can compromise with convenience.

If you happen to *prefer* handling the tonearm at the beginning and end of every record—with the risk of damaging the stylus and record—you can narrow the choice down to the manual turntables.

However, if you would rather not handle the tonearm, you had better concentrate on the automatic turntables.

And if you—or anyone else in your family—will ever want to play two or more records in sequence, your only choice would be from among

the automatic turntables with provision for multiple play. All of which brings us to the four turntables pictured here.

What most audio experts prefer.

More audio experts—engineers, editors, salesmen—own Duals than any other make of quality turntable. The same is true of the readers of the audio/music magazines. These serious music lovers, whose investment in records typically exceeds their investment in equipment, prefer Dual for only one reason: quality.

Dual owners most frequently use their turntables in the automatic, single-play mode; only occasionally to change records. (Just for the record, virtually the entire changer action in a Dual takes place within the long spindle. Only one part beneath the chassis is used, and that is simply to detect the presence of the changer spindle. Throughout play, the tonearm itself is totally disengaged and free-floating.)

Thus, you can narrow your turntable selection to any of the Duals pictured here, especially since even the lowest priced model, the 1225, has more precision than you are likely to need.

Not pictured here, but also available, are two more Duals for those who prefer single-play automatic turntables without multi-play option. These are the belt-driven model 601 at \$295, and the all-electronic direct drive model 701 at \$400.

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AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



Car Speakers

Q. *Can you suggest a state-of-the-art high-fidelity speaker to be incorporated into a VW bug sedan?*

B. G. MILLER
Dallas, Texas

A. This is an excellent idea. Here's how to go about it. First select a good wide-range coaxial driver such as the Altec 604. Cut out an "adapter" baffle board (from 3/4-inch plywood) with outside dimensions that are about 3 inches wider than one of the Volkswagen's door-window openings. Drill a 1/4-inch hole every 6 inches or so around the window frame. Install the panel using stove bolts of the appropriate length (3 inches or so). If for some reason you can't get an airtight seal, apply caulking compound between the baffle panel and the door frame.

You can use ordinary 18-gauge lamp cord to run the leads from the speaker to the amplifier of your choice. The system is tuned to the proper Helmholtz resonance point by partially rolling down the window *opposite* the one the speaker is installed in. If the sound appears too resonant, it may be that you've parked the VW in the wrong area of your listening room or that the internal damping of the car is inadequate for the speaker chosen. In the latter case, a pile of glass wool in the front and rear seats should be of some help.

It occurs to me that perhaps you may want a speaker to listen to *inside* the car rather than outside it—which of course is an entirely different matter. Jensen has a line of excellent-sounding small drivers meant for installation in rear decks and door panels. Complete instructions and mounting hardware are included. Write directly to Jensen (Dept SR, 4310 Transworld Road, Schiller Park, Ill. 60176) for further information.

Phono-Stylus Microscope

Q. *Is there a small microscope on the market for examining a stylus for evidence of wear? If so, can you send me the name of the manufacturer?*

GEORGE S. BERGER
Davis, Calif.

A. There are several small pocket microscopes on the market suitable for examining styli for *major* problems such as solidified dirt on the tip or a cantilever that is bent or displaced from its proper position. However, a pocket microscope is not adequate to detect stylus wear until such wear is

already at a stage where it will damage discs. I'm afraid you'll have to settle for the large, expensive, and specialized binocular microscopes used by the better audio stores for stylus examination.

Idle Tape Question

Q. *I received a note from a tape-recorder service shop in reference to repairs needed on my tape deck which reads as follows: "Rubber belts and tires dead from standing idle. To prolong belt life, recorder should be operated three or four hours per week." I thought this a strange comment. If true, what happens to the new recorders that are kept in storage before sale?*

M. L. KRESS
Piney Flats, Tenn.

A. "Dead" is perhaps the wrong word to use: I think the correct expression would be that they had "taken a set." If a rubber belt under tension is stretched over its pulleys in one position for a long period of time, it could well be permanently deformed, with subsequent increases in wow and flutter. For a belt this would be the equivalent of having a flat spot on a rubber idler drive wheel in a turntable.

I suspect that the materials used in the new drive belts are relatively immune to this sort of problem, but older machines that have seen long periods of disuse may indeed suffer from "dead" belts and rubber drive tires.

Record Compatibility

Q. *I'm curious as to how compatible four-channel records are when played on my stereo system. I'm told by my record dealer that they should sound the same, but some of them (when played in stereo) sound different to me from the stereo versions.*

ROY KALISH
Hackensack, N.J.

A. Well, four-channel discs are *sort of* compatible—if, by compatible, it is meant that a reasonable performance will be heard and that the record grooves will not be damaged when played with a light-tracking stereo cartridge. However, there's still the question of how the musical information has been distributed among the four channels, and whether all this information is available in stereo playback.

Since many four-channel discs—both matrixed and CD-4—are coming through with an engineer's being credited for a "quadraphonic

remix," it's safe to assume that the four-channel and stereo versions of a disc will *not* sound the same when both are played in stereo. It's even conceivable that a circumstance could occur in which the quadraphonic mix actually sounded better in stereo than the original stereo mix—but it doesn't seem too likely. After all, if the discs are totally compatible, how come the record companies are still issuing releases in both two- and four-channel versions?

Turntable Motors

Q. *Have you had any articles covering in detail the differences between the various types of turntable motors such as induction, servo, outer-rotor, hysteresis-synchronous, etc.?*

A. S. THOMSON
Portland, Washington

A. Sorry, no. In our turntable test reports we do mention whatever motor-design approach the manufacturer tells us he is using, but our basic concern is with the ultimate measurable/audible performance of the complete turntable rather than with the inner workings of its drive motor. Our reasons are very simple: a turntable may employ a motor of theoretically superior design that has been botched in its execution or quality control, or, conversely, a theoretically inferior design may deliver high-quality performance because of manufacturing precision and attention to detail. For these reasons, it makes more sense to check out—as best one can—the *actual performance* of any audio product rather than get hung up trying to evaluate theoretically the pros and cons of any particular design approach.

Phono-cartridge Load

Q. *I have an amplifier with two magnetic-phono inputs. The instruction booklet advises that the PHONO 1 input has a load resistance of 50,000 ohms and PHONO 2 has a load resistance of 100,000 ohms, and then goes on to advise that the input should be selected according to the phono cartridge used. I have tried several instant comparisons, plugging my phono leads in PHONO 1 and then PHONO 2. In no case have I been able to hear a difference. Can you explain this for me?*

FREDERICK M. GAVILLER
Ontario, Canada

A. In general, the resistance (actually impedance) that a magnetic-phono cartridge sees at a preamplifier's input jacks affects only its upper mid-range and high-frequency response—that is, if it has any effect at all. The specific internal electrical properties of the various phono cartridges determine the degree to which variations in load resistance affect their response. The response of a moving-coil cartridge, for example, is virtually independent of differences in the load it works into. Therefore, the fact that you hear no difference with your particular cartridge means that (1) your cartridge is insensitive to load differences; (2) the differences are there to be heard, but your preamplifier section (or possibly your speaker) is not permitting them to come through; or (3) there is in fact no difference in the load impedance at the two phono inputs because, with your particular cartridge, the differences in input capacitance between the two inputs are sufficient to cancel the effects of the differences in load resistance.



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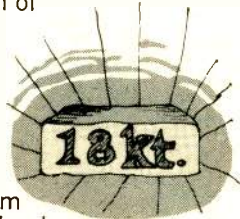
Revox dependability is a combination of many factors, but perhaps the most important of them is advanced engineering. Borrowing from space age technology, Revox gold-plates all of the electrical contacts on its plug-in circuit boards, relays and rotary switches. The result: every one of these movable contacts, the ones that usually cause most of the problems, can be depended upon to perform well for the life of the machine. Obviously, gold plating is considerably more expensive than conventional tinning, but Revox thinks it's worth it.

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AUDIO NEWS

VIEWS AND COMMENT

By LARRY KLEIN
Technical Editor

SINCE there appears to be a slight dearth of eligible hot audio news at the moment, I am activating the "views and comment" aspect of this column to pass on to you the slightly edited contents of a letter I received recently from George Sioles, a talented speaker-system designer and president of Design Acoustics Corporation.

For some time I have been struck by the variations in tonal balance heard from a given speaker in various rooms, and I have even suggested that room-to-room acoustic differences may at times override differences in speaker performance. But it appears that differences in (a) recording methods and (b) interpretive preferences can have an even more significant effect on the sound delivered to the listener's ears.

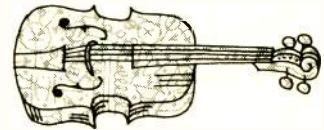
For example: I recently heard the Los Angeles Philharmonic perform excerpts from Berlioz's *Les Troyens*. In the section "Hail, all hail to the Queen," the cellos and trombones play a rhythmic bass passage, alternately *piano* and *forte*, beneath the chorus. Very effective musically. On the following day I bought a recording of the same piece made by Colin Davis and the BBC Symphony. The balance between orchestra and chorus in this recording was such that the bass passage I found so exciting in the live performance was almost inaudible. The chorus masked the *piano* passage totally, and the *forte* playing was only occasionally audible. These differences in balance can arise, I'm sure, with multiple-microphone recording methods and subsequent mix-down, but they must also reflect the musical director's sense of how the passage should be played—and heard.

My point, then, is this: since the center frequencies of the sound produced by the chorus are at least one to two octaves above those of the cellos, the difference in audible frequency balance between the live and the recorded performances sounds as if the amplifier in one instance had boosted the bass and, in another, emphasized the middle-high frequencies. I have also noted radical frequency-balance differences between one recording and another, most notably between the Reiner (brassy) and Solti (heavy) versions of the Beethoven Ninth, both with the Chicago Symphony. The implications of all this to A-B speaker testing using recorded music are rather obvious.

As you know, a few speaker designers feel that, since the high frequencies reaching a seat in the concert hall are much reduced relative to their recorded level (because of close-up microphones), the high end of the speakers

should therefore be rolled off to produce a proper illusion. You and I agree that (a) such frequency shaping, if required, properly belongs in the equalization section of the electronics, and (b) it is a moot question whether, given the option, we want to re-create the sound at a good seat in the concert hall, or rather the sound at the conductor's ears. There is a *real* difference in high-frequency energy in the two locations because the conductor is in the direct field of the instruments and subject to their directional effects, whereas most of the seats in the hall are in the reverberant field—which has a different frequency balance. And not only is the sound at the conductor's location more exciting—that is, louder and more brilliant—but the audible separation between the individual instruments and sections is dramatic. In the average seat, the volume and highs are down, the spatial perspective is diminished (indeed, it tends toward "monophonic" reproduction). It seems clear that elements of taste intrude quite heavily into our science (art?) of sound reproduction.

As I see it, the message for the speaker designer is: if you intend to produce a speaker that will be "unbiased" in favor of any one type of recording "philosophy," make it as "flat" as possible in its energy response. This will provide the knowledgeable listener—if his tone controls are sufficiently flexible—the option of "correcting" (with a gentle hand, I hope) the overall balance in his listening room until he achieves his concept of what the music *should* sound like. —George Sioles



I couldn't agree with Mr. Sioles more—and as a matter of fact I have a supporting anecdote of my own to relate. On a recent weekend I had two visitors, both of whom had at one time been involved in live recording and were still frequent nonprofessional listeners to live music. The sound of my system received mixed reviews from my two golden-eared friends. One engineer thought the sound was much too bright, and the other thought it just right. A matter of taste? In a sense, yes. My friend who thought the sound overbright limits himself, in his live listening, to classical music; the engineer who judged the high-frequency response and balance as "natural" preferred live jazz and usually listened up close in small clubs. The brushes and cymbals as reproduced (from good records) through my system sounded just right to him (and to me).

The moral of the story? A simple affirmation of Mr. Sioles' point: a speaker that has a built-in high-frequency roll-off may, indeed, provide a concert-hall quality to recordings that would otherwise be overly bright, but they are also going to deaden those recordings meant to be heard as bright, open, and clear. What we want, it seems to me, is a speaker that will give us what's in the recording—neither more nor less.

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muting, hi/low filters, dual tuning meters, loudness contour, a dial dimmer control and a fail-safe speaker protector circuit. Never before used on a receiver are the twin stepped bass and treble tone controls that custom tailor listening to more than 3,000 variations. A tone defeat switch provides flat response instantly throughout the audio spectrum.

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AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES



GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS—18

● **Heat sinks** are the metal radiators—often finned and finished in black—that the output transistors of an amplifier or receiver are customarily mounted on. Their function is not to warm up the room (although they do this to some slight degree), but to carry potentially destructive heat away from the transistors and transfer it to air currents circulating through the amplifier. Smaller transistors within the amplifier may also have their own heat sinks—little wings or fin assemblies clamped right to the transistor case.

● **Horn**, for audio purposes, is a type of speaker enclosure that can conceptually be thought of as resembling the familiar musical-instrument horn—that is, it has a sound path with a narrow entrance, a wide exit, and a controlled rate of expansion (or *flare*) throughout its length. The horn is principally useful because it improves the efficiency of energy transfer from the sound source—the lips of a trumpet player in one case, or the speaker within the enclosure in another—to the surrounding air.

Horn speaker systems tend to be highly efficient, meaning that for a given acoustic output, amplifier-power requirements and the resulting activity (motion) of the speaker diaphragm are less than with other designs. Under the right circumstances, such efficiency can result in higher sound outputs with lower distortion. Bass horns, in order to be effective at low frequencies, must be quite large. As a rule they are constructed of sturdy wood panels within the speaker cabinet, and to conserve space they are bent back upon (or within) themselves to create what is known as a *folded horn*. An appropriate cone woofer, sometimes entirely concealed within the enclosure, drives the horn.

● **Hum** is merely (and usually) 60-Hz house electric current rendered audible through being leaked, in greater or lesser amounts, into the audio signal path. It

sounds like a smooth, monotonic "mmm" of very low frequency. Hum is most frequently picked up as radiated energy, and it is most readily prevented by using proper shielding and grounding techniques in system interconnections.

Another type of hum originates in an audio component's power supply as it goes about its business of converting the 60-Hz current into pure, non-alternating d.c. This noise may also be picked up as radiation or, more often, directly through internal wiring as a result of inadequate filtering at the output of the power supply. It can be 60 or 120 Hz in frequency, and sometimes it has a bristly or buzzy quality to it, indicating the presence of some higher harmonics. (A "buzz" without any low-frequency content is not, strictly speaking, "hum," but rather the pick up of radiated energy from sources such as fluorescent lights or TV broadcast transmissions.)

Modern, properly operating audio systems should not have audible hum at normal listening levels. If they do, it is most often caused by improperly rigged or faulty grounds between components, or perhaps a loose connection at some low-level signal source such as a phono cartridge.

● **Hz**, an abbreviation of the surname of Heinrich Hertz, noted electrical researcher, is the unit of frequency. Some years ago it was established internationally as the successor to the equivalent expression "cycles per second," to the continuing frustration of those who admired the descriptive qualities of the phrase. Therefore, "20 to 20,000 cps" has now become "20 to 20,000 Hz."

● **IHF (Institute of High Fidelity)** is a voluntary-membership organization of audio manufacturers interested in promoting quality sound reproduction. Performance standards set up by the Institute are usually designated by its initials: for example, IHF sensitivity for FM tuners.



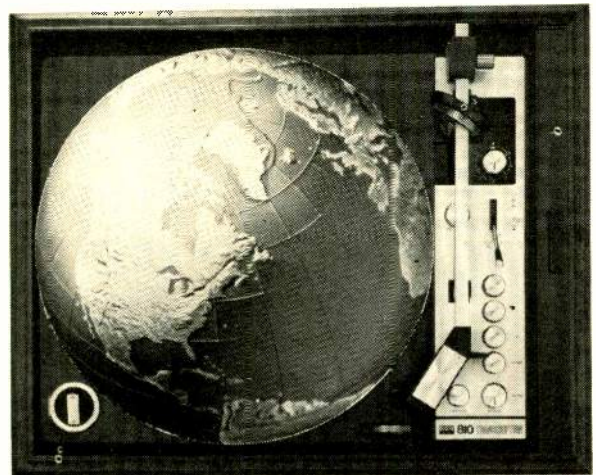
**4 out of 5
automatic turntables
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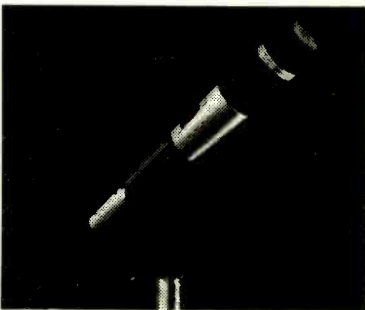


Good time capsule.

Saving fleeting moments requires a quality tape recorder. But, just as a camera can be no better than its lens, tapes can be no better than the microphone. Whether it costs \$200, \$500—even \$1,000—a tape recorder can be significantly improved by the addition of a Shure unidirectional microphone—a mike that can be 'aimed' so that only the target sounds will be recorded. Microphone misers who ignore this will never hear the true sound of recorded music lessons, parties, classes, speech therapy, sound movies and rehearsals. With Shure microphones, creating tomorrow's treasures is today's pleasure.

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Manufacturers of high fidelity components,
microphones, sound systems and related circuitry.
CIRCLE NO. 32 ON READER SERVICE CARD

TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



THE NOISE NUISANCE

OF the many problems in tape recording, some are less difficult to deal with than others. Since our ears will tolerate a certain amount of restriction in dynamic range (the loud-to-soft ratio) of music and speech, you shouldn't be afraid to sacrifice some of the dynamics in behalf of improved signal-to-noise ratio. If you're careful and gradual about it, you can knock back the record level on extremely loud passages to prevent the distortion that occurs when your recording-level meters are running too far into the red. And you can raise the level of very soft passages by about the same amount (a couple of VU units) to help keep them above the hiss level. If you've done the job right, the artist himself, listening to the playback, won't detect the fact that you've fiddled a bit with his dynamics. If you work manually, it's easy to overdo such gain-riding, so the pros use sophisticated automatic equipment for the purpose and our ears let them get away with it.

Frequency response may be the most highly touted problem in tape recorders, and I don't want to make light of it, but unless you're making a direct comparison with the live source over a professional monitoring system, a drop of a few decibels in response at the ends of the audible spectrum will pass unnoticed. To me, however, *noise* (or "mud," as it's called in the trade) in any audible amount is always detrimental. If you hear noise in the recording, then the illusion of reality is shattered. The trouble is that noise has so many sources it's sometimes hard to pinpoint the problem and solve it.

Aside from such things as passing trucks, planes, and children playing outside that might be picked up by your microphone (and these certainly come under the heading of noise), I define the term "noise" as *any signal component present at the output of an audio device that was not present at the input*. Hum and hiss are the best known, of course, and I'll discuss them in this and future

columns, but the significance of using this kind of definition is that it includes distortion in the category of noise.

A good open-reel recorder is likely to have about 1 per cent harmonic distortion (the third harmonic is the most prevalent) when the VU meter reads zero. For cassettes, 3 per cent is typical. Put into equivalent terms, that means that if I record a 400-Hz tone at 0 VU, the noise (in this case, the 1,200-Hz harmonic distortion) is only 40 dB below the signal level in the first case, and only 30 dB in the second.

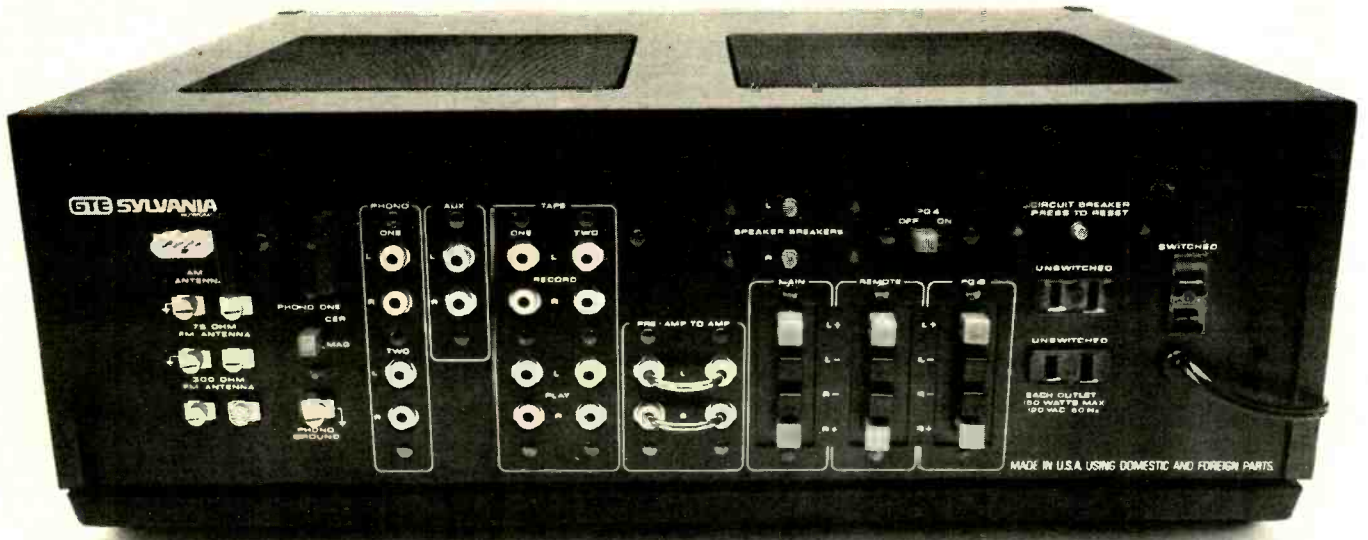
The "objectionableness" of this kind of distortion/noise (and intermodulation distortion figures tend to be several times as high as harmonic) has been hotly argued since hi-fi began to come of age in the Forties and Fifties. No one can deny that if you record and play back a pure tone you can hear a distinct difference in direct comparison with the original, and *part* of this difference may be the distortion component. On the other hand, music is already so rich in harmonics that again our ears are successfully fooled into accepting distortion "noise" in large quantities. At any rate, when a manufacturer gives a signal-to-noise (S/N) specification of, say, 60 dB, he's usually comparing signal plus some kinds of noise (three per cent distortion being typical) to residual noise with no signal input.

Hum is less a problem today than it used to be, but if at all audible, it, too, is noise. If grossly loud, it usually indicates a defective ground in one of the cables between the recorder and the rest of your equipment. Mike cables are especially sensitive, but the cure is simply to substitute cables and see if it disappears. If it persists, it's a job for the technician.

You can sometimes deflect hum around the record head by adding a ferrous shield of your own across from the head—and out of the tape path, of course. Trial and error will find the location that minimizes the hum, and your ingenuity will dictate how to mount the shield there.



We're not afraid to turn our back on you.



Introducing the RS 4744

We can afford to be very forward about our back.

Because the back of our RS 4744 stereo receiver is one of the most versatile you'll ever see. We've got phono inputs for two different turntables. And two sets of tape monitor input and output jacks. And terminals for main speakers, remote speakers, and PQ4 speakers. And three AC power outlets, one switched and two unswitched. The rest you can see for yourself in the picture above.

But what's behind our back is just as impressive as the back itself.

As *Popular Electronics** put it, the RS 4744 "met or surpassed all the published specifications we were able to test" and was



"...well above average in the important performance aspects."

Take power, for example. *Popular Electronics* found the RS 4744 "conservatively rated" at 60 watts per channel, min. RMS at 4 to 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz with no more than .25% Total Harmonic Distortion. Which made it "outstanding for a receiver in the RS 4744's price range." FM 50 dB quieting sensitivity was equally impressive—"a very good $3\mu\text{v}$ in mono and $35\mu\text{v}$ in stereo."

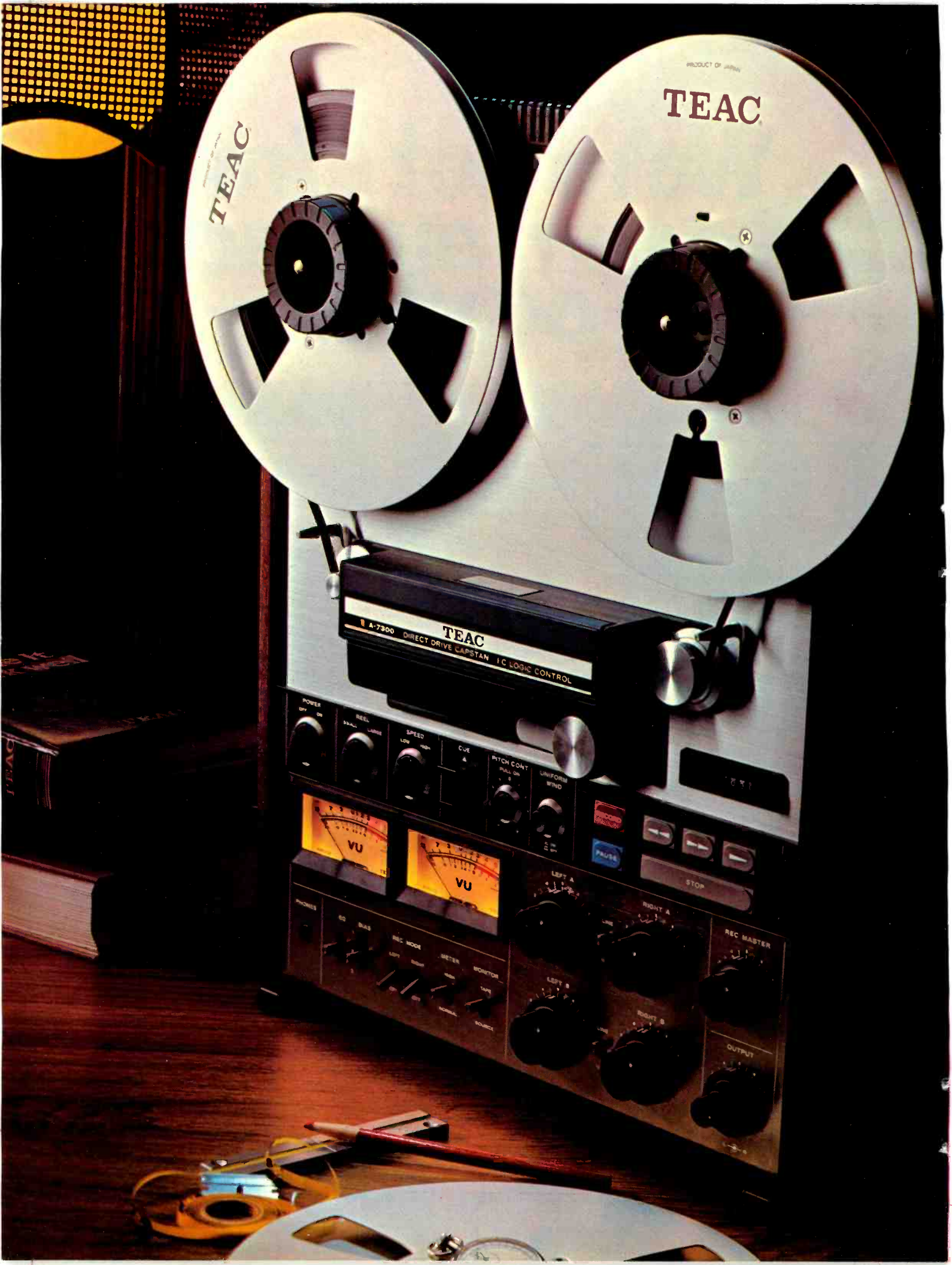
But don't take our word for it. Or their word for it. Go see the RS 4744 for yourself.

Back or front, any way you look at it, the RS 4744 is one fine stereo receiver.

**Popular Electronics*, December 1974 Issue.

GTE SYLVANIA

CIRCLE NO. 15 ON READER SERVICE CARD



TEAC

PRODUCT OF JAPAN
TEAC

TEAC
A-7900 DIRECT DRIVE CAPSTAN IC LOGIC CONTROL

POWER
OFF ON

REEL
SMALL LARGE

SPEED
LOW HIGH

CUE
&

PITCH CONT
PULL ON

UNIFORM
WIND

VU

VU

PHONES

EQ

BASS

REC MODE

METER

MONITOR

LEFT A

RIGHT A

LEFT B

RIGHT B

REC MASTER

OUTPUT

STOP

PAUSE

RECORD

REVERSE

STOP

A-7300.

**Just because
we don't call it professional
doesn't mean it couldn't be.**

We make professional recorders and we're in a position to know precisely what is meant by the word "professional." So we don't use it casually or carelessly in describing our tape recorders.

On the other hand, the A-7300 is far better than the typical high fidelity component. In fact there are certainly some professional features on the A-7300, like a servo controlled direct drive capstan system, full IC logic transport controls, four balanced mic inputs with XL-type connectors, and a flip-up hinged head cover for easy maintenance and editing.

Then, keeping in mind the serious home recordist, we added a constant

speed wind control for even tape packs... a pitch control for fine-tune speed adjustments... a 3-position pinch roller setting for cueing and eliminating tape bounce... and a zero VU click stop on the output level control.

Yet we don't label the A-7300 professional.

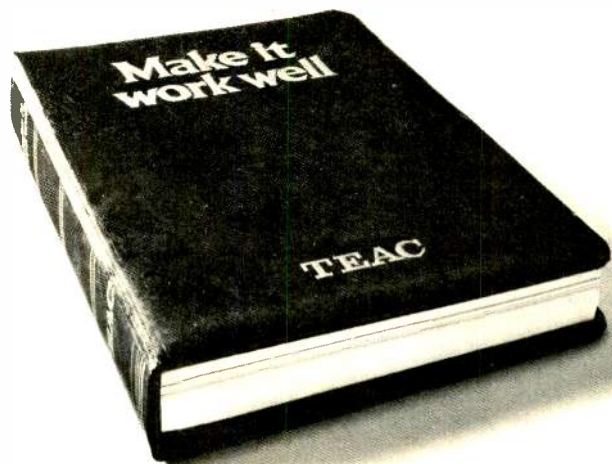
Then what about those tape recorders that cost much less and are called "professional"?

They're only kidding.

In the final analysis, though, it isn't what it's called, but what it does that counts. You'll have to determine for yourself whether or not the A-7300 meets your specific needs, and you can do that only by examining and operating it for yourself.

You'll find that our retailers are well informed and helpful in general. Rare qualities, so there can't be many of them. You can find the one nearest you by calling (800) 447-4700.* We'll pay for the call.

* In Illinois, call (800) 322-4400.



TEAC

The leader. Always has been.

TEAC Corporation of America, 7733 Telegraph Road, Montebello, California 90640.



In response to the needs of the recording and broadcast industries, Stanton creates the new calibration standard ...the 681 TRIPLE-E...

A definite need arose.

The recording industry has been cutting discs with higher accuracy to achieve greater definition and sound quality.

Naturally, the engineers turned to Stanton for a cartridge of excellence to serve as a primary calibration standard in recording system check-outs.

The result is a *new* calibration standard, the Stanton 681 TRIPLE-E. Perhaps, with this cartridge, the outer limits of excellence in stereo sound reproduction has been reached.

The Stanton 681 TRIPLE-E offers improved tracking at all frequencies. It achieves perfectly flat frequency response to beyond 20 kHz. It features a dramatically reduced tip mass. Actually, its

new ultra miniaturized stylus assembly represents an important advance in stereo cartridge design and construction, with substantially less mass than its predecessor. And this stylus assembly possesses even greater durability than had been previously thought possible to achieve.

The Stanton 681 TRIPLE-E features a new design of both cartridge body and stylus; it has been created for those for whom the best is none too good.

Each 681 TRIPLE-E is guaranteed to meet its specifications within exacting limits, and each one boasts the most meaningful warranty possible: an individual calibration test result is packed with each unit.

For further information write Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

CIRCLE NO. 44 ON READER SERVICE CARD





TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **MORE THOUGHTS ON POWER REQUIREMENTS:** On several occasions I have discussed in this column aspects of the important question of how much amplifier power is needed for realistic music reproduction in the home. Since most people are perfectly satisfied with amplifiers rated at 25 watts per channel or less driving speakers of fairly low efficiency, it may be difficult for even a knowledgeable audiophile to appreciate the reason for using "super-power" amplifiers rated at 150 to 350 watts per channel. As I have explained in the past, much of this huge power reserve is needed to handle brief peaks in the program material that can demand *ten to one hundred times* the average power of a musical program (at typical, not-too-loud listening levels, average power is probably a fraction of one watt).

However, there is another side to this coin. The logarithmic response of the human ear requires a ten-fold increase in acoustic power to produce the subjective sensation of "twice as loud." It is most instructive to monitor the average power output of an amplifier as the listening volume is increased, and to observe how easy it is to drive the amplifier to very high outputs without producing a deafening sound level or even (if both amplifier and speakers are equal to the task) any sense of strain or obvious distortion. (Remember, if the *average* power output is 20 watts, peak audio-power levels will surely reach, or exceed, 200 watts!)

I would not pretend that listening at such levels is relaxing, that it is compatible with conversation or practically any other normal social activity. Nevertheless, many people do find it stimulating, feeling that it provides an added sense of realism that brings the listener one step closer to the "live" listening experience. To approach this goal, however, everything in the music system, from the program material to the speakers, must be of top quality.

All of which brings me to the subject

of listening to rock music, either recorded or live. In a sense, there is really no such thing as completely "live" rock music since most of the instruments produce sound only through electronic amplification (including signal-"distorting" elements) and loudspeakers. When it is recorded, all the distortions introduced deliberately *and* otherwise are carried over into the recording, and they are then additionally distorted, more or less, by the listener's music system. (Incidentally, I am aware that there are many types of "rock" music, and I hope that aficionados are not offended by my lumping them together for the purposes of this discussion.)

TESTED THIS MONTH

●
Marantz 3600 Preamplifier
Stanton 681EEE Phono Cartridge
Heath AA-1640 Power Amplifier
Ferrograph "Super Seven" Deck

Many rock recordings therefore fail to meet the minimum standards one would apply to recordings of unamplified instrumental or vocal music with respect to clarity and freedom from distortion. For a time I thought that this was due to careless recording practices, but on a number of occasions I have heard enough of this sonic debris produced during live concerts to convince me that it was inherent in many actual performances. Given the fact that many rock recordings have built-in distortion, it may be easier to accept this quality in your home listening and even to turn up the volume in an attempt to simulate the sound level of a concert performance without regard for the extra distortion

contributed by your overloaded system. It soon becomes apparent, if you try to listen in this fashion, that there is *no way* in which conventional audiophile equipment can match the sonic impact of the original, despite the best efforts of hundreds of watts of amplifier power and banks of rugged high-fidelity loudspeaker systems.

During a recent visit with my son, who plays lead guitar with a Vermont-based rock group (Better Days & Co.), I spent an evening listening to the group perform in their natural environment. It was—quite literally—an ear-opening experience for me. I expected them to be loud, and this they were, with average sound-pressure levels somewhere around 110 dB throughout the room. I also expected to hear the familiar distorted sounds I had come to associate with rock music, but here I was disappointed ("gratified" would perhaps be more accurate!). For someone like myself, accustomed to listening mostly to classical music at moderate volume, it was a revelation to hear clean, unclipped, smooth sound—even at a numbing sound-pressure level. (I do not as a rule listen under these conditions; in this case my abused auditory system took about twelve hours to recover to the point where things once again sounded normal!)

When I examined the equipment used to produce these sounds, it became obvious to me that a home listener would have to forgo the experience of accurately reproducing this sort of music in his listening room. Each instrument, of course, produced its own sound through a large number of speakers—I did not attempt to total the number of drivers and the amplifier's power, but the former surely numbered in the dozens and the latter over 1,000 watts. Vocals and drums were each amplified separately by a 400-watt amplifier and channeled to a number of horn-loaded, high-efficiency speaker systems. This array of equipment would be considered insignificant

by many of the groups that normally play in large auditoriums, but Better Days & Co. were doing their thing in a room measuring perhaps 1,000 square feet before an audience of about one hundred people—in other words, a listening environment only about three times as large as a typical home living room.

When I came home (and after my hearing had returned to normal), I auditioned some reasonably good-quality rock records in my listening room (about 400 square feet) through a quadraphonic system with about 750 watts of total amplifier capacity and four typically inefficient but rugged speaker systems. With the amplifiers delivering average outputs of about one-fourth their rated capacity (and therefore certainly clipping somewhat on peaks), the result was clean and very listenable sound, with a measured sound-pressure level of about 103 dB fairly well distributed through

the room. But, loud as the sound was, it produced hardly a trace of the skin-tingling sensation of a live performance. To achieve that, it would have been necessary to increase the amplifier power to between 3,000 and 5,000 watts (and at least double the number of speakers), or to use much more efficient speakers. The former course is clearly impractical for most listeners, which probably explains the appeal of the more rugged high-efficiency speaker systems to those who like their rock loud and clean.

Fortunately for the high-fidelity industry and neighbor relations, most of us are content to listen to our music at more reasonable sound levels. In fact, the "natural" level of orchestral music, as heard by the audience, is rarely more than 90 dB or so, and when that level is created in a listening room the results can be quite satisfying. For *casual* listening of any type, ear-shattering levels are

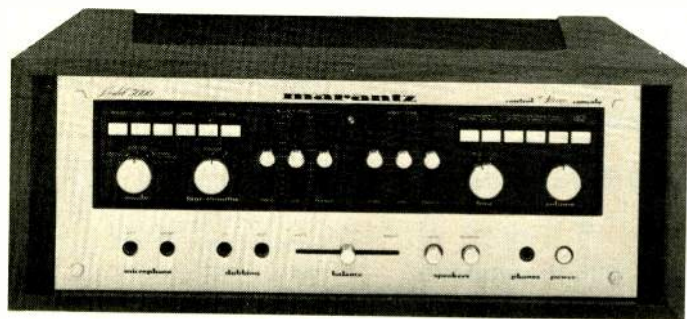
inappropriate. I am afraid that most rock devotees will have to attend a live concert to derive the full emotional and tactile effect of the performance, unless they are blessed with the wherewithal to install an audio powerhouse in their homes, and unless they live a healthy physical distance from neighbors.

An alternative worth considering is the use of headphones. Some phones (not all) can create a sound-pressure level of 115 to 130 dB at the wearer's ears, which will at least produce the desired saturation of the user's hearing apparatus. However, the very palpable *physical* pressure of such sound levels on the listener's entire body, which is an integral and important part of many live rock performances, will be absent. And after sustained exposure via headphones to such sound-pressure levels, I expect that much of the original hearing ability of the listener will be missing also.

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

Marantz Model 3600 Stereo Preamplifier



● THE Marantz Model 3600 Stereo Control Console is a de luxe preamplifier with exceptional performance and versatility. Among the stated design goals in the development of the Model 3600 were the reduction of audible noise and all forms of nonlinear distortion to a minimum, plus the elimination of system interface problems that may cause poor overall performance despite excellent individual specifications. The Marantz Model 3600 uses operational amplifiers with large amounts of negative feedback to provide precise and stable gain and equalization characteristics. The phono-preamplifier circuits were designed for very low noise when driven by typical magnetic cartridges, and to have equalization characteristics that would be unaffected by cartridge inductance.

The tone-control section can be completely bypassed if desired. Each channel has separate bass, treble, and mid-range controls, with selectable turnover frequencies of 250 or 500 Hz for the bass control and 2,000 or 4,000 Hz for the treble control (the mid-range action is nominally centered at 1,000 Hz). Although a

number of preamplifiers can deliver a large output voltage to a high-impedance load (say, 47,000 ohms or more), many cannot drive low-impedance power-amplifier inputs (some of which are as low as 10,000 ohms) without an undesirable increase in distortion or loss of bass response. Such preamplifiers may also lose highs when coupled to the power amplifier using very long cables. The 150-ohm output impedance of the Model 3600 makes it essentially independent of load conditions, and it can function with full performance into loads as low as 600 ohms.

The satin-gold finished front panel of the Model 3600 is dominated by a rectangular black inset section that contains most of its controls. Six vertical sliders in the center operate the tone controls. To their left are a three-position tape-monitor switch (for playing either the selected source or either of two tape-deck outputs) and the mode switch with positions for stereo, reversed stereo, L + R (mono), and either the left or right input through both outputs. To the right of the tone controls are a tone-control bypass switch and

the volume control. Six pushbuttons at the upper left of the control area select the input source: PHONO, MIC, TUNER, AUX, and TAPE 1 or TAPE 2 playback. Six similar pushbuttons at the upper right switch in the three filters (which operate below 30 Hz and above 5,000 or 9,000 Hz), change the bass and treble tone-control turnover frequencies, and add loudness compensation to the volume control.

Along the bottom of the panel are the two microphone input jacks, input and output jacks for tape dubbing (which essentially parallel the TAPE 2 inputs and outputs, replacing the TAPE 2 rear inputs when a plug is inserted into the DUBBING IN jack), and a stereo headphone jack. The Marantz Model 3600 can be connected to the power-amplifier speaker output terminals and will channel the signals from them to either main or remote speaker systems (or both) by means of two pushbutton switches on the panel that can handle 250 continuous watts per channel. The headphone jack is also driven from the speaker inputs and is not connected to any part of the preamplifier circuitry. A pushbutton power switch and the horizontal slider control for channel balance complete the front-panel control lineup.

