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High Fidelity

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

IN THIS ISSUE

JACQUES BARZUN

Erich Kleiber: An Interpreter Passes

ROBERT CHARLES MARSH

Where Will New Conductors Come From?



Robert Oakes Jordan

In the article reproduced here, just as it appeared in the May 16 issue of "Down Beat", Mr. Robert Oakes Jordan reports his completely unbiased and impartial findings on the vitally important subject of tape quality. A leading authority in the high-fidelity field, and tape recording in particular, his comments are of interest to all users of tape recording equipment, professional and amateur alike.

High Fidelity **DOWN BEAT**

By Robert Oakes Jordan

IT LOOKS AS though 1956 will be a year for magnetic tape recording. Perhaps it might be wise to review the subject of tape.

Looking back over the recent history of magnetic recording and its plastic tape medium, it is easy to see the progress in both.

Factors, more often than not overlooked, which are concerned with the use and storage of tape should be known and used by every person having a tape recorder.

During the last year, one of the long-term projects at our laboratory in Highland Park, Ill., has been the independent study of magnetic recording tape. We are interested in finding out just which practises in its use must be observed and how the user can best assure the safekeeping of his recorded tapes.

SEVERAL HUNDRED reels of magnetic tape from all the tape manufacturers were studied. Not more than 5 percent of this tape was submitted by manufacturers as samples. The bulk was bought by the laboratory.

In this a nontechnical report, we will tell of those factors considered most important for the tape user. It is our opinion that output consistency is the single most important factor governing the choice of any recording tape. Output consistency