In the rear of the Model 3600 are the usual input and output jacks, with two paralleled sets of preamplifier outputs (for driving two power amplifiers) and a pair of outputs for connection to a display oscilloscope. Insulated spring clips are used for speaker connection, and there are four switched a.c. outlets plus two unswitched outlets. The Marantz Model 3600 is 15³/₈ inches wide, 5³/₄ inches high, and 9¹/₄ inches deep; it weighs 15 pounds. An optional walnut cabinet is available.

(Continued on page 40)

The Speaker.

Rather than starting with an existing speaker, Yamaha began with a speaker idea

A speaker system with the lowest distortion and coloration, and the best possible transient response.

Instead of merely modifying one, Yamaha has re-invented it. And in doing so, has improved every aspect of speaker design.

We call it the NS-1000 M Monitor.

Transparency and The Dome.

Existing technology has largely solved a major problem of speaker design through the use of the acoustic suspension driver: extended frequency response.

Today, what's missing from most sound in most people's living rooms is something a touch more subtle. It's called transparency.

The hemispheric dome tweeter allows a wider dispersion of high frequencies

But the dome's own material weight causes it to lag behind the input signal. It simply doesn't respond fast enough, creating an opaque, masked sound that lacks fine detail and definition.

The ideal dome material for midrange and high frequency drivers would be extremely rigid and, most importantly, virtually weightless.

Introducing the Beryllium Dome.

Why did it take so long?

After all, beryllium is the lightest, and most rigid metal known, and has a sound propagation velocity twice that of commonly used aluminum.

Beryllium is lighter and stronger and propagates sound better than other metals.

	ATOMIC WEIGHT	RIGIDITY (ELASTIC MODULUS) kg/mm ²	SOUND PROPAGATION velocity m/sec
BERYLLIUM (Be)	9.013	28000	12600
MAGNESIUM (Mg)	24.32	4500	5770
ALUMINIUM (Al)	26.98	7400	6420
TITANIUM (Ti)	47.90	11000	5990
IRON (Fe)	55.85	19700	5950

But because of beryllium's inherent characteristics, it resisted attempts by any manufacturer to form it into a diaphragm, let alone a dome.

Until now

The New Yamaha Beryllium Dome, formed by Yamaha's unique vacuum deposition process, is lighter than any other speaker diaphragm found today. So it's more responsive

to direction changes in amplitude and frequency of the input signal.

Dome Tweeter Comparison			
	SIZE OF DOME	THICKNESS	WEIGHT
YAMAHA NS-1000 M (BERYLLIUM DOME)	3 cm	0.03 mm	0.03 g
TYPICAL SOFT DOME	3 cm	0.3 mm	0.1 g
CONVENTIONAL DRIVER	2.5 cm	0.45 mm	1.03 g

This is called transparency. It can be noticed best in complex musical passages and can be best described

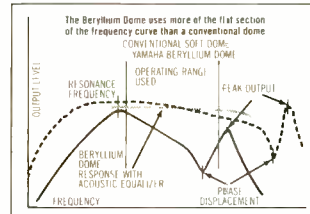


as highly defined and finely detailed. Only Yamaha has it.

Midrange: The Voice of Your Speaker. It's no secret that between 500 Hz and 6 KHz is where most audible differences in speakers occur.

It's where we hear the human voice, and it is the hardest part of the frequency spectrum to reproduce accurately.

Once again, beryllium solves the problem of uneven response. Since it's so lightweight, the dome can be made larger and lighter than before



possible for a midrange driver. It extends the linear portion of its response curve.

The midrange driver's frequency response is so wide that we can select only the choice flat section of its frequency response, thereby eliminating the peaks and valleys most competitors are forced to use.

The Beryllium Dome creates simply the flattest response; least colored, most natural sounding midrange of any speaker around.

Carefully designed acoustic equalizers flatten the frequency

response curve even further.

The NS-1000 M Monitor is so accurate that you may even hear enhanced detail in a recording you once thought already perfect.

Re-thinking the Woofer.

Some respected speaker manufacturers buy their low frequency drivers wholesale.

Yamaha doesn't buy them. We make them.

Even the very cone material itself was researched and developed and manufactured specially by Yamaha. (It's made much more dense than most cones. That means a tighter, cleaner sound.) And the frame is cast in our own foundry so we can control quality.

A plucked string of a bass sounds like a plucked string bass note.

Instead of a dull thud.

The Tangential Edge and Other Extras. Yamaha designed a special suspension

system that holds the beryllium dome to the speaker frame with less contact allowing it to move more freely. It's called the Tangential Edge. (You may not hear the difference at first, but you will.)

The crossover system was specially designed to have a very low DC resistance, increasing the system efficiency.

Most highly accurate systems need a large amp to drive them properly. The NS-1000 M Monitor requires only 15 watts RMS to fill an average room with loud music, yet can handle RMS power outputs exceeding 100 watts.

By Our Own Skilled Hands.

Yamaha's philosophy is one of self-reliance

That's why, for example, we build the critical speaker components (like cone materials and speaker baskets) rather than purchase them.

That includes the speaker enclosure made from material designed for anti-resonance characteristics. (Our piano making experience was essential here.)

There are enough speaker system modifications and copies around, already

This is something original.

Proudly Presenting the NS-1000 M. It's not inexpensive or easy to find

The NS-1000 M is sold as right and left-hand units, and by the pair only.

They cost \$960.00 the pair, when you can get them.

Yamaha is making them as fast as we can, but you may have to wait a short while until your Yamaha Audio Dealer has a pair for you to audition. (He also features Yamaha speakers based on the same technology and quality at less money.)

Patience, please

Part of the Yamaha System.

The NS-1000 M Monitor is the ultimate air suspension speaker system.

That is a strong claim to make.

In the future, Yamaha will present the ultimate power amplifier, tuner, preamplifier, and turntable.

Actually advancing the state-of-the-art of the major components of a music reproduction system

In short, the ultimate system.

We're convinced that no matter what you think is the best today, we'll make you dissatisfied with it.

Don't say we didn't warn you.



YAMAHA

INTERNATIONAL CORP., P.O. BOX 6600, BUENA PARK, CALIF 90620
CIRCLE NO. 42 ON READER SERVICE CARD

able (\$32.95). Marantz also manufactures the Model 3800, which is essentially the same as the Model 3600 with the addition of Dolby noise-reduction circuits. Prices: Model 3600, \$499.95; Model 3800, \$649.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** Measuring the distortion of the Marantz Model 3600 requires the finest available test equipment, but, even so, the reading may reflect only the residual distortion in the test instruments themselves. With a 1,000-Hz test signal and a high-impedance load (approximately 100,000 ohms), total harmonic distortion (THD) was less than the noise level (which in itself was exceptionally low) until the output reached 2 volts, where it measured 0.003 per cent. It remained at approximately that level until the output signal reached 10 volts, where the THD was 0.008 per cent. The output clipped between 10 and 11 volts. We repeated this measurement with a 600-ohm load, and the lowest measurable distortion of 0.019 per cent occurred at a 1-volt output, increasing to 0.041 per cent at 2 volts and clipping at about 3 volts. The intermodulation (IM) distortion, as Marantz claims, was even lower than the THD, reading 0.011 per cent at a 100-millivolt (mV) output, 0.002 per cent (test instrument residual) from 0.5 volt to over 1 volt, and increasing to 0.006 per cent at 5 volts and 0.012 per cent at 9 volts (with a high-impedance load).

The input level required for a reference 1-volt output was 0.95 mV (PHONO), 89 mV (AUX), and 0.88 mV (MIC). The signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) was measured unweighted and with IEC "A" weighting. The unweighted

S/N was 74 dB (PHONO), 76 dB (AUX), and 67 dB (MIC). Weighted measurements were respectively 77 dB, 78 dB, and 71 dB. All S/N figures are referred to a 1-volt output. (Note that these figures, although excellent, do not match Marantz's S/N specifications only because of differences in testing techniques and instrumentation.) The phono inputs overloaded at 100 mV, and the microphone inputs at 95 mV.

The filters had desirable 12-dB-per-octave slopes, with their -3-dB response points at 30 Hz, 4,800 Hz, and 8,000 Hz. The loudness compensation was mild and unobtrusive in its effect, with a boost of low and high frequencies beginning at volume-control settings 20 to 30 dB below maximum. The RIAA phono equalization (extended) was accurate within ± 0.5 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz, and was not affected significantly by phono-cartridge inductance. The three tone controls, as might be expected, provided an almost infinite choice of response curves. With the "standard" turnover frequencies of 500 and 2,000 Hz, the tone controls were comparable to most of today's better tone-control systems. With the optional turnover frequencies of 250 and 4,000 Hz, it was possible to operate the controls at or near their limits without a drastic change of sound character. With intelligent use, the 3600's tone controls can tailor the overall sound of a music system with remarkable subtlety.

● **Comment.** As its measured S/N performance indicates, the Marantz Model 3600 is a very quiet preamplifier. In fact, its internal noise was lower than that of any program

source we could use with it. (Marantz claims that the unit is 3 to 4 dB quieter than anything else available.) We doubt that many people will ever require more system flexibility than is offered by the Model 3600. Marantz engineers have effectively removed the limitations (whose existence may not even be suspected by many users) of most preamplifiers in respect to interaction between the phono cartridge and the preamplifier input, and between the preamplifier output and the power-amplifier input. Not only can two tape decks be fully controlled from the Model 3600 (including dubbing from either one to the other), but a third deck can be plugged into the front-panel jacks without disturbing the normal system wiring.

Distortion is really a moot consideration with a preamplifier such as this. It can barely be measured, let alone heard, under any conceivable condition of operation. If you hear distortion when using the Model 3600, it is a safe bet that it originates elsewhere in your system. As for equalization, including tone controls and filters, this unit permits the user (actually it *invites* him) to modify a program in almost any way he desires, limited only by his taste and hearing acuity. Those who prefer to listen to a program "as received" can simply bypass the tone controls and enjoy a true "straight-wire-with-gain" component. All in all, we found the Marantz Model 3600 to be an exceptional product. Although one learns to expect components of high quality from a company with Marantz's reputation, we nevertheless were much impressed with the performance of the Model 3600.

Circle 105 on reader service card

Stanton 681EEE Phono Cartridge



● For some time, the Stanton 681EE magnetic phono cartridge has been noted for smooth, uncolored sound, excellent tracking ability, and mechanical ruggedness. Stanton has now replaced the 681EE with a slightly improved version, the 681EEE.

Externally, the "Triple E" appears almost identical to its predecessor, except for the "EEE" marking on the side of its removable stylus assembly. According to Stanton, the principal design change has been a reduction of stylus moving mass by about one-third. Stanton's familiar "Longhair" record brush is still a part of the 681EEE stylus assembly. It rides on the record, removing surface dust ahead of the stylus. The brush assembly weighs one gram, so that after the tone arm has been balanced, one gram of vertical force must be added to compensate for the fact that

the brush is now being supported by the disc. (Note that this relates to the *balancing* procedure only and does not affect the actual tracking force applied.)

The Stanton 681EEE is rated to operate at a 1-gram force, and the recommended range of operating forces is from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ grams. Each cartridge comes with its individual calibration card listing its frequency-response variations and output voltage. Although the card does not specify the test record used, it does give the test conditions (a 47,000-ohm load which is shunted by a capacitance of 275 picofarads).

The Stanton 681EEE comes in a decorative wooden box with mounting hardware, a small screwdriver, and a metal "pill box" for storing extra styli. It is supplied with a 0.2 x 0.7-mil elliptical stylus. Price: \$82. Other available styli include a 1-mil conical for mono LP records (2 to 5 grams tracking force) and a 2.7-mil conical for 78-rpm records (3 to 7 grams tracking force).

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Stanton 681EEE was installed in the tone arm of a Dual 601 record player. It was able to play the highest levels of the Fairchild 101 and Cook 60 test records at 1 gram, and this force was used throughout our subsequent tests. The effect of the brush on the record necessitated an antiskating adjustment of about 1

gram higher than would otherwise have been required. The brush is easily removed without tools, and so far as we could determine, it had no negative effect on the operation of the pickup once the necessary corrective adjustments were made.

Playing the CBS STR 100 record, the 681EEE produced one of the smoothest overall frequency-response curves we have ever seen from a phono cartridge. It had a uniform downward slope above 500 Hz, with the 20,000-Hz output about 4 dB less than the 500-Hz level. The only departure from perfect linearity was a "jog" at 17,000 Hz (apparently due to a stylus resonance). The amplitude was only about ± 0.5 dB. The two channels had almost identical characteristics. The channel separation averaged 25 to 30 dB up to 10,000 Hz, and was still a strong 12 dB at 20,000 Hz. The 17,000-Hz resonance showed up as a moderate irregularity on the crosstalk curve, although it could not be heard.

These measurements were made with a load capacitance of 250 picofarads (pF), closely approximating Stanton's test conditions. When we raised the load capacitance to 480 pF, the output above 10,000 Hz was reduced by 5 dB at 20,000 Hz. The low-frequency resonance in the Dual 601 arm was at 7 Hz, with an amplitude of 10 dB. A 1,000-Hz

(Continued on page 42)

Today, underdog. Tomorrow, topdog.

We make receivers, tape recorders and speakers.

We're good at it.

Because we've been putting most of our energy into our products. Not our advertising.

After all, if our products weren't any good then you wouldn't want them.

No matter how big our name was.

But the fact remains someone can make the best components in the world

and still not sell many of them because not enough people know about them.

That doesn't mean we're going to tell you our components are the best in the world. No one can say that.

What we're saying is this:

We're going to start telling you more about them. But there's going to be no false promises, no empty claims.

We're going to tell you exactly what we make. And how to get the most out of it.

We're going to prove that a sale doesn't end when you walk out of the store.

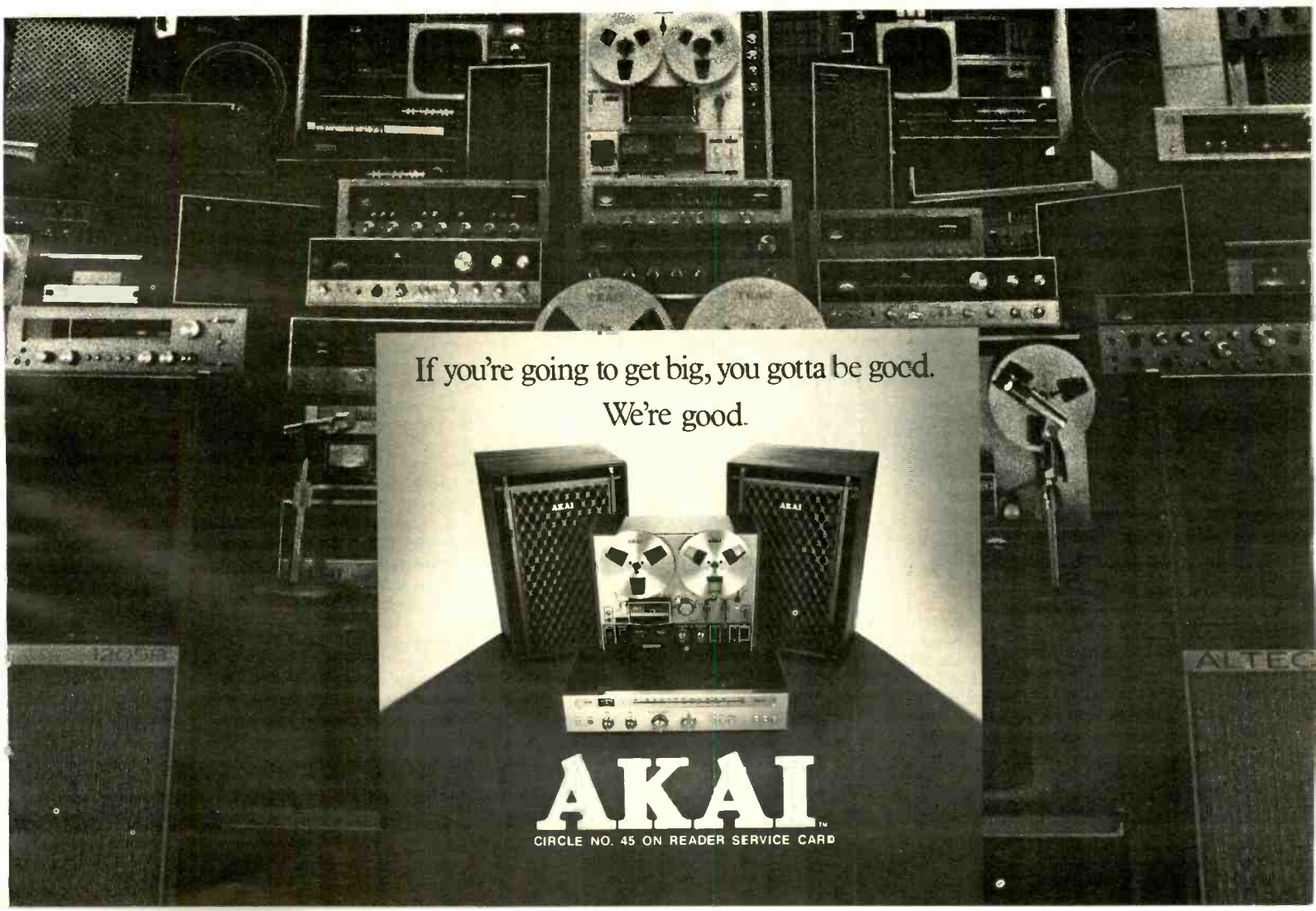
We're going to do some things to shake up this business. And turn a few heads.

We have some big names to compete with.

You know who they are.

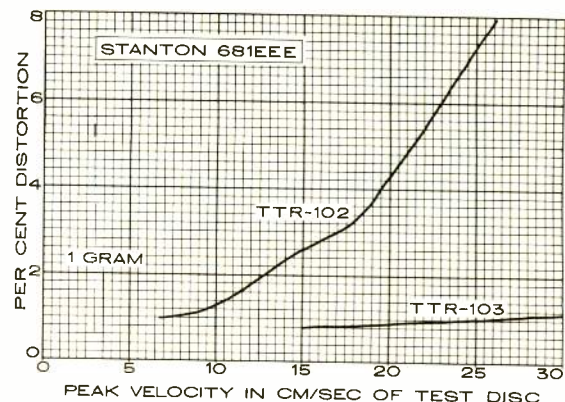
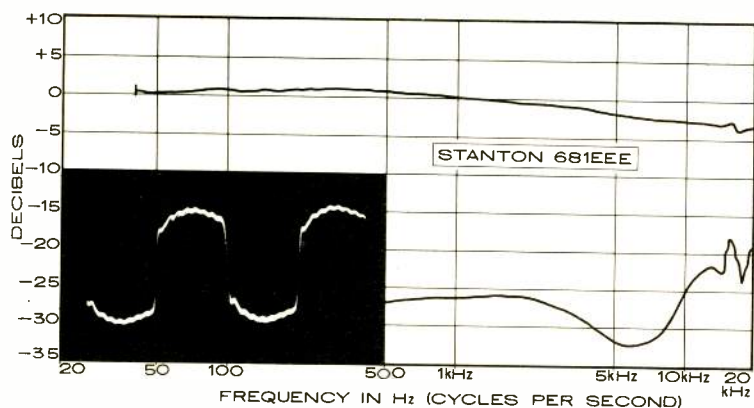
So from now on the underdog is going to look more and more like the topdog.

Because that's exactly what we intend to be.



If you're going to get big, you gotta be good.
We're good.

AKAI
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In the graph at left, the upper curve represents the smoothed, averaged frequency response of the cartridge's right and left channels; the distance (calibrated in decibels) between it and the lower curve represents the separation between the two channels. The inset oscilloscope photo shows the cartridge's response to a recorded 1,000-Hz square wave, which gives an indication of resonances and overall frequency response. At right is the cartridge's response to the intermodulation-distortion (IM) and 10.8-kHz tone-burst test bands of the TTR-102 and TTR-103 test records. These high velocities provide a severe test of a phono cartridge's performance.

square wave was reproduced with no overshoot, a slight convex rounding, and a very low level ringing at the 17,000-Hz stylus-resonance frequency. The output voltage was 3.2 millivolts per channel for a recorded velocity of 3.54 centimeters per second (cm/sec). The two channel outputs matched closely.

Other tracking tests confirmed the excellent tracking ability of the 681EEE at all frequencies. The 300-Hz tones of the German High-Fidelity Institute record were played successfully up to a 70-micrometer level (about par for a top-grade cartridge). Intermodulation (IM) distortion measurements with the Shure TTR-102 record showed low distortion (under 2 per cent) up to a 12.5-cm/sec velocity, with a smooth increase to 10 per cent at the record's maximum level of 27.1 cm/sec. There was no sign of complete loss of contact with the groove (which often happens at the highest velocities) even at the 1-gram test

force. The 10.8-kHz tone bursts of the Shure TTR-103 record verified that the 681EEE had excellent high-frequency tracking ability, with about 1 per cent distortion that varied little with level over the 15- to 30-cm/sec range of the record.

● **Comment.** The Stanton 681EEE sounded as neutral as its linear frequency response and low distortion would suggest. This was a characteristic of the old 681EE, and as far as we could tell the new cartridge is sonically a twin of its illustrious ancestor. The virtual absence of a high-frequency peak, or even of any broad emphasis of frequencies above 10,000 Hz, should make this a fine cartridge for use with speakers having an accentuated response in that region. Such speakers can sound unpleasantly shrill when coupled with a cartridge that peaks in the same range (as many do). Used with a Stanton 681EEE, the net

result should be a nearly flat acoustic response over the full audio range.

It came as no surprise to find that the 681EEE coped with the Shure "Audio Obstacle Course—Era III" record with no sign of strain, except for a trace of "sandpaper" quality on the two highest levels of the sibilance test (which have proved the nemesis of almost every cartridge we have tested with this record).

Clearly, the Stanton 681EEE has a combination of virtues—ultra-smooth, wide-range response, uniform channel separation, outstanding tracking ability at a 1-gram force, and a rugged, easily replaced stylus system—that earn it a place among the handful of today's top stereo cartridges. And it even manages to offer some improvements over the 681EE that preceded it in the Stanton line, which is no small achievement in itself.

Circle 106 on reader service card

Heath AA-1640 Stereo Power Amplifier



● THE latest addition to the growing roster of "super power" amplifiers is the AA-1640 from Heath Company. The capabilities of the AA-1640 are eloquently expressed by its key specifications: "continuous power output 200 watts per channel into 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.1 per cent total harmonic distortion from 250 milliwatts to 200 watts." In order to present this report to coincide with the market introduction of the AA-1640, we tested a prototype model.

Past experience with dozens of Heath products gives us confidence that subsequent units assembled from kits will perform in essentially the same manner as our test sample.

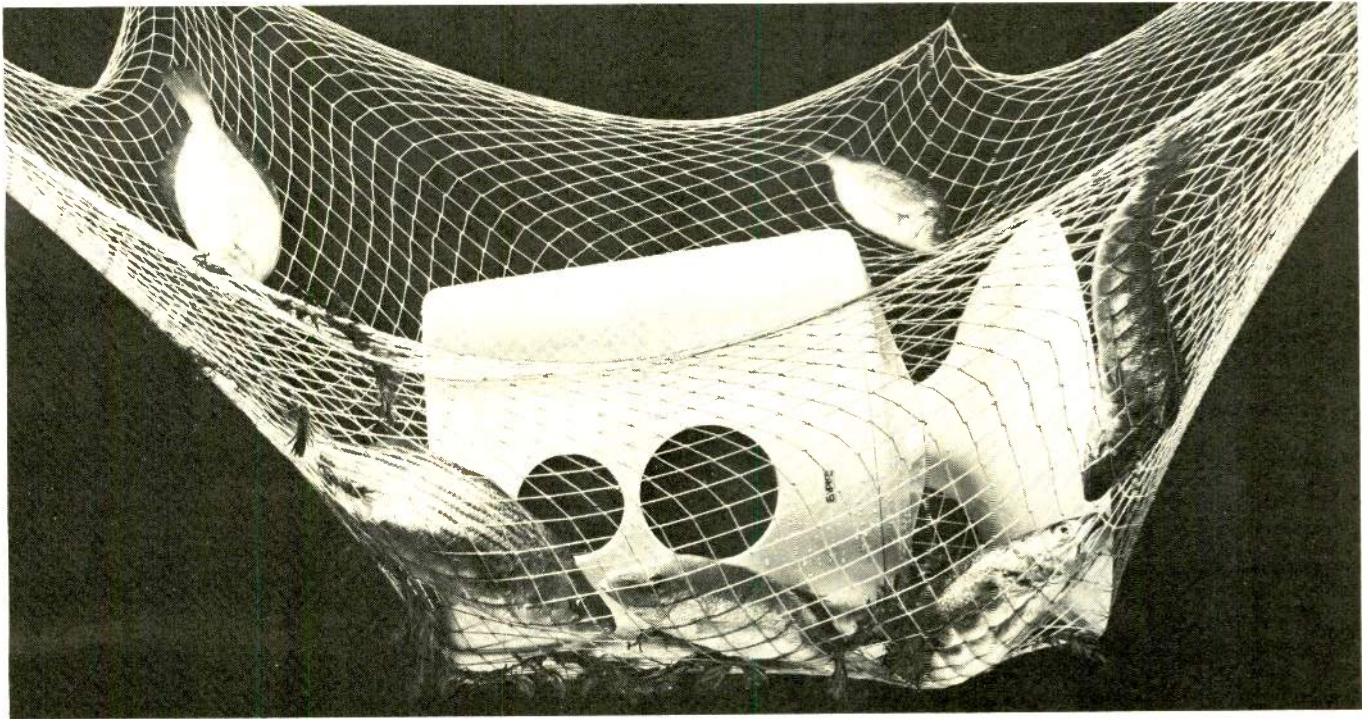
Lifting the 58-pound amplifier gives one an immediate clue to its robust construction and conservative ratings. Its front panel is 19 x 7¼ inches, but the unit is not designed for rack mounting. The 18-inch depth of the AA-1640, which is somewhat greater than that of most amplifiers in its power class, is neces-

sary to accommodate, among other things, the two huge heat sinks along its sides. Each heat sink is a 6-pound aluminum die casting with a black anodized finish, on which is mounted the eight output transistors for one channel. The other circuits are principally located on two long printed wiring boards, and the 25-pound power transformer occupies the center of the chassis.

Because of its large heat-sink area, the AA-1640 needs no cooling fan to maintain safe operating temperatures during extended operation at any power output within its ratings. Thermal sensors shut down the amplifier (and turn on a red HI TEMP light on its panel) if the transistors do become too hot, as might happen under severe operating conditions combined with inadequate ventilation. The output transistors of the AA-1640 are protected by internal limiting circuits, and the speaker outputs are fused. The entire amplifier is protected by a 10-ampere line fuse. A 10-second time-delay circuit protects the speakers from turn-on "thumps" and disconnects them in-

(Continued on page 44)

A weatherproof 3-way system makes Empire's Jupiter 6500 more than just another fish in a sea of speakers.



It's quite a catch!

It's not easy deciding on a system in today's ocean of speaker models.

Comparing, listening, wading through all the technical specs, trying to catch the most for your money.

So we've netted an easy choice.

The Jupiter 6500.

It provides features you would only expect to land in more expensive speakers.

A complete 3-way system with: 12-inch woofer, mid-range radiator and ultrasonic tweeter — powerful enough to reel in over 90 watts RMS.

Empire's automatic, resetting circuit breaker to prevent overload and burn out.

Individual testing of

each driver and a complete system check after assembly.

Then there are features you wouldn't expect to find in any speaker.

A durable, marproof enclosure that's totally damped so there are no vibrations.

Completely weatherproofed drivers and cabinet so you can enjoy your system, indoors or out, all year round.

Contemporary styling to fit any decor with 4 luring colors to choose from: Gloss White, Sun Yellow, Bittersweet and Flemish Blue.

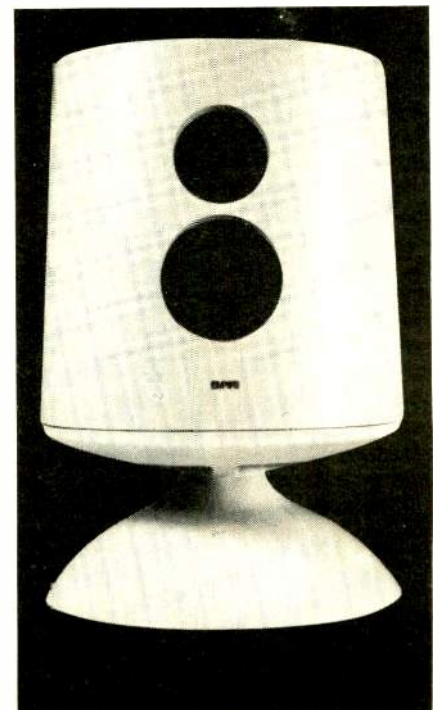
With all the care Empire puts into every Jupiter 6500, you won't want to let this one get away.

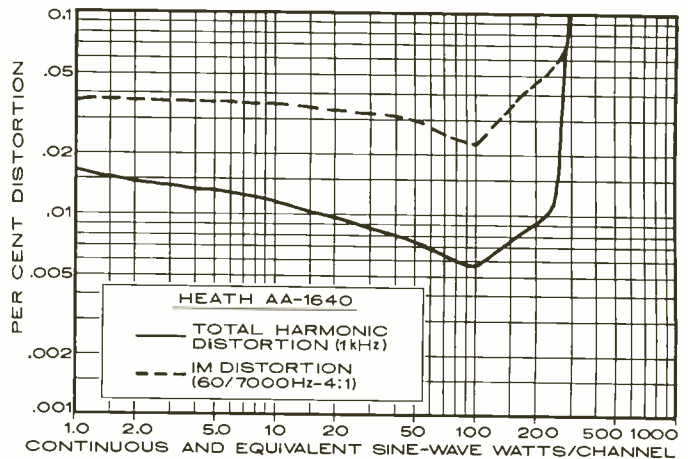
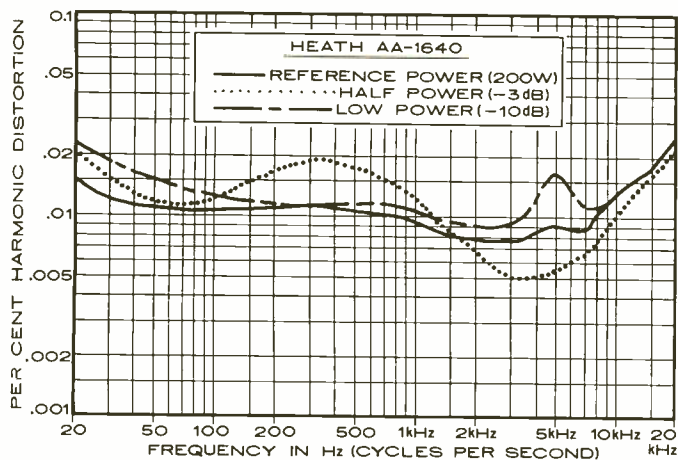
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EMPIRE 





stantly when the power is switched off. The same circuit instantly disconnects the speakers if excessive d.c. or very low frequency a.c. levels appear at the speaker output terminals.

The satin-finish aluminum control panel includes a pushbutton power switch, individual channel-gain controls, and a red pilot light in addition to the HI-TEMP indicator. Two illuminated power meters (optional) are a unique and useful feature of the AA-1640. They have logarithmic scales with a range of over 30 dB and are calibrated in decibels relative to 200 watts (into 8 ohms) as well as in watts. A 3-dB over-range is provided. No scale switching is needed to display any output power level from less than 0.2 watt to over 200 watts.

The meters are peak-responding, with an extremely rapid response time of 50 microseconds and a slow decay of about 0.5 second. As a result, they hold the peak audio levels of the program, and there is no need to calculate peak outputs in excess of the meter readings. Even when they regularly reach the 0-dB mark, the amplifier will not be overdriven. The 50,000-ohm input impedance of the amplifier presents a compatible load to any preamplifier. The Heath AA-1640 kit is priced at \$439.95 and the optional meter kit at \$69.95; however, when the two are ordered at the same time, the combined price is \$489.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Heath

AA-1640 was "pre-conditioned" by operating it at an output of 67 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads for one hour. The heat sinks, though they became quite warm, were not uncomfortable to the touch. With both channels driven at 1,000 Hz into 8-ohm loads, the amplifier clipped at 312 watts per channel. Full power at clipping, driving 4-ohm loads, could not be determined accurately since the line fuse blew, but we did note that it was something over 400 watts per channel. Into 16 ohms, the amplifier delivered 203 watts per channel. The total harmonic distortion (THD) at 1,000 Hz was under 0.016 per cent from 1 watt to over 250 watts output, and the intermodulation (IM) distortion was well under 0.05 per cent (typically about 0.03 per cent) from 230 watts down to an output of 6 milliwatts. At the rated 200 watts, as well as at 100 and 20 watts output, the THD was less than 0.023 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz, and typically measured about 0.01 per cent. The distortion was largely second-harmonic, and (as the low-level IM measurements also suggest) there was almost no trace of crossover distortion.

The frequency response, as is usual with amplifiers having a moderately high input impedance, varied slightly with input-level-control settings. At maximum gain, it was within ± 0.1 dB from 10 to 25,000 Hz, -0.5 dB at 5 Hz, and -3 dB at 150,000 Hz. The

"worst case" condition is with the gain set at -6 dB; in this case, the response was -0.5 dB at 5 and 20,000 Hz, and -3 dB at 60,000 Hz. Such differences are not likely to be audible. The meter calibrations were accurate at 0 dB, which corresponded to 200 watts output into 8 ohms. The calibrations at -10 , -20 , and -30 dB, which should correspond to power levels of 20, 2, and 0.2 watts, actually fell at 18.5, 1.85, and 0.18 watts, which is an insignificant error. The d.c. voltage level at the speaker output terminals was only 25 millivolts, which should cause no problems.

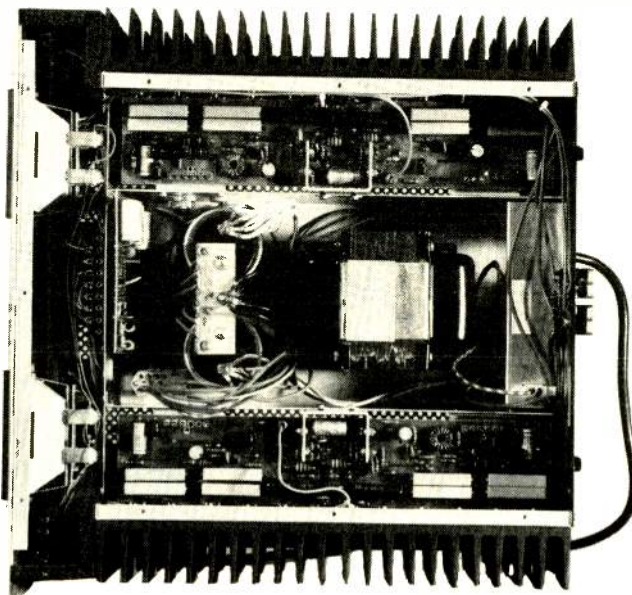
The meter-response characteristics were even more impressive than the Heath specifications suggested. We used tone bursts, at a level corresponding to a steady-signal output of 0 dB, and varied the "on" and "off" periods of the burst over a wide range. When the "off" time was 1 second, the meters overshot by 2 dB on a 1-second burst, read correctly with a 0.5-second burst, and were only 3 dB low with a 100-millisecond burst. At 10 milliseconds, the meters read 9 dB low, but this was evidently a limitation of the meter movements themselves rather than of the peak-reading and "holding" circuits that drove them, since the -9 -dB reading was maintained down to the shortest burst we could use—10 microseconds! On the assumption that the "on" and "off" duty cycle of a music signal would not be nearly as demanding as the artificial test signal, we shortened the "off" time and found that a 10-microsecond burst occurring every 20 milliseconds gave a -1 -dB meter reading. To us, this suggests that the Heath meter circuit will accurately follow the instantaneous peaks of any musical signal, without regard to its average level.

The amplifier was stable with a wide range of capacitive loads, although, as with similar amplifiers, large capacitors (greater than 0.1 microfarad) caused some visible ringing on a high-frequency square-wave test signal in the range between 50 kHz and 200 kHz. The ringing was never more than about 20 per cent of the square-wave amplitude and, of course, never audible. Into a resistive load, the amplifier rise time was 2.5 microseconds.

The input sensitivity of the AA-1640, for a reference 10-watt output, was 0.3 volt, and about 1.35 volts drove it to rated output power. As a rule, we measure amplifier output noise without weighting, but in this case we could not verify the 400-microvolt noise rating of the AA-1640 because of r.f. pickup from local broadcast stations. Lacking the shielded "screen" room (to exclude r.f. sig-

(Continued on page 46)

Removal of the AA-1640's protective cover reveals, at center, the large power transformer and filter capacitors. The circuit boards for the audio sections are mounted at top and bottom adjacent to the heat sinks.



The AR-10 π

A new standard of musical accuracy and an unprecedented degree of placement flexibility

Musical accuracy

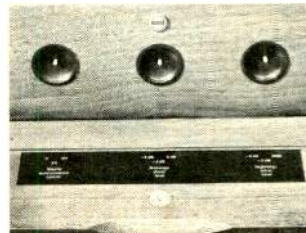
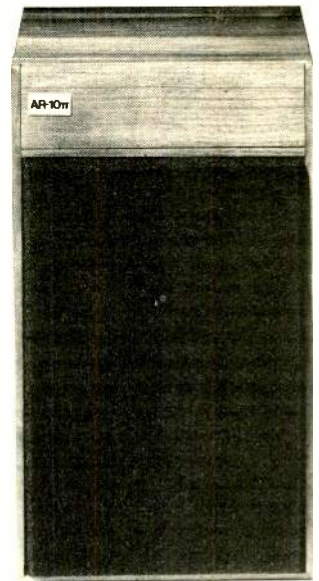
The new AR-10 π is the most accurate musical reproducer that Acoustic Research has ever built for use in the home. It has been designed to deliver uniform flat energy response in most listening rooms. This means that the musical balance of the input signal will be accurately transmitted to the listener, and listeners in virtually all listening positions will hear the performance in the same way. A new tweeter and crossover network make this new standard of accuracy possible.

Speaker placement:

Speaker placement in the listening room is of critical importance to the musical balance of the system. That's why most speaker manufacturers give explicit instructions on exactly where their speakers must be placed for best results. The AR-10 π however has been designed for maximum flexibility in this respect. It can operate in almost any location in your room with no sacrifice in accuracy.



The AR-10 π can be positioned against a wall, in a corner, or even in the middle of the room.



Simply resetting a single switch will ensure the right amount of bass energy for any position—something that is not possible with conventional loudspeaker designs or equalization techniques.

Acoustic Research has prepared a comprehensive description of the AR-10 π speaker system. You can get a free copy by sending us the coupon below.

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nals) that is obviously necessary for measurements at these levels, we used an IEC "A" weighting filter to remove most of the r.f. and achieved a 430-microvolt measurement. This is 86.4 dB below 10 watts, or 99.4 dB below 200 watts—not only totally inaudible under any conceivable condition, but within a hair's breadth of the Heath rating of -100 dB.

● *Comment.* The electrical performance of the Heath AA-1640 makes comment superfluous. In every respect it ranks with the finest high-power amplifiers on the market. We were constantly impressed with the conservatism of its construction and ratings. This is one amplifier that simply cannot be overheated under home music-listening conditions, as we verified by an afternoon of auditioning with a pair of Ohm F speakers while the amplifier meters read almost constantly between 0 and

-10 dB. After a few hours of this sort of use, the AA-1640's heat sinks were cooler than the FM tuner and tape deck we were using as signal sources!

How does it sound? The Heath AA-1640 has no more a sound of its own than any other fine amplifier operated within its power ratings. In other words, it sounded no better and no worse than the two or three top power amplifiers we have heard that might be considered competitive with it. This is no back-handed compliment, since the utter freedom from distortion and the effortless sound at any listening level (which are among the major reasons for using a super-power amplifier) are certainly prominent qualities of the AA-1640. It is interesting to note that in our listening tests with the Ohm speakers we were regularly delivering over 400 watts per channel on peaks to their 4-ohm impedance, and we never

had the sense that the amplifier was nearing the end of its capability.

The meters are by far the most useful we have seen on an audio amplifier. We would go so far as to say that they are the *only* ones that have any practical utility for the listener, since they constantly show how close the amplifier is coming to its real limits and readings are unencumbered by the sluggish indications of averaging-type meters. We would like to see this metering system available as an accessory for a good hi-fi system, since it would be every bit as useful to a serious audiophile as the oscilloscopes offered for similar applications (especially if it were combined with simultaneous average-power indication). By all means, if you buy the AA-1640 kit, take advantage of the saving afforded by the combination price and get the metered version.

Circle 25 on reader service card

Ferrograph "Super Seven" Tape Deck



● Ferrograph "Super Seven" open-reel tape recorders are available with a variety of formats, operating speeds, and other control features. The Model 7504ADHW, tested for this report, is a quarter-track stereo deck with tape speeds of 3³/₄, 7¹/₂, and 15 ips, plus built-in Dolby "B" circuits for recording and playback functions. Other models are available without the Dolby circuits, with half-track heads, with built-in power amplifiers and speakers, tape speeds of 1⁷/₈ to 7¹/₂ ips, or any combination of these features.

The Ferrograph tape transport is solenoid operated and can be remotely controlled or set up for unattended recording or playback with an external power-line timer switch. It can accommodate tape reels of any size up to 10¹/₂ inches. All signal inputs are through standard 1/4-inch, two-conductor phone jacks instead of the usual phono jacks. The machine can be installed either vertically or horizontally. A small on/off switch and a larger tape-speed selector are located at the top of the front panel between the reels. Below them are a red RECORD indicator light, a four-digit index counter, and the RECORD interlock button. The center section of the panel contains the main transport controls. The head assembly is

exposed by lifting a hinged door. A lever behind the door moves the pressure pads away from the heads for tape loading. The tape passes over a guide post, through slots in the sides of the head cover, and over a tension arm on its way to the takeup reel. A knob switch adjusts the tape tension for 10¹/₂-inch reels or for smaller sizes.

To the left of the heads is the transport-control lever. Its FAST position operates in conjunction with a knob to the right of the heads which differentially varies the current to the two reel motors. The fast speed can thus be adjusted smoothly from zero (control centered) to full speed in either direction. To move the lever in the other direction, past the STOP position to PAUSE or RUN, a small catch above it must be released. The record interlock can be engaged only when the lever is in the STOP position, but there is provision for "interjection" recording at any time during playback, accomplished by holding a lock lever aside while pressing the RECORD button. If the tape runs out or breaks, the machine shuts off after a delay of about 1.5 seconds. A conducting foil attached to the tape can also be used to stop it at any desired point.

The lower part of the panel contains the

electronic controls. In its center are the two large level meters, and between them is a small lever for recording on either channel alone or on both simultaneously. Below is the DOLBY switch, with positions for off, on, and an intermediate setting that activates only the playback Dolby circuits for monitoring a recording made from a Dolbyized source (such as FM or another tape) while recording the undecoded input signal. Another switch connects the MPX filter, which attenuates any 19-kHz pilot in an audio FM signal that might affect the operation of the Dolby system.

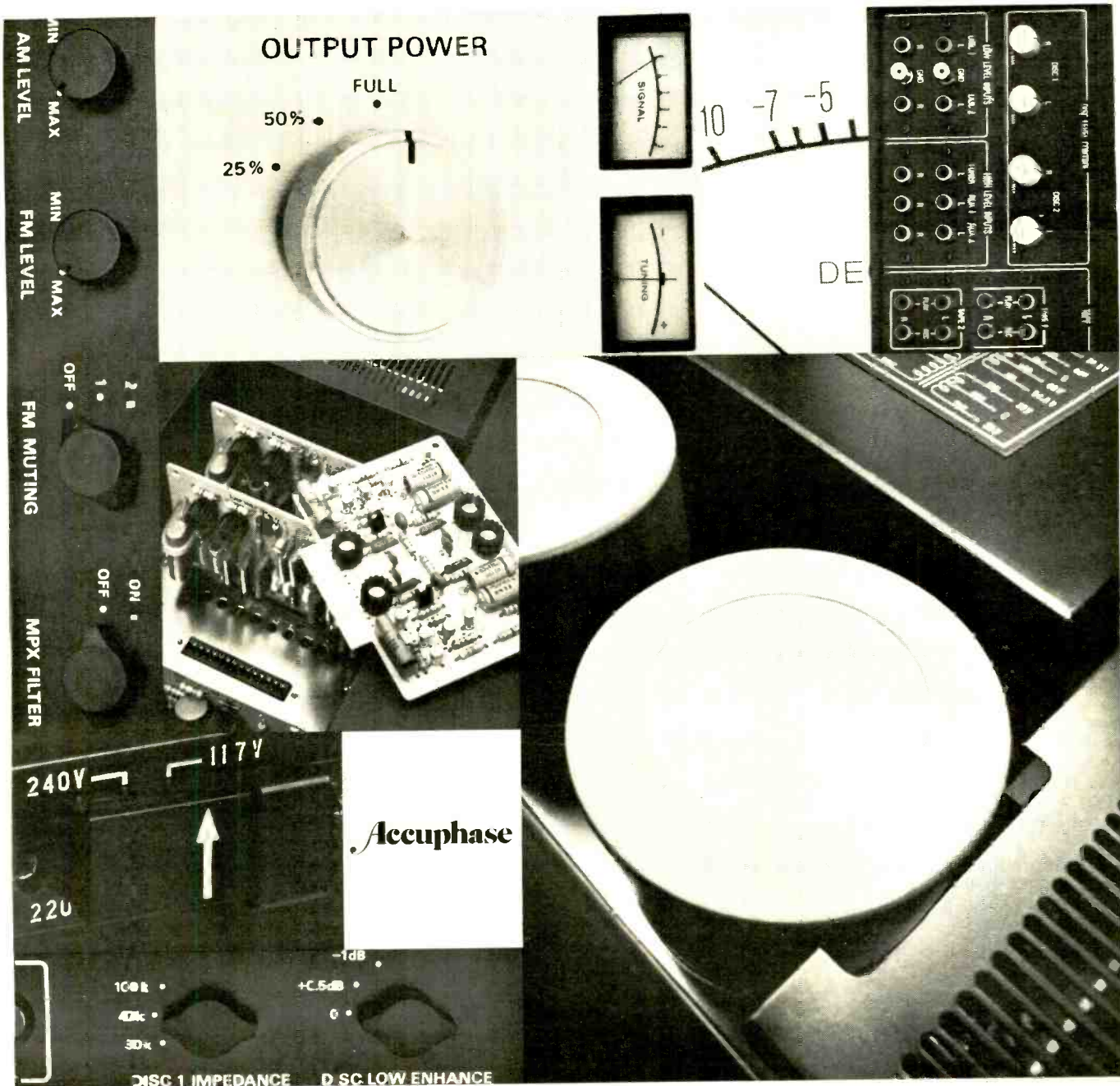
At the far left and right of the panel are two sets of concentric recording-level controls for the respective line and microphone (MIC) inputs. A 1/4-inch input jack is located next to each microphone control (the LINE inputs and all outputs are recessed into the top of the machine). Below the left- and right-channel recording-level controls are small knobs for bass and treble tone control of the low-level preamplifier playback outputs; there are also line-level outputs that are not affected by these controls.

To the immediate left of the meters is an equalization knob that must be set to agree with the selected tape speed. If it is set incorrectly, the recorder will not operate, and a red RESET light glows next to the index counter. To the right of the meters are the concentric playback-level controls for the preamplifier low-level outputs (the line outputs are not affected).

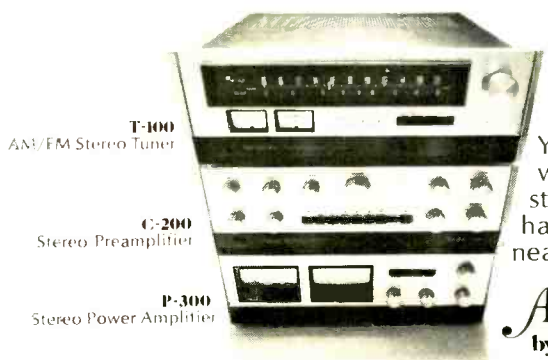
Along the bottom of the panel are pushbutton switches for independent SOURCE/TAPE monitoring of each channel. Two similar buttons can patch the playback output of either channel to the line input of the other for special effects (for example, echo or sound-on-sound), and a third button switches the meters to read the recording bias current. Under each meter is a screwdriver bias adjustment, and another that sets the playback level to give the same readings as the recording level.

A recess on the top of the recorder contains the line inputs and 600-ohm line outputs, plus two sets of low-level preamplifier outputs for each channel (one is at a fixed level not con-

(Continued on page 48)



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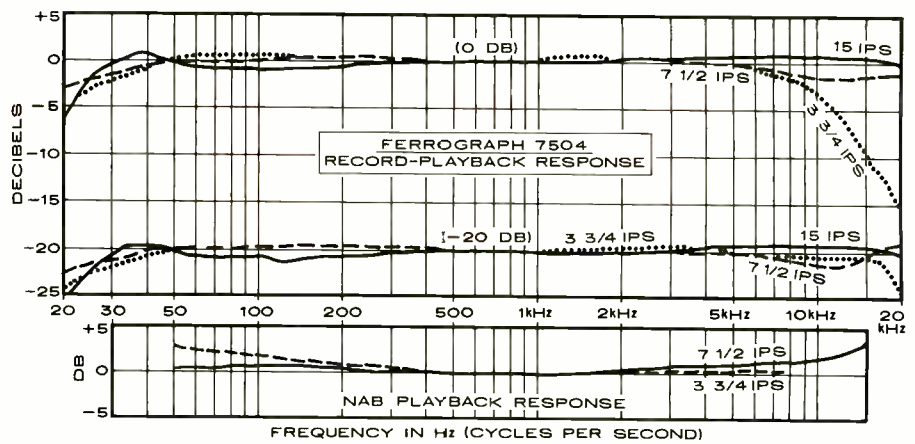
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trolled by the front-panel knobs). The sturdy metal carrying handle fits into the recess and collapses down flush with the top of the case when not in use. The Ferrograph 7504ADHW is installed in a wooden walnut-finish cabinet measuring 19³/₈ inches wide, 17 inches high, and 9 inches deep. It weighs about 55 pounds. Price: \$1,150.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The playback frequency response, with Ampex test tapes, was within ±1.5 dB over the full range of the tapes (50 to 15,000 Hz at 7¹/₂ ips and 50 to 7,500 Hz at 3³/₄ ips). The record-playback response was measured with Scotch 207 tape, for which the machine was biased (although it could easily have been rebiased for any tape). At 3³/₄ ips, the response at a -20-dB level was within ±1 dB from 30 to 17,000 Hz. At a 0-dB level the response began to roll off above 10,000 Hz due to tape saturation. At the 7¹/₂-ips speed, things were quite different, with virtually no difference between the 0- and -20-dB response, which was within ±2 dB from 20 to 22,000 Hz. The 15-ips curves were similar, except that the response was ±2 dB from 23 to 23,500 Hz. All the curves showed an unusually smooth and extended low-frequency response. The Dolby tracking was close, with less than 1.5 dB difference between the response curves made with and without Dolby at levels from -20 to -40 dB. The MPX filter cut response off sharply above 17,000 Hz.

The input signal required for a 0-dB recording level at maximum gain was 21 millivolts (LINE) and 0.1 millivolt (MIC). The microphone inputs overloaded at 20 millivolts, so that an external microphone attenuator might be needed when recording very loud sound levels or when using high-output microphones. The playback level was 1.45 volts at the LINE outputs and 0.28 volt at the preamplifier outputs. There is no provision for calibrating the Dolby system (such as adjustable controls or a recording test tone), but a standard 200-nanowebers-per-meter Dolby reference tape gave a meter reading of -2 dB when the



playback gain was set for equal meter readings during recording and playback.

With a 0-dB recording level, the playback distortion was, respectively, 1, 1.3, and 1.7 per cent at 15, 7¹/₂, and 3³/₄ ips. The 3 per cent reference playback distortion level was reached with recording inputs of +7.5, +6.5, and +3 dB, respectively. The unweighted signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) relative to these levels was 59.5, 58.2, and 54.5 dB. With IEC "A" weighting, these figures improved to 65.7, 65, and 61 dB. Adding the Dolby system resulted in the impressively high S/N measurements of 73.5 (15 ips), 72.5 (7¹/₂ ips), and 67.5 dB (3³/₄ ips). The noise increased by 14 dB through the microphone inputs at maximum gain, but the increase was negligible at normal gain settings with a properly matched microphone.

The tape speed was exact at the two lower tape speeds and was fast by about 0.4 per cent at 15 ips. Flutter at 7¹/₂ ips and 3³/₄ ips was, respectively, 0.1 and 0.15 per cent unweighted. Since the flutter frequency was mostly at 100 Hz, it would produce a much lower reading in a weighted measurement. Perhaps needless to say, the flutter was never audible. At 15 ips, we measured the combined record-playback flutter, which was 0.1 per

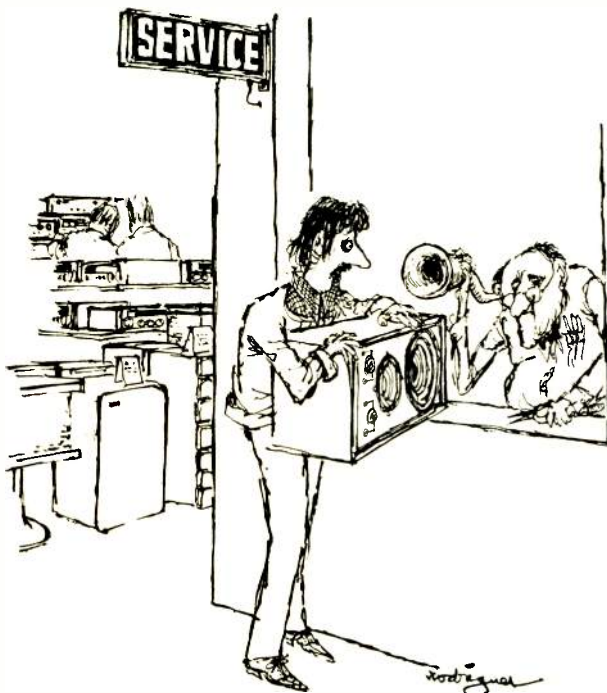
cent. In fast forward, 1,800 feet of tape was moved in 90 seconds, and in reverse it required 107 seconds. The meters responded more slowly than standard VU meters, with 0.3-second tone bursts reading about 66 per cent of the steady-state value.

● **Comment.** Ferrograph recorders, over the years, have always evinced a somewhat "different" approach to human engineering and styling, and the Model 7504 is no exception. Once the very comprehensive instruction manual (all sixty-four pages of it!) has been read and understood, a few practice sessions should enable anyone to use the machine to best advantage.

The novel fast-wind system has its advantages, since the tape can be shuttled back and forth to locate any section (the playback head is effective during fast operation, which permits the usual "monkey chatter" to be smoothly converted to intelligible sounds at the turn of a knob). On our test unit, there was a tendency to spill tape in fast forward when the speed knob was moved rapidly from its maximum setting to center. We have been informed by the importer, Elpa Marketing, that a few of the early machines received in the United States did not have their reel-braking circuits correctly adjusted for our 120-volt a.c. line. These machines have been recalled and readjusted, so that purchasers of the Ferrograph recorder in this country should receive a properly set-up machine. We have since had an opportunity to use one of these adjusted decks, and we were not able to induce tape spill under any circumstances.

We were not too happy about the exclusive use of phone jacks for signal connections, but this could be considered *our* idiosyncrasy. Phone plugs, after all, are stronger and more secure than the RCA type. The lack of a headphone jack on the recorder makes some of its multi-play functions a little hard to execute, although the headphone jack of an associated amplifier could be used for this purpose. Finally, we found the tape threading to be slightly difficult, especially with the recorder vertical. The tape path is not quite the straight line it seems to be, since it must be guided around the capstan pressure roller. Despite these criticisms, mostly engendered by the unconventional (to us) design of the recorder, the Ferrograph 7504 is without question a very fine machine. In respect to frequency response, distortion, and noise level it is a superior performer. And in respect to flexibility, it does at least as well as any of a number of more widely known stereo open-reel decks we can think of.

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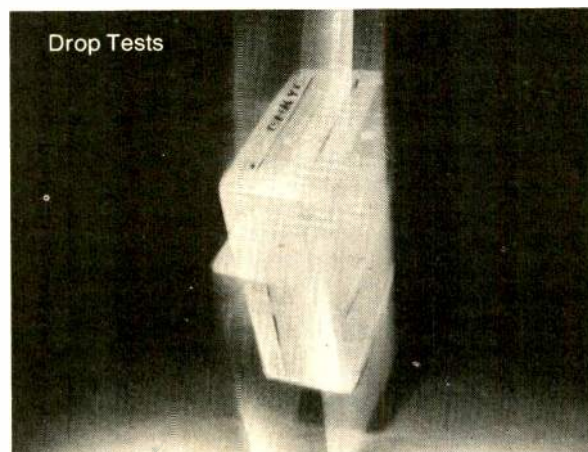
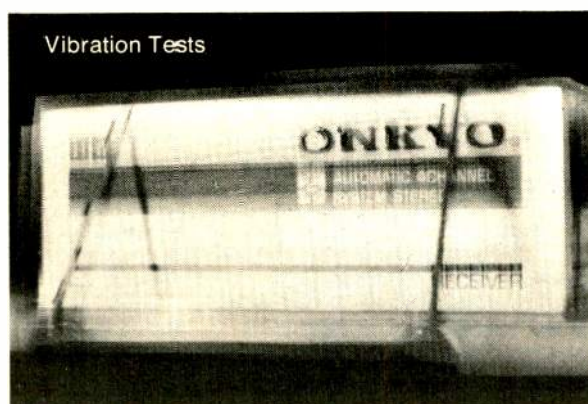
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CIRCLE NO. 24 ON READER SERVICE CARD

THE SIMELS REPORT

By STEVE SIMELS



THE REAL JANIS: JUST A GLIMPSE

It's more than a bit difficult to write about Janis Joplin without getting mired in the rhetoric of sexual politics, but I'm going to try, because the new film about her, titled, appropriately enough, simply *Janis*, manages—if only by accident—to pull that little trick off. It's a flawed film, to be sure, not really a documentary, and not really a concert flick either, but I'm told that its schizophrenia is just a reflection of the way the project was researched. It was *supposed* to be a compilation of concert footage, but along the way they kept unearthing all sorts of fascinating material and couldn't make up their minds.

Actually, I'm rather grateful for that. Had they really done the documentary number—interviewing the people who were close to her, who, from all accounts, were a rather venal and insensitive lot—we would have been forced to confront all sorts of larger issues, which I think would have been brutally cruel to her memory. The woman is dead, and theorizing about her death, attempting to turn her somehow into a symbol, is both a violation of her privacy and terribly dehumanizing. Somehow it cheapens her very real personal agonies if you try to make them into something larger, something representative of whatever currently fashionable philosophical position you may be pushing. We are also spared, thank God, the kind of morbid cult-mongering such a documentary would inevitably have produced—the Judy Garland-ization of Janis—although, on the basis of the audience reactions I witnessed, such a process may al-

ready be well under way and out of the control of the filmmakers in any event.

My own feeling is that what destroyed her had at least as much to do with an artistic decline helped along by the media as it did with her personal problems or with the role of women in society. Those toeing the feminist line on her "case" might reflect on the parallels in the career of Joe Cocker. Like Janis, he was built by the media into something other than what he really was—a singer in a rock-and-roll band—and forced to be the new Ray Charles, just as Janis was cast as the new Bessie Smith. These days Joe is falling apart, on stage and off, in a manner heartbreakingly reminiscent of the latter days of Ms. Joplin.

At any rate, all this comes across very strongly in the film, especially in the scenes with Big Brother, who incidentally were the most criminally underrated band in rock history. They provided the perfect instrumental equivalent of the things Janis was doing vocally, and the music they made together, despite what we were reading at the time, had almost nothing to do with the subtlety of the blues, but instead with the anarchic and *joyous* (the key word) clatter of rock-and-roll. The Monterey Pop sequence, with Janis wailing *Ball and Chain*, bears this out. The performance, despite what the song is supposed to be about, is nothing if not celebratory: the energy is all directed outward, and it's breathtaking. Later, of course, we see the band in the studio (recording "Cheap Thrills"), and producer John Simon is trying to turn them into musi-

cians. This particular segment (shot by D. A. Pennebaker, probably for what her manager Albert Grossman visualized as another *Don't Look Back*) is especially telling. The band is listening to a playback, and Simon is getting really annoyed at his lack of success in getting them to conform to his sterile musical conceptions. What finally does it for him is that Janis is having none of it. Rather than listening, she's simply babbling away energetically about whatever it was that had happened to her that day. Unfortunately, the John Simons of the world eventually won out: Big Brother was fired, and for the rest of the film we see Janis with a succession of predictably competent back-up musicians, who, with their very anonymity and lack of feeling, forced Janis to strip herself naked on stage in an attempt to summon up something like the excitement that had come so easily and spontaneously in the days when she was just one of five lovable hippies making undisciplined but infectious noise.

The film does, however, without really trying to, convey the feeling of disintegration on a psychological, rather than musical, level, and there is one sequence that will haunt me. Janis is on the Dick Cavett Show, and she is witty, brash, and very much in control. She projects the image we all had of her—one that was, of course, a total lie—with such panache that it's next to impossible not to believe in it. In the course of the conversation, she mentions that she is about to attend her high-school class' tenth-year reunion, and she seems to truly relish the idea of returning in triumph to a place where some basically creepy people had worked hard at making her unhappy. Ah, sweet revenge! Then we cut immediately to the reunion itself, where Janis is being interviewed by a local TV reporter; she's obviously very high, and the façade is beginning to crumble. In the midst of some reminiscences there is a moment—brief, but unmistakable—when she is suddenly again the little girl no one had asked to the prom, smarting from an entire adolescence of rejection, and for just that brief moment she is on the verge of breaking down completely. You see the realization of this in her face, and she pulls back, becoming the Tough Mama again. But you know you've just glimpsed someone almost literally on the brink. It's really rather horrifying, especially in the light of what was about to happen to her.

I have my own memories of Janis—the first performance with Big Brother in New York, which was one of the most exciting rock-and-roll shows I've ever had the good fortune to attend—and I prefer them to the kind of visions the film presents. But, for the moment anyway, I think the film will do. It distills an individual, her music, and even a whole era with remarkable power, and it has a great deal to say about the essential callousness of too many in the world of rock, on *both* sides of the stage. (In what other field of endeavor, after all, do journalists publish polls in which people vote on which star will be the next to kick the bucket?) Far better a movie like this than the kind of exploitative fictionalization you know Hollywood must be preparing at this very moment. *Janis* isn't a great piece of cinema, and I certainly can't recommend it as a particularly important musical experience (for that we'll have to wait until Lou Adler and Pennebaker open up their vaults and give us the complete Big Brother set from Monterey), but I suggest you see it anyway.

Janis joyous at San Jose



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MILTON CROSS (1897-1975)

A memoir by Francis Robinson

ONE of the best-known voices ever associated with the Metropolitan Opera belonged not to a singer, but to the radio announcer of the Met's Saturday matinee broadcasts, a man who for millions throughout this country and Canada was the Voice of Opera. Milton Cross was the announcer on the first regular broadcast of the Metropolitan Opera on Christmas Day 1931. In the ensuing forty-three years he missed only two broadcasts: that was when his beloved wife died two years ago. When he died, January 3, 1975, at the age of seventy-seven, he was working on the script for the next day's matinee less than twenty-four hours away. His career was as long as radio itself. He had begun as a singer on WJZ in 1922.

Curiously, none of the obituaries mentioned his hosting of the *Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street*, a hilarious Sunday program on NBC in 1939. Many of the best jazz musicians of the day were regulars, including Henry (Hot Lips) Levine, under Maestro Paul Laval. The singer was a girl on her way up; her name was Dinah Shore.

Whether he intended it or not, the announcer, Gene Hamilton, sounded like Milton Cross. And so, one fine day, someone got the divine inspiration to have Milton himself go on the show. The *Toronto Star* called him "the first performer in history to give a sustained imitation of himself." One can think of others since.

Many of the tributes to Milton dwelt at length on his ability to ad-lib. Several years before the Metropolitan took to the airwaves, he used to commute to Chicago to put that city's great opera company on radio. One night he had finished relating the plot of *Il Trovatore* when a voice ordered, "Tell Cross to keep talking." Samuel Insull, the utilities magnate, who considered it his personal, private, and particular privilege to pick up the tab for the Chicago Opera, was reading the company's annual report to the audience. It droned on for thirty-five minutes. By resorting

to the tactics of a Southern senator on filibuster, Milton filled the time, but the experience must have left a Freudian bruise. By the time I knew him he couldn't even read a typed script. It had to be mimeographed and totally predigested, like pabulum. No matter; it was still magic

He loathed personal appearances and avoided as many as possible. A few years ago he was persuaded to return to Chicago to receive an award from the National Association of Broadcasters. If you ever saw him, you know that he looked and comported himself as he sounded—like a Presbyterian minister. At the award ceremony he told the following story—despite a long cocktail hour he hadn't had a drop. A young couple was on the village green one summer evening. The night noises, the crickets, and the katydids had begun their song. Through the open doors and windows of the church could be heard the organ and the weekly choir practice. "Sounds lovely, doesn't it?" murmured the girl, thinking of the choir. "Yes," replied the young man, his mind on the earthier sounds of the insect world. "And, you know, they make that sound by rubbing their legs together!" It was a mixed audience, and I began looking for the nearest exit. Any moment, I thought, the vice squad would be at the door, but the place roared; Milton did have his surprises.

As Lillian Fowler, Mrs. Cross had been his accompanist in those prehistoric days before the square box microphone. She was choir director at New York's All Angels Church on West Eighty-first Street just around the corner from their apartment on Riverside Drive. They were both buried from there. Of Milton, the rector, the Rev. Eric J. Whiting, said he possessed two childlike qualities, humility and faithfulness. "He carried his honors easily, not lightly." Father Whiting said. "To have said lightly would have implied that he lightly regarded them, and this was not so."

THE day of his funeral the *New York Times* carried an editorial that said, "Milton Cross did more than any other individual to make the Met a national and even a North American institution, rather than merely New York's leading lyric theatre." Two weeks later the *Times* said, "He did more to acquaint listeners with the nuances and subtleties, as well as the grandeur, of opera than any human being in history."

His and Mrs. Cross' great, even unspeakable, sorrow, for no one ever heard them refer to it, was the death of their only child, but his first book of *Stories of the Great Operas* is dedicated "To Lillian and the memory of Our Little Daughter, Lillian Gale." Gilda's last phrases in *Rigoletto* begin "*Lassù in cielo, vicina alla madre*"—"Up there in heaven, near to my mother." When Mrs. Cross died, Mary Ellis Peltz, the first editor of *Opera News* and now archivist at the Metropolitan, wrote to Milton: "*Lassù in cielo, vicina alla bimba*"—"Up there in heaven, near the little girl."

Millions felt about Milton as though he were a member of their family. Countless people have told me that when they learned of his death they wept. All those who knew him, whether in person or as a radio voice, will remember him as long as there is a Saturday afternoon opera broadcast to remind them.

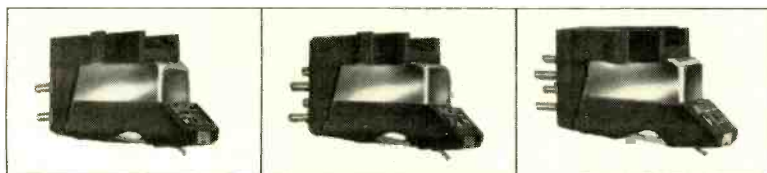
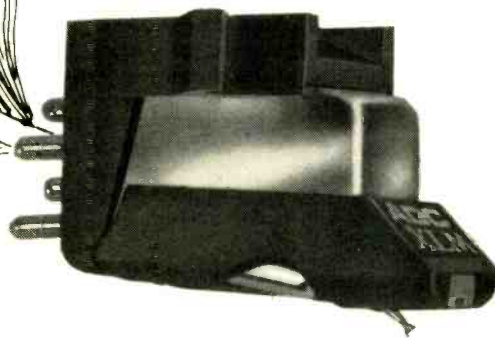
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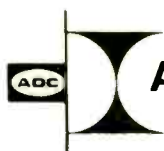
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GOING ON RECORD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND

Music Editor



BWVWoOHobRSVPZ

THE most casual collector of classical records, even if he does no more than leaf through a catalog, finds himself constantly beset with numbers: Op. 59, No. 3; BWV 140; K. 581; and so on. Though he may pass over these in silence for some time, eventually he will want to know what the devil they mean and why they are there. That curiosity may have been prompted by encountering one of the less usual abbreviations—WoO 17, say—and being struck with the obvious comicality of it, or it may simply be the result of the same additive irritation as troubled the unfortunate bartender who endured in silence, for a dozen evenings, the appearance of a customer with a carrot stuck in his ear, only to lose his cool on the thirteenth night when the man appeared with a turnip emerging from that part of his anatomy. He asked, of course, why the turnip? And he was answered, of course, “Because I couldn’t find a carrot.”

Something of the same reasoning is behind some of the numbers one sees in record catalogs and on records. If one glances, for example, down the list of concertos for flute and orchestra by Antonio Vivaldi currently in Schwann-I, one will see an assortment of numbers: P. 155, P. 104, P. 105, P. 77, P. 80, P. 203, P. 440, and so on and on. At the very bottom of the list, though, referring to a recording conducted by Leonard Bernstein, one suddenly sees “F. VI/11.” If you ask, “Why the ‘F’?” I’m afraid that the answer will be that they couldn’t find any “P.”

“P” stands for the catalog of Vivaldi’s instrumental works compiled by the French musicologist Marc Pincherle. “F” stands for the catalog of Vivaldi’s works compiled by the Italian musicologist Antonio Fanna. There is also a catalog of Vivaldi’s works compiled by Mario Rinaldi. You can find an “R” listing in Schwann about a half-inch above the concertos for flute and orchestra (R. Op. 64, No. 6),

again, interestingly, referring to a work on that same record conducted by Bernstein.

Pursuing the matter further (for if you’ve gotten in this far you can’t very well let it drop there), you will find that some concertos have neither a “P” nor an “L” nor even an “R,” but instead say just Op. 3, No. 6. This is because Vivaldi himself collected numbers of his concertos into groups of six or twelve and published them as Op. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 (he stopped there). You will also find that some concertos are not so labeled but are merely parenthetically described as “in a” or “in G.” This is because Vivaldi did not collect all his concertos into *opera* (which is the plural of *opus* or Op.); the upper- and lower-case letters of the keys are an old-fashioned way of signifying major and minor or, as the Germans insist upon having it, *Dir* and *moll*.

Now, why all the confusion? The answer, at least in regard to that ill-starred Bernstein record, is that Columbia Records obviously does not own a copy of the Pincherle catalog. The flute concerto in question was probably performed from an edition published by Ricordi, which lists, along with its own edition number, the Fanna number but not the Pincherle number (that’s called Italian Power). The other concerto mentioned, then, must have been performed from a Rinaldi edition, which apparently lists Rinaldi’s number but no one else’s. In fact, both concertos possess a Pincherle number (respectively, P. 440 and P. 16), but since Columbia couldn’t find the carrots they used the turnips.

The frequency of use of special catalog numbers depends on a number of factors: first, the prominence of the composer; second, the sheer quantity of his work and the number of similarly labeled works; third, the availability of the catalog. Catalogs are sometimes

published in limited editions of a couple of hundred or so and then promptly go out of print. Others are done as Ph.D. theses, with a copy deposited here and a copy there, and most people don’t even know about them, much less have access to them. Pincherle’s Vivaldi catalog was easily available once (you only had to find the right store in Paris), but try to buy a copy now.

There is a fourth determinant of the frequency of use of a catalog, and that is when the composer has made such an unholy mess of his opus numbers that somebody has to straighten things out. An opus number is *supposed* to be applied by the composer to his works in the order in which he composes them. It hasn’t worked out that way. Frequently, it is applied by a publisher in the order in which the works have been published, and that, particularly with Schubert, has no relation to when they were composed. Therefore, it became necessary for Otto Erich Deutsch to compile a Schubert Thematic Catalog in chronological order, and the “D” one sees next to Schubert compositions stands for that.

Generally, the greatest need for catalog numbers occurs with composers of the Classical, pre-Classical, and Baroque eras, who wrote large numbers of similar works in similar keys. J. S. Bach is represented by either “S,” which stands for Schmieder, or BWV, which stands for *Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis*, which is the name of Schmieder’s book. “L” next to a Scarlatti sonata stands for Longo’s catalog, but it has been superseded (though not yet everywhere) by “K” for harpsichordist and cataloger Ralph Kirkpatrick. “K” next to a Mozart work means Köchel. “K. Anh.” stands for the *appendix* to Köchel’s original catalog, and “K-E” or just “E” alone stands for Alfred Einstein’s *revision* of Köchel’s catalog. “Hob” is the usual abbreviation for Hoboken, who is responsible for the *Haydn Verzeichnis* (in 1,450 pages plus XXXI). “Z” for Zimmerman is the letter for Purcell. “W” or “Wot,” for Wotquenne, that for C. P. E. Bach, and “G.” meaning Giegling, for the Torelli trumpet concertos—which is especially handy because they all seem to be in D Major.

There is also, of course, Robert Offergeld’s (“RO”) 1970 centennial catalog of the works of Gottschalk, published by STEREO REVIEW. And there is a catalog, by Georg Kinsky, of Beethoven. Kinsky, however, seems not to have been interested in the small immortality of abbreviation for himself, and he cataloged the works according to Beethoven’s own opus numbers. And what of the works that escaped the composer’s numbering system? That’s where “WoO” comes in, for it refers to the latter part of Kinsky’s catalog where appear the *Werke ohne Opuszahlen* (works without opus numbers). Logical. They couldn’t find a turnip either.

Left to right,
Schubert’s D.,
Haydn’s Hob.,
and Vivaldi’s P.



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THE BASIC REPERTOIRE • 181

By MARTIN BOOKSPAN

MENDELSSOHN'S A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

THE plays of Shakespeare, as translated by such literary masters as August Wilhelm von Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck, have been known and loved by German-speaking readers for nearly two centuries. An early enthusiast was the young Felix Mendelssohn, who read the plays eagerly. Indeed, so inspired was the sixteen-year-old Mendelssohn by *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that he forthwith composed an overture for the play, and, with perhaps characteristic innocence, dedicated it to the Crown Prince of Prussia.

Fourteen years later the Crown Prince ascended the throne as King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. One of his first official actions was to establish an academy of the arts at his court, and his choice of a musician for the academy was instant and inevitable: Felix Mendelssohn. For the most part, Mendelssohn accommodated himself to the requirements of his new position. The composition of incidental music for the elaborate stage presentations at Friedrich Wilhelm's court was a considerable part of those requirements. Accordingly, he produced in 1841 incidental music for Sophocles' *Antigone*, and in 1842 music for Racine's *Athalie*, Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

In all, Mendelssohn composed thirteen pieces as incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the music was first performed, along with the Overture of sixteen years earlier, at a production of the play at the Potsdam Palace in October 1843. Four days later there was a second performance, this time at the Schauspielhaus in Berlin. In the music composed in 1842-1843 Mendelssohn was able to recapture perfectly the poetry, humor, and insight of his boyhood artistry: indeed, some of the music from the Overture is incorporated bodily into several of the later pieces—the "donkey" theme in the Dance of the Clowns, for example, and the magical chords of the Overture's ending at the conclusion of the Finale. The Scherzo, Intermezzo, Nocturne, and Wedding March from the incidental music have often been combined with the Overture to form a suite of Mendelssohn's music for the play.

RECORDINGS of Mendelssohn's music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* come in all shapes and sizes. Absolutely complete—that is, with the Overture and all thirteen pieces of the incidental music—is the performance conducted by Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos (London OS 26107). Included here are six melodramas, five of them very brief, composed by Mendelssohn to heighten certain of the dramatic situations in the play. The third of the melodramas (Op. 61, No. 6), more than

five minutes long, accompanies Puck's observation of the players as they rehearse in the wood. It is a superb piece of inspired tone painting and adds much to our knowledge of Mendelssohn's music. Alas, aside from its completeness, there is little to recommend this recording, for the conducting is rather prosaic and the recorded sound is a bit flat.

Of the other available recordings of extensive material from the incidental music, nearly all include the Fairy March, the Dance of the Clowns, the Finale, and the vocal duet with chorus, "You spotted snakes with double tongue" (from Act II, Scene 2 of the play), along with the Overture and the four pieces that together form the Suite. Perhaps the most imaginatively conceived performance is the one conducted by Erich Leinsdorf (RCA LSC 2673), in which lines from the play are spoken before (and sometimes during) sections of the music. The device is not an unqualified success, however, partly because of actress Inga Swenson's often rather coy delivery. The performance of the music is unexceptionable, if unexceptional, but the recorded sound—a product of RCA's much-touted Dynagroove experiments of the early 1960's—is on the glassy side. Otto Klemperer's version (Angel S 35881), despite some heavy-handedness here and there, is my favorite among the recordings of extensive excerpts. His performance is full of personality, and the humorous aspects of the score are invested with a wry, sardonic quality that casts new light on the music. Tape collectors have available a perfectly serviceable version conducted by Rafael Kubelik (Deutsche Grammophon reel L 8959, cassette 923010). If the performance and reproduction are not particularly outstanding, neither are there any serious flaws or drawbacks.

Recordings of the Overture and Suite from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* abound. My own favorites are those conducted by Jean Martinon (RCA Victrola VICS 1628) and George Szell (Columbia MS 7002, reel MQ 910). Both conductors have virtuoso orchestras at their disposal (the Chicago Symphony and the Cleveland Orchestra, respectively), and both are afforded vibrant playing and sound reproduction.

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performance separate components. This results from the simple fact that the three basic component elements in a receiver share a common power supply, chassis, and cabinet. The resulting savings can easily be estimated by examining and pricing the products of those manufacturers who produce receivers and separate components that have similar ratings (they are often identical); the price differences can be significant.

So far, it might appear that the case for the receiver is strong enough that there would be little justification for choosing either an integrated amplifier plus tuner or a system with completely separate elements. Not so, for the receiver would obviously be the wrong choice for someone whose interest in equipment is such that he is constantly striving for improvement, constantly up-dating one aspect or another of his system. The receiver cannot, of course, be "up-dated" in this piecemeal fashion.

Another point against the receiver is the fact that a failure of any circuit within it effectively disables the entire music system of which it is a part, since the whole thing must be hauled out for repair. In a system composed of separate units, however, you can still play records and tapes if the tuner goes bad, and you can often feed your tuner directly to the power amplifier if the preamplifier fails. (There are, of course, exceptions to these general rules—a dead power amplifier can disable a whole system of separates, unless, of course, you have separate stereo power amplifiers in a four-channel system.)

There is one further inherent limitation of the receiver format that must also be considered: it is just not possible to build a "super-power" (150 watts per channel and up) amplifier into a receiver without increasing its size and weight to unmanageable proportions. At present, about 100 watts per channel seems to be the practical limit for either a receiver or an integrated amplifier, although some large four-channel receivers can have their front and rear channels "strapped" together to produce upwards of 150 watts per channel in the stereo mode.

Most home music systems seem to function quite well with less than 100 watts per channel of amplifier power, and the design of the majority of popular speakers makes it unwise to use higher powers without special fusing precautions. Nevertheless, a growing

number of audiophiles finds that the potential for clean reproduction of loud signal peaks offered by a very powerful amplifier is an important factor in achieving a closer approach to "natural" sound. For them, a separate power amplifier is a must, and this in turn dictates the use of separate preamplifiers and tuners (there are a couple of "tuner-preamplifier" combinations available, but they seem not to have attracted a significant part of the total market).

There are other advantages to the use of a separate preamplifier, although they are not really fundamental to this component. As a rule, separate preamplifiers tend to have more control flexibility as a result of their filters, special tone-control characteristics, and available inputs. And there is at least one preamplifier available whose special circuits are so complex that they would be difficult to physically incorporate in a receiver-size component. In general, however, there is no reason why the same features could not be incorporated in receivers—and they often are—but they are *usually* found in separate preamplifier/control units.

It is not so easy to generalize about integrated amplifiers, many of which differ little from a receiver (minus the tuner) while having most of the added versatility of totally separate components. It is interesting to observe that some features long associated only

People do not appreciate that very high power is not always heard as a high listening level

with receivers are now appearing in the higher-price separate components. These include switching for multiple speaker outputs, which may require that the power amplifier outputs be brought back to the preamplifier before being distributed to the speakers, and headphone outputs which usually also must be taken from the speaker-output circuit. Many preamplifiers do have headphone jacks, but they are designed for driving 8- to 16-ohm phones and frequently do not provide sufficient volume with the increasingly popular 200- to 600-ohm phones. A few preamplifiers provide only marginal output levels driving 8-ohm phones, a point that may be worth checking in advance if you are a frequent headphone listener.

There is a surprising range of fea-

tures among basic power amplifiers (I refer to *operating* features, not the circuits or electrical performance). Some of these units are truly basic, lacking level controls, meters, and even an on/off switch. On others, level meters are added to provide visual clues to the power being delivered. Although these might seem to be mere gimmicks, they are very useful as a warning when unsafe power levels are being applied to the speakers, since most people do not appreciate the fact that very high power is not always *heard* as a correspondingly high listening level (if the sound is "clean," one can use most of the output of a super-power amplifier without hearing distress—if the speaker can take it!). Some amplifiers have adjustable electronic circuits to monitor and control their power output. Input-level controls are sometimes provided, adding to the compatibility of the power amplifier with preamplifiers of widely differing characteristics. Other features normally associated with the preamplifier, such as subsonic and ultrasonic filters, are also occasionally built into power amplifiers.

It might be well to examine now some of the fundamental features and functions of preamplifiers and power amplifiers. First, the power amplifier. As the name implies, its purpose is to supply electrical audio *power* to the speakers. To do this, it must receive a suitable drive signal from the preamplifier and provide an appropriate input impedance for the preamplifier's output. The relatively high input impedance of most power amplifiers (usually 50,000 to 100,000 ohms) usually fulfills the latter condition. But some power amps have a 10,000-ohm or so input impedance and some preamplifiers have a relatively high output impedance. This combination may adversely affect the distortion at high output levels in a given installation. This sort of mismatch can also affect the preamplifier output at very low frequencies, perhaps to the point of making the combination sound "bass shy." (If both components come from the same manufacturer, however, this is not likely to happen.)

The specific circuit details of power amplifiers, the number of output transistors used in each channel, the size of the power-supply components, and the manner in which the output stages are protected against short-circuit or overload damage vary widely from

one model to another. These factors may be important in a given installation or they may not. Unfortunately, it is not possible to make any sweeping statements about their significance to a particular user. It is a fact that most amplifiers, with most types of speaker loads, sound very much alike so long as they are being operated within their power ratings. On the other hand, certain speakers present

Almost any cartridge can be used successfully with any properly designed preamplifier

unusual loads to the amplifier, and some amplifiers react peculiarly to them. If you have a pair of these speakers (and those of you who do are probably well aware of their properties) and if you have reason to believe that some amplifiers are more suitable than others in your installation, by all means act accordingly. But most people can safely make their selection on the basis of size, style, price, reputation, or any other suitable criterion.

The preamplifier is a much more visible component, since it contains almost all the controls normally involved in the operation of the system. Basically, the preamplifier selects one of a number of input sources connected to it, passes it through tone-control and filter circuits (which often can be by-passed to prevent their having even a minimal effect on the signal), through a volume control, and out to the power amplifier. Most preamplifiers are designed to accept high-level signal inputs (from a tuner or tape deck) that are actually strong enough to drive the power amplifier directly. However, the magnetic phono-cartridge inputs receive signals at a level of a few millivolts at most, and these signals must also be equalized (by boosting the low frequencies and cutting the highs) to give a flat overall response. Therefore, the phono-preamplifier section generally operates independently of the other inputs and provides an output comparable in strength to that of a high-level program source. This output then internally enters the subsequent preamplifier circuits at the same point as the high-level signal from, say, a tuner.

Since most magnetic cartridges have roughly the same output range, almost any cartridge can be used successfully with any properly designed preamplifier without having to oper-

ate the volume control near its upper or lower limits to accommodate cartridge-output extremes. Certain cartridges, especially moving-coil designs, have a very low output, and they therefore cannot normally be used without a step-up transformer or an outboard preamplifier to increase their output voltage to that of a standard magnetic cartridge. At the other extreme, there are a few cartridges with relatively high output levels (7 to 10 millivolts, as opposed to the more usual 2 to 5 millivolts) that can overload the phono preamplifier if it is not designed with adequate "headroom."

The specifications of many preamplifiers—and preamplifier sections—include the maximum phono-input voltage that can be handled without overload. Occasionally, one finds a unit that overloads with as little as 30 millivolts input; this indicates a borderline design. It should be used only with relatively low-output phono cartridges, since a cartridge's output on high musical peaks can exceed its nominal rated output to a significant degree. Most preamplifiers, even in moderate-price receivers, can handle more than 50 millivolts of audio signal at their phono inputs, and among the better ones overload levels of 100 millivolts or more are not uncommon.

It is rare to find a situation in which a tone control will correct a speaker deficiency

Some preamplifier controls are taken for granted, such as the on/off power switch. Not only does it turn on the preamplifier itself, but it also turns on the power amplifier and any other component plugged into the "switched" convenience outlets on its rear panel. It may seem ridiculous even to mention this control, but since one of the principal reasons for using a separate preamplifier is to drive a high-power amplifier, we must give some thought to the current rating of these switched a.c. outlets. A large power amplifier can draw more than 10 amperes of current from the power line (through the preamplifier on/off switch), yet many preamp switches can handle only a fraction of that current. The result can be premature failure of the power switch—perhaps not as devastating as the loss of one's output transistors, but equally able to put a whole system out of action. Though some of the preceding

cautions apply most particularly to separate preamplifiers and power amplifiers, in many cases they apply with equal force to integrated amplifiers and receivers.

WE move on now to control flexibility and some basic specifications, both of them factors that are of great importance when purchasing any type of component. It must be realized first of all that most tone-control circuits are quite similar in their effects. Although they can certainly alter the frequency balance of a program, it is rare to find a situation in which a tone control will correct a deficiency in a speaker or in the room acoustics, only because the correction is rarely introduced in the frequency area where it is needed.

Greater flexibility is offered in some receivers and amplifiers by a *third* control, one which adjusts the mid-range level over a limited range. This can sometimes correct a "forward"-sounding speaker into one with a more retiring personality (or vice versa). A more effective arrangement, used on some preamplifiers and integrated amplifiers (and on a couple of high-price receivers), involves the ability to vary the response at very high and very low frequencies without affecting the greater part of the musical spectrum. Since the weaknesses of many speakers are most evident at the frequency extremes, this offers at least the possibility of useful speaker equalization. Two techniques are used. Most often, the standard bass and treble tone controls have associated switches that change their "turnover" frequencies—the frequencies at which they begin to become effective. An even better arrangement uses two bass controls and two treble controls, one pair having conventional characteristics and the other operating only at the frequency extremes.

If you want greater control over the system's frequency response, a multi-band "graphic equalizer" is the best approach. Simple two-octave-band equalizers are found in some receivers as well as in separate preamplifiers, but for the utmost flexibility there should be a separate adjustment for each audible octave. Since this calls for ten or eleven controls in each channel, the octave-band equalizer is found only in a few separate preamplifiers (and as an accessory that can be added to any system).

A key amplifier specification is the

signal-to-noise ratio (S/N). This ratio is the difference between a reference power output (usually the rated power of the amplifier) and the noise output in the absence of a signal output. It is expressed in decibels. Unfortunately, there is little standardization of the measurement conditions (such as gain-control settings, input termination, and "weighting" curves that give better correlation with audible effects), so comparisons between amplifiers on the basis of published noise specifications can be misleading.

At Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, we prefer to refer the noise output to a fixed output level (10 watts output for a power amplifier, or a 1-volt output level for a preamplifier), since this gives a more practical indication of the noise that will be heard by the listener. For example, a 100-watt power amplifier with a 90-dB S/N and a 10-watt power amplifier with an 80-dB S/N would produce the same noise level in the listening room if they were connected to the same speakers. Our test method would give each an

One of the best guarantees against obsolescence is a spare tape input-output circuit

80-dB rating, even though their published specifications might suggest that the more powerful amplifier was also the quieter of the two.

The noise through the high-level (AUX) inputs of any good amplifier or receiver will normally be inaudible even at very high volume-control settings (a S/N measurement of 70 dB or better, which is common, means that noise will not be heard unless one uses very efficient speakers and listens at a distance of a foot or less, which is *not* a realistic condition). Phono-preamplifier noise is more likely to be heard at high volume settings, but not at the usual operating gain levels. Bear in mind that the noise from the program source will almost always be greater than amplifier noise. In other words, undue weight should not be attached to S/N ratings, especially if they are better than 70 dB below 10 watts. In this respect there is no significant difference between receivers and separate components of comparable quality.

The power ratings of amplifiers and receivers have suffered in past years from an advertising race that has made it difficult to compare amplifier

ratings without reading the fine print—literally! The current FTC ruling on advertised power ratings attempted to put everyone on an even basis—and would have achieved that end except for a "preconditioning" requirement still in dispute. The approach, now required for all advertised ratings, states the guaranteed minimum power from each channel, with all channels driven, at a specified distortion level that cannot be exceeded from 0.25 watt to rated power over a stated frequency range. Although other power ratings are still permitted, in advertising they must appear in a *smaller* typeface.

One respect in which separate preamplifiers (and some integrated amplifiers) offer an advantage over most receivers is in the number and variety of program inputs they can handle. At a minimum, there should be one high-level (AUX) input and one phono input, plus one set of tape-recorder input and output jacks with a monitoring switch. Some higher-price receivers have additional inputs for a second phono cartridge and a second tape recorder plus one or two additional high-level sources. However, separate preamplifiers tend to offer more input capability than receivers, and some will control as many as three high-level sources, two phono cartridges, and three tape decks. If this versatility is important to you, it is most likely to be found in a preamplifier—but do not overlook the fact that a few of the de luxe receivers can match almost any separate component in the generosity of their input-output facilities.

Even if you plan to use only one tape deck, it might be well to look for an amplifier or receiver with *two* sets of tape facilities. One of the best guarantees against obsolescence these days is a spare tape input-output circuit with a monitoring switch, since almost any conceivable "out-board" accessory can be added through these connections without disturbing the operation of the system. However, even if your amplifier has only a single tape circuit that is already devoted to a tape deck, many accessories (such as equalizers, noise-reduction devices, etc.) have duplicate tape inputs and outputs and monitoring switching that replaces the ones taken up on the amplifier by their installation.

Some accessories are designed to go between the preamplifier output and the power-amplifier input. This

does not mandate the use of separate components, since many integrated amplifiers and the better receivers have their preamplifier outputs and main-amplifier inputs accessible as separate jacks on the rear panel, where they are normally joined by external jumper plugs or an internal switch. By interrupting the circuit at this point, any device that could be used with separate components can also be patched into the signal path of an integrated amplifier or receiver.

To repeat: the essential advantage of a separate power amplifier is its ability to deliver very high power outputs (up to several hundred watts per channel). This capability requires that an amplifier be very large and heavy and that it be able to dissipate considerable amounts of heat. In general, when power outputs of more

What it comes down to is the nature of your needs and the state of your pocketbook

than 100 watts per channel are required, "separates" are indicated. A few rather expensive preamplifiers also have special features such as multi-band equalizers or noise-reduction systems that can be valuable in a de luxe system. And obviously, if a separate preamplifier is used, the power amplifier would logically also be a separate unit. Another, less compelling, reason for choosing a separate preamplifier could be the extra input and control flexibility afforded by some models.

Unless one or more of the above criteria weighs conspicuously heavy in your system plans, there seems to be little practical advantage in owning separate components. Almost every feature and level of performance found in an integrated amplifier, for example, is also available in a receiver, and usually at an appreciable saving over the cost of a system composed entirely of "separates." It could be argued also that the special features of some component tuners might justify their purchase, and therefore the use of either an integrated amplifier or separate preamp and power amplifier. There are some tuners, all of them very expensive, that could make this choice an attractive one—in an installation in which price is no object, that is. All of which is to say, again, that what it all comes down to is the nature of your needs and the state of your pocketbook.

STEREO REVIEW THROWS A PARTY

To celebrate its Record of the Year Awards for 1974—and to honor Mabel Mercer in the year of her Diamond Jubilee



John David Kahoher/Atlantic



Mabel Mercer accepts flowery congratulations from Metropolitan Opera soprano Anna Moffo, who has just presented her with STEREO REVIEW's first Certificate of Merit award, as Edgar W. Hopper, the magazine's publisher, looks on. Right, Miss Mercer chats in a quiet corner with Dick Phipps, who is director of special projects for the Columbia, South Carolina ETV Network.



Left above, composer-pianist Eubie Blake demonstrates his still-effective, though nonagenarian blarney to an appreciative Mabel Mercer. Singer-pianist Travis Hudson collects a treasurable autograph, center, and artist Lisa Rhana, a long-time friend, exchanges greetings with Miss Mercer before a blow-up of her February-cover portrait of the young Mabel. More autographs for (below left) Ronny Whyte, singer-actress Ruth Warrick (the recent Broadway revival of Irene, TV's serial All My Children), and Stereo Reviewer Chris Albertson. Right, Miss Mercer with Vivien Friedman, Chappell Music's public relations director.





Left, Anna Moffo accepts a Record of the Year award to RCA for its recording of Humperdinck's Hansel und Gretel (she played the Hosenrolle); the Metropolitan Opera's assistant manager Francis Robinson with actress-sculptor Patricia Peardon; Patrick and Carol Veitch (he is the Met's advertising coordinator, she is on the Brooklyn Academy of Music's public-information staff); Music Editor James Goodfriend plays sandwich with record producer Jo Nickrenz and Nonesuch Records' director Tracey Sterne.



Managing Editor William Livingstone at the feet of songwriter Elisse (Guess Who I Saw Today) Boyd; Diane Nakamura, Assistant to the Managing Editor, greets soprano Janet Baker (whose Schubert recital with Gerald Moore for Seraphim was another Record of the Year award winner) while Music Editor Goodfriend and Angel's director of artist relations John Coveney look on; Editor William Anderson, soprano Anna Moffo and mezzo Joanna Simon on either arm, demonstrates that rank hath privileges.



Above left, the one, the only Sylvia Syms explains the topical significance of STEREO REVIEW's cabaret issue to a captivated audience; author Robert (Cole, The Gershwins) Kimball and wife Abigail Kuffik of Newsweek's music staff; F. Scott Mampe, vice president of Phonogram Inc. (Philips), and James Frey, vice president of Polydor (DG); Music Editor Goodfriend with terrible-tempered Stereo Reviewer Joel Vance. Bottom left, Editor Anderson recommends a little Gottschalk to pianist Antonio Barbosa as Connoisseur Society's marketing director Rosana Silver looks on; composer Alec Wilder exchanges a few words with Harry Beard, Mabel Mercer's manager; and Renée Martins and Jack Romann, manager of Baldwin Pianos' concert-artist department, agree that it's a marvelous party. (All photos by Christian Steiner except as otherwise indicated.)





Erika Davidson

SHIRLEY VERRETT, SINGER

By Roy Hemming

MOST opera stars feel quite capable of filling a stage all by themselves, particularly the glamorous ladies of the international opera world, but the Metropolitan in New York has cast two of them in its new production of Rossini's *The Siege of Corinth*: Beverly Sills and Shirley Verrett. This production is the first in which the two singers have worked together "live," although they have made recordings before—*Norma* and *Anna Bolena* for ABC and Angel's *The Siege of Corinth*, which has just been released and is reviewed in this issue.

"I won't deny that I prefer being the sole female protagonist up there

on stage, because I *do* prefer it," Miss Verrett (accent the last syllable) admitted with typical candor as we talked in her elegant duplex apartment on New York City's upper West Side. "But there's something special and exciting about singing with a fabulous colleague and a marvelous artist like Beverly Sills—or with Montserrat Caballé [with whom Miss Verrett has also been teamed live and for recordings]. It makes you do *your* best, and when everything in a production is well integrated, I'm happiest."

In the past few years, Shirley Verrett has become a leading diva not only at the Met but with the principal opera companies in London, Milan, Moscow, Vienna, Paris, and San Francisco, and she has a very busy recording schedule. What makes her so special is not just the wide range of her mezzo-soprano voice, but also the wide variety of roles she can handle—from dramatic to lyric to bel canto—including many contralto and soprano roles. Add to that her trim figure, her vivacious good looks, and an ability to convey sexiness on an operatic stage without being phony about it, and it's easy to understand why Shirley Verrett has so much going for her right now.

Her path to opera was not a direct one. Born in New Orleans, she grew up in Los Angeles where her father was a building contractor. Her family were the only blacks in the Seventh Day Adventist Church there, and Shirley began to sing in church at the age of six. Her parents encouraged her musical talent, but being strict Adventists they disapproved of a career on the stage. So when Miss Verrett began serious musical studies, it was with the understanding that any career as a singer would be outside the realm of opera. "My father didn't see why I couldn't be a great singer and a C.P.A. at the same time," she says. For a while she even sold real estate in California.

Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts changed all that when she became a winner on the show in 1955. "If I had not come to New York for the Godfrey show," she said, "I probably would not have come here until much later. Certain people would not have seen me, I wouldn't have gone to Juilliard and to certain teachers there, and I wouldn't have met Louis [her husband, an artist]. So I guess it was fate or *destino* for me."

With the aid of grants and scholar-

ships, she completed her musical training at Juilliard in 1961. That year Rudolf Bing, general manager of the Met, offered her a contract. She turned him down flat—and only partly for religious reasons. “My family by then had come to accept the fact that I’m my own woman and would probably sing opera someday. I said ‘no’ because the Met offered me only some Wagnerian roles—for *contralto*! Not by any stretch was I a *contralto* then or now,” she says emphatically.

“When I was a little girl, I would sing low like Marian Anderson, who was my ideal, and my father would say I was a *contralto*. My teacher in California said I was a soprano, but she also said we shouldn’t categorize it until we’d worked out certain things. From the beginning I knew I could be a mezzo-soprano, even though I also knew that one day I would break out into another area. Whether I’m ever going to call myself a soprano, I’m not quite sure. The classification is very dangerous because once you’re a soprano, you’re expected to do *everything*. Even sopranos who have been singing as sopranos all their lives don’t attempt certain roles—such as Manon Lescaut because it’s so low, or Fidelio or Salome because of the range, or Norma. So I’d like to be called just Shirley Verrett, Singer.”

IN the early 1960’s, Miss Verrett embarked on a career as a recitalist. She was one of the soloists chosen by Leonard Bernstein for the inaugural concert of Lincoln Center’s Philharmonic Hall (later renamed Avery Fisher Hall). Soon thereafter she was singing with most of the major American symphony orchestras. Especially significant was an appearance with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski when he returned to conduct his former orchestra after an absence of nineteen years. Her performance of Falla’s *El Amor Brujo* was so electrifying that Columbia Records promptly got Verrett, Stokowski, and the Philadelphians to record it.

On that recording, as on several other early ones, she was listed as Shirley Verrett-Carter. “Carter was a first marriage,” she explains. “I was known at Juilliard and had won a Naumberg Award as Shirley Carter. But I knew the marriage was doomed, and professionally I wanted to use my maiden name, Verrett. The only way I could do so then was to use *both*

names. After the divorce I dropped the Carter.” Since then, Miss Verrett has had to endure a few jokes about being a name-dropper—especially as a number of her colleagues *added* to theirs, Grace Bumbry becoming Grace Melzia Bumbry and Ursula Schroeder becoming Ursula Schroeder-Feinen.

Until the late 1960’s Miss Verrett thought of herself as a recitalist who also sang a couple of operas. But in 1967 she agreed to sing at Covent Garden in London, and in 1968 she made her Met debut in *Carmen*. Other roles followed, and in 1974 she made her biggest operatic splash with the Met’s uncut five-hour production of Berlioz’s *The Trojans*. Originally scheduled to sing Cassandra in the first half of the opera, she took on the other leading role of Dido in the second half when Christa Ludwig became ill and could not sing the première. It was a tour de force that opera fans still talk about.

Next on her schedule are Verdi’s Lady Macbeth, to open La Scala in December, and then the title role in *Norma* at Covent Garden in 1976. Yes, the *title* role—not the role of Adalgisa, which she recorded with Sills. “I don’t know anyone else in this generation who’s sung *both* Adalgisa and *Norma*,” she says with audible excitement in her voice. “Certain people have tried to scare me off from doing *Norma*. You need a lot of stamina for it because the role is so long. You have to have the notes, of course, and I do. But most important for *Norma*, I feel, is having flexibility and dramatic quality in your voice. I just love the music, and, well, if I have the stamina to sing both Cassandra and Dido in *The Trojans*, I can certainly do *Norma*.”

There are certain roles she insists she won’t sing again, including *Carmen* and Princess Eboli (in *Don Carlo*) and possibly Amneris in *Aïda*. “I won’t say I’ll *never* sing Amneris again—it depends on who is in the pit—but I will not ruin my voice by trying to get through an orchestra led by a conductor who thinks he’s God, drowning out everybody when the score doesn’t call for it.”

I commented that baritone Sherrill Milnes had told me audiences are sometimes disappointed to discover that a singer’s voice may not sound as loud in the theater as it does on recordings. “Exactly!” Miss Verrett shot back. “I’ve recorded for quite a few different companies and they

have different methods, different sounds. One producer will say, ‘Let’s do it as it would sound in the opera house.’ Another producer will be a voice man. He says, ‘People sitting in their living room haven’t got the visual, just the aural. So they want to hear the sound of the voice, no matter what. The thing I care about is that the sound be accurately *my* sound. If it’s horrible, I’ll live with it, but let it be *my* horrible sound.”

I asked on which recordings she thought her voice had been captured well. She answered, “The *Anna Bolena* on ABC, in which I sing Jane Seymour, and the *Don Carlo* on Angel, in which I sing Eboli, with Giulini conducting. Also a few times on RCA, especially the *Stabat Mater* and the *Singing in the Storm* album.”

On recordings listeners hear only singers’ voices without any awareness of what their racial background may be. This led me to ask Miss Verrett if we’ve reached the point where opera audiences will take a racial mix as matter-of-factly as they’ll take a blond singer or a brunette singer in certain roles and think only of their vocal abilities. “Not exactly,” she answered. “Maybe as far as the lady singers are concerned—although that’s still not one hundred per cent—but certainly *not* with black male singers. It’s the whole social-sexual thing that still goes on. I’m hoping for the day when I can sing with a black leading man or *any* soprano can. George Shirley is our only one at the Met right now, but there are a few black men singing opera in Europe, such as Simon Estes and McHenry Boatwright. The Germans, surprisingly, are much less uptight about this than we in America are or than the Italians are. Since the war, German opera houses have taken blacks and whites *on merit*. I give them great credit for that.”

ONE concert that Miss Verrett is especially proud of doing took place in 1968 in Bethlehem. There, in one of the world’s most strife-torn regions, she sang the Verdi Requiem together with a black soprano (Martina Arroyo), a Jewish tenor (Richard Tucker), and an Italian baritone (Bonaldo Giaiotti), with an Indian conductor (Zubin Mehta) leading the Israel Philharmonic in a performance sponsored by the city’s Arab mayor. “It said a lot about how people can work together, and how music can help them do it,” she says simply.

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET (1952-1974)

By Chris Albertson

Though the quartet usually harked back to the tuxedoed formality of early jazz for its concerts, there were times when workaday garb seemed more appropriate



THE year 1952 was one of dramatic political conventions, McCarthyism, a war in Korea, Howdy Doody, Mr. Peepers, Queen Elizabeth II, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Musically, it was the year Johnnie Ray cried, Kay Starr spun the wheel of fortune, Vera Lynn bid us *auf Wiederseh'n*, Jimmy Boyd saw mommy kissing Santa Claus, Truman played his swan song on the White House piano, and Mahalia Jackson got her first taste of European adulation. Jazz people mourned the deaths of John Kirby and Fletcher Henderson. There was no stereo, no Elvis, no Motown. Crew cuts and processed pompadours were still in vogue, and "long-hairs" were still "squares" whose ears favored classical music.

Jazz musicians, who had been concertizing for years, continued to do so with an air of informality. But four men were about to change that, because 1952 was also the year that produced the Modern Jazz Quartet.

Pianist John Lewis, vibraphonist Milt Jackson, bassist Percy Heath, and drummer Kenny Clarke, recording as the Milt Jackson Quartet, made four sides for the Hi-Lo label in April of 1952, and it was from this loosely structured, spontaneous session that the most durable combo in jazz history sprang. The first official Modern Jazz Quartet session came the following December and was released in the early part of 1953 as a 10-inch Prestige album titled "The Modern Jazz Quartet with Milt Jackson." More

carefully thought out than the Hi-Lo recordings, the album pointed in a direction that was refreshingly original, and the critics reacted accordingly. The high degree of skill and creativity possessed by the four musicians had already been demonstrated, but, largely through the efforts of John Lewis, the quartet now exhibited a degree of versatility not evidenced by their previous recordings. There was *Vendome*, John Lewis' excellent mixture of funk and fugue; *Rose of the Rio Grande*, a 1922 Dixieland item in hard-swinging mainstream dress; *La Ronde* and *All the Things You Are*, reflecting the past involvement of the quartet's members in the bebop developments that took jazz out of the swing era.



A second Prestige session, in the summer of 1953, produced a masterly version of *Autumn in New York*, featuring the velvety ballad style of Milt Jackson; *Delaunay's Dilemma*, with a sophisticated approach to traditional swing style; and *The Queen's Fancy*, John Lewis' exquisite blend of eighteenth-century England and twentieth-century America. Once again the critics raved. But, though the quartet began to get offers of club bookings, there were not enough of them to consider making the group a permanent alliance. Heath and Clarke continued free-lancing in the New York area, Lewis went on tour as Ella Fitzgerald's accompanist, and Jackson made more appearances with Dizzy Gillespie, with whom all four

had been associated and in whose band the seeds of the MJQ had actually germinated some five years earlier. "That's really when the original idea for the quartet came," Jackson once recalled, "around 1946 or '47 when John and I were with Dizzy. We'd play as a quartet with Ray Brown and Kenny Clarke or Joe Harris—to give the brass section a chance to rest."

The Modern Jazz Quartet did not become a viable entity until 1954 when winning the annual *down beat* critics award for the best combo record of the year brought substantial offers of bookings. "We decided that no individual member of the quartet should have star billing," says Jackson, "and I must admit that I felt bad-

ly about no longer being the leader. But John worked very hard and he was responsible for the direction we took. John had come up with the Modern Jazz Quartet as a name for the group when we did the first Prestige recordings, and we decided to stick to that name when we became a cooperative."

The quartet's *only* personnel change occurred in February 1955, when drummer Connie Kay replaced Kenny Clarke: although Clarke was one of the finest drummers of modern jazz at that time, and many saw his departure as some sort of death knell, Connie Kay proved to be just the finishing touch Lewis needed to get his ideas across. Despite a background that included five years with Lester

Young and stints with Coleman Hawkins, Miles Davis, and Charlie Parker, Connie Kay was not as well known as his predecessor or his three new colleagues. An ardent admirer of the late Big Sid Catlett—the modern drummer of the previous two decades—Kay displayed Catlett’s sensitivity, employed a growing variety of percussion tools, and used them to feed the quartet rather than the crowd.

“Kenny always wanted to play his own way,” Jackson recalled ten years later. “His drum solos were solos, but Connie always took the whole piece into consideration. If John wanted a paradiddle in a certain spot, that’s exactly where he got it.”

Over the years, various reasons have been given for the change in drummers, but Clarke’s individualism simply could not thrive in the kind of quartet John Lewis had in mind. The effect of the change was immediate: Lewis extended his compositions,

there was a heavier reliance on arrangements, and Kay’s fondness for unorthodox percussion instruments helped shape the overall sound of the quartet.

Each man now took on responsibilities vital to the operation of the group: John Lewis took over a chore previously handled by Milt Jackson and became the musical director, Jackson handled public relations, Kay was put in charge of travel arrangements and accommodations, and Heath bore the responsibility for the quartet’s wardrobe. “We discussed everything, from how we should dress to how we should take a bow.” All billing and publicity focused on the group rather than on any of its individual members, but Milt Jackson—who had the largest built-in following—was obviously the man most people came to hear. Throughout the group’s twenty-two-year history, Jackson continued to be the crowd-pleaser, but his playing be-

came less flashy and more controlled (some would say more inhibited) as the MJQ matured.

DURING its first ten years, the MJQ concentrated on concert appearances, sometimes accepting as few as two club dates in a year. So cohesive was the group that finding a replacement for an ailing member was out of the question—if someone got sick, all engagements were simply canceled until he was well enough to perform again. However, though replacements or subtractions were never considered, there was no policy against the addition of guest performers. Jimmy Guiffre, Sonny Rollins, and Laurindo Almeida have all recorded with the MJQ, as have the Beaux Arts String Quartet, the Juilliard String Quartet, symphony orchestras, and a group led by third-stream composer Gunther Schuller. Such collaborations have generally been successful, and the MJQ



John Lewis, piano



Connie Kay, drums



Percy Heath, bass



Milt Jackson, vibraharp

Atlantic Records



The Modern Jazz Quartet in its New York farewell concert in Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, last November

seemed to mature with each new venture, ever developing and ever keeping up with developments around it.

Besides its ventures into the realm of classical music and the refinements it brought to the music from which it sprang, the MJQ brought dignity to jazz. Except for a very brief spell during which they wore Nehru suits (a style that enjoyed an even briefer vogue), the MJQ wore tuxedos for its public appearances. This was actually a throwback to the Twenties, when most jazz bands performed in formal dress, but it was new to jazz audiences of the Fifties who, along with some critics, often chided the quartet for its formal appearance and presentation and even found John Lewis' insistence on using a Steinway concert grand pretentious. So heavy was the MJQ's emphasis on visual dignity that it sometimes detracted from the quartet's great musical accomplishments, but to attribute the enormous and unique success of the MJQ to anything other than its music—as some still do—is nothing short of nonsense.

In 1956, the quartet began a long and fruitful association with Atlantic Records. The year 1968 saw their appearance on a Solid State album, followed by two on Apple and a brief

return to Atlantic. But in 1974, after twenty-two years of prolific recording activity, several film scores, extensive and exhausting tours throughout the United States and the world, and accolades and awards, the MJQ decided it was time to call it quits. "After twenty-two years of what we are supposed to represent to the creative arts, I really don't think our efforts are justified financially," says Milt Jackson, who is believed by many to be the instigator of the breakup. "Not having substantial amounts of money after twenty-two years, in terms of financial security, makes me feel that there is something wrong or that the music really isn't what people claim it is." If there is a tone of bitterness in Jackson's remark, it does not seem to be shared by John Lewis. "I'm sad, in a sense," he says, "because I've enjoyed all these years—they've been wonderful years with three marvelous human beings, and I don't regret not having to do all the traveling that we did, because I was beginning to feel it. I think we've made enough of a contribution to American culture, so there's no regret in that sense."

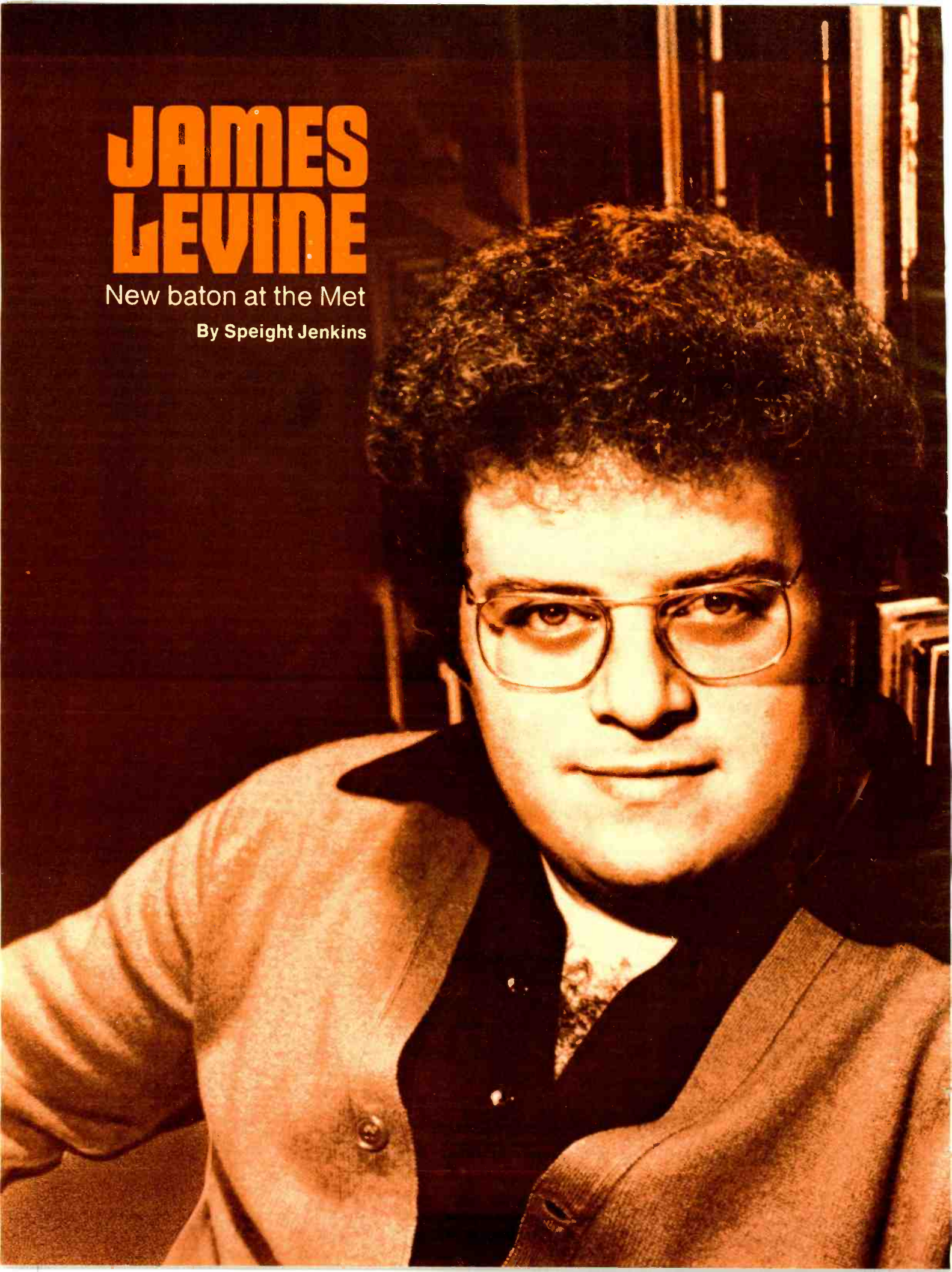
Before taking its final bow, the Modern Jazz Quartet made its last label switch, resulting in a marvelous merger with symphony orchestra on

the Little David label—its title, appropriately, is "In Memoriam." The quartet also made a number of farewell appearances, culminating in a concert at New York's Lincoln Center last November. It was not a teary affair. The program consisted for the most part of old MJQ favorites in their current arrangements, the four men were called back for encores by an enthusiastic capacity audience, and then it was all over. Or was it? Still to come is the recording of that concert, followed, no doubt, by the usual sweepings up of previously unreleased material. Messrs. Lewis, Jackson, Heath, and Kay will, of course, continue to perform and record separately, as indeed they have always done even during the lifetime of the MJQ. Perhaps there will be occasions for a reunion, though that seems unlikely for some time. But should this really prove to have been the MJQ's last stand, a rich recorded legacy documenting the twenty-two years of the quartet remains. Their achievements have been extraordinary, their contribution to American music is immeasurable, and those of us who have an affinity for jazz should all be grateful to the Modern Jazz Quartet for the worldwide interest they sparked.

JAMES LEVINE

New baton at the Met

By Speight Jenkins



THE reaction of New York audiences to young opera conductors has often followed a somewhat predictable pattern: initial rapture, fading interest, mildly negative criticism, and, finally, virtual dismissal. One man who seems to have broken out of that pattern is James Levine (pronounced to rhyme with "wine"), the thirty-one-year-old, Cincinnati-born principal conductor of the Metropolitan Opera. In fact, Met audiences now give him the kind of enthusiastic reception they usually reserve for such old favorites as Karl Böhm and Erich Leinsdorf.

In an age in which cinematic (or perhaps video) good looks usually matter, Levine is an exception again. He is overweight ("the one area of my life that is not disciplined") and cares little about clothes—which is just as well, for he has no taste for the carefully turned conductorial profile or the dramatic podium manner. In keeping with all this, he has no publicity agent either, so the career rests so far on his musical talent, his conductorial skills, and the engaging, non-stop ebullience of a born talker.

The lack of actual opera-house experience and the constant need to learn new scores are the banes of most young conductors' existences, but they do not count as heavily with Levine because of what he calls "total immersion"—a combination of tremendous powers of concentration and a familiarity with much of the repertoire that dates back for years. At his Central Park West apartment one recent morning (it was 1 A.M.—he had no other time available for the interview) he explained this "immersion," recalling a *Traviata* he conducted a few years ago in the Hollywood Bowl, with Beverly Sills. After the performance Miss Sills remarked, "I've done this role 150 times and this was the best—and it's really because of you. How many *Traviatas* have you done?" When Levine told her it was his first, she said, "Impossible," and waited for an explanation. "Beverly," the conductor said, "I find when I compare notes with my colleagues that the only difference in my training and theirs is that I don't remember learning *Traviata*. With the Toscanini recording, all those old tapes, and coaching, why, I've been living this opera since I was thirteen."

Levine's parents saw that music meant something special to him as early as the age of three, and when piano lessons began, soon after, they

laid down one basic rule: no practice, no lesson. Though he hated the tedium of practice, he had to have the stimulation of instruction, and he cooperated so well that by the age of ten he played his first concert with the Cincinnati Symphony. As a reward for that success, his father offered him whatever he wanted. "I told him a week at the Met," Levine remembered with a smile. "*Faust* with George London, then *Così* with the original Bing cast—this was 1954—and then *Cav* and *Pag*, noteworthy because I got to hear Leonard Warren for the first time."

When he was thirteen, Levine prepared and directed the chorus in *Così* at Rudolf Serkin's Marlboro Festival, and the experience so delighted him that he told his father he was going to be a conductor. He continued to study the piano, however, commuting every weekend from Cincinnati to New York's Juilliard School for piano lessons with Rosina Lhevinne and conducting study with Jean Morel. He was already getting engagements as a piano soloist when he entered the Baltimore Symphony's 1964 competition for young conductors. George Szell heard him there and asked why he had not asked to join Szell's apprentice program in Cleveland. "Because it didn't occur to me I could make it," Levine told him. Szell replied, "No, you do very well. You're a good conductor. If you came to Cleveland I could make you a great one. Levine said, "What do you want me to do?"

RECALLING the incident ten years later, Levine added, "The funny thing was that of all the conductors in the world, he was the one I most respected and the one I most wanted to study with. My job with Szell was as an apprentice who sat in on all the rehearsals, responded to questions about balance, and rehearsed the orchestra whenever he asked me to. He would let me do one piece on some of his programs, and he also recommended that I take over the orchestra at the Cleveland Institute of Music, which I did. In my five years in Cleveland that orchestra became a really first-class ensemble capable of taking on the Mahler Fifth and winning praise from as exacting a man as Leinsdorf.

"The last thing Szell did for me, just before he died," Levine continued, "was to tell Kurt Adler in San Francisco about me. 'If you want some-

body who'll come and know *Falstaff* cold and do a better job than anybody else you can find, then ask Levine.' Because of problems with schedules, I made my San Francisco debut in 1970, in *Tosca*, which was also the work I came into the Met with."

Tosca in the Met's June Festival four years ago led to Levine's being asked to do *Luisa Miller* the following fall. On the strength of those performances, Rafael Kubelik and Goeran Gentele asked him to be principal conductor of the Met, with four operas under his baton each season—a position analogous to that of first conductor in a European house. After the tragic death of Gentele and on through the tortuous 1973-1974 season, which saw the resignation of Kubelik and a merry-go-round of cast changes too numerous to keep track of, Levine kept moving smoothly forward with few brickbats thrown in his direction—however many there were shied at other heads in the house.

Levine defends the Met eloquently: "What chance has the Met had for really good planning? Since before Bing left, the Met has been in a constant state of flux, and everyone has been under pressure to 'evaluate' all the time. I'll tell you what was achieved that season: the beginnings of stable, well-rehearsed casts and an approach to theater in opera that worked—at least in the new productions and the big revivals. I think the Met has the best orchestra and chorus of any opera house in the world; it's up to us to use their potential."

Levine makes full use of his own potential. In addition to his Met chores, he also directs Chicago's Ravinia Festival, and last July he added another facet to his relationship with the Chicago orchestra by recording with it a performance of the Mahler Fourth for RCA. Though buoyed by the results ("some of the best things in the live performance didn't get on the record, but certain others worked far better"), he still takes a cautious view of recordings: "A studio recording helps you technically, but technical complexity sometimes impedes the conductor's conception. And it's not because of a mixed-up order of recording or heavy splicing. I've found you can't tell splices most of the time, and sometimes played-through sections sound spliced. Other problems come from the nature of a stereo recording. In an opera recording, for instance, you

have to move people all over a room to get track separation. This means you have to redo a lot of passages just because the singers aren't standing together as they would onstage.

"Recordings and live performances are simply different—different both in the way they are produced and in the way they are experienced by the listener. In a recording, details are evident that cannot be heard live, and as a conductor the least you can do is to strive for sufficient presence so that the character of sound has a palpable reality. In a hall the listener *has* a live experience; on records we have to make him *feel* that he is having one."

AT the moment Levine has three complete opera recordings in the catalog: Bellini's *Norma* and Verdi's *Giovanna d'Arco* and *I Vespri Siciliani*. "Some recordings I've made I'm not thrilled with, but I've learned a lot each time. Of the operas, the two Verdi works give me the most satisfaction. These are good performances of not overly familiar works which are faithful to Verdi's style—as I see it—and have good casts."

Asked if he would record *Vespri* differently now that he has conducted so many repertoire performances of the opera at the Met, he replied, "I don't see that I would. The main differences in my reading come from the cast. Arroyo and Domingo on the recording are more bravura, Caballé and Gedda in performance are more ethereal. Both qualities have to be present, but you emphasize the one the singers have. The main thing to me is that the two Verdi recordings say what I think about these operas in recording terms."

"An artist is documented in two different kinds of recording: live-performance tapes taken off the radio or made in the theater, which means they are painfully accurate if not sonically balanced, and studio recordings, which have their own assets and liabilities. Neither is more or less valid than the other."

Levine's recording career continues despite his caveats, however. Late last summer he recorded the Mahler First with the London Symphony Orchestra for RCA (it and the Fourth with the Chicago orchestra have just been released), and went on to a complete *Barbiere di Siviglia* for Angel with Beverly Sills, Nicolai Gedda, and Sherrill Milnes. Further, RCA, which has for some time been looming ever larger in Levine's fu-

ture, has now signed him to an exclusive contract. A *Don Giovanni* recording is planned for the summer, and anyone who knows the company's artist roster can imagine such names as Price, Caballé, and Milnes in the cast list.

Though Levine is noncommittal about his future recording plans, he is very clear about the importance of recording to him. "I want an opera and symphony repertoire that is worth documentation. This is a challenge that may take time to meet fully, but it's what I want to do. And I also have a dream: I want to see permanent microphones installed in opera houses and symphony halls, and I want expert taping of two or more repetitions of a performance. Records made that way—à la Bayreuth—would have, I believe, the most value to listeners because, though producers would still select the best, they would be working with *live* material, and that makes all the difference."

Such an idea would obviously have to be implemented through some very painful union negotiations, but on the evidence so far available, Levine would be just the man to do it. With all the orchestras he has led, and certainly with the notoriously difficult Met musicians, he has had a continuing love affair. Neither his age nor his relative inexperience have mattered: the musicians consistently give him the kind of playing they have heretofore produced only for Karl Böhm, Herbert von Karajan, and Leonard Bernstein. Why? "I've been asked that question so much I've really given it a lot of thought, and I come up with no simple answer. I've had tiffs with administrations, but never with an orchestra. We meet as musicians and try to do the main job—giving a performance that is as faithful as possible to the composer's intention."

"Now, that's a tricky phrase. A composer who writes something has to have in his ear what he wants it to sound like. You have to study everything you can to find the secret. I know men who conduct a Beethoven symphony, for instance, without knowing much about his vocal works: you have to know both, because each explains the other. So often I read that there is too much literalness in performance. Baloney! Basically, there are two kinds of performance: the scholarly and sterile and the exciting and distorted. But why not exciting *and* correct? To me, Toscanini

found the right balance. What I think about when the curtain goes down at the end of Act I is, would Verdi come rushing back and say, 'Jimmy, that was a total disaster,' or would he say, 'That's pretty close'?"

"I can't stand a performance in which the conductor seems to be drawing the music out of the players as though he were a magician. The whole thing turns into a visual trip. I want the people to *listen*, and the only way that will happen is to get the players to put forth enough energy and communication that the sound goes from them to the audience. It's all cooperation."

Cooperation with performers has been Levine's watchword as well. Sherrill Milnes, rehearsing for his first *Don Giovanni* at the Met last March, said, "Levine gets you to do anything he wants because he puts down his baton, runs up on stage, and in a conversational tone says, 'I have an idea there that I'd like: will you try it?' He doesn't scream across the pit that you're an idiot to read a line differently from his idea. He treats you as a collaborative artist."

Levine himself cites an experience in point with Jon Vickers. "When we did *Otello* together for the first time, we ran afoul of the moment in Act II when Iago raises the subject of the handkerchief, and Otello says that it was his first 'love-gift.' Jon feels very strongly that if you throw away that line, you do not establish the importance of the handkerchief for the audience. The way Verdi set it, it seems to me to call for casual delivery. I tried that, then worked for a compromise, but finally realized that for Jon to do Otello to the best of his ability, he *had* to turn the line into a great nostalgic moment. These points of yielding are rare, but if you *don't* yield, you may destroy everything."

"On the other hand, Jon encouraged me in solving a problem of my own. I told him I was worried about covering his "A" at the end of the second act. 'Cover it!' he said. 'The texture attaches to the massive sound from the orchestra, and Verdi meant for it to be covered.'" Pausing, Levine added, slowly, "I think what it boils down to is that orchestras and singers do not like conductors who are charlatans or tyrants or those who just get in their way. And I guess they feel I don't."

Speight Jenkins, *Record World's* classical music editor, writes widely on music.

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



Luciano Pavarotti Triumphant Again: London's New *I Puritani*

MUCH has happened to Vincenzo Bellini's *I Puritani* on the nation's opera stages in the eleven years since the Sutherland-Bonyngé team first recorded it for London (OSA 1373). First, the opera became a triumphant vehicle for soprano Beverly Sills and conductor Julius Rudel, as well as one of the most successful productions ever for the New York City Opera company. Next, it received noteworthy productions in both Boston and San Francisco. And now the Metropolitan has also scheduled it for its 1975/1976 season—for the first time in nearly sixty years. Thus have our two presiding high priestesses of bel canto, Joan Sutherland and Beverly Sills, returned Bellini's last, and possibly best, opera to general circulation.

That earlier London recording had its good points, but it suffered from the serious imbalance of casting only a *serviceable* tenor in the stellar role of Arturo, one written for and created by Italy's now-legendary Giovanni Battista Rubini. The role of Elvira is, admittedly, the opera's central part, but Arturo's big scenes—and they are big indeed, replete with high C's,

C-sharps, and D-naturals—must be commanded in a big way. And so they are, in London's *new* recording of *I Puritani*, by the amazing Luciano Pavarotti, who pours out streams of golden sound with what seems like an almost reckless ease, his voice fully centered, gracefully shaped, and finely attuned to the Bellini idiom. His singing is never less than involved, it is enriched by true ardor, and, allowing for some honest (and engaging) Italian mannerisms, it is laudably musical.

Joan Sutherland's Elvira is a vocal triumph. Her intonation in all registers has never been more secure, and her florid singing is a model of accuracy. While tonally there is nothing out of place, she cannot *humanize* the

character the way Beverly Sills can with her clear enunciation and alert responses to Elvira's changing moods. In contrast, Sutherland's Elvira appears to lack dramatic color—her first-act duet with Giorgio Walton is treated rather like a vocalise. At the same time, Sutherland remains unsurpassed in purely vocal terms: her part in the final scene of Act II is splendidly realized, and the “*Vien, diletto*” aria is brilliant (though Bellini might have trouble recognizing the over-decorated *da capo* portion as his own music).

Piero Cappuccilli is a major artist with a voice of ample range and power, but he too sings without much dramatic involvement, and he finds some of his florid music uncomfort-

Thanks to London Records' practice of staging "autograph parties" at retail record stores around the country, fans of many of the company's recording artists get a chance to meet their idols in person. So here is Luciano Pavarotti, in a March appearance at New York's Korvettes, accepting the congratulations of STEREO REVIEW'S Managing Editor William Livingstone (his interview with the tenor appeared in last November's issue) as Richard Bungay, London's classical promotion manager, looks on.



able. Nicolai Ghiaurov's mellow *cantante* sound is always a joy to hear, and he brings a subdued authority to the part of the kindly uncle. The smaller roles are all adequately done, though Anita Caminada makes a wavery sounding Queen.

Richard Bonyngé knows the bel canto style as well as any conductor around, but all too often he seems reconciled to mere accompanying when real leadership is needed, perhaps taking his cue from Miss Sutherland's contagious languor. Most of the ensembles are well handled, but the tricky "*Son vergin vezzosa*" lacks a firm rhythmic foundation. Julius Rudel's conducting imparts more incisiveness and tension to the competing ABC set, but London's Pavarotti and Ghiaurov are superior to their counterparts. As for the two divas, each offers in abundance what the other lacks. It is therefore not easy to make a choice here, but for me Pavarotti tips the balance in London's favor. The recording's sound quality is excellent, and so are William Weaver's notes.

George Jellinek

BELLINI: *I Puritani*. Joan Sutherland (soprano). Elvira: Luciano Pavarotti (tenor). Arturo: Piero Cappuccilli (baritone). Riccardo: Nicolai Ghiaurov (bass). Giorgio: Anita Caminada (mezzo-soprano). Enrichetta: Renato Cazzaniga (tenor). Bruno: Gian Carlo Luccardi (bass). Walton. Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; London Symphony Orchestra, Richard Bonyngé cond. LONDON OSA 13111 three discs \$20.94.

Carmina Burana: Four Lusty Channels Of Naughty Sonic Razzle-Dazzle

ON THE admittedly not very exalted level of the musical crowd pleaser, given really first-class performing forces, it is as hard to miss with Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* as it would be with, say, Ravel's *Boléro* or Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* (no invidious quality comparisons intended). But even with such "pops" favorites as these, there are performances and then there are performances. Columbia's new matrix-quadraphonic release of the German composer's dazzlingly effective sonic blockbuster is definitely one of the latter kind. The virtuoso forces in this case are, in the main, the Cleveland Orchestra (plus chorus and boys' choir) under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas, and they have produced a performance of a quality which, together with the stunning recorded sound, places it at once at the head of the four versions currently available.

Whether heard as two-channel stereo or in its full quadraphonic pantly, the sheer wealth of sonic detail offered in this recording—the elaborate disposition of soloists, choirs, and lavishly percussed orches-

tra—can only be described as startling. The *sforzando* concatenation that bursts forth at the introduction of the *Song of the Roasted Swan* (No. 12) is merely the most potent instance in point. But quite beyond such questions of sonic attention-getting is the acoustic panorama that unfolds spectacularly across the end of your listening room in four-channel playback. It is in essence an aural counterpart of Cinerama film projection: everything is very close-up, with not a detail missing, yet the relative proportion of ensemble sound (as in the opening and closing *Fortuna Imperatrix* choruses) to that of instruments and soloists heard individually or in small groups (as in much of the *Court of Love* sequence) remains just.

To go back just a bit for the benefit of those for whom *Carmina* has yet to become either warhorse or chestnut, the work is a setting by composer Orff (b. 1895), in an undeniably accessible musical language quite his own, of selections from medieval German student songs of an often arresting frankness in both language and subject matter. Since the work includes in its scoring a mixed chorus and boys' choir (a female soprano too), it is perhaps just as well that the texts were maintained in their original (mostly Latin) languages.

As to the musical aspects of the performance, only the highest praise will do for all concerned—the expert Cleveland Orchestra, the beautifully trained choir (the characteristic tim-

Michael Tilson Thomas: enormous zest and a sense of pure delight



bre of whose boys' section emerges most tellingly in the "Amor volat undique" opening of the *Court of Love*), and, of course, the three remarkable soloists. Tenor Kenneth Riegel is a most convincingly unenviable roasted swan in his famous falsetto solo. Peter Binder's Abbot of Cucany says his piece over a mug of tavern wine with singular savagery and vehemence, and Judith Blegen is both fetchingly sensual and endearingly feminine in her low-register solo as a young girl on the verge of yielding to the pleasures of fleshly love. Needless to say, conductor Michael Tilson Thomas' enormous zest communicates a sense of pure delight in his assignment.

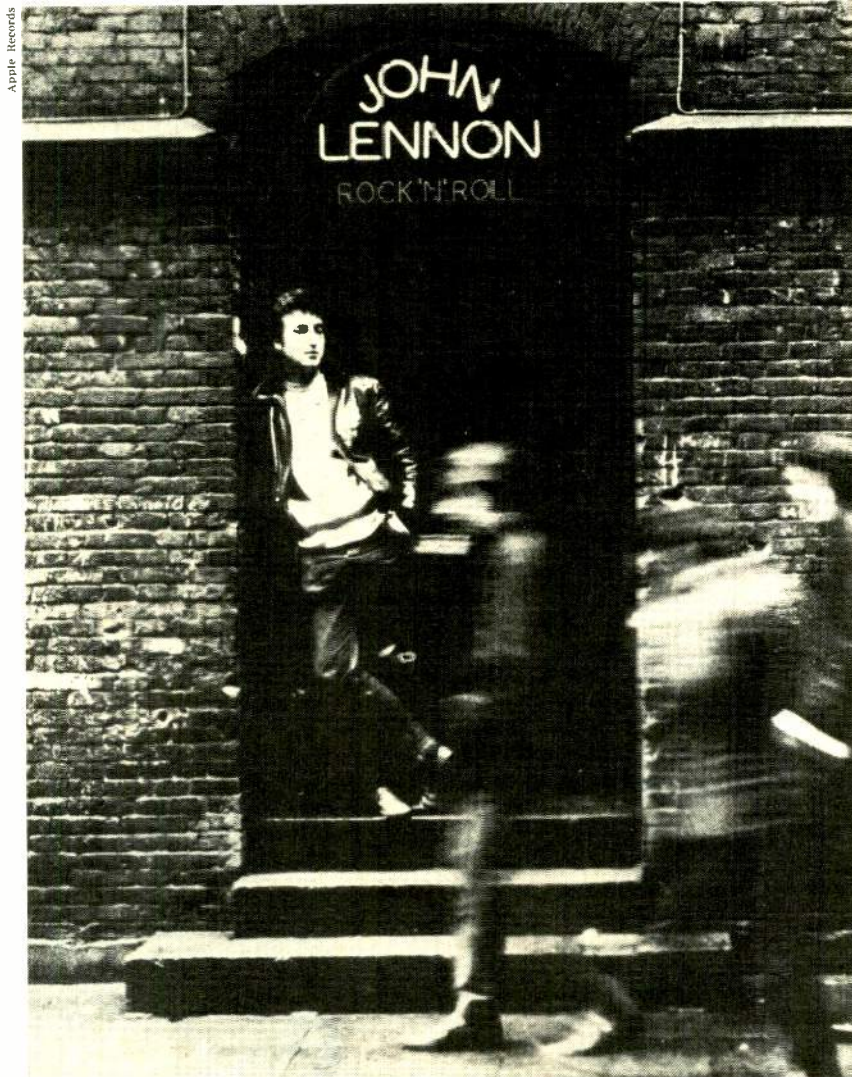
One could catalog at length the musical and sonic felicities of this performance of what will probably stand as Carl Orff's one genuine masterpiece. The skillful wedding of text to music rather than the inherent quality of either is what makes it so in my estimation. But whether one esteems or derides this score and its aesthetic premises, there is no doubt in my mind that anyone with a capacity for enjoying gorgeous recorded sound and the equipment to reproduce it will find a great deal of unalloyed pleasure in this record.

David Hall

ORFF: *Carmina Burana*. Judith Blegen (soprano); Kenneth Riegel (tenor); Peter Binder (baritone); Cleveland Orchestra Chorus and Boys' Choir; Cleveland Orchestra, Michael Tilson Thomas cond. COLUMBIA □ MQ 33172 \$7.98, M 33172 \$6.98, 8 MAQ 33172 \$8.98.

John Lennon Pays Affectionate Tribute to His Rock 'n' Roll Roots

It's kind of amazing when you think about it, but I don't know anyone who will admit to liking any of John Lennon's albums since "Imagine" (I certainly don't) and yet everybody still loves *him*, despite the continuing, boring saga of John and Yoko and their various public misadventures. Part of it is probably due to the still powerful Beatle mystique (witness his overwhelming success at the re-



John Lennon: the echoing cellars of Hamburg

cent Elton John concert in New York), but I suspect it's mostly because, despite his erratic songwriting of late, he still has the pipes. Consider, if you will, the poll conducted by one of the British pop papers not long ago, in which sixty famous rock artists, from Little Richard to Alice Cooper, were asked to name their favorite singers. John finished an overwhelming first.

At any rate, hot on the heels of his generally undistinguished "Wall and Bridges," John has now delivered that long-promised Oldies album, and I am happy to report that it is his first consistently listenable work in ages. "Rock 'n' Roll," as it is succinctly titled, is, in fact, a joy. John runs down a host of classic Fifties and early Sixties numbers, all the kind of thing he must have ruptured his lungs on dur-

ing the Beatles' sojourn in the cellars of Hamburg way back when, and he obviously hasn't lost his touch; the singing is so alive, so full of fun, that I defy any but the most jaded progressive types not to be absolutely charmed by it. There are no surprises in the song selections, but John and his sometime producer Phil Spector are not afraid to play around with the arrangements; for example, Chuck Berry's *You Can't Catch Me* is slowed down so that it reveals its obvious parentage of John's own *Come Together*. I am also especially impressed by the massive Spector-ization of Buddy Holly's *Peggy Sue*, which comes off simultaneously as completely authentic and as a roar of heavy metal thunder the likes of which we simply have not been privileged to hear before. (overleaf)

I might also add that although John clearly takes none of these bits of sublimine nonsense any more seriously than he has to, nowhere on this album are we subjected, in Robert Christgau's phrase, to "the sweet stink of a Bryan Ferry parody." In other words, although the times have changed, certain essential values in rock have not, and John, bless his heart, understands this. If someone hadn't beat him to it, "Rock 'n' Roll" could just as easily have been called "Bringing It All Back Home." It's that good, and therefore most heartening news for any Beatles fan.

Steve Simels

JOHN LENNON: *Rock 'n' Roll*. John Lennon (vocals and guitar); other musicians. *Be-Bop-a-Lula; Stand by Me; Ready Teddy/Rip It Up; You Can't Catch Me; Ain't That a Shame; Do You Want to Dance; Sweet Little Sixteen; Slippin' and Slidin'; Peggy Sue; Bring It On Home to Me/Send Me Some Lovin'; Bonny Maronie; Ya Ya; Just Because.* APPLE SK 3419 \$5.98, Ⓣ 8XK 3419 \$6.98, Ⓞ 4XK 3419 \$6.98.

The Versatile Jazz Flute of Paul Horn in "A Special Edition"

FORTY-YEAR-OLD Paul Horn, once lead tenor of the Sauter-Finegan Orchestra, became prominent as a member of the Chico Hamilton Quintet during the latter half of the Fifties and won a new and younger following ten years later when Epic released "Inside," an extraordinary album of solo flute performances recorded inside India's Taj Mahal (!) in April of 1968. The natural acoustics of the three-hundred-year-old structure, echoing the surpassingly beautiful notes of Horn's flute and blending them with the haunting voice of a local singer, created an atmosphere of overwhelming serenity. It was the ultimate mood album. Coming at a time when gurus, the art of meditation, and all that were receiving the fervid embrace of America's rock culture, it said it all.

Now "A Special Edition," a new set of performances on the Island label, gives us a look inside Paul Horn rather than the Taj Mahal. It does not have the Far East mystique

of the Epic album, but it is in its own way just as great a treat. Except for *Forms*, which was done in a studio with Horn playing several flutes by way of over-dubbing, the album was recorded during two nights of a recent Vancouver, B.C., club engagement. This is the flutist's first club recording, and it gives him the opportunity to display his versatility through a variety of moods ranging from free-form solo exploration (*Forms*) to hard-swinging jazz quintets. (*Freedom Jazz Dance* and *Summertime*).

Horn is a dedicated musician who quite clearly enjoys his work and practices his art without pretentiousness. He has style, technique, and imagination which he combines with a rare sensitivity. In the accompanying twenty-two-page, richly illustrated, album-size booklet he reflects on his past, his music, and the people who influenced him. It is an interesting and pertinent supplement to the

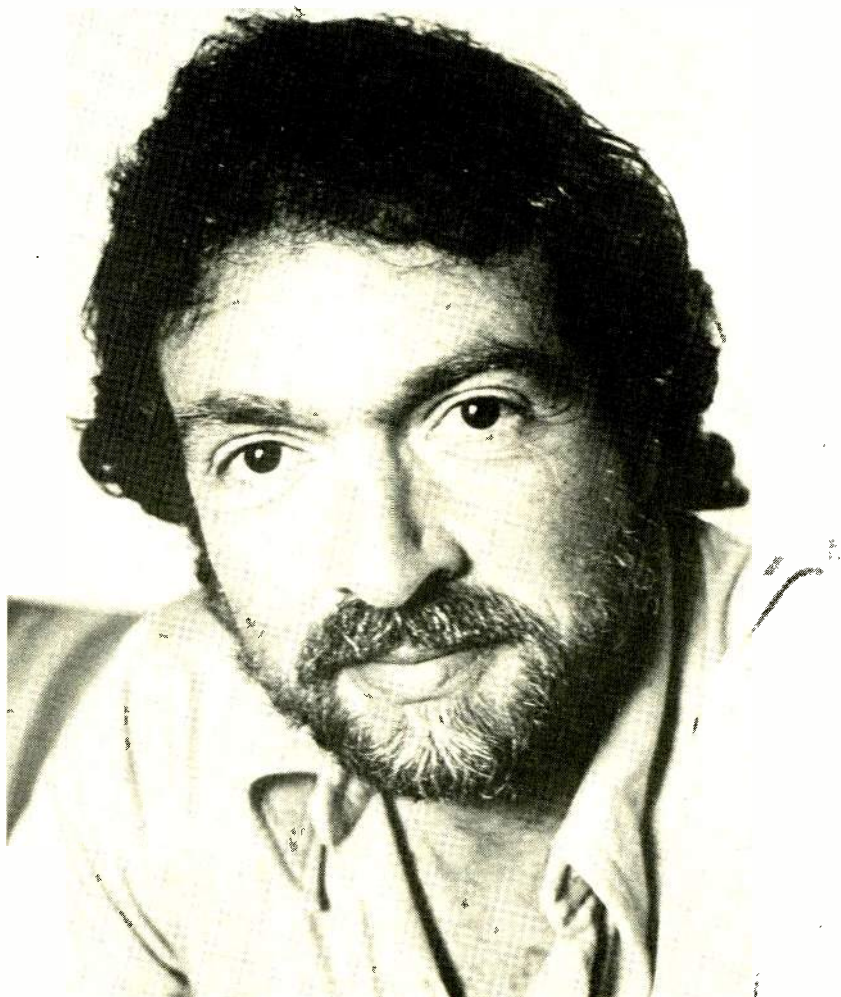
music, which itself reflects the musician's past and present with uniform excellence.

Paul Horn's music will not make him rich, nor will it send eager hordes scrambling to the nearest record shop. But it will surely survive the overwhelming proportion of today's output of recorded music. A greater appreciation of Paul Horn is bound to come with time; I just hope he'll get to hear about it before age and neglect send him into unwarranted early retirement.

Chris Albertson

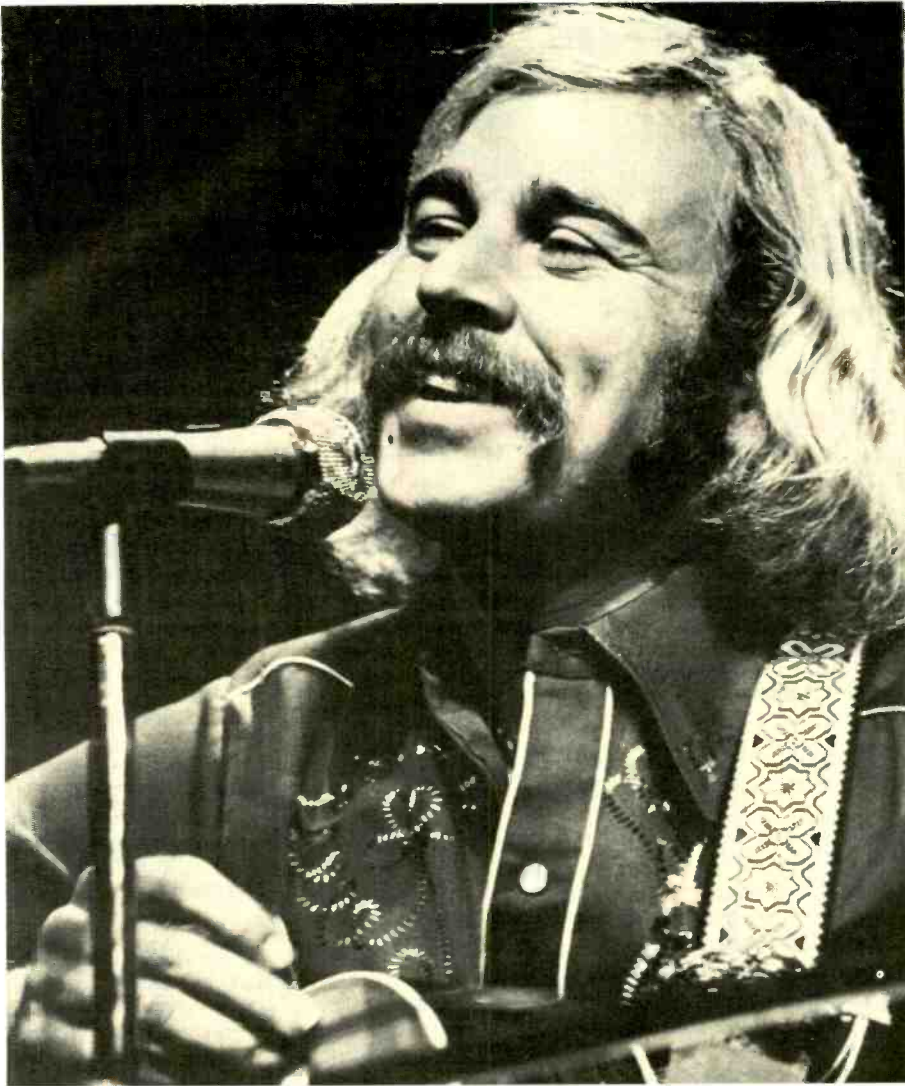
PAUL HORN: *A Special Edition*. Paul Horn (flutes, alto saxophone, clarinet, electric piano); Lynn Blessing (vibraphone); Art Johnson (guitar); Dave Parlato (bass); Bart Hall (drums, percussion). *Prelude; Freedom Jazz Dance; Summertime; Tribute to Jobim—Meditation, Corcovado; Dreamer; Just Because We're Kids; Willow Weep for Me; Rain; Dusk; Dawn; Forms.* ISLAND ISLD 6 two discs \$9.98. Ⓣ Y81D 106 \$10.98.

Paul Horn: style, technique, and imagination



Island Records

“contrived rusticity and a bit of wit are all you need...”



Jimmy Buffett and The Good Life

Now you know, and I know, that life is not a tire swing, that there is just a bit more to it than having a cold beer and a hot conch chowder for lunch in a rocking chair under a palm tree on the town beach at the foot of Duval Street in Key West, Florida, U.S.A., but does Jimmy Buffett know? He likes to pose for pictures sitting on broken-winded pickup trucks and in the carcasses of defunct Chevys (as he does on the cover of his first album, “Down to Earth,” Barnaby Z30093), and he keeps telling us how he’d like to keep it

that way, how he doesn’t want to find himself being *recognized* on planes, how he doesn’t want to make music for money (“I want to make music for me”).

Well, whether he knows it or not, he’s going to have to resign himself to the perils of fame if he continues to turn out albums like his latest, “Jimmy Buffett A1A,” which has me warmed up all over again on the subject of our home-grown singer-songwriters, the young troubadours who are about the best thing to happen to American popular music since Dixieland. I have a little roster of favorite troubadours, highly selective and rather crowded at the moment, and making room for a new one usually means that someone else has to be nudged off. Jimmy Buffett has only recently nosed in right above the tragically vacant slot that used to hold the name of his friend Jim Croce—and I might as well give you the names of the rest of them: Denver, Kristofferson, Nilsson, and Newman.

I like to think that what all these artists have in common is not simply the fact that

they are on my personal list, that there is something fundamental in what they *do* that unites them. They all write their own material, of course, and of course it is of different kinds. If I may generalize without ruffling the feathers of too many captious particularizers, Kristofferson and Croce are scenarists and short-story writers, Nilsson is a nostalgist, Newman a social critic, and Denver and Buffett are celebrators of what is to them the good life. But these are mere forms and styles: it is their content that interests me, a content that runs deeper than the fashion of the moment and connects with some of the best that America is—there is Thoreau in Denver, Mencken in Newman, a transcendental streak in Nilsson, Whitman and Twain in Croce, and maybe a little Rogers (Will, that is) in Buffett. There is therefore courage, grace, and humor in what they do, and they do it with an instinctive authenticity in which we can recognize our American selves. It is, above all, a positive and optimistic approach to life once nicely summed up by Harry Nilsson: “Hope,” says Harry, “is practical.” Truth to tell, I can’t imagine a nicer bunch of optimists to have around these—or any other—days.

BUT to get back to Jimmy Buffett and that tire swing. Does he *know*? Of course he does. He also knows, as the cowboy philosopher knew, that a contrived rusticity and a bit of wit are all the license you need to say some of the *damndest* things, things that would upset a lot of people a whole lot if you didn’t give them the opportunity to dismiss you as some kind of clown. What Jimmy Buffett is saying is that the rat race is not all it’s cracked up to be (“I can’t run at this pace very long”), and if we will stand off a bit to the side of the road (“A1A” is a beach-access road running just off U.S. 1 along Florida’s eastern shore) the preposterousness of some of the things we’ve fallen into the habit of taking too seriously becomes all too clear.

Buffett is clearest on this subject when he is speaking his own words in his own voice: I find that Alec Harvey’s *Makin’ Music for Money* traps him into sounding like Croce and John Sebastian’s *Stories We Could Tell* is pure Kristofferson. But I can’t remember anything lately that has given me as much pure pleasure as his own *Life Is Just a Tire Swing*, *Migration*, the waltz-time *Nautical Wheelers*, and particularly *A Pirate Looks at Forty*. The almost negligible album notes supply no lyrics, so you’ll have to listen carefully to get it all. Just as well, for a couple or three listenings will repay you in cherishable lyric moments and give the really excellent tunes a chance to wear in. You’ll finish the album, I think, another Buffett fan. —William Anderson

JIMMY BUFFETT: *A1A*; *Makin’ Music for Money*; *Door Number Three*; *Dallas*; *Presents to Send You*; *Stories We Could Tell*; *Life Is Just a Tire Swing*; *A Pirate Looks at Forty*; *Migration*; *Trying to Reason with Hurricane Season*; *Nautical Wheelers*; *Tin Cup Chalice*. ABC RECORDS DSD-50183 \$6.98, ⓑ 8023-50183H \$7.95, © 5023-50183H \$7.95.



POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

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

BAKER-GURVITZ ARMY. Ginger Baker (drums, vocals); Adrian Gurvitz (guitars, vocals); Paul Gurvitz (bass, vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Help Me; Love Is; Memory Lane; Inside of Me*; and four others. JANUS JXS 7015 \$6.98, Ⓜ 8098 7015 H \$7.98.

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

Ginger Baker was, of course, the drummer for Cream. Adrian and Paul Gurvitz were the leading members of Gun, a British group of the Sixties which never made noise over here but fairly deafened London. (Gun was known as the first of the Loudest Groups; later they fooled everybody by switching to an acoustic sound.) Adrian is a facile guitarist in the Clapton mold with some style of his own.

Baker has had a mostly unrewarding career since the disbanding of Cream. A crude but powerful drummer who once, with commendable candor, described his playing as "just bashing about," he formed several bands, none of which were successful. Baker swore off playing and emigrated to Nigeria where he supervised the building of a modern recording studio (Paul McCartney's "Band on the Run" was cut there) and set up a talent and booking agency. But then he went to England on a business trip, ran into the brothers Gurvitz, jammed with them, and felt the old siren call. The result is this new album.

The music here is very Creamish, as is to be expected, but the old pep is now goosed by the expertise of experience. It is odd and sad

that a musician like Baker, only a few years away from his fame, is in essence trying to make a comeback. That is the speed with which things move in pop: if you're not on top tomorrow at noon, then you were obsolete as of 4 P.M. today. This album is already somewhat dated. Every once in a while it stirs up the blood. But it proves, I fear, that you can't go home again. J.V.

JOHN BERBERIAN: *Ode to an Oud.* John Berberian (oud); Bob Tashjian (vocals); orchestra. *Azziza; Yarus; Savgulum; Arabaya; Whyek; Laz*; and ten others. MAINSTREAM 802 two discs \$7.98.

Performance: **Get out your finger cymbals**
Recording: **Good**

This double album of Turkish, Armenian, and Arabic music is actually a repackaging of two previously released Mainstream albums (MS 6023, "Expressions East," and MS 6047, "Oud Artistry of John Berberian"). The notes suggest that the music should appeal "not only to belly dancers, but also to jazz fans with an ear for the unusual." I gave up belly dancing years ago, but I do consider myself a jazz fan with an ear for the unusual. This album is unusual only if you've never heard Middle Eastern music before, but I can report that the music here contains sufficient rhythmic ingredients to shake a firmly ensconced navel-rubby loose, that the performers are technically facile, and the overall sound is most pleasing. Lacking real authority in this area, I may have overlooked a lack of authenticity, but if John Berberian's music should turn out to be some kind of substitute for what Middle-Eastern purists consider "the real thing," it is one substitute I am prepared to accept. C.A.

BONNIE BRAMLETT: *It's Time.* Bonnie Bramlett (vocals); orchestra. *Cowboys and Indians; Atlanta, Georgia; Cover Me; It's Time; Since I Met You Baby*; and five others. CAPRICORN CP 0148 \$6.98, Ⓜ M8 0148 \$7.98, Ⓞ M5 0148 \$7.98.

Performance: **Earthier than thou**
Recording: **Very good**

Bonnie Bramlett is apparently dead serious about winning the Miss Earthy of 1975 title,

and you don't have to listen to more than one track here to be convinced that she doesn't give an exceedingly loud hoot 'n' holler who knows about it. Her own (with Patsy Camp) *Atlanta, Georgia* is by far the best band; the song itself is nothing special, but when ol' Bonnie gives it one of her vehement gooses it leaps to a sort of deranged life. *Higher and Higher*, with Bonnie also doubling on the tambourine, is another wild and woolly excursion into abandoned earthiness—and it works.

Okay, so you'll probably have to hit your hand against the side of your head, the way swimmers do, after you've finished listening to Ms. Bramlett, but it's a lot more fun than peeling off the fudgy flypaper of, say, Melanie and her ilk. P.R.

JACK BRUCE: *Out of the Storm.* Jack Bruce (vocals, bass, clavinet, keyboards, harmonica); instrumental accompaniment. *Pieces of Mind; Golden Days; Running Through Our Hands; Keep On Wondering*; and four others. RSO SO 4805 \$6.98, Ⓜ TP 4805 \$7.98, Ⓞ CS 4805 \$7.98.

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

Jack Bruce, at least in his solo efforts, has always reminded me of some minor, albeit exotic, novelist—say, Lafcadio Hearn or Ronald Firbank—or perhaps one of the stuffer intellectual English poets—say, George Chapman. That being the case, and since music has all but supplanted other forms of entertainment and instruction, a collection of Jack Bruce solo albums displayed prominently in one's listening room will probably make just the right impression.

But really, Mr. Bruce is out of date. It is several years since he was a member of Cream, and even that estimable trio is, in many ways, already a period piece. Since then he's made do with a berth in West, Bruce, and Laing, where his skill as a bassist (which is considerable) is largely lost amid the megakill of Leslie West's vocals and guitar.

Bruce's own introspective, cautious, carefully made, but bloodless music quickly palls. Six or seven years ago, it might have seemed different, even important; now it just lies there. I think it's about time he got out of rock-and-roll altogether. J.V.

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.

ERIC BURDON BAND: *Sun Secrets*. Eric Burdon (vocals); Aalon (guitar); Alvin Taylor (drums); Randy Rice (bass). *Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood*; *It's My Life*; *Letter from the County Farm*; *Ring of Fire*; and three others. CAPITOL ST-11359 \$6.98, Ⓢ 8XT-11359 \$7.98, Ⓢ 4XT-11359 \$7.98.

Performance: **Fairly awful**
Recording: **So-so**

I can forgive Eric Burdon for having perpetrated, during his War months, *Spill the Wine*, but after three or four years I still can't forgive those scurvy disc jockeys who played it so much I was forced, for the first time in my life, to drive around in a car with the radio off. The taste of jocks being one of the constants, I expect something similar to happen now with *Ring of Fire*; just about everything here is a horror of some sort, but *Ring* is one of your basically hideous songs to begin with, and Burdon's hysterical vocal would embarrass a drunk hog-caller. Burdon probably *could* sing if he had to, but ever since the days of the Animals he has tended to shout instead. His new band, like his old ones, does the instrumental equivalent of shouting. This one's a loser. N.C.

MAC DAVIS: *All the Love in the World*. Mac Davis (vocals); orchestra. *Rock n' Roll*; *Every Woman*; *Emily Suzanne*; *Freedom Trail*; *If You Add All the Love in the World*; and seven others. COLUMBIA PC 32927 \$6.98, Ⓢ PCA 32927 \$7.98, Ⓢ PCT 32927 \$7.98.

Performance: **For his fans**
Recording: **Good**

Mac Davis' new TV show is doing surprisingly well in the ratings, and on the tube he can often provide some easy, friendly entertain-

ment. On records he's still punching too hard, trying to be "expressive" and "warm." *Fall in Love with Your Wife* is, for example, yet another of his typically bathetic slobbers about "everyday life" that no self-respecting soap opera nowadays would touch with a ten-foot character actress, but Davis grunts tearfully away at it as if he believes it—which may, after all, be his charm. *Boogie Woogie Mama* turns out to be a fairly respectable lady—what else would you expect in a Davis song?—but at least he gives it a little action with a lively performance that is, like the rest of the album, slick and unabrasive. Televiewers will know that Mac Davis has just received the Country Music Entertainer of the Year Award and the People's Choice Award (my, how they multiply) for much the same thing. Like Mr. Davis himself, I wonder "how come he got it." Only his fans know. P.R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JONATHAN EDWARDS: *Lucky Day*. Jonathan Edwards (vocals, guitar, harp); instrumental accompaniment. *Give Us a Song*; *Don't Cry Blue*; *Nova Scotia*; *Today I Started Loving You Again*; *Shanty*; *Have You Seen Her*; *Everybody Knows Her*; *Lucky Day*; *Sometimes*; and five others. ATCO SD 36-104 \$6.98, Ⓢ TP 36-104 \$7.98, Ⓢ CS 36-104 \$7.98.

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

Jonathan Edwards' voice still has that cloying huskiness about it, and that still bothers me, but I know he's good. The back-up band, Orphan, abetted by such luminaries as steel player Bill Keith, guitarist Al Anderson, and violinist-pianist Stuart Schulman, gives a new

zing to the songs Edwards has recorded before, and someone made some good choices about what else to record. Edwards' harp playing is the weakest thing about the instrumentals, being fast but tasteless (blame, in part, the fact that on stage he uses a rack so he can also play guitar), but Schulman's civilized but surprising fiddling takes the pressure off—and his spaced-out break on the opening cut also takes, as they used to say, the rag off'n the bush. It's a live album that has some life in it, and we don't get too many of those. N.C.

ELECTRIC FLAG: *The Band Kept Playing*. Michael Bloomfield (guitars); Buddy Miles (drums, vocals); Nick Gravenites (rhythm guitar, vocals); Barry Goldberg (keyboards); Roger "Jellyroll" Troy (bass, vocals). *Sweet Soul Music*; *Every Now and Then*; *Earthquake Country*; *Doctor Oh Doctor (Massive Infusion)*; *Lonely Song*; and four others. ATLANTIC SD 18112 \$6.98, Ⓢ TP 18112 \$7.98, Ⓢ CS 18112 \$7.98.

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

Perhaps my mind is getting fuzzy from listening to all this rock-and-roll, but it seems to me that a lot of mid-Sixties bands are reuniting for "comeback" LP's. Or maybe they're just trying to go back and pick the peaches they didn't pick the first time around: "This is what we would have sounded like back then if we could have sounded like it."

I don't know about newly recruited bassist Roger (Jellyroll) Troy, but, since the old Flag broke up, Michael Bloomfield has been fairly active. Buddy Miles tried to be a star, Nick Gravenites turned into an excellent producer, and Barry Goldberg has been writing songs for Gladys Knight, among others. Whatever



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THE HOLLIES

Left to right, Terry Sylvester, Bobby Elliott, Allan Clarke, Bernie Calvert, Tony Hicks

their individual fortunes of the past few years, the reconstituted Flag has turned in a very solid album here, better than anything they did in the old days and better than any of the members have ever done on their own. The writing, arrangements, and performances are all fine, and it must be satisfying for them to know they have, after all, managed to go back and pick them peaches. *J.V.*

TOM FOGERTY: *Myopia*. Tom Fogerty (vocals and guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *She La La La; Get Up; Sweet Things to Come; There Was a Time; Theme from Four-D;* and five others. FANTASY F-9469 \$6.98.

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

There's some startling guitar work here by Fogerty, Russell Da Shiell, and Tom Phillips, but unfortunately this album doesn't offer a great deal else. Fogerty's songs have an undistinctive insouciance (*She La La La* is about the best) that could help you pass the time brightly enough, but his metallic, narrow voice and choppy lyric style frustrate any attempt to turn them into entertainment. *P.R.*

ARETHA FRANKLIN: *With Everything I Feel in Me*. Aretha Franklin (vocals, piano); instrumental accompaniment. *Without Love; Don't Go Breaking My Heart; When You Get Right Down to It; You'll Never Get to Heaven;* and five others. ATLANTIC SD 18116 \$6.98, ⓑ TP 18116 \$7.98, ⓒ CS 18116 \$7.98.

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

Aretha Franklin has a remarkable voice and a highly developed technique (of which her gospel whoop is probably the best-known part). She attacks each tune in this album with all the stops out, giving a series of steamy, powerhouse performances that leave the listener pretty well exhausted by the end of the first side. Yet something is missing. Ms. Franklin seems to be trying too hard to prove how good she is.

Well, even mightily talented people can't be tops all the time. I revere Ray Charles, for instance, but he hasn't recorded anything in the last ten years that made me listen twice.

Whenever real artists like Mr. Charles and Ms. Franklin create something definitive during that period of months or years they spend establishing their artistic identity, they are left with a much longer period in front of them and it becomes difficult for them to surpass themselves. Yet they mustn't stand still. They either relax into serene perfection, like Mr. Charles, or try too hard, like Ms. Franklin. 'Tain't all roses bein' a musical giant. *J.V.*

KINKY FRIEDMAN: Kinky Friedman (vocals, guitar); Ben Benay (guitar, harmonica, jew's harp); Panama Red (guitar); Michael Omartian (keyboards); Lee Sklar (bass); other musicians. *Rapid City South Dakota; Popeye the Sailor Man; Homo Erectus; Lover Please; Wild Man from Borneo;* and six others. ABC ABCD-829 \$6.98, ⓑ H8022-829 \$7.98.

Performance: **Good clean fun**
(nyerk nyerk)
Recording: **Excellent**

Kinky Friedman is audacious and fearless the way Howard Cosell is, the way William F. Buckley is—a little lunatic hyperbole within the system trying to look like a savage attack from without—but, yes, he is entertaining, too, as they are. Kinky's acceptance into the clique of country music's progressives, the lovable renegades from Texas (many of whom are actually from Nashville), is attested here by cameo roles taken by Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Tompall Glaser, Billy Swan, and such folk. Those still chuckling over how Kinky stood up to women's lib and sang *Get Your Biscuits in the Oven and Your Buns in the Bed*, or how he named his band the Texas Jewboys, will be pleased to find here a fantasy about his beating up a redneck to teach him *They Ain't Makin' Jews Like Jesus Anymore*, while others might like his Buffett-like recall for TV trivia, *Somethin's Wrong with the Beaver*. If I read that one right, Kinky suggests that what's wrong is the Beaver has OD'd on something.

Friedman's writing includes regular production of good lines, but he uses several awkward, not quite satisfying words to make the rhymes come out, and he doesn't capitalize on this as Ogden Nash would have. He also is just barely able to carry a tune. Still, there aren't many singer-songwriters who

have as much fun, and Kinky thinks up an actual melody to go with his nonsense sometimes, which is a definite bonus. The backing here is not always inspired, but it nicely balances spice and smoothness. All things considered, when it comes to Out West Jewish Humor, I'd have to take Kinky over Mel Brooks. *N.C.*

GRAND FUNK: *All the Girls in the World Beware!!!* Grand Funk (vocals and instrumentals). *Life: Wild: Runnin': Bad Time: Some Kind of Wonderful:* and five others. CAPITOL SO-11356 \$6.98. © 8XZ-11356 \$7.98. © 4XZ-11356 \$7.98.

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

Grand Funk used to be a poor band; now they're an average one. They have survived the furor that surrounded them during their heady days and they don't play as loudly as before. Their material gets a little better each time, and they now throw in a golden goodie every once in a while—here there are two: *Look at Granny Run Run* and *Some Kind of Wonderful*. The production this time out is by the reliable Jimmy Ienner, who also did wonders for Raspberries, Lighthouse, and Three Dog Night.

Still, the progress of a band like Grand Funk is very, very slow. They improve, but by inches. Maybe five albums from now they'll do something above average. Until then, may all their tours be sellouts, may all their sessions be fruitful, may they all have good accountants who invest their earnings wisely, and may they all learn a trade like carpentry or plumbing so they'll have something to fall back on when their last audience has outgrown them. *J.V.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

TOM T. HALL: *Songs of Fox Hollow*. Tom T. Hall (vocals, guitar); Jerry Kennedy (guitar); Charlie McCoy (harmonica); other musicians. *The Mysterious Fox of Fox Hollow; Sneaky Snake; How to Talk to a Little Baby Goat; The Barn Dance; I Care;* and five others. MERCURY SRM 1-500 \$6.98. © MC8 1-500 \$7.98.

Performance: **Corny/charming**
Recording: **Very good**

The only way to review something like this—even if you are as childish in some ways as I'm said to be—is to let your kids do it. Of course it is corny, perceived through the sophistication that glazes us adults, but the little ones haven't heard it all too many times and it is their album, not ours. My two girls like it just fine, with one or two qualifications. The seven-year-old singled out for high praise *Ole Lonesome George the Basset* (in which ole Tom T., who raises bassets, turns the neat trick of putting his own name into the lyrics) and *The Barn Dance*, especially where the old hen becomes so tickled she almost lays an egg. The four-year-old—excuse me, the four-and-a-half-year-old—thought *Sneaky Snake* was deliciously scary to the point of being addictive and that *The Mysterious Fox* was one of the few worthy characters she had encountered so far in fiction. Neither cared much for being patronized in *I Like to Feel Pretty Inside*, both having been thoroughly glazed to that sort of thing themselves by the simpering of Misterogers, but both liked the banjos. And their daddy, as always in a Tom

T. record, loved Charlie McCoy's harmonica (and, of course, being a harp player himself, also hated it) . . . and the sound of this one broke up two fights in a single afternoon, so all three of us are moved to say "Bravo, Tom T." And we'd do it, too, if it didn't bring up among us the complicated question of "What's a Bravo, Daddy?" *N.C.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE HOLLIES: *Another Night*. Allan Clarke (vocals); Tony Hicks (guitar and vocals); Terry Sylvester (guitar and vocals); Bernie Calvert (bass, keyboards); Bobby Elliott (drums). *Another Night; Sandy; Lonely Hobo Lullabye; Second Hand Hangups; Time Machine Live; I'm Down; Look Out Johnny (There's a*

Monkey on Your Back); Give Me Time; You Gave Me Life (With That Look in Your Eyes). Epic PE 33387 \$6.98. © PEA 33387 \$7.98. © PET 33387 \$7.98.

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

Now that Bowie has apparently punked out, the honor of being the first to cover a Bruce Springsteen song has fallen to the Hollies. (Actually, their lead singer Allan Clarke beat them to it on his last solo album in Britain, but that's there and not here: for all intents, especially since they're releasing it as a single, this is the first.) The song in question, *Sandy*, from Bruce's second album, is one of those poignant ballads in honor of the boardwalk life at Asbury Park, and I must admit it's quite a

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shock initially to hear those soaring British three-part harmonies that are the Hollies' trademark applied to such an ode to sleaze. But it works, and I am quite in awe of the performance here. I hate to bring up the Dylan comparisons, but it reminds me a bit of the rush of hearing the Byrds' California vocalisms applied to *Mr. Tambourine Man* for the first time. I don't know if the Hollies are going to make Bruce a household word the way the Byrds did Dylan; I can but hope.

The rest of the album is typical of the Hollies since Graham Nash's departure: in other words, it's erratic. The rockers are uniformly blah, but the big production ballads (*Sandy, I'm Down, Give Me Time*) are exquisite, and their ensemble singing remains one of the most thrilling sounds in all of pop music. Next time out, I just hope that they have the smarts to do an album with outside writers, as they did on their last totally successful record, "Romany." In the meantime, this one is more than worth your \$6.98. *Steve Simels*

TOM JONES: *Somethin' 'Bout You Baby I Like.* Tom Jones (vocals); orchestra. *You Make Me Smile; Rainin' in My Heart; Which Way Home; Run Clero Run; Make Believe World;* and five others. PARROT PAS 71066 \$6.98, ⑧ 0871066 \$7.98, ⑥ 0571066 \$7.98.

Performance: **What you'd expect**
Recording: **Excellent**

This is another collection of art songs by the Godzilla of pop. Jones sweats and writhes his way through what is, for him, standard repertoire: commercially manufactured blues such as *Run Clero Run* carefully belted out with precision-engineered arrangements and meticulous production. Miraculously, Jones never seems to tire. By the second band, however, I do. *P.R.*

KRIS & RITA: *Breakaway.* Kris Kristofferson and Rita Coolidge (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *Rain; Crippled Crow; Sweet Susannah; Dakota; Slow Down;* and six others. MONUMENT PZ 33278 \$6.98, ⑧ PZA-33278 \$7.98, ⑥ PZT-33278 \$7.98.

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

Kris and Rita have lately grown as inseparable as Nick and Nora Charles, and as they whack out one c-&-w song after another here, as if neither of them had ever been north of Nashville, you begin to wonder how far they eventually plan to regress into rusticity. Before they get to the release of a "Grunt Songs of the Maori" album, however, some notes about this one: *Lover Please* is an amiable, funny song beautifully performed by both, and *We Must Have Been Out of Our Minds* suggests that they just might have been, to record it, since it is stupid marriage-counselor soap opera that would be a mess even if Kirsten and Lauritz attempted it. Kristofferson's voice sounds even worse than usual, gritty, laryngitic, and blurred. But then again it only makes things that much more authentic for a back-to-the-roots album by a pair of slickers in carefully stressed and aged jeans. *P.R.*

JOHN LENNON: *Rock 'n' Roll* (see *Best of the Month*, page 75)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LOVE: *Reel-to-Real.* Arthur Lee (vocals, guitar, harmonica); Joey Blocker (drums); Sher-

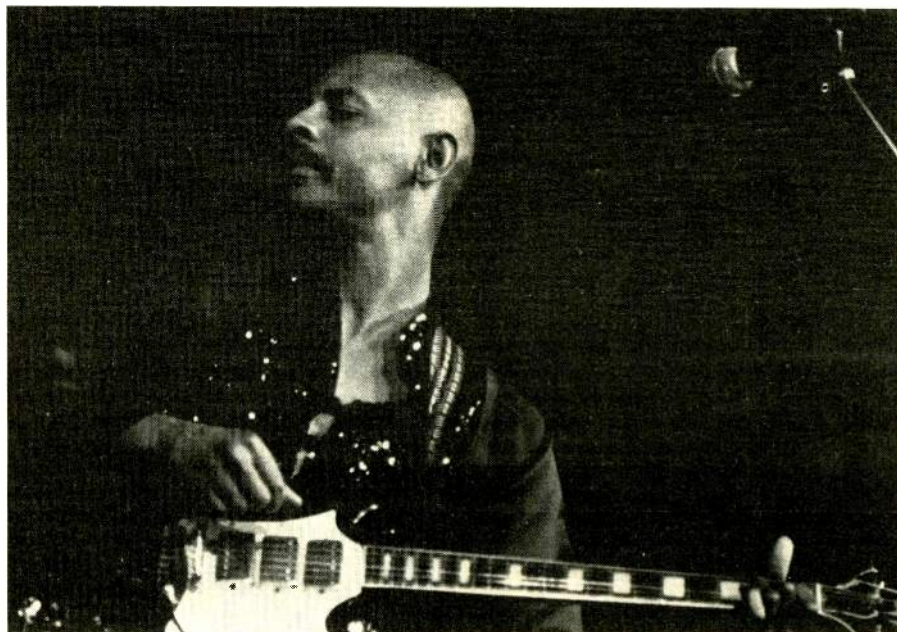
wood Akuna (bass); Melvin Whittington (guitar); other musicians. *Time Is Like a River; Stop the Music; Who Are You?; Good Old Fashion Dream; Which Witch Is Which;* and six others. RSO SO 4804 \$6.98, ⑧ TP 4804 \$7.97, ⑥ CS 4804 \$7.97.

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

Most rock bandleaders don't listen so well—they're too busy measuring adrenalin flow against the beat, perhaps—and a lot of that can get audiences to doing the same thing. An audience a few years into that, when confronted by someone like Stevie Wonder, who can hear, instantly cries "genius," meaning (if you allow for the hyperbolic perspective) "gifted." It would be fair to say that of Arthur Lee as well. He has been around a long time and has learned a few things about music, including the simple but neglected importance of lis-

Hundreds of thousands of people—mostly white teenagers, I suspect—profess to find messages of deep import and social significance in Mayfield's ersatz music. I have said it before and (patient sigh) here it is again: Mayfield is a charming man, and he exercised his fine talent with great skill during his long stay with the Impressions. The moment he embarked on a solo career, five years ago, his style became turgid, monotonous, unbearably didactic, and sometimes downright silly. But for reasons known only to God he became a star. Those are the jokes.

Doubtless Mayfield's success will continue, and the people who like this sort of piffle will still nod their heads. I may have to review another Mayfield album at some time, but I'd rather not. So would you folks out there mind clipping this review and keeping it handy? Barring the unforeseen, it will do as well the next time out. *J.V.*



Arthur Lee: leader of Love's good vibes

tening with some objectivity to what the tones sound like. His (revamped) band is going strong again, its power involved with its delicacy of blend. Lee has his instrumentalists playing things that go together, as opposed to stuff that shows what a master somebody is at bending a note. The songs here are just adequate—less than that if you have need of some richness of lyric—but Lee's singing manages to do some communicating with the syllables, and the spirit of the album generates, in nontechnical terms, good vibes. *N.C.*

CURTIS MAYFIELD: *Got to Find a Way.* Curtis Mayfield (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Love Me (Right in the Pocket); So You Don't Love Me; A Prayer; Mother's Son; Cannot Find a Way; Ain't No Love Lost.* CURTOM CRS 8604 \$6.98.

Performance: **Bland**
Recording: **Fair**

Nothing new to report: everything Curtis Mayfield does sounds the same. His lyrics are at least coherent this time out, but you have to refer to the lyric sheet to understand what he's saying (which is not much) because of the poor mix on the recording.

MELANIE: *As I See It Now.* Melanie (vocals); orchestra. *Monongahela River; Chart Song; Eyes of Man; Record Machine; Autumn Lady;* and seven others. NEIGHBORHOOD NB 3000 \$6.98, ⑧ 8303-3000 H \$7.98, ⑥ 5303-3000 H \$7.98.

Performance: **For Melanie's minions**
Recording: **Good**

Oh God! Don't look now, but here comes Melanie again. Uh huh, she's still writing and composing such doughy blintzes of enlightenment as *Eyes of Man* and *As I See It Now* ("As I see it now/We have all got to change/Keeping us whole is the main thing/But me, I just sing . . ."), and she is still singing in a gasping, "meaningful" vibrato, as if someone had just fished her out of a well. With a nod to the gifts of another "real" artist, she tackles Robert Zimmerman's decade-old *Don't Think Twice, It's All Right* and glues it firmly to the ground. When she wraps that debonair old classic *Yes Sir, That's My Baby* in her accustomed hippie shawl, she perpetrates something of an unthinkable crime—rather like Fred Astaire being arrested for flashing. Her audiences, naturally, will adore the whole thing. *P.R.*

SERGIO MENDES. Sergio Mendes and His Orchestra. *Here Comes the Sun; Davy; Let Them Work It Out; All in Love Is Fair;* and six others. ELEKTRA 7E-1027 \$6.98.

Performance: **Nowhere**
Recording: **Dull**

This is Sergio Mendes' most inexplicable album. The weary focus is on Bonnie Bowden and Sondra Catton, who drone through such things as *All in Love Is Fair* and *The Trouble with Hello Is Goodbye*, in flatulent arrangements by Mendes and Dave Grusin, with stolid, show-biz grins. All that Mendes seems to have contributed is the time it took him to pose for the cover photos. P.R.

ANNE MURRAY: Highly Prized Possession. Anne Murray (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Dream Lover; Slow Fall; Saved by the Grace of Your Love; Lullaby; When We Both Had Time to Love;* and five others. CAPITOL ST-11354 \$6.98. ⑧ 8XT-11354 \$7.98. ④ 4XT-11354 \$7.98.

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

I still like Anne Murray, and I still don't care for her albums. This time out, she again has a lovely voice, crystal clear and easy-driving, and behind it an attitude of the can-do, all-pro sort that *can* turn me off but in her case doesn't. But the production again suggests taste and/or cynicism on a par with Elton John's recent slaps and dashes. *Dream Lover? Davy Tripper?* Come on, now. The audience has to be only a little less lazy to put up with *Slow Fall* and the title song, and whoever thinks *Saved by the Grace of Your Love* is good enough to be recorded by Murray should never, never demonstrate a tune that *isn't* good enough. It can't be all that difficult to find a dozen or so decent songs for one of the best female singers Capitol (or anybody else, for that matter) has available. So why don't they ever do it? N.C.

TONY ORLANDO & DAWN: Prime Time. Tony Orlando and Dawn (vocals); orchestra. *Raindrops; Dreamboat; Here Comes the Spring; My Love Has No Pride;* and six others. BELL 1317 \$6.98, ⑧ 8301-1317H \$7.98, ④ 5301-1317H \$7.98.

Performance: **Just keep on truckin'**
Recording: **Excellent**

Tony Orlando and Dawn, recently back on prime time, do one smart thing in their TV appearances—they keep moving. Their truckin' glides smoothly and continuously from one side of the screen to the other, so that the whole thing has a pleasantly drowsy effect, not unlike watching a senior-citizens' tennis tournament on a hazy summer afternoon. Their new album has an even more soporific effect as it unspools like one continuous piece of tinsel. Everything sounds the same. That's logical enough when you consider the strait-jacket arrangements (Our Star up front and his two anonymous helpers muttering in the rear), the mediocre songs (most apparently written to order by Dave Appell), and the startlingly lush but unobtrusive production and engineering (it's a good record to show off your new equipment with). Actually, there is nothing to dislike in this album, and it makes perfect background music for a party. Especially for that time when you wish your guests would leave: just start truckin' with any song

(Continued on page 85)



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Back again: the groovy group Germaine Greer groupied for

Little Stevie Wright Returns



Wright



Vanda



Young

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BEFORE you get too heavily involved with this, I guess I'm duty bound to point out (although it should be patently obvious within a line or two) that I'm totally without objectivity where Stevie Wright and his cohorts Harry Vanda and George Young are concerned. So take all that follows with a grain of salt, if you like. Since you've probably never heard of them, that's not an unreasonable request, especially since you're not alone: with the exception of perhaps five or six rock archivists, almost no one has. Even the amiable Mr. Rod Stewart, who did one of their songs on his most recent album, didn't know who they were and he's been *around*. (When informed that Harry and George, who had submitted a tape for his consideration, were guiding lights of the once popular Easybeats, Rod's comment was, "Were they really?") Ah hah! *Now* you remember. The Easybeats!

Okay, time for the history lesson. The Easybeats, as I'm sure you recall, were a spectacular rock-and-roll band that had one major hit in America (*Friday on My Mind*). There were five of them, but the ones who mattered (and if I'm offending any Dick Diamonde or Snowy Fleet fans, forgive me) were—you guessed it—vocalist Little Stevie Wright and guitarist/songwriters Vanda and Young. Musically, they sounded a bit like the Small Faces, and as a stage act . . . well, I never saw them, but they must have had *something*; after all, Germaine Greer (!) groupied for them for a time. They passed themselves off as Australians, but in reality they were all from England; they had simply *emigrated* to Australia, where they reasoned it would be easier to make it. They were right, and after inspiring reactions comparable to Beatlemania amongst the teenagers Down Under, they returned home in late 1966 and hooked up with Shel Talmy, who was responsible for producing the early hits of both the Who and the Kinks.

Seemingly they had everything going for them: they were visually exciting, Harry and George were fantastic writers when they were on, and Little Stevie could soul shout with the best of them. But things just didn't work out.

After their initial world-wide hit, they chose to follow up with an absolutely cataclysmic single called *Heaven and Hell*, but unfortunately in those young and innocent days (1967) you couldn't say hell on the radio (there was also a brouhaha over some allegedly suggestive lyrics), and that effectively did them in. And so, despite a brief tour, the rest was silence.

In 1968 they came up with an excellent second album, featuring *Gonna Have a Good Time*, a superb archetypal rocker that enjoyed modest single success, but in America United Artists delayed the LP's release for months, changed the cover, dropped some of the better cuts, tampered with the mix, and in general mucked it up about as badly as possible. A label change in 1969—to Polydor in England and Rare Earth over here—boded well, and they were able to score a small hit with their debut single on that label (*St. Louis*, another excellent song), but corporate stupidity struck again. Rare Earth refused to issue their third album ("Friends") to capitalize on the success of the hit, at which point the band, by now minus Little Stevie, gave up the ghost. This was *particularly* unfortunate, since the album contained some of their best work. Harry and George, writing under a pseudonym for contractual reasons, had thoroughly digested the Motown influences they had dabbled in previously, and in the process came up with some classic numbers, most notably *Woman You're on My Mind*, a stunning four-minute capsule history of black music from Delta blues to Ray Charles, which in my opinion is one of the great rave-ups in all of British rock.

Almost three years later, Harry and George popped up again, this time as the Marcus Hook Roll Band and a single called *Natural Man*, which, despite the fact that nobody bought it, is one of the crucial records of the decade. A teenage protest song ("Guys in drag and men in bowlers/Even good old rock-and-rollers/They all wanna change my thinking") based loosely on Free's *Alright Now*, it was possibly their strongest effort to date.

They did two more singles as Marcus Hook, both of which died commercially, but at least they weren't starving—Savoy Brown cut one of their songs, as did Rod Stewart, and Bowie did a parodistic (though for Harry and George highly profitable) remake of *Friday on My Mind*. For myself, like the Count of Monte Cristo, I waited and hoped.

Well, they've finally come through for me. They went back to Australia, hooked up with Stevie, and now they've given us the first album from any of them in six years. I love it. "Hard Road" is, well, uneven (none of Stevie's songs are up to the Vanda/Young things, and as a unit they've always had a weakness for the kind of schlock ballads that make it at San Remo anyway), but when it's good, it's as good as anything they've ever done, and that's as good as good gets. Stevie's singing is more convincing than ever, and Harry and George, who provide the guitars and background vocals, back him to the hilt. The title track, in particular, is as exciting a rocker as I've heard in years, and it cuts the Stewart version by miles. Considering that Rod has one of the best bands in the world behind him, that's saying quite a bit.

I'm absolutely delighted, of course. I've loved these guys for so long that "Hard Road" is almost like a letter from home. But, as I said at the beginning, I can't claim to be objective about them. Still, I can't see anybody not getting off on at least some of the stuff here either, and since I'm not in the mood to wait another six years, just do me a favor and buy a copy. —Steve Simels

STEVIE WRIGHT: *Hard Road*. Stevie Wright (vocals); Harry Vanda and George Young (guitars and vocals); George Alexander (bass); other musicians. *Hard Road*; *Life Gets Better*; *The Other Side*; *I Got You Good*; *Dancing in the Limelight*; *Didn't I Take You Higher*; *Evie (Parts 1-3)*; *Movin' On Up*; *Commando Line*. Atco SD 36-109 \$6.98. Ⓟ TP 36-109 \$7.97, © CS 36-109 \$7.97.

and they're bound to follow you out the door and into their cars. P.R.

GILBERT O'SULLIVAN: *A Stranger in My Own Backyard*. Gilbert O'Sullivan (vocals); orchestra. *My Father; Number 4; No More; If You Ever; Just Like Me*; and ten others. MAM MAM-10 \$6.98.

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

This is an album that doesn't mean a damned thing once you've taken it off the turntable, but it's continuously easy and likable while it's playing. Gilbert O'Sullivan is hardly a titan of pop music, but he sure can write awfully good little verses and set them to often charming music. Most of O'Sullivan's songs here are brief snippings, of which *No More* is probably the best. *It's So Easy to Be Sad* is the longest, most complex number, and it begins to clank with effort about halfway through. O'Sullivan's voice and performing manner have improved enormously in a few years, and I'm now starting to wonder if he wouldn't have made it eventually on his own even if Mr. Starmaker, Gordon Mills, hadn't discovered him; that's one of those show-biz questions, folks, that will probably never be answered. Johnnie Spence's arranging and conducting are absolutely first-rate. P.R.

HELEN REDDY: *Free and Easy*. Helen Reddy (vocals); orchestra. *Angie Baby; You Have Lived; Emotion; Showbiz; Raised on Rock*; and five others. CAPITOL ST-11348 \$6.98. ⑧ 8XT-11348 \$7.98. ⑨ 4XT-11348 \$7.98.

Performance: **Batting .200**
Recording: **Very good**

Helen Reddy has never been my cup of tea (never less than when she materialized as an itinerant singing nun in *Airport*—how I envied Myrna Loy that boilermaker she was drinking). Most of her performances strike me as cold, rigid, strident, and professional in all the wrong ways. But in every album there seems to be one band in which she nails a song and the idea behind it so firmly that I can't do anything but admire her unreservedly. Her latest release has two such tracks. One, *Emotion*, is on the surface only another he-beats-me-too-what-can-I-do torch song, but in Reddy's stunning performance it becomes a womanly cry of desperation about the loss of control. *Showbiz* is a bitterly wry little jig ("Faces come and faces go/The smart ones never let the wrinkles show . . . they're in/Showbiz, good ol' screw everyone you know biz") by Dennis Tracy that Reddy sings in the kind of clenched-teeth grimace that might be mistaken for a smile and that perfectly evokes a too often dusty, tacky profession. The other eight performances are the usual uninvolved cut-glass jobs that her public seems to love. P.R.

CHARLIE RICH: *The Silver Fox*. Charlie Rich (vocals); orchestra. *I Love My Friend; Pieces of My Life; Break-Up; Charlie's Swing; My Elusive Dreams*; and six others. Epic PE 33250 \$6.98, ⑧ PEA 33250 \$7.98, ⑨ PET 33250 \$7.98.

Performance: **Real peaceful**
Recording: **Good**

Here's of' Charlie Rich in a real soothin' and peaceful kind of album. You and your Aunt Myrt ought to have a real good time listening

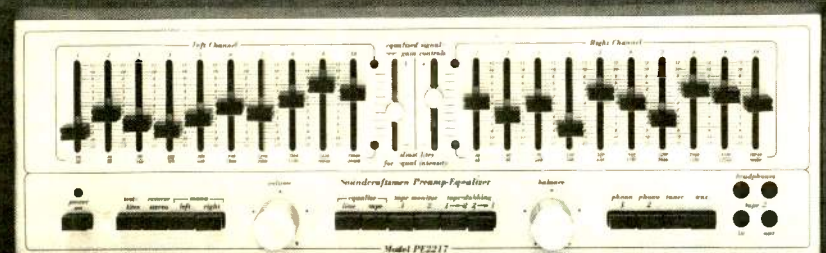
to Charlie croon through such hot numbers as *My Elusive Dreams* or *I Love My Friend* in a voice half beeswax and half Nat "King" Cole. Aunt Myrt might just get herself all worked up over Charlie's rendition of *Don't Put No Headstone on My Grave* and take to thinkin' about poor Uncle Bert, but if that happens, just show her Charlie's picture on the cover with all his beautiful silver hair and tell that humorous story about how "just because there's snow on the roof don't mean there ain't a fire in the furnace." That ought to break up the tension. P.R.

ROXY MUSIC: *Country Life*. Roxy Music (vocals and instrumentals). *The Thrill of It All; Three and Nine; All I Want Is You; Out of the Blue; If It Takes All Night; Bitter-*

Sweet; and four others. ATCO SD 36-106 \$6.98, ⑧ TP 36-106 \$7.98, ⑨ CS 36-106 \$7.98.

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

Bryan Ferry, in the lyrics of one song here, says there'll be "No cheap nostalgia/Conjured up by me," but if we slapped a breach-of-promise action on him he'd probably weasel out of it. As Mr. Simels has noted, this whole deco-rock fad is already nostalgia. And did the man say cheap? Well, Roxy Music, once kind of but not really interesting, has slipped to a fuzzy, generalized pounding sound, as dense and aimless as any that ever backed David Bowie, and Ferry's wobble-throat vocals sound exactly like Marc Bolan



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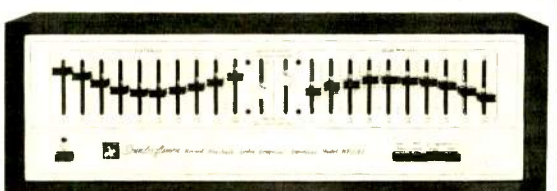
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would if someone stretched him out to normal size. Ferry still has a way with words, saying in a second song he's merely searching for truth and will find it if it takes all night, and in a third that the soil is so barren around here that only crosses will grow, but that—and another cover illustration calculated to offend Gloria Steinem—can do little besides shock the easily shocked. You don't want to admit you're easily shocked, do you? Thought not.
N.C.

BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE: *Changing Woman.* Buffy Sainte-Marie (vocals, guitar, piano, clavinet); instrumental accompaniment. *Eagle Man/Changing Woman; Can't You See the Way I Love You; Love's Got to Breathe and Fly; You Take Me Away; 'Til I See You Again;* and five others. MCA MCA-451 \$6.98, Ⓜ MCAT 451 \$7.98.

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

Buffy Sainte-Marie is singing well and writing nice melodies, and I think her idea here was to simplify, simplify. But her lyrics are starting to remind me of leftover corn flakes. I mean, if all you want to say is "I love you," maybe it's better to put off writing a batch of song lyrics until something a little more specific comes to mind. Just a thought. It might be a good idea, too, to examine some of these lines, such as "laughter is the grease of growth," in the clear light of morning before rushing off to the mailbox with the copyright papers. If you can stand the words, this album has a nice sound to it, with a few Nashville pickers in a mellow mood and staying close to the melodic line—but no singer with a delivery as intense as Buffy's will let you ignore the words, and I don't know how else you're going to stand them. You're on your own.
N.C.

LEO SAYER: *Just a Boy.* Leo Sayer (vocals); orchestra. *Telepath; Train; One Man Band; In My Life; Another Time;* and five others. WARNER BROS. BS 2836 \$6.98, Ⓜ M8 2836 \$7.98, Ⓜ M5 2836 \$7.98.

Performance: **Cheerful and a bit tetchd**
Recording: **Excellent**

Loony and likable, Leo Sayer charges through his new album like a friendly Mel Brooksian monster in search of a full moon. For instance, he screams his head off and yet makes something quite joyful out of *Telepath*, in which he seems to go from berserk to beyond with each repeat of the "Hello! London calling!!" refrain. He and David Courtney have written, or gotten from their ouija board, all of the songs in this collection, and they suit his nutty purposes admirably. Surely Sayer's performance of *The Bells of St. Mary's* here is some sort of frantic classic—of what, I'm not too sure. Sayer is a lot like the class clown that we all remember; you may get tired and impatient with him, but he tries so hard to entertain that you can't really get angry with him. The string, woodwind, and brass arrangements here by Andrew Powell are superlative, as is, mostly, the production by Adam Faith (remember him?) and David Courtney.
P.R.

SONNY TERRY/BROWNIE MCGHEE AND PEPPERMINT HARRIS: *Going Down Slow.* Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. C.C. Rider *Where Did She Go; Going*



Warner Bros. Records

LEO SAYER
From berserk to beyond

Down Slow; I Believe; Bulldog Blues; and four others. Peppermint Harris (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Sweet Happy Home; Lord Have Mercy.* MAINSTREAM Ⓜ 407 \$6.98.

Performance: **Sturdy**
Recording: **Good reprocessed mono**

This is a reissue, though I don't know where the originals come from. The two Peppermint Harris tracks—average blues performances—were included to make up an album's worth of songs. The majority of the selections, by Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, are fine, straightforward readings. Some of the tunes are a bit dusty (we heard them thousands of times during the folk boom of the late Fifties), and the unnamed piano player is over-recorded, but the album still makes pleasant listening. Terry seems to have been a harmonica master since his cradle days, and McGhee's husky, well-phrased baritone is always good to hear.
J.V.

JOE WALSH: *So What.* Joe Walsh (vocals, guitar, keyboards); instrumental accompaniment. *Welcome to the Club; Falling Down; Pavanne of the Sleeping Beauty by Ravel; Time Out; Turn to Stone;* and four others. ABC/DUNHILL DSD-50171 \$6.98, Ⓜ 8023-50171 H \$7.98, Ⓜ 5023-50171 H \$7.98.

Performance: **None**
Recording: **Look, Ma, I'm engineering!**

Joe Walsh is the former lead singer of the James Gang. This album is packaged as though what he does is of momentous import. It isn't.

Walsh has made it difficult to know what the tunes are about, having chosen to sound like he was recorded at the bottom of a well lined with tin, while he miaowed the lyrics into a water glass. I was at first annoyed that lyrics had not been provided, but after the second listening I was grateful. This is simply another dreary collection of you-better-get-your-fertilizer-together diatribes, plus the required "interpretation" of a classical melody, plus a batch of self-pitying ditties about how hard life is and how grateful we should be that rock-and-roll musicians like Joe Walsh are defending us from latent fascism by offering us a (yawn) counterculture life-style. In short, the title for the album amply describes what's in it.
J.V.



SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON
A buoyant, intense performance

KITTY WELLS: *Forever Young*. Kitty Wells (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Too Much Love Between Us*; *Forever Young*; *Too Stubborn*; *I've Been Loving You Too Long (To Stop Now)*; *What About You*; and five others. CAPRICORN CP 0146 \$6.98. © M8 0146 \$7.98, © M5 0146 \$7.98.

Performance: **Dog my (sob) cats . . .**
Recording: **Very good**

Lordy, lordy. Seems like only twenty years ago Kitty Wells was the Queen of Country Music, and now look at her, recordin' on them shaggy Allman Brothers' label and rockin' and rollin' and I don't know what all. Well, times change, just like it says in one of the songs (dad gum if they don't get more profound all the time), and there are some numbers, as we used to call 'em, in here that remind a body how life was in the Eat-Gas Diner when you played a Kitty Wells number with one nickel and a Cal Smith number with the next. There's *What About You*, made up by Kitty's husband, Johnny Wright, and one of his good buddies, Mr. Jack Anglin, that's as country as a three-legged calf. Still, it will take some getting used to, Kitty's nasal whine backed by this jumpin', stompin' band that rips through these here modern songs like *Too Much Love Between Us* and Mr. Dylan's *Forever Young* like a dose of Epsom salts through a widow woman. But I guess the main thing is that, after all these years and takin' up with these new ways and all, Kitty still has something others can't imitate, even if they put clothespins on their noses. To quote, somewhat out of context, that brazen Joan Baez when she was mocking the way Kitty talks on the TV the other night, "It's kindly morbid. Maybe that's why we like it so good." N.C.

SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON: *King Biscuit Time*. Sonny Boy Williamson (harmonica and vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Pontiac Blues*; *Mighty Long Time*; *Nine Below Zero*; *Mr. Downchild*; and twelve others. ARHOLIE M 2020 \$5.98.

Performance: **Better late than never**
Recording: **Fair**

To avoid confusion, let me first say that this is not the Sonny Boy Williamson who recorded extensively for the Bluebird and Victor labels in the Thirties and Forties, but rather one

who—though older than his more famous colleague—did not start recording until 1951. According to Noel Coppage's December 1973 STEREO REVIEW article about the harmonica, this man was actually Willie "Rice" Miller, and he took the name of Williamson; Paul Oliver's characteristically detailed notes tell us that he spent much of his time trying to convince skeptical blues collectors that he was the Sonny Boy and that the other one was merely an imitator who had been given all the "breaks." Be that as it may, this man's performances on these, his first recordings, render such arguments academic. Williamson died in 1965, leaving behind a number of recordings released on the Chess label, but, though they are generally of high technical quality, none rival these sides originally released on the Trumpet label. The accompaniment is dated, but the vitality, natural quality, and intense emotion of Williamson's performances will never go out of style. Williamson claimed to have recorded as early as 1929, though so far no evidence of this has come to light; but 1951 was obviously still not too late. C.A.

COLLECTIONS

AFRICA DANCES. *Afrika Mokili Mobimba* (Kale-Roger and Rochereau with the OK Jazz Orchestra); *Lisie* (Bantous de la Capitale); *Me Nsae Da* (Ahamano's Guitar Band); *Broadway Special* (Broadway Dance Band); *Omo Oloja* (Dele Ojo and His Star Brothers Band); *Toomus Meremereh Nor Good* (S. E. Rogers); *Kenyatta Aliteswa Sana* (John Mwale); *Pole Musa* (Peter Tsotsi, Nashil Pichen and the Equator Sound Band); and eight others. AUTHENTIC 601 \$5.98 (available by mail from Authentic Records, 123 Congress Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201).

Performance: **Afro-pop**
Recording: **Well-transferred mono**

Fifteen years ago, some friends of mine spent a month or so touring the African Continent. They made extensive use of their home movie camera, and it occurred to them, en route to the airport, that a recording of authentic African music would enhance their films. A mad dash in and out of a record shop yielded an album that looked like just the thing. Entitled "Music Was Born in Africa," its back cover promised a variety of authentic music. Imagine their surprise when the first track turned out to be a lady singing *Tenderly* to the accompaniment of a cocktail-piano trio.

I'm glad to say you won't find *Tenderly* in this album, but neither will you find music for a Senegalese circumcision ceremony. This is a collection of African dance music of recent times, recorded in eleven of the continent's nations and revealing very strong influences of Caribbean music, Latin music, jazz, and, in one case, soul music. I don't find the music itself particularly interesting, but the album is a fascinating study of ricocheting influences, a blend of local African traditions with Western elements that themselves developed from earlier blends with African tradition. In short, this is the music that urban Africans create and listen to, the local pop music. It has not replaced the traditional forms, which are still the music of the African majority. The album contains authoritative annotation by John Storm Roberts and should prove useful to teachers of black studies courses. C.A.

(Continued overleaf)

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CHET BAKER: *She Was Too Good to Me*. Chet Baker (trumpet, vocals); Paul Desmond (alto saxophone); Hubert Laws (flute); Bob James (electric piano); Ron Carter (bass); Jack DeJohnette (drums); others. *Autumn Leaves; Tangerine; Funk in Deep Freeze; With a Song in My Heart*; and three others. CT1 CT1 6050 S1 \$6.98, ⑧ CT8 6050 \$6.95, ⑨ CTC 6050 \$6.95.

Performance: **A welcome return**
Recording: **Excellent**

Chet Baker was the young-man-with-a-horn of the Fifties. Soaring mellifluously to fame after a hit recording of *My Funny Valentine*, made with the extraordinary Gerry Mulligan Quartet, Baker's smooth-as-butter horn serenaded the romantic in an era when America's pop music was dominated by one-fingered piano players and ersatz Elvises. He also gained a considerable following as a velvety singer of romantic ballads, but the success was more than he could deal with at the time, and as we entered the Sixties he had fallen prey to drugs. There were more albums after that, but Baker's highly publicized personal problem and the public's changing tastes made it impossible to capture what once had been.

CHET BAKER:
Back with an album to gladden the hearts of his fans

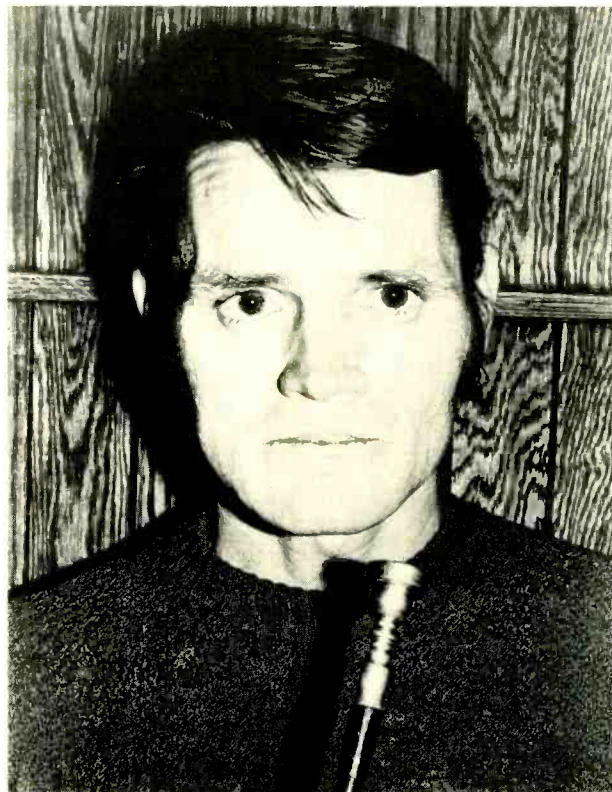
Now Chet Baker is back among the healthy, and he's as good as he's ever been. Teaming up with a superb crew, including alto saxophonist Paul Desmond, whose enormous popularity with the Dave Brubeck Quartet was at its peak in Baker's heyday, he has come up with an album that is bound to gladden the hearts of his old fans. Except for Bob James' electric piano, this set could just as well have been recorded fifteen or twenty years ago: Baker's style is virtually unaltered, and much of the material is drawn from the past. There is undeniably a touch of anachronism in the music, but rather than being a mere attempt at re-creation this is simply Chet Baker doing his thing as he has always done. He does it well and with a spirit that belies the setbacks he experienced in the intervening years. C.A.

HAMPTON HAWES: *Northern Windows*. Hampton Hawes (piano); Carol Kaye (electric bass); Spider Webb (drums); other musicians. *Sierra Morena; Go Down Moses; Bach*; and three others. PRESTIGE P-10088 \$6.98, ⑧ 8162-10088 \$7.98.

Performance: **Pale potpourri**
Recording: **Very good**

Twenty years ago, Hampton Hawes' playing showed symptoms of unique talent, but his playing today reflects promises unkept. Here his playing is as devoid of character as David Axelrod's plodding arrangements. Back in the old days of Prestige, I grew weary of the so-called blowing sessions, but, disorganized as such affairs usually were, they at least produced inspired moments from time to time. There is nothing inspiring about this set of nondescript piano-trio performances set against the most unimaginative horn configurations this side of Lester Lanin. C.A.

PAUL HORN: *A Special Edition* (see Best of the Month, page 76)



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AHMAD JAMAL: *Jamal Plays Jamal*. Ahmad Jamal (keyboards); other musicians. *Eclipse: Pastures: Swahililand: Spanish Interlude*; and two others. 20TH CENTURY T-459 \$6.98, © 8459 \$7.98, © C 459 \$7.98.

Performance: **Twixt Mulligan and Mantovani**

Recording: **Very good**

Ahmad Jamal's music is always in good taste; it is pleasant on the ears and a great deal of it has found its way into albums over the past twenty or so years. Obviously, there is a sizable market for what he does, and I suspect that market consists mainly of people whose taste lies somewhere between Mulligan and Mantovani. Jamal, who has neither the lyricism of a Bill Evans nor the potency of an Erroll Garner, sorely lacks individuality.

This album, featuring a quartet augmented by namby-pamby strings and an ever-so-slight touch of brass, consists of six undistinguished Jamal compositions that are sure to delight all-night FM disc jockeys, but will hardly be remembered a year from now. *C.A.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

KEITH JARRETT: *Facing You*. Keith Jarrett (piano). *In Front: Lalene: Landscape for Future Earth: Semblance*; and four others. ECM 1017 ST \$6.98.

Performance: **Excellent**

Recording: **Excellent**

This album is not better than Jarrett's previous release, "Solo Concerts Bremen/Lausanne," but that would be too much to expect. It is, however, equally fine, and that is more than one dared expect. Jarrett, now thirty, imbues his unique improvisations with experience which he is too young to have had himself, but which he has obviously explored to the core. His totally personal musical statements can perhaps be likened to impressionistic renderings of a Renaissance theme—as a Monet might see the works of a Michelangelo. Keith Jarrett paints a modern musical canvas with strokes that capture the essence of past piano masters from Joplin to Tatum. The result is an excellent album. *C.A.*

BERNIE LEIGHTON: *Bernie Leighton Plays Duke Ellington at Jimmy Weston's*. Bernie Leighton (piano); Howie Collins (guitar); Milt

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CIRCLE NO. 20 ON READER SERVICE CARD

“...from UFO's to cosmic cicadas...”

Eddie Palmieri



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FOUR of the six tracks on Eddie Palmieri's latest album, "The Sun of Latin Music," are fine and original salsa, including one *cumbia* (a Colombian rhythm that seems about to burst onto the scene). From most other musicians, these four tracks would be enough. From Eddie Palmieri, though, one almost takes for granted their many excellences: the inexorably developing swing; the tonal richness of the baritone saxes in *Nada de Ti*; fine solos, notably Alfredo de la Fe's marvelous violin playing, also in *Nada de Ti*; the rather French melody and the beautiful French horn part behind the vocal in *Deseo Salvaje*; brass writing that cuts clear to the bone; and the singing of a fine young *sonero*, Lalo Rodríguez. But it is the musical mind that comes through on the two remaining tracks that makes this disc and Palmieri's other recent albums major events.

One of these two tracks, *Una Rosa Española*, is a nearly perfect example of its type, but it is continuously surprising as well. To begin with, it is a *danzón*—a Cuban salon dance dating from the 1870's (though still well loved), which would have seemed about as interesting to most experimentalists as a one-step. Yet this is no exercise in camp. The beautiful melody is allowed to exercise its full charm at the opening before the piece develops into a capsule musical history that ends in an all-out *montuno*.

The pleasures of *Una Rosa Española* are subtle but not perplexing: they stem from unexpected but entirely appropriate instrumentation (flute and French horn, followed by a passage for violin, trumpets, and tuba), taste, wit, and musicianship. The other outstanding track, *Un Día Bonito*, is much harder to write about. Its formal elements are easy enough to describe: it consists of a very long free-form prelude for piano and (mostly) taped sounds, a bridge passage for the drummers, and then one of Barry Rogers' most fiercely orchestrated pieces, rhythmically based on a conga-comparsa combination. But the prelude mixes in elements that, on the face of it, would seem highly unlikely to work

together. Palmieri's piano playing, while his own, contains elements going back to Debussy via McCoy Tyner as well as the forearm tone clusters (Henry Cowell?) that currently fascinate him (there's also one of those tone clusters in *Una Rosa Española* that achieves total surprise). The tape work, which is largely Barry Rogers', ranges from UFO-type effects to some cosmic cicadas. There are a couple of sudden brass interjections as shocking as razor slashes. In the reading it must all seem pretentiousness or pastiche, and yet in the listening it is neither.

PINNING down just what is so special about Eddie Palmieri is extremely difficult. He has, I think, an extraordinary talent for matching his own creativity with fine choices of soloists and other musicians, and in Barry Rogers he has a collaborator of outstanding quality. But a number of other salsa musicians, some of whom outdo Palmieri in strictly technical skill, also choose excellent collaborators. Another of Palmieri's notable characteristics is the way he combines gut-level swing (and corresponding popularity) with constant innovation; but others do some of that too. Part of his fascination, for me, at least, lies in his willingness to sweat and bleed in public. His musical daring is often on the verge of recklessness, continually alternating and mixing mere excitement and emotional cliffhanging—this time, next time, surely he is going to take a fall. . . . Music as pleasure and music as adventure, which rarely come together, are so tightly intertwined in Eddie Palmieri's work that listening to him can be like the first time you ever discovered music. And that's an experience well worth having.

—John Storm Roberts

EDDIE PALMIERI: *The Sun of Latin Music*. Eddie Palmieri (piano); other musicians; Eddie Palmieri, Rene Hernandez, and Barry Rogers, arrs. *Nada de Ti; Deseo Salvaje; Una Rosa Española; Nunca con Tigo; Un Día Bonito; Mi Cumbia*. Coco CLP 109XX \$5.98, ⓑ 1109XX \$6.98, ⓒ 1109XX \$6.98.

Hinton (bass); Ronnie Bedford (drums). *Sophisticated Lady; Caravan; Kissing Bug; Azure; Chelsea Bridge; Black Butterfly; What Am I Here For?*; and ten others. MONMOUTH EVERGREEN MES 7068 \$6.98.

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

Bernie Leighton entered music professionally in the Thirties. His band experience includes time spent with the orchestras of Bud Freeman, Benny Goodman, Leo Reisman, and Raymond Scott; he has been active as composer-arranger-pianist in New York studios for several years, and he has made a few recordings in a middle-of-the-road pop vein.

This tribute to Duke Ellington—two roughly twenty-minute medleys—was recorded at Jimmy Weston's, a New York supper club, less than a week before Ellington's death last May. Though it won't exactly provide a source for study by future jazz scholars, this is a pleasant album, well performed and recorded. Leighton is technically excellent and capable of considerable swing, but his style is too impersonal for my taste. Guitarist Howie Collins is equally agile and a bit more interesting to listen to, and, with strong rhythmic support from drummer Ronnie Bedford and the ever-reliable Milt Hinton, the quartet generates a great deal of good music. That's not bad considering the quantity of pap that is served up on vinyl these days. C.A.

GLENN MILLER: *A Legendary Performer and His Orchestra*. Glenn Miller and His Orchestra. *Moonlight Serenade; Little Brown Jug; Tuxedo Junction; Pennsylvania 6-5000; A String of Pearls; In the Mood; Chattanooga Choo Choo; Juke Box Saturday Night*; and seventeen others. RCA CPM2-0693 two discs \$9.98.

Performance: **Good for your ulcers**
Recording: **Faithful to its time**

Turn back the clock! It's May 17, 1939, 11:45 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time at the Glen Island Casino where NBC Radio is about to bring you, live, the opening engagement of Glenn Miller and His Orchestra. The smooth voice of announcer Hugh James completes its cozy introduction and the next sound you hear is—you guessed it!—*Moonlight Serenade*, harbinger of the mellow, cool music that is to sweep the nation over the next three years. *Moonlight Serenade* is followed by *Sunrise Serenade*, and Glenn, in that civil, affable voice that blended so well with the rest of his public personality, tells you how happy he is to be playing for your pleasure this evening at Glen Island. The rest of this two-record set, put together with loving care by George T. Simon (who wrote the book, *Glenn Miller and His Orchestra*, from which biographical excerpts are reprinted in a handsome booklet that comes with the album) is a chronological survey of Miller recordings, all of them takes unreleased until now.

In Miller's world, everything had a beveled edge: compare his playing of *Take the "A" Train* with Ellington's own; although the arrangement is by Billy Strayhorn, the cars on this one have rubber wheels. Even the *Chattanooga Choo Choo* rolls into Carolina on a jolt-proof roadbed. Miller did not come back alive from the War. But he's here all right on these records, which genuinely evoke their time. Here is Miller getting his plaque after winning the *Make-Believe Ballroom* popularity poll; broadcasting *In the Mood* on New

Year's Eve, 1941, from the Cafe Rouge of the Hotel Pennsylvania (New York's Statler Hilton now); making his "emotional" farewell to his fans (about as emotional as the expression on the face of a girl selling you a ticket at a movie box-office). These production touches intensify the authentic feeling of the whole experience. And for the rest—why, it's practically Miller's entire repertoire, from his malted-milk version of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto to the creamy-rich vocalizing of Ray Eberle and the Modernaires and the sweet sound of Bobby Hackett's cornet. *P.K.*

GIL SCOTT-HERON/BRIAN JACKSON: *The First Minute of a New Day*. Gil Scott-Heron (vocals, electric piano); Brian Jackson (piano, bells); others. *Guerilla: Must Be Something: Alluswe; Western Sunrise*; and five others. ARISTA A 4030 \$6.98.

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

Gil Scott-Heron, now in his mid-twenties, is a gifted poet/novelist/composer whose work generally deals perceptively with the so-called black experience. His "Winter in America" album, which appeared on the Strata-East label last year, contained a marvelous song entitled *The Bottle*, a bit of social commentary which he himself rendered splendidly, but which became a greater, if still modest, hit as *In the Bottle* by a lesser group called Brother to Brother. The rest of "Winter in America" was something of a letdown, as is this new release.

These two albums and an earlier one on the Flying Dutchman label make it clear that Scott-Heron is at his best—often brilliant—when he deals with social problems. His only monologue in the new album, *Pardon Our Analysis (We Beg Your Pardon)*, is an updated extension of *H2Ogate Blues*. Whereas "King Richard" (Nixon) bore the brunt of Scott-Heron's earlier work, he now focuses on President Ford ("Oatmeal Man"), and the satire is equally biting, but none of the songs in this new set come close to being as effective as *The Bottle*: most of them consist of rambling rhetoric about the black man's struggle, and it's all been said before. The music, too, is uninspired, whether from the pen of Scott-Heron or his partner Brian Jackson. What carries the album is Scott-Heron's spoken commentary on the Washington mess and his singing voice, which is too good for the material he feeds it. *C.A.*

COLLECTIONS

THE ORIGINAL BOOGIE-WOOGIE PIANO GIANTS. Albert Ammons, Pete Johnson, Meade Lux Lewis, Jimmy Yancey, Champion Jack Dupree (pianos); Joe Turner (vocals). *Cafe Society Rag; Bear Trap Blues; Bear Cat Crawl; Dupree Shake Dance; Shout for Joy; Cherry Red*; and seven others. COLUMBIA MKC 32708 \$5.98.

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

Boogie-woogie piano was not much of a musical form. It was very beaty and rhythmic but so limited in scope that the playing of it was easily reduced to mere mechanics. In rock the rule has been, "When in doubt, play louder": in boogie the trick was to sound *busy*—play the riffs faster and keep those twelve-bar bass patterns going.

This mostly negligible collection is compiled

from recordings made between 1938 and 1941, when boogie in its final, commercial form became briefly popular as part of the Tin Pan Alley-concocted "swing era." The three worst performances here are *Bear Cat Crawl* by Meade Lux Lewis, the two-fisted player who wrote *Honky Tonk Train*, a show-piece which is the *Maple Leaf Rag* of boogie, and two selections by Jimmy Yancey, who is as good as boogie ever got. Yancey had a delicate, springy touch to his playing; he sounds like a stone skipping over water where almost everyone else sounds like boulders being dropped into the sea.

Pete Johnson and Albert Ammons made a hit in café society as a team. Their appeal, it seems now, must have been based almost entirely on manpower, but it just does not re-

quire two people to play what a really capable pianist would not be interested in playing at all. In fact, such musicians as Earl Hines, James P. Johnson, and Fats Waller would have little or nothing to do with boogie. Waller, who was not a fussy man, even went so far as to have a clause inserted in his personal-appearance contracts that he would not be required to play it.

There is an earlier, cruder, rural form of boogie based on folk blues, played in the Twenties, which is more satisfying to the hips and the gut. Examples of it may be heard in "Pitchin' Boogie" (Milestone MLP 2018). Jimmy Yancey's definitive *Yancey Stomp* is in "Classic Piano Styles" (RCA LPV-543). I recommend you hear these before, or instead of, this collection. *J.V.*

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CHOOSING SIDES

By IRVING KOLODIN



À LA MANIÈRE DE RAVEL

AS MUCH as he was praised during his lifetime, Maurice Ravel was disparaged as well, especially by those who demanded that he be something he never professed to be—that is, a composer in the “grand tradition,” complete with weighty aesthetic pronouncements, stylistic “periods,” and all the other trappings of conventional musical mastery. He had none of it, of course. But why, then, the persistence of his music, the undeviating place of prominence it occupies in concert programs and record listings, the emergence—in this hundredth year of his birth—of a whole new generation of interpreters devoting themselves to the recycling of his “complete” piano literature? (Such collections of the piano works have never been out of the record catalog since the pioneering effort of Walter Gieseking in the early Fifties, whose set was followed not long afterward by those of Robert Casadesus, Vlado Perlmutter, and, more recently, Samson François.) The answer is simply that the world is endlessly grateful that Ravel was precisely what he was: a strong embodiment of his own unique personality rather than a weak imitation of someone else’s.

I have, over the span of years marked by the issuance of all those “complete” recordings, devised a personal, private test for determining (in less than two minutes) just where a new interpreter of total Ravel stands. No, I have not isolated a particularly prickly passage in *Scarbo*, *Jeux d’Eau*, or *La Vallée des Cloches* to set up as the one, the all-embracing challenge. My test is rather the full length of one of the most delightful pieces of musical portraiture ever put to canvas—I mean paper: *À la Manière de Chabrier*.

For those who have been denied the pleasure of acquaintance with this piece, I may mention that it begins with a straightforward quote from Gounod’s *Faust* (the introduction to “*Faites-lui mes aveux*” sung by Siebel in Act II as she—he—leaves a bouquet for Marguerite). But it ceases to be straightforward at measure No. 5, where it approaches the transition from introduction to aria. Ravel persuades the pre-cadential measure, with a Puckish flick of harmony, to shed the likeness of Gounod and put on the mask of Chabrier. Two notes do it: a change from Gounod’s “G” and “F” to “F-sharp” and “D-sharp.” From there on it is a paraphrase of Gounod’s waltzy idea as it might have sounded had

Chabrier thought of it first. If a performer doesn’t know what to do with those two critical notes he may still be able to storm his way through the intricacies of, say, *Scarbo*, but he will never comprehend the quintessential trait of Ravel: his determination always to have a precise reason for writing every note. As the composer once remarked to his good friend, the penetrating critic Michel D. Calvocoressi, “I never release a work until I feel quite certain that I have done my utmost, and could not in any way improve one single detail in it.”

Of the latest contenders for critical honors in the “complete” Ravel stakes, Abbey Simon (Vox SVBX 5473) passes the Chabrier test with flying colors, Philippe Entremont (Columbia D3M 33311) with what might be termed flying fingers. From this two-minute sampling comes what the polling profession likes to call a “profile” of things to come: Simon a Ravel man for all seasons, Entremont at his best only when the weather is at its most stormy.

Gaspard de la Nuit may be cited as a particular instance of these pianists’ different

approaches. Simon plays each section with his ear cocked for what he is doing, giving me as he does so the sensation that he is alert to the possibility that *this time* a new surge of interpretive impulse may cause some alteration in the course of his *Ondine* or *Le Gibet*. Entremont, on the other hand, strikes me as having it all carefully under control according to an already drawn battle plan. The thrust of *Ondine* or *Le Gibet* is therefore somewhat subdued, the heavy guns of dynamic contrast being held in abeyance for full onslaught in *Scarbo*. This section is, indeed, phenomenally propelled to an overwhelming conclusion, but in winning the battle of *Scarbo* Entremont may have sacrificed the war of *Gaspard de la Nuit*. Technical complexities, it appears, do not pose problems for Entremont, but simplicities sometimes do.

Both of these Ravel collections bear the descriptive term “complete,” which suggests that both contain the same music. But, following precedent in this area of Ravel’s music, that is not necessarily the case. Both pianists perform the same basic dozen solo pieces: the large blocks of *Miroirs*, *Jeux d’Eau*, *Gaspard de la Nuit*, *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, and *Sonatine*, plus the charming miniatures ranging from *Pavane pour une Infante Défunte*, *Prelude*, and the two *Menuets* (*Antique* and *Sur le Nom d’Haydn*) to the pieces in the manner of Borodin and Chabrier. To them (following the precedent of the Casadesus collection) Entremont adds *Ma Mère l’Oye* and *Habanera*, both in their pre-orchestral form for piano duet (four hands, one piano) and both perfectly performed with the collaboration of Malaysian-born pianist Dennis Lee. Simon’s choice for an added entry is the transcription for solo piano made by Ravel after the orchestral *La Valse* was completed (1919-1920).

ANY performer who has a sufficient sense of the sporting challenge to take on *La Valse* in its pianistic form for the sheer joy of conveying its sound to others has my suffrage. This would include not only Simon (and, before him, Leonard Pennario, whose version is now out of circulation), but Ruth Laredo, whose performance (Connoisseur Society CS



ABBEY SIMON:
a Ravel man
for all seasons

2005) was highly acclaimed when it was first issued in the late Sixties. Hearing Simon and Laredo back to back in these recordings, one's first impression is: "What a two-piano team they would make!" The basic agreement on tempo is so close that the difference in elapsed time can be measured in seconds: 11'07" for Laredo, 11'21" for Simon.

Within that time frame, however, there is plenty of room for individuality. To Laredo, Ravel is nothing like the manufacturer of "slick trash" one contemporary critic labeled him, but rather a man with a hot core of inner fire whose work impels her to a climax both *espressivo* and *agitato*. To Simon, he is no part of the "artistic dandy" he was imputed to be by another critic during his lifetime, but rather an enormously resourceful master at making prismatic color out of the black and white of the keyboard. In Simon's treatment, power and grace are blended with that finesse which is his particular musical distinction. As to which is "better," well, which orchestral version do you prefer, Bernstein's or Munch's?

IF I were looking for a new "complete" Ravel, I would, for general point-of-view reasons, prefer Simon to Entremont. (London, by the way, is sponsoring another set by the young Pascal Rogé, of which only the first record has so far been released. Our view of this artist in this repertoire is thus limited to his performances of *Sonatine*, *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, and *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, none of which are of the quality of the others discussed here.) Basically, however, a "complete" Ravel cannot exist within one box of recordings by one artist—there is simply too much of him for any one of them, however gifted he may be. But I can recommend a composite "complete" from individual issues that have long enriched the catalogs, plus excerpts from a collection or two. I would start my program with Artur Schnabel's insuperably seductive treatment of *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* (RCA LSC 2751) and follow quickly with the inimitably strumming, guitar-like sound Alicia de Larrocha imparts to *Alborada del Gracioso* (Columbia M 30115). Contemporary competitors for honors in *Gaspard de la Nuit* press in on all sides, but my favor remains firmly with the version of the late Robert Casadesus (Volume II of his complete Columbia sequence, ML 4519, now on Odyssey 32360003, three discs, and still remarkable in sound). The same disc would take care of *Jeux d'Eau* and *Menuet Antique*, likewise *Ma Mère l'Oye* and *Habanera* (in collaboration with Gaby Casadesus). John Browning's fine pairing of the *Sonatine* and *Tombeau de Couperin* together with *Gaspard* (RCA LSC 3028) shows an aptitude for this repertoire that should be extended.

Of course, if we are privileged to subdivide a larger work (such as *Miroirs*) to get a superior performance of one segment (De Larrocha's *Alborada del Gracioso*), partiality may also be extended to include a preference for one *Ondine* over all the others—Gieseking's, by reason of the way he performs the first sixteen measures in the *right hand*. Since this acquisition will also take care of the not-yet-included *Miroirs*, *Pavane pour une Infante Défunte*, *Menuet Sur le Nom d'Haydn*, *Prélude*, and *À la Manière de Borodine*, it may even be called economical—especially since it also has the best version ever made of *À la Manière de Chabrier*.

MAY 1975

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CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by RICHARD FREED • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS
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BARBER: *Symphony No. 1, Op. 9* (see MAYER)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 1, in C Major, Op. 21; Symphony No. 2, in D Major, Op. 36.* Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner cond. PHILIPS 6500 113 \$7.98.

Performance: **Fresh and flowing**
Recording: **Excellent**

This immensely enjoyable disc is one of the four originally issued (in England, but not in this country) in a set called "The Rise of the Symphony," whose other components were works of Johann Christian Bach, Haydn, and Mozart. The Haydn segment has already been issued here on its own (Symphonies Nos. 52 and 53, on Philips 6500 114), and I hope the Bach (the six symphonies of Johann Christian's Op. 6, on Philips 6500 115) will make its way to us soon. In the meantime, the Beethoven, which for once does not commence another cycle of the Immortal Nine, is a thorough delight. The idea of recording these symphonies with a chamber orchestra is not new: Leslie Jones has done Nos. 1 and 8 for Unicorn with his Little Orchestra, and the string section of the "Columbia Symphony Orchestra" assembled for Bruno Walter's last Beethoven cycle was probably no larger than Marriner's. What is *always* new, though, is the spring-like freshness of such performances as these: the approach is one of un-

cluttered simplicity that matches the clean, lithe sound of the impeccably balanced ensemble to define its own kind of eloquence. Perhaps because this is one of the relatively few Beethoven symphony recordings *not* involved in an integral cycle, the participants were able to breathe more freely, with a sense of fastidiousness and pleasure in the works at hand instead of the heavy awareness of a momentous undertaking. No grand drama, no exalted insights, no flashing revelations—and no pretentiousness or self-consciousness, either—but marvelous clarity and the quiet exhilaration that comes from hearing everything Beethoven wrote make its effect without artificial spotlighting. Excellent sound, too. *R.F.*

BELLINI: *I Puritani* (see Best of the Month, page 73)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ELGAR: *Enigma Variations, Op. 36.* **R.** **STRAUSS:** *Don Juan, Op. 20.* Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam, Bernard Haitink cond. PHILIPS 6500481 \$7.98.

Performance: **A-1**
Recording: **Superb**

The *Enigma Variations* never have lacked for distinguished recorded performances, beginning with those of Elgar himself and Sir Hamilton Harty on 78's and extending through those of Toscanini, Monteux, Boult, and Barbirolli to the most recently issued of the currently available stereo crop. Except for an unaccountably stolid treatment of the great adagio ninth variation (*Nimrod*), Haitink's reading belongs right up there with the best. Indeed, his beautiful shaping of the theme at the opening leads one to expect this to be the best of all. It almost is—but not quite. What is best here is the recorded sound, the most rich and detailed yet enjoyed by this music, especially in the woodwind and percussion departments. Cock an ear to the bass drum afterbeat (inaudible in most recordings) in *Troyte* (seventh variation), for example—that is, if your speakers have the requisite bottom range. The *Don Juan* reading is in the same top class as the Elgar, and it has superb sonics to match. *D.H.*

HAUBIEL: *Gothic Variations; Nuances; Violin Sonata; Shadows; 1865 A.D.* Endre Granat (violin); Carol Roberts (piano); Westphalian Symphony Orchestra, Paul Freeman cond. ORION ORS 74158 \$6.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Mostly good**

Ohio-born Charles Haubiel, now in his eighties, made his first major impact as a composer in 1928, when his *Karma Symphonic Variations* on a Theme of Handel won the American division prize in the Schubert Centennial competition sponsored by the Columbia Phonograph Company and were subsequently recorded under the composer's direction. Conservatory teaching positions have occupied much of Haubiel's career, and in recent years he has lived on the West Coast. To judge from the music on this disc, Haubiel's work is pleasantly post-Romantic in style, with mildly mystical overtones. It will hardly compare, though, with the best work of such other frankly post-Romantic Americans as Howard Hanson and the early Samuel Barber.

All the works are for violin. The *Variations* and *Nuances* are both with orchestra, and they are well recorded and well played on this disc. The remaining works, with piano, are also well recorded, but there is a disconcerting stereo allocation of violin to the left speaker and piano to the right. The *Violin Sonata* is effectively written, if lacking in distinctive stylistic personality. The smaller pieces verge on the salon level, and *1865 A.D.* offers some unmistakable reminiscences of Jerome Kern's *Old Man River*. Endre Granat's solo work reveals him as a first-rate violinist and all-around musician. He deserves more substantial fare than this on which to lavish his obvious talents. *D.H.*

HAYDN: *Concerto in D Major, Op. 21* (see MOZART)

HERRMANN: *Wuthering Heights.* Morag Beaton (soprano), Catherine Earnshaw; Donald Bell (baritone), Heathcliff; John Kitchiner (baritone), Hindley Earnshaw; Pamela Bowden (mezzo-soprano), Isabella Linton; Joseph Ward (tenor), Edgar Linton; Elizabeth Bain-

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.

bridge (mezzo-soprano), Nelly Dean; Michael Rippon (bass), Joseph; David Kelly (baritone), Mr. Lockwood; Mark Snashall (alto), Hareton Earnshaw; Elizabethan Singers; carolers; Pro Arte Orchestra, Bernard Herrmann cond. UNICORN UNB 400 four discs \$29.98.

Performance: **Fascinating failure**
Recording: **Stunning**

Just after scoring the 1944 film of *Jane Eyre*, Bernard Herrmann, at thirty-five (he is now sixty-three), was inspired to launch into the composition of an ambitious four-act opera based on Emily Brontë's classic *Wuthering Heights*. He even made a pilgrimage to Brontë country to explore the moors for inspiration. In 1950 the completed opera was recorded in England and released on the Pye label, but it has never been performed in an opera house.

Herrmann has handled the problems posed by his subject with tremendous formal skill. Indeed, the constant stir of instrumental allusions to the changing weather and the seasons on the moors (there are even real larks at one point) frequently evokes the Delius of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. But Herrmann can also work up storms of Richard Straussian dimensions, and his ability to parody period music is admirably brought into play, especially in the set pieces. A wordless duet between Edgar and Cathy in the second act is an arresting instance of the resourceful way the composer has applied his craft. Yet, somehow, craft it remains. It is one thing to extend the emotional power of a scene on film through the ingenious use of atmospheric music, quite another to wed that skill to the genuine operatic contents of a work that must sing its way into the soul.

The cast in this recording, a group of first-rate British singers with a real flair for drama, do their best to conceal the weaknesses of the opera and all but succeed. Morag Beaton as Cathy and Donald Bell as Heathcliff infuse a passion into their duets that almost makes us forget the barren stretches in some of their long exchanges, although Mr. Bell at times, especially in the early scenes, fails to lend the proper harshness and idiomatically earthy spirit to the character of Heathcliff, the gypsy foundling. Miss Beaton's Cathy, too, is a mite over-refined for the heroine's rebellious, rugged spirit. Pamela Bowden as Isabella and Joseph Ward as Edgar Linton, on the other hand, have an easier time projecting the more genteel nature of the roles entrusted to them. John Kitchiner is a suitably sadistic Hindley Earnshaw, and Elizabeth Bainbridge's Nelly Dean, the housekeeper through whose sensibilities the story is filtered, has just the right brooding, Cassandra-like tone. P.K.

HOVHANESS: *Tumburu, Op. 264, No. 1; Varuna, Op. 264, No. 2.* Macalester Piano Trio. **WEIGL:** *Nature Moods.* George Shirley (tenor); Stanley Drucker (clarinet); Kenneth Gordon (violin). *New England Suite.* Stanley Drucker (clarinet); Ilse Sass (piano); Kermit Moore (cello). **COMPOSERS RECORDINGS INC.** CRI SD 326 \$6.95.

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

CRI has labeled this record "Music of Nature and the Gods," a little grandiose perhaps for the modest if attractive contents. The gods are Tumburu and Varuna from the Hindu
(Continued overleaf)

"... the piano had not yet arrived ..."

The English Kipnis

KIPNIS does it again! These are his twenty-first and twenty-second discs of solo harpsichord music, and, as usual, he roams over an extraordinary range of material with mastery, imagination, and finesse. Using two different Rutkowski and Robinette instruments, he covers almost two and a half centuries of Olde England, from the anonymous virginals music of the court of Henry VIII to that great flourishing of the Elizabethan and Jacobean period to Purcell and, finally, to the end of both native talent and harpsichord music in the eighteenth century. If you wonder what J. C. Bach and Dussek are doing in a set devoted to English music, the answer is, the same thing as Handel. Handel was merely the first in a long line of foreigners who established themselves in England as native talent weakened.

The English had a long and honorable tradition of music-making in the home. This music, like the theater songs that were also an important part of English tradition, developed in a close relationship with the lively popular music of the day, which, in turn, had its roots in English and Gaelic folk song. The popular character is a distinctive feature of English (as opposed to Continental) music. It is dominant in the early period and still a major part of Purcell's style. It gives the old English music its bite, and, of course, it produced the tremendous repertoire so well represented here. Kipnis' rhythmic style, his rather simple registration, and his lively and impeccable use of ornament catch the particularity of this music as well as its remarkable universality.

After the change of taste in the eighteenth century and the overwhelming invasion of Continental styles, the local, folk-influenced traditions must have seemed unsophisticated and rather provincial. Of the many English musicians who tried to sound like Corelli or Alessandro Scarlatti or Handel or Bellini or Brahms (or Stravinsky or Schoenberg or Stockhausen), very few succeeded. Thomas Arne, best remembered as the author of *Rule Britannia*, had a certain melodic gift that comes through the foreign influences. Many of the foreigners who settled in and, inevitably, catered to native tastes, took on certain English characteristics. Certainly this was the case with Handel. To a more limited degree it was also true of Johann Christian Bach. Outside of Germany, the London Bach was far more famous than his father or even his brother Carl Philip Emmanuel, and he was a major influence on Mozart. His sonatas were composed in the third decade of the century for either harpsichord or piano. Jan Ladislav Dussek arrived in England in 1789, and here we are really over the line into piano music. Harpsichords were still everywhere in people's houses, however, and music like this—variations on a very well-known pop tune—

might well appear in not-so-fashionable homes where the piano had not yet arrived.

Since, with the partial exception of the J. C. Bach, none of this was intended for public performance, the intimate and personal character of the music is essential, and Kipnis brings this across perfectly. His tempos are mostly on the moderate side—one or two places, notably in the Handel, seem cautious. Nevertheless, the qualities of intimacy—an idle hour or two at the keys—are neatly balanced by a very clear sense of purpose. And Kipnis' characteristic embellishments—his repeats are invariably so treated—are always superb. The instrumental sound, quiet and not brilliant, avoids the usual elephantine effect of harpsichord in stereo. The album notes by Judith Robison are excellent, but there is a bit of confusion about the numbering of pieces from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, the source of much of the music. —Eric Saltzman

IGOR KIPNIS: *The English Harpsichord.* Anon.: *My Lady Careys Dompe; The Short Mesure off My Lady Wynkfylds Rownde.* Redford: *Eterne rex altissime.* Tallis: *A Poynt.* Byrd: *Pavan and Galliard No. 4; Alman; French Corantos; Lavolta, Lady Morley; Callina Casturame; Rowland or Lord Willoughby's Welcome Home; A Fancie.* Peerson: *The Fall of the Leafe; The Primrose.* Farnaby: *A Toye; The Old Spagnoletta; The New Sahoo; Tell Me, Daphne; Giles Farnaby's Dream; His Rest; Farnaby's Conceit; His Humour; Up Tails All.* Tomkins: *Pavan in A Minor; The Hunting Galliard; A Sad Pavan for These Distracted Times.* Purcell: *Suite No. 8, in F (Z. 669); Four Pieces from Musick's Handmaid (Z. 648, 655, 646, 653).* Handel: *Suite No. 8, in F Minor; Forest Music (arr. Kipnis).* Arne: *Sonata No. 3, in G Major.* J. C. Bach: *Sonata in D Major, Op. 5, No. 2.* Dussek: *Within a Mile of Edinburgh.* Igor Kipnis (harpsichord). ANGEL SB 3816 two discs \$13.96.



pantheon. Alan Hovhaness, one of the most prolific of living composers, has created a distinctive style based on a strong admixture of Oriental elements. Here an Indian influence is supposed to be prominent, along with elements of Japanese *gagaku*; neither influence is very obvious, however, although there is an attractive and rather generalized Eastern character to the music. Everything flows serenely by with the gentlest of nuance and a soupçon of exotic coloration.

Vally Weigl's music is an entirely different case. Karl and Vally Weigl, both composers, were born and educated in Vienna and came to this country in 1938. Since her husband's death after World War II, Vally Weigl has pursued her own career as a composer, musical therapist, and teacher. That she is a woman

loved theater orchestra! How is this possible? How could so much Ives material have escaped notice for so long? The explanation is not hard to uncover. In the vast Ives archives at Yale there are indications for alternative versions of many works. So, with the blessings of Ives scholars Vivian Perlis and John Kirkpatrick, and the skills of Kenneth Singleton and James Sinclair, it was not hard to produce a whole new repertoire of Ives music for theater orchestra. Purists may object, but Ives himself was no purist: the whole enterprise is quite within the bounds of his spirit and philosophy.

The sources of this material are various. *The Holiday Quickstep* is the earliest surviving music by Ives, and two other rousing old-fashioned marches are of the same vintage.

his live performances at the Metropolitan Opera, where I heard him lead a crackerjack *Otello* and an unusually lively opening-night *Trovatore*. Both performances were distinguished, in the orchestral department, by their rhythmic alertness, welcome clarity of texture, and overall vitality.

The same qualities mark Mr. Levine's RCA debut as a symphonic conductor in what has become, over the past two decades, a virtuoso conductor's showpiece. But, fortunately, he does not choose to go that particular route: there is no straining for outsize effect here, and, most important of all, no blatant vulgarities beyond those inherent in certain pages of the music itself (especially in the celebrated Funeral March movement). With the help of the best work I have yet heard from recording engineer Bob Auger and superb playing from the London Symphony, most notably from the first-desk winds, Levine gives us a Mahler First that is truly vernal in atmosphere and impulsively youthful in spirit. His reading has much in common with the wonderful ones I used to hear from Dimitri Mitropoulos—both in concert and on the 1940 Columbia recording with the Minneapolis Symphony—for it has the same lithe springiness (though not quite the same degree of emotional intensity).

Particular points in Mr. Levine's interpretation stand out for me: he injects much fresh interest into the scherzo in his handling of nuance and counterpoint throughout the lyrical middle section, and he reveals brilliantly the bitter irony implicit in the reprise of the Funeral March following the infinitely poignant quotation of the last of the *Wayfarer* songs. He also works a minor miracle in the Summer Storm finale, in that for once the climaxes don't sound congested, but wonderfully brilliant and clear, yet amply full-bodied. This is not a Mahler reading for the sentimentalist or the hothead; it is a young man's reading of a young man's symphony.

As I have already intimated, I feel that a large part of the credit for the excellence of this disc belongs to the engineers who obviously made special efforts to achieve detailed and transparent texture without in any way sacrificing exciting and full-bodied orchestral sound at the climactic moments. The acoustic ambiance seems to be that of the church locales that Mr. Auger has favored in recent years. The stereo perspective is very deep, most strikingly so in the cuckoo-call echo effects and in the exchanges involving trumpets and horns, where the sense of distinct localization in terms of distance is every bit as clear over my speakers as the expertly handled lateral localization. I was particularly pleased and relieved to get the sense of the *entire* orchestra in the major climaxes, something which has been missing in certain of Mr. Auger's past recordings as a result of his passion for detail. D.H.



William Levine/Ives

KENNETH SCHERMERHORN, WILLIAM MASSELOS: making a splash in Mayer's Octagon

of great courage and conviction certainly comes through in her music, even though the specific moods here are gentle and pastoral. Much of it sounds more like tales of the Vienna woods than the American landscape; Mahler is often just around the corner. *New England Suite*, it is true, ends with a barn dance, but the evensong evoked in the name of the whippoorwill might just as well be a nightingale or some other of the Old World *Waldvögel*.

The performances are all first-rate, the song texts are given (frankly, the poetry would be nearly impossible to follow without them), and the recorded sound is attractive. E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

IVES: *Old Songs Deranged—Music for Theater Orchestra. Country Band March; The Swimmers; Mists; Charlie Rutlage; Evening; March II; March III; Overture and March, 1776; An Old Song Deranged; Gyp the Blood or Hearst!?! Which is Worst?!; Remembrance; Fugue in Four Keys on "The Shining Shore"; Chromatimelodtune; Holiday Quickstep.* Yale Theater Orchestra, James Sinclair cond. COLUMBIA M 32969 \$6.98.

Performance: **In the right spirit**
Recording: **Theater-style**

Here is a footnote to the Ives centennial: an album of thirteen first recordings for his be-

Country Band March is a presumptive "original" version of the second movement of *Three Places in New England*. *The Overture and March, 1776* was the only completed part of a proposed opera on John André; its presence here is the real find of the album. The *Fugue in Four Keys* and the *Chromatimelodtune* are among Ives' few truly experimental essays and are in fact among his rather less interesting and less completely realized conceptions. Most of the rest are realizations of songs worked out according to suggestions by Ives himself.

All of this is very cleverly put together and played with genuine Ivesian spirit by students and alumni of the Yale School of Music. The recording is dry, clear, and a little tacky-sounding. It suits the music well enough that only a confirmed sonic sybarite will mind. Anyway, this is not a record for sybarites and purists; for the rest of us, it is a delight. And apparently we can look forward to more Ives premières for a long time to come! E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 1, in D Major.* London Symphony Orchestra, James Levine cond. RCA ARL1-0894 \$6.98.

Performance: **Crisp and vernal**
Recording: **Richly transparent**

My experience with the work of James Levine has so far been limited almost wholly to

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MAYER: *Octagon for Piano and Orchestra. BARBER: Symphony No. 1, Op. 9.* William Masseos (piano); Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Kenneth Schermerhorn cond. TURNABOUT □ QTV-S 34564 \$3.98.

Performance: **First-rate**
Recording: **Very good**

Kenneth Schermerhorn and the Milwaukee Symphony make a most auspicious disc debut here. William Mayer's *Octagon* is his most

substantial and brilliant work, and the Barber symphony (this is its first genuine stereo recording) is one of the generally acknowledged masterworks of the American repertoire. The eight sections of the Mayer work demand not only virtuoso orchestral performance, but also the super keyboard virtuosity of a William Masselos, who premièred the work under Stokowski. The music gestures, bellows, ruminates, and glitters by turns, eventually fading out into a tonal-spatial infinity. I'm not sure how the piece will stand up under repeated hearing, but the first few times around, this performance certainly makes a gorgeous aural splash.

There is no question in my mind about the durability of Barber's symphony. I have lived with this work ever since its first performances under Rodzinski in 1937 and had the pleasure of producing the 1954 Mercury recording with Howard Hanson. I still consider the slow section and the concluding passacaglia among the finest things in Barber's distinguished output. Schermerhorn and his players bring to the music all the ardor and excitement it calls for, if not the string power that Hanson summoned up in 1954. The Turnabout recording is wide in range, with brilliant and full-bodied sound, especially in the Mayer score. The QS four-channel sound is tasteful and ungimmicky. *D.H.*

MENDELSSOHN: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (see *The Basic Repertoire*, page 56)

MOZART (arr. J. G. Triebensee): *Don Giovanni, Suite*. **MOZART** (arr. attrib. J. Wendt): *Die Entführung aus dem Serail, Suite*. Netherlands Wind Ensemble. PHILIPS 6500 783 \$7.98.

Performance: **Enchanting**
Recording: **Transparent**

When Mozart had an operatic hit on his hands neither he nor his contemporaries were reluctant to use the tunes of the popular arias in other forms. Figaro's "Non piu andrai," for example, was set as a contredanse by Mozart himself (in the K. 609 set) and was played in the banquet scene of *Don Giovanni*. He had planned to arrange several of the numbers from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* as a suite for winds, but it is not known whether he actually got around to it. When this twenty-minute suite from that work—the Overture and seven of the jollier numbers, scored for pairs of oboes, English horns, bassoons, and horns—was recorded before, on Deutsche Grammophon, it was suggested that it might be Mozart's own work, and it was noted that "Giovanni de Went" had arranged an identical sequence, but with clarinets instead of English horns: on the new Philips release the arrangement is simply attributed to Johann Wendt (1745-1801). Whoever may have done the arranging, it is a skillful and imaginative piece of work, faithful to the spirit of the original. The same may be said of the *Don Giovanni* adaptation, which is known to be the work of Johann Georg Triebensee (1746-1813). Triebensee, who did use clarinets instead of English horns and also added a double bass to his wind group, went all out, arranging all but seven of the numbers Mozart wrote for *Don Giovanni*; the Overture and a dozen others are included in the forty-minute sequence recorded here.

A solid hour of this sort of thing, one might think, would be a good deal more than enough—but the arrangements are so attrac-

tive, the performances so filled with vivacity, wit, and charm, and the recording so transparent, that it all adds up to pure enchantment. Wendt, we are told, also arranged a fifteen-movement suite from *The Marriage of Figaro*; if that has not been taped already, I hope it soon will be. *R.F.*

MOZART: *Piano Concerto No. 21, in C Major (K. 467)*. **HAYDN:** *Concerto in D Major, Op. 21 (Hob. XVIII.2)*. Emil Gilels (piano); Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Rudolf Barshai cond. COLUMBIA/MELODIYA M 33098 \$6.98.

Performance: **Magnificent**
Recording: **Only fair**

It seems odd that two major East European producers should initiate their newest affilia-

tions with American record companies (the U.S.S.R.'s Melodiya with Columbia, Czechoslovakia's Supraphon with Vanguard) with material that is for the most part recognizable as having circulated on other labels. Most of the music, though, is extremely welcome—which is certainly true of this classic concerto coupling (evidently derived from the same tapes as Artia mono ALP-159, released here in the fall of 1960). Both of the performances here are simply magnificent and deserve a permanent place in the active catalog. There may be, in fact, no better performance of either of these concertos on records now, but there are several attractive ones that benefit from conspicuously superior sound, and I can't help feeling that I would be able to recommend this reissue more enthusiastically if

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THE ADS 2001

Columbia had offered it on *Odyssey* (to which series Igor Kipnis' splendid, full-bodied harp-sichord version of the Haydn was transferred recently) instead of its full-price label. R.F.

ORFF: *Carmina Burana* (see *Best of the Month*, page 74)

PENDERECKI: *Kosmogonia; De Natura Sonoris No. 2; Anaklasis; Fluorescences*. Stefania Woytowicz (soprano); Kazimierz Pustelak (tenor); Bernard Ładysz (bass); Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of the National Philharmonic, Warsaw, Andrzej Markowski cond. PHILIPS 6500 683 \$7.98.

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

Krzysztof Penderecki's *Kosmogonia* was commissioned for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and performed there in 1970. It sets texts from, among others, Copernicus, Nicolaus of Clusa, Genesis, Sophocles, Ovid, Leonardo, and John Glenn (in what language or languages I cannot say; no texts are supplied and no verbal content is distinguishable at all). These are set in the composer's familiar millennial pile-up of huge chorus-and-orchestra clusters. *Anaklasis*, which first appeared in Germany in 1960, was the work that made Penderecki's reputation; *Fluorescences*, also an orchestral piece, appeared two years later. In these works, Penderecki's basic coloristic style was already well established, although the musical sensibility was subtler, more refined, and less dramatic than it was to become in the big vocal works. *De Natura Sonoris No. 2*, premièred in 1971 at the Juilliard School, applies the simpler, melodramatic effects of the vocal and dramatic works to an orchestral composition—a typical combination of subdivided strings, brass, and percussion. There is, in effect, some small development in Penderecki's work; he is doing much the same sort of thing only in ever broader, more telling, simpler, even simplistic strokes.

SHIRLEY VERRETT:
outstanding
as Neocle in
The Siege of Corinth



Christian Steiner/Angebot Records

This recording is, as they say, a good introduction to Penderecki's art and craft, featuring excellent performances under the direction of Andrzej Markowski, one of the pioneers of new-music performance in Europe. Sonically the record is a marvelous challenge for anyone's sound system, and it is, in a way, too bad that it doesn't exist in a quadraphonic version. Musically, though, I find it bombastic and alienated in a thoroughly unpleasant way. Apparently others find musical, dramatic, and humanistic values in Penderecki that escape me. This is, in short, "important" music—and Penderecki never lets you forget it. E.S.

POULENC: *The Story of Babar, the Little Elephant*. **SATIE:** *Sports and Diversions*. Mildred Natwick (narrator); Grant Johannesen (piano). GOLDEN CREST CRS-4133 \$6.98.

Performance: **Slightly sweet**
Recording: **Good**

Francis Poulenc's music does for *The Story of Babar* what the pictures do for it in Jean de Brunhoff's charming book. The Angel recording of a couple of years ago, with Peter Ustinov as narrator and George Prêtre conducting the Paris Conservatory Orchestra in a version orchestrated by Jean Françaix, is still around, and it is still unsurpassed. But this new disc, with pianist Grant Johannesen playing the original piano sketches as Poulenc set them down for a four-year-old niece, and with actress Mildred Natwick reading the text (in English translation by Nelly Riev), has its own virtues. Miss Natwick's way with the story of Babar is more genial and relaxed than Mr. Ustinov's, but she does draw you in, and Johannesen's reserved interpretations of the episodes match the tone she sets.

The bonus here is Erik Satie's *Sports and Diversions*, an exercise in poetic and musical surrealism that should be right up the alley of most children—and a lot of adults. These mock-solemn miniatures about such as singing rabbits, militant nightingales, sea bathers

warned not to sit on the bottom because "it's very damp," and an octopus caught teasing a crab are slightly reminiscent of the Sitwell-Walton *Façade* at times, but far briefer and quite exultantly irresponsible. And this is the first recording of these pieces with the spoken text. Miss Natwick is not altogether right for them—she's a little too benign—but her readings of the Virgil Thomson translations of Satie's own words are certainly spirited and admirably clear. Still, a printed text would have been welcome. P.K.

PUCCINI: *Opera Duets* (see *Collections—Mirabella Freni/Franco Bonisolli*)

RAVEL: *Piano Music* (see *Choosing Sides*, page 92)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ROSSINI: *The Siege of Corinth*. Beverly Sills (soprano). Pamira; Shirley Verrett (mezzo-soprano). Neocle; Justino Diaz (bass). Maometto; Harry Theyard (tenor). Cleomene; Gwynne Howell (bass). Jero; Robert Lloyd (bass). Omar; Delia Wallis (soprano). Ismene; Gaetano Scano (tenor). Adrasto. Ambrosian Opera Chorus; London Symphony Orchestra, Thomas Schippers cond. ANGEL SLCX 3819 three discs \$20.94.

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

This opera of mixed Franco-Italian parentage was Rossini's first Parisian success. It was called *Le Siège de Corinthe* then (1826), a reworking of the earlier and not too successful *Maometto II* (1820, Naples). Despite its good reception, *Le Siège de Corinthe* soon disappeared from view, though a later Italian incarnation, *L'Assedio di Corinto*, managed to gain a foothold for a while. (This has often been the case with such Franco-Italian operas, somewhat confusing the issue for those who contend that Donizetti's *La Favorite* and Verdi's *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* are really "French" operas. . . .) But nothing much really happened to either version for about a century, until *L'Assedio* was mounted with Renata Tebaldi in Italy in 1948 and 1951. Then Thomas Schippers and Randolph Mickelson revived the opera for La Scala, Milan, in 1969, on the occasion of the centenary of Rossini's death, editing the score rather heavily. The notes accompanying this recording provide many details; indeed, the historical background of the opera is more complicated than its plot. We learn, among other things, that the recording before us is also at variance with the Milan version of 1969, though two of the principals of the production (Miss Sills and Mr. Diaz) reappear here under Mr. Schippers' direction.

Halfway through listening, I began regretting that so much musicological enterprise and performing zeal could not be channeled into the revival of a better opera—Rossini's *Mosé*, for instance, a work of true grandeur. For *L'Assedio*, despite its impressive trappings, is not first-rate Rossini: its plot is old-fashioned *opera seria* with stock characters, its libretto is riddled with clichés, and, though the colorful ensemble writing reveals skill and imagination throughout, the arias do not display the kind of melodic inspiration that would compensate for excessive length. An infusion of vitality does occur in the powerful third act, particularly in the opening prayer
(Continued on page 101)

and the tense closing scenes with their stirring patriotic undertone. These final moments go a long way toward atoning for the artificialities of the earlier pages, and, if the singers were possessed of extraordinary inspiration, the overall impression would perhaps help us overlook the intrinsic weaknesses altogether.

But these revivals of bel canto operas are a tricky business. True, hardly anyone expects them to come off as dramatically valid stage experiences, and even outright skeptics are willing to suspend disbelief in the face of spellbinding bel canto stylists. The best I can say for the forces at hand is that they *almost* qualify, and *L'Assedio* in this instance is *almost* successful.

Outstanding in the cast is Shirley Verrett in the role of Neocle, the young Greek warrior, the part Marilyn Horne sang at the Milan revival of 1969. (The Parisians, to their everlasting credit, wanted no part of a female singer for this male role in 1828; Rossini therefore rewrote the music for tenor, but he had to simplify the florid writing.) Here only Miss Verrett combines technical facility with consistent tonal beauty: she alone triumphs over the music without compromise of any kind. In the longer and even more difficult role of Pamina, Beverly Sills displays her exceptional command of florid music, her total commitment, and a rare ability to endow the most predictably banal situations with dramatic meaning. She attacks her music bravely, fearlessly, and often effectively, but there is much unsteadiness in her singing, and an ever-widening vibrato which, alas, obscures true pitch.

The part of Maometto, now the tender lover, now the bloodthirsty tyrant, is operatic cardboard. Justino Diaz brings to it a strong dramatic presence and adequate vocal resources. Harry Theyard's youthful sound is ill-suited to a fatherly role: he meets the florid requirements only halfway and reveals a damaging tendency to attack his notes from below. Bass Gwynne Howell contributes powerfully to the closing ensemble, and tenor Scano and bass Lloyd are also excellent in minor roles.

Schippers paces the opera firmly and excitingly without trying to take the spotlight away from the singers. I wish, though, that he had exercised a restraining hand to avoid the desperate reaching for elusive high notes that turns the first-act finale into a bellowing contest. The engineering has its impressive moments, but signs of studio "enhancement" are quite obvious in the opening of Act III. In sum, this is a set worth acquiring for the light it sheds on this heretofore unknown Rossini opera. The performance is an honest and serious effort, and it is not likely to be bettered in our lifetime. *G.J.*

SATIE: *Sports and Diversions* (see **POULENC**)

SCHUBERT: *Sonata in A Minor for Arpeggione and Piano* (D. 821). Klaus Storck (arpeggione); Alfons Kontarsky (piano). *Variations on "Trochne Blumen" for Flute and Piano* (D. 802). Hans-Martin Linde (flute); Alfons Kontarsky (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON Archiv 2533 175 \$7.98.

Performance: **Sonata dull, Variations superb**

Recording: **Very good**

The Arpeggione Sonata has for so long been an integral and beloved part of the cello repertoire that one tends to forget that its sobriquet
(Continued on page 103)

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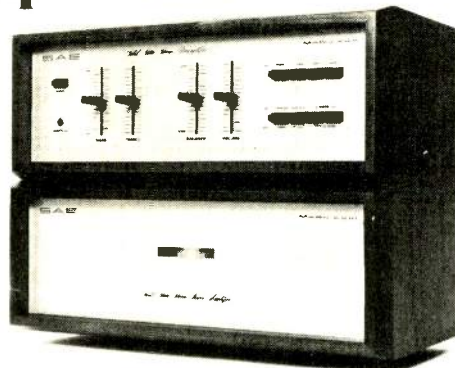
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The Suk Trio: left to right, Jan Panenka, Josef Chuchro, and Josef Suk. Their Beethoven Archduke and Schubert B-flat Major are available again.



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Vanguard's Supraphon Recordings

THE Czechoslovak record company Supraphon may not produce as many recordings as the big German, English, and French companies during a given year, but it has been responsible for a disproportionately large quantity of unusually attractive things, particularly in the realms of orchestral and chamber music, and by no means limited to Czech repertoire. The availability of this material to American collectors has been frustratingly irregular, with less and less of it around in the last few years.

Supraphon recordings have been in and out of many American catalogs: in the last two dozen years they have appeared intermittently on such labels as Urania, Artia, Parliament, Westminster, Music Guild, Turnabout, Candide, Epic, Nonesuch, and Musical Heritage Society. In 1966 Columbia created the Crossroads label specifically for Supraphon material: there were some splendid records in that series, and more of them than from any of the Czech company's other U.S. outlets, but after only two or three years the affiliation ended and CBS not only withdrew the Supraphon items on both Epic and Crossroads, but abandoned the latter label altogether. Urania, Parliament, and Artia had vanished earlier. Since Vox has taken nothing from Supraphon into its catalog since 1968, and Nonesuch now has a firm policy against taking *any* material that has been issued before on an American label, the chances of our having any of these things available again seemed extremely slim until now. (Supraphon's own pressings are imported here, but they have such limited distribution that the label is not even listed in

Schwann-1 or Schwann-2.) Now, however, Vanguard has entered into an arrangement with Supraphon and is offering reissues as well as recordings new to this country: both are enormously welcome—and the more so for Vanguard's extraordinary success in re-mastering the older items.

The new label for Vanguard's Supraphon releases bears the names of both the producing and releasing companies, and the records are priced at \$3.98 per disc. Four of the six discs in the initial Vanguard/Supraphon release are reissues, and all of them are conspicuously worthy of a prominent place in any catalog—or in any individual collection, for that matter. Three of them feature the violinist Josef Suk, and the late Karel Ančerl conducts on two; the pick of the lot is the one on which they perform together.

There has so far been no performance on records of the Violin Concerto or the Romance by Suk's great-grandfather Antonín Dvořák to compare with the ones Suk recorded with Ančerl fifteen years ago. When they were released on Artia ALP(S)-193 in 1961, the quality of the sound was not especially impressive; what Vanguard has accomplished in its new transfer is little short of miraculous: the sound now is rich and clear and could just about pass for new. Disc surfaces, too, are exemplary.

Suk and his colleagues (Josef Chuchro and Jan Panenka) in the trio bearing his name recorded an exalted and warmhearted account of Beethoven's *Archduke* Trio in the early Sixties, and similarly persuasive ones of Schubert's Trio in B-flat Major and his Not-

turno in E-flat Major. These have been my favorite versions of these well-loved trios since I first heard them on Crossroads; the sound was good then, and the new release benefits from a little more fullness. (Of no benefit at all, however, are the sizable blisters on both sides of the *Archduke* and the gritty surfaces that disfigure that disc, alone among the six. These irritations could be peculiar to my copy, but I would advise checking before taking SU-5 home.)

A SONIC renovation even more striking than that of the Dvořák Concerto has been brought off for the reissue of Ančerl's splendid Shostakovich Fifth. As evidenced further in his recordings of the First, Seventh, and Tenth, Ančerl had an exceptional feeling for Shostakovich, a gift for realizing the noble and Mahlerian qualities of the music and minimizing the occasional patches of bathos. On Parliament PLP(S)-168 the sound of this 1962 recording was so wiry and uncomfortable as to be unacceptable (I have not heard the later Turnabout transfer, TV-S 34268, which may in fact have been announced but never released); the Vanguard edition is remarkably opened-up and unrestricted—not as rich as the best American and English versions but more than adequate to enable us to appreciate the fine performance. There are not more than one or two other Shostakovich Fifts on this level (my choice is Ormandy, abetted by Columbia's very rich sonics on MS 7279), and none, surely, at this price.

The performance of the Mendelssohn Octet by the combined Janáček and Smetana en-

sembles is not, as I had assumed, the one issued on Westminster WST-14082 in 1959 (and subsequently transferred to Music Guild MS-176), but a remake taped in 1969. It seems incredible that these eight men could duplicate their earlier performance so precisely, but the only really noticeable changes are a different attack on the very last note of the famous scherzo and a slightly less driving tempo in the newer version of the finale. In short, the remake is every bit as distinguished as its celebrated predecessor: those who missed the earlier version ought not to miss this one.

THE one item that is neither a reissue nor a remake is Neumann's 1972 recording of the Dvořák G Major Symphony, part of the Czech Philharmonic's first complete Dvořák cycle. It is a brilliantly controlled reading, as one would expect from this conductor's marvelous set of the Slavonic Dances and Rhapsodies (released in the U.S. on Telefunken) and the Symphonic Variations and *Scherzo Capriccioso* (on Nonesuch): the playing of the great orchestra is downright elegant, and it is handsomely recorded. At first, I found the performance disappointing—strangely sober and uninflected—but repeated hearings persuaded me that Neumann had opted not to make it on charm alone but to emphasize the work's solid musical values, and that he had succeeded grandly. He takes the finale at an even broader tempo than Bruno Walter (whose affectionate and still competitive version has at last been reissued on Odyssey Y 33231), but he allows no sentimentalizing or sagging in the architectonic span. It is a majestic concept, magnificently realized.

The same might be said of the Vanguard/Supraphon series itself if future releases sustain the high standards of this initial batch. We are to have some fifteen additional discs on the new label this year; I'm hoping Ančerl's recording of Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* will be among them—and surely many collectors will be watching for specific items on their own priority lists.

BEETHOVEN: *Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 97* ("Archduke"). Suk Trio. VANGUARD/SUPRAPHON SU-5 \$3.98.

DVOŘÁK: *Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 53; Romance in F Minor for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 11.* Josef Suk (violin): Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ančerl cond. VANGUARD/SUPRAPHON SU-3 \$3.98.

DVOŘÁK: *Symphony No. 8, in G Major, Op. 88.* Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Václav Neumann cond. VANGUARD/SUPRAPHON SU-2 \$3.98.

MENDELSSOHN: *String Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 20.* Janáček Quartet; Smetana Quartet. VANGUARD/SUPRAPHON SU-4 \$3.98.

SCHUBERT: *Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 99 (D. 898); Notturmo in E-flat Major, Op. 148 (D. 897).* Suk Trio. VANGUARD/SUPRAPHON SU-6 \$3.98.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 5, Op. 47.* Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ančerl cond. VANGUARD/SUPRAPHON SU-1 \$3.98.

identifies the now-forgotten instrument for which Schubert actually wrote it. Johann Georg Stauffer, who invented the arpeggione in 1823, called it a "guitarre d'amour"; it is essentially an oversized six-string guitar with gut strings and a bridge, designed to be bowed instead of plucked, its four lowest strings corresponding to those of the cello. The instrument played by Klaus Storck in this recording, thought to have been made by one of Stauffer's pupils about 1830, is from the collection of the Berlin Museum of Musical Instruments, as is the fine-sounding Brodmann *Hammerflügel* (ca. 1810) played by Kontarsky. The arpeggione's tone is ingratiatingly sweet, but so like that of a cello (only a bit lighter) that the novelty effect is quite lost. And, in any event, Storck's performance is unforgivably dull. He has made some fine recordings as a cellist, and I suspect he has played this work on the cello with greater conviction.

The lackluster nature of the sonata performance is the more regrettable because Linde's playing of the Variations for Flute and Piano (on a period instrument from his own collection) is simply masterly. Kontarsky is, as always, the perfect partner, the distinctive sound of his own instrument adding no little to the enchanting effect. I would hope the flute side of this disc might be recoupled in the future, for there is little pleasure to be had from its present companion. **R.F.**

SCHUMANN: *Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42; Liederkreis, Op. 39.* Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano); Geoffrey Parsons (piano). ANGEL S-37043 \$6.98.

Performance: **Uneven**
Recording: **Too reverberant**

In a 1967 interview, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf expressed a rather low opinion of Chamisso's "kitchen maid poetry" in Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*. "I've tried it but I know it is not for me," she said. But of course a change of mind is a time-honored prerogative of *Frauenleben*.

Schwarzkopf is too stimulating an artist to be uninteresting, but this release does not measure up to the high standard she herself has established. Her singing is short on natural charm, and skill and artifice cannot compensate for that. With its variety of moods and superior poetry, *Liederkreis* goes better. Schwarzkopf can still color her tones with rare mastery, and she can create dialogue effects with a vivid dramatic skill few can equal. But the signs of vocal decline are evident: breathiness, poor support for the low register, difficulty in sustaining long phrases. Her diction, too, is frequently cloudy. Her excellent accompanist, Geoffrey Parsons, has also been more impressive on other occasions than he is here. **G.J.**

R. STRAUSS: *Don Juan, Op. 20* (see ELGAR)

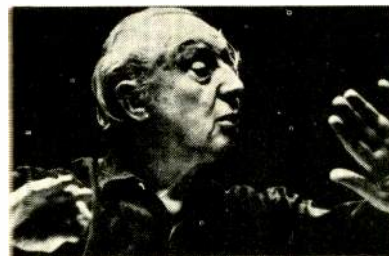
RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

TCHAIKOVSKY: *The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66.* London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn cond. ANGEL SCLX-3812 three discs \$20.94.

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

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CIRCLE NO. 3 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Beauty, has been the one with Antal Dorati and the Minneapolis Symphony that I produced for Mercury. I must say that it is a pleasure to have, at long last, a stereo version using the same 1952 score that the Russian State Publishing House painstakingly put together from the original manuscripts and first-performance materials as part of its complete Tchaikovsky edition.

From experience I know that the complete *Sleeping Beauty*, for all its wonderful music, is a grueling thing to record. For, unlike a symphony, in which the musical style is essentially homogeneous throughout, *The Sleeping Beauty* is made up chiefly of short numbers—many of them only two or three minutes long, each very different in style from the others, and almost all (the fairy numbers and the character dances especially) difficult to execute even by the most practiced orchestra. Happily, Previn and his Londoners do splendidly by the music, bringing the lyrical and picturesque elements somewhat more to the fore than the more intensely dramatic Dorati version did. The London woodwinds cover themselves with glory in the hunting-scene dances of Act II and in the character dances of the final act, and solo violinist John Brown does himself particularly proud with his lovely playing in the Aurora Variation.

Angel's recording shows to best advantage in the more intimately scored numbers, though it is never less than good. I would have liked a bigger and closer string and percussion sound for such grandiose pieces as the introduction and the great awakening-scene climax of Act II. Angel's engineers opted for a very broad and deep stereo perspective, with some resultant loss in presence, but this is a relatively minor fault in a very major achievement. D.H.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 1, in G Minor, Op. 13 ("Winter Reveries")*. Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR-40261 \$6.98.

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

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 2, in C Minor, Op. 17 ("Little Russian")*. Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR-40262 \$6.98.

Performance: **Vivacious**
Recording: **Satisfactory**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 3, in D Major, Op. 29 ("Polish")*. Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR-40263 \$6.98.

Performance: **First-rate**
Recording: **Close-up**

With attractive recordings of these symphonies under Yevgeny Svetlanov already available on Melodiya/Angel, the release of the new Rozhdestvensky versions came as a surprise; the superb quality of the performances, however, did not: they are refined, polished, extremely well proportioned, and in general could hardly fail to please. It may be noted, too, as Angel issues what remains available to it from Melodiya now that the Soviet company is affiliated with Columbia, that these are among the best-sounding orchestral recordings yet from this source. The focus is very



MARTIN KATZ, MARILYN HORNE: an impressive lieder recital on London

close-up and in many passages on all three discs the winds seem unnaturally prominent, but overall the sonics are more than respectable. That much acknowledged, however, and attractive as these recordings are in their own right, I still prefer other versions of two of them.

My standard for comparison among currently available recordings of the First Symphony is the superb one by Leonard Bernstein (Columbia M 30842). Listening to it again after hearing Rozhdestvensky, I find a greater sense of continuity and subtlety in the first movement and far more poetry in the lovely *Adagio cantabile*—in which the Moscow oboist is unfairly matched against the Philharmonic's incomparable Harold Gomberg, and the Moscow horn is not only too saxy but really rather crude. Bernstein builds the finale more thoughtfully, too.

The *Little Russian* gets a stunning performance from Rozhdestvensky, filled with wit and excitement (and without cuts), but in the exquisite *Andantino marziale* his tempo is a bit too fast for the best effect (though preferable to Svetlanov's too-slow tempo) and—more disappointing still—the drumbeats at the beginning and end of the movement are not sufficiently audible (some of the percussion effects are unduly muffled in the finale, too). Rozhdestvensky and all other current contenders are conspicuously outclassed by Igor Markevitch's magical realization of this score, with the London Symphony Orchestra, on Philips 835 390 LY.

Rozhdestvensky's winner is the Third Symphony. Here all of his tempos are just about ideal, his approach is balletically poised, and his winds are heard to excellent advantage. Bernstein's otherwise magnificent performance (Columbia M 31727) is marred by his deliberate and fussy handling of the second movement (the *Alla tedesca*, probably the most original portion of the symphony). Lorin Maazel's version (London CS-6428), similar to Rozhdestvensky's in many respects, benefits from more elegant playing and a more natural balance between winds and strings, but shows less imagination in phrasing (particularly in that infectious *Alla tedesca*) and tends to sound somewhat rushed in the "funeral march" introduction to the first

movement. (My stopwatch shows that the timings for this section are actually identical in the two recordings, but Maazel's nevertheless *sounds* faster.) Rozhdestvensky's affinity for the melodic contours of the work is extraordinary; with both the Dorati and Markevitch versions still in limbo, this new disc of No. 3 is pretty close to irresistible. R.F.

VERDI: *Opera Duets* (see Collections—Mirella Freni/Franco Bonisolli)

WEIGL: *Nature Moods; New England Suite* (see HOVHANESS)

COLLECTIONS

FRANCO BONISOLLI: *Arias from Italian and French Operas*. Puccini: *Turandot: Nessun dorma. Manon Lescaut: Donna non vidi mai. La Bohème: Che gelida manina. Gianni Schicchi: Firenze è come un albero. Verdi: Luisa Miller: Quando le sere al placido. Aida: Celeste Aida. Il Trovatore: Di quella pira. Donizetti: La Favorita: Una vergine. Gounod: Faust: Salut, demeure chaste et pure. Massenet: Manon: Ah fuyez, douce image. Halévy: La Juive: Rachel, quand du Seigneur. Franco Bonisolli (tenor); Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Leone Magiera cond. BASF BC 21723 \$6.98.*

MIRELLA FRENI/FRANCO BONISOLLI: *Duets from Verdi and Puccini Operas*. Puccini: *Manon Lescaut: Tu, tu, amore tu. La Bohème: O soave fanciulla. Madama Butterfly: Bimba, dagli occhi. Gianni Schicchi: Lauretta mia. Verdi: La Traviata: Parigi o cara. Otello: Già nella notte densa. Mirella Freni (soprano); Franco Bonisolli (tenor); Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Leone Magiera cond.; Berlin State Orchestra, Lamberto Gardelli cond. (in *Traviata* only). BASF KBC 22007 \$6.98.*

Performances: **Good**
Recordings: **Generally good**

On the basis of this generous evidence and his Alfredo in the new BASF *Traviata*, Franco Bonisolli is one of the brighter lights among contemporary Italian tenors. His dark-hued voice has a manly ring, healthy and agreeable

throughout the range. Top notes come easily to him, a facility Signor Bonisolli repeatedly brings to our attention (at times through unwritten interpolations) with stentorian vigor. A few stylistic exaggerations notwithstanding, he appears to be a well-schooled and musicianly singer, and there is much to admire in his achievement. He does, however, use his vocal gifts unsparingly, somewhat explosively, and with insufficient subtlety. Still, only his "Celeste Aida" is really unsatisfactory, because there, in search of the "big sound," he manages to sound strained all the way and uncertain of intonation. By contrast, he delivers the music of Otello remarkably well, and in the *La Favorita* aria sings a stunning high D-natural with a diminuendo that, if achieved naturally (without studio trickery), is spectacular indeed.

Mirella Freni's contribution to the duets is characteristic of the musicality and pleasing tonal qualities she has consistently exhibited on stage and in her many recordings. Conductor Magiera's work, on the other hand, is at best good routine.

The *Traviata* scene, taken from the complete set, offers more music than we normally get for the "Parigi o cara" duet, but then it ends at an inconclusive spot. Even worse is the *Gianni Schicchi* "duet"—a mere fragment snipped out of what may have been a film or television performance. G.J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MARILYN HORNE: *German Lieder.* Schubert: *Im Frühling; Nacht und Träume; Die junge Nonne; Fischerweise.* Schumann: *Die Lotosblume; Aus den hebräischen Gesängen; Die Kartenlegerin; Abendlied.* Wolf: *Der Genesene an die Hoffnung; Auf einer Wanderung; Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen; Kennst du das Land?* Richard Strauss: *Schön sind, doch kalt; Für fünfzehn Pfennige; Befreit.* Marilyn Horne (mezzo-soprano); Martin Katz (piano). LONDON OS 26302 \$6.98.

Performance: **Often thrilling**
Recording: **Outstanding**

This is Marilyn Horne's first recital disc devoted to lieder, and, as is her previously released Spanish-French collection (London OS 26301), it is highly individualistic and very impressive. At the same time, it is also quite thought-provoking: she is an exceptional singer who makes the repertoire meet her on her own terms, with results that are exciting, at times even revelatory, but occasionally leave the listener with ambivalent feelings.

Each sequence contains at least one song that calls for a sustained, slow unfolding of majestic utterance (Schubert's *Nacht und Träume*, Schumann's *Abendlied*, Wolf's *Der Genesene an die Hoffnung*, Strauss' *Befreit*). In these, the luscious Horne tone pours forth in full splendor. Her natural dramatic temperament, combined with prodigious vocal resources, add up to truly unique results in *Die junge Nonne* and *Kennst du das Land*. Nor is she found wanting at other points of the dramatic spectrum: Schumann's *Die Kartenlegerin* and Wolf's *Mein Liebster* have just the right amount of good humor. Her diction is excellent. She is, in short, a compelling interpreter of songs.

But she finds it rather hard to scale down her phenomenal resources to serve the needs of a song. The last line of Schumann's *Aus den hebräischen Gesängen* and the phrase "Bis

der Sieg gewonnen hiess" in Wolf's *Der Genesene an die Hoffnung* are good examples of this kind of tonal overkill. The effect is startling but out of proportion. Scaling down the tone would also probably eliminate the imperfections in attack and intonation which, though relatively infrequent, are nonetheless regrettable in an artist of such superb gifts.

Miss Horne deserves special praise for her choice of repertoire, which is refreshing for its large percentage of seldom-heard songs. I'm afraid I find *Für fünfzehn Pfennige* an extremely unattractive example of heavy-handed Teutonic humor, but all of them cannot be winners. The accompaniments of Martin Katz are very effective, and the sound is the best imaginable. G.J.

THE VIOLIN. *Augmented History of the Violin on Records (1920-1950).* Portions of violin concertos by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Paganini, and Hindemith; sonatas by Bach, Beethoven, and Grieg; and miscellaneous concert pieces. Jacques Thibaud, Jenő Hubay, Carl Flesch, Henri Marteau, Cecilia Hansen, Mischa Elman, Duci de Kerekjarto, László Szentgyörgyi, Harry Soloway, Renee Chemet, Max Strub, Louis Zimmerman, Alexander Moguilevsky, Franz von Vecsey, Ibolka Zilzer, Toscha Samaroff, Eddy Brown, Albert Spalding, Alfred Dubois, Gerhard Taschner, Alberto Bachmann, Richard Czerwonky, Heinz Stanske, Henri Merckel, Juan Manen, Alfredo San Malo, Manuel Quiroga, Gregoras Dinicu, Georges Enesco, Miguel Candela, René Bendetti, Samuel Gardner, Karl Freund, Joseph Hassid, Hugo Kolberg, and Tossy Spivakovsky (violin); various accompaniments. TLC 2580 three discs \$10.00 (available from Thomas L. Clear, 579 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016).

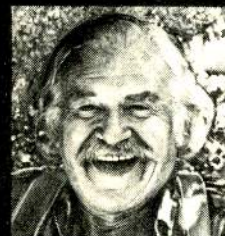
Performance: **Nearly all excellent**
Recording: **1920-1950**

Thomas L. Clear is a veteran record collector who seems to have traveled far and wide in search of rarities. Determined to share his treasures with those who are similarly inclined, he has published a limited number of copies of this set as a "non-profit venture," with a price tag that is assurance of his good intentions.

Fiddle buffs will find a fascinating conglomeration here. There are legendary names better known to us as pedagogues than as performers (Hubay, Flesch, Enesco, Marteau, Bachmann), erstwhile prodigies who, for one reason or another, failed to sustain the glory of their beginnings (Vecsey, Kerekjarto, Hassid), outstanding fiddle players who opted for successful careers as concertmasters (Szentgyörgyi, Kolberg, Zimmerman). There are elusive mementos of artists who have made significant phonographic careers (Elman, Thibaud), others who disappeared from labels after auspicious beginnings (Hansen, Chemet, Zilzer—all women!), and some who fall somewhere in between (Spalding, Dubois, Brown, Spivakovsky). The choice does credit to Mr. Clear's judgment. These are all major artists, and only one performance (the Brahms Hungarian Dance No. 6, played by an elderly Henri Marteau) falls below a good concert level.

All but seven of the selections are electric recordings. The sound reproduction is quite good, though the endings of some pieces could perhaps have been faded out just a bit more sensitively. G.J.

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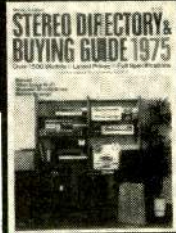
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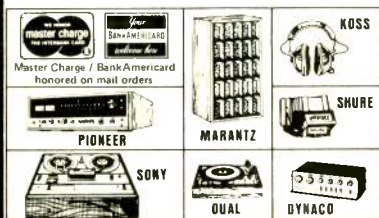
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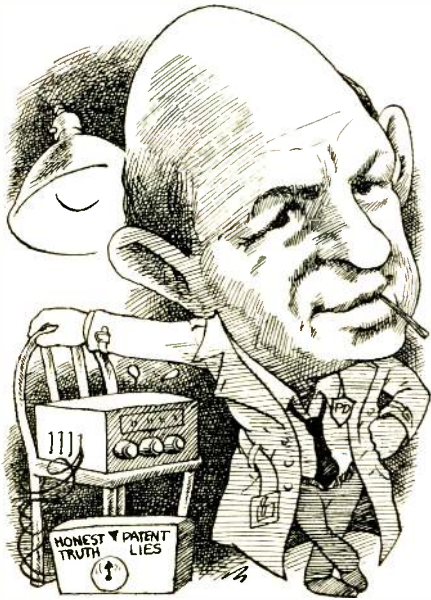
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Introducing the Staff...

Since readers from time to time understandably display a natural human curiosity about the backgrounds of the writers and editors who bend their ears each month in these pages, we will be offering, in issues to come, a series of capsule biographies and autobiographies designed to satisfy that expressed need and at the same time to circumvent some of the hazards of mere speculation.

—Ed.



Contributing Editor

Julian Hirsch

BEFORE the year 1949, I don't think I had even heard the term "high fidelity." My ignorance is simply explained: the high-fidelity component industry as we now know it was in its infancy in those days, the exclusive interest of a few dedicated entrepreneurs and their small but enthusiastic following of audio hobbyists. However, all the controversies that arouse today's audiophiles had their counterparts even then—triode vs. pentode vacuum tubes, Partridge vs. Peerless output transformers, horn vs. bass-reflex speaker enclosures, and so on. Novice though I was, I was nonetheless ripe for infection by the audio virus, for my interest in what is now known as "electronics" had already been whetted by my discovery of ham radio. At age fourteen I was licensed as W2KFB (which call letters I still hold), and my passion for amateur radio has never waned.

After receiving a B.E.E. degree from New York's Cooper Union in 1943, I spent the next three years in the Army Signal Corps, learning the intricacies of anti-aircraft gun-laying radars and finding myself ultimately

in charge of a radar maintenance team stationed in Japan. Mustered out, I married and then looked for a job (in just that order), eventually joining the research division of a large electronics manufacturing company, where I spent the next nine years working on such diverse projects as radar training simulators and TV receivers, among others.

In 1949, I suddenly noticed that some of my associates were building amplifiers, speaker enclosures, and other strange (to me) contraptions. Since it was all around me, it was impossible to remain uninvolved, and before long I too was deeply—and, as it turned out, irrevocably—"hooked" on this fascinating new hobby. Working in a well-equipped lab, much of whose work lay in the fields of audio and acoustics, it was only natural that we should have subjected our finished projects to exhaustive tests to verify their performance. In those days many audiophiles chose to build their own components, partly as a point of pride, partly because commercial products were often not good enough, too expensive, or both.

As the hi-fi industry expanded in the early Fifties, our loosely knit group of audio hobbyists began to acquire a representative assortment of commercially manufactured products. To satisfy our curiosity, we routinely tested these components, quickly becoming aware of the gap that frequently existed between claims and performance. In 1954, four of us joined forces to make our new-found knowledge available to other audiophiles, founding a newsletter which we called the *Audio League Report*.

During the next three years, as our circulation grew to more than 5,000, we struggled to keep up with the myriad tasks of handling and testing equipment, writing reports and articles, and explaining to irate readers why each issue was later than the preceding one. Since this activity was carried on during evenings and weekends, the effect on our family lives can be imagined.

When two of our staff left for other employment, Gladden Houck and I were faced with an impossible situation. We were forced to disband the Audio League, but we formed a partnership as Hirsch-Houck Laboratories and continued our work, with one important difference—we devoted ourselves only to testing and writing, leaving publication to the commercial magazines.

DURING these years, each of us had left our original employer to work in different segments of the electronics industry. I spent the next thirteen years developing sophisticated laboratory instruments, principally in the field of spectrum analysis, and Gladden and I continued to do our audio work in our homes. Since 1960, the Hirsch-Houck Laboratories reports on audio equipment have appeared exclusively in the Ziff-Davis electronics publications, currently in *STEREO REVIEW* and *Popular Electronics*.

Looking back over a quarter-century of evaluating high-fidelity components, I am impressed by the incredible sophistication of today's products, the talent and personal integrity of the many people who have made this industry what it is today, the never-flagging enthusiasm of audio hobbyists—and, not least, the fact that I still enjoy every moment of my association with the wonderful world of high fidelity.

STEREO REVIEW MAY 1975 ADVERTISERS' INDEX

READER SERVICE NO.	ADVERTISER	PAGE NUMBER
	Accuphase, Division of Teac	47
1	Acoustic Research	45
2	ADR Audio	80
	ADS	97
45	Akai America Ltd.	41
3	Angel Records	103
4	Audio Devices, Inc.	10
5	Audio Dynamics Corp.	53
	Audio Technica, US, Inc.	89
6	Audio Warehouse	88
	Bell & Howell Schools	16, 19
7	Bose Corp.	11, 21
8	British Industries Co., BIC Venturi	56
10	BSR, McDonald Division	31
	Capitol Magnetics Products	10
11	Clifford's Hi Fi Wholesalers	86
12	Crown International	20
	Discwasher	Cover 4
	Dixie HiFidelity	107
50	Dual	32, 33
13	Dynaco, Inc.	57
14	Electro-Voice	81
21, 90, 99	Empire Scientific Corp.	2, 9, 43
15	GTE Sylvania, Entertainment Division	33
25	Heath Company	55
16	Illinois Audio	80
55	Impro, PE	13
17	International HiFi Distributors	52
	J & B Scotch, Paddington Corp.	7
18	Kenwood Electronics	51
	L & M	15
43	Marantz, Inc.	Cover 3
19	Maxell	93
20	McIntosh Laboratory	89
22	Memorex	12
	Midwest Hi-Fi Wholesalers	86
23	Minolta Corp.	83
24	Onkyo	49
26	Phase Linear	30
27	Playback	52
28	Radio Shack	24
	Revox Corp.	28
	R. J. Reynolds, Salem	8
30	SAE	101
29	Sansui Electronics Corp.	26, 27
31	Sherwood	Cover 2, 1
32	Shure Brothers, Inc.	32
33	Sony Corp. of America	5
34	Sound Reproduction	87
35	Soundcraftsmen	85
44	Stanton Magnetics	36
36	Stereo Corp. of America	101
37	Stereo Wholesalers	88
	Teac Corp.	34, 35
38	Tokyo Shapiro	87
39	Uher of America	91
50	United Audio	32, 33
40	U.S. Pioneer	29
41	Vanguard Records	105
42	Yamaha International Corp.	39

"The Marantz 1070 integrated amp is close to optimum in performance and the low price makes it an even better value."



The 1070 Stereo Amp

"As far as good basic features are concerned, it's comparable to units costing twice as much!"

"It maintains all the features of the Marantz 1060, plus it adds a number of its own. For instance, it now has graphic slide-type tone controls, two tape monitors and a versatile tone mode selector switch!"

"With the 1070 you have a full range of tone controls like bass, mid range and treble slide controls plus preamp out and main in jacks."

"I feel strongly about the preamp out jacks. You can re-equalize tape recordings, insert equalizers or even add electronic cross-overs into the chain!"

"One major feature that I like in the 1070 is its ambience circuitry. Essentially it's a speaker matrix or pseudo 4-channel. This means you can get into simulated 4-channel sound by just adding a second pair of speakers!"

"In addition to the step up in power to 35 watts continuous power per channel at 0.3% total harmonic distortion, 20 Hz to 20 kHz both channels driven into an 8 ohm load, the circuitry is direct coupled!"

In December, 1974, sound engineers and audiophiles were invited to examine and discuss the new Marantz Stereo Console Amplifiers featuring models 1040 and 1070 and the new Marantz 112 AM/FM Stereo Tuner. The following comments were taken from that taped discussion.

"The circuitry is now full-complementary direct coupled to the speaker terminals. As a result, the damping factor is much improved at low frequencies where it counts!"

"The output circuitry now includes a speaker protection relay circuit and turn on delay!"

"There's improved thermal stability. This buys long term reliability as well as improved performance!"

The 1040 Stereo Amp

"The new 1040 integrated amp is rated at 20 watts continuous power per channel at 0.3% total harmonic distortion, 20 Hz to 20 kHz, both channels driven into an 8 ohm load!"

"It also has the ambience circuitry for simulated 4-channel. Most all of the features of the 1070 are on the 1040!"

"It's an excellent performance component for a modest price!"

The 112 Tuner

"It's got phase lock loop, a Dolby* de-emphasis switch and a number of other high-performance features. There're no gimmicks in it. Every feature is practical!"

"A complete system including the 112 tuner plus either the 1070 integrated amp or the 1040 integrated amp gives performance you couldn't get in most receivers and still costs less than \$500!"

The Marantz 1070 Amp, 1040 Amp and 112 Tuner are just part of the exciting new Marantz component line starting as low as \$199.95. Each of them reflects the kind of technical expertise and engineering excellence that has made Marantz the choice of professionals world-wide. Stop by your local dealer and see the entire Marantz line featuring an exclusive three-year guarantee** on parts, labor and performance specifications.

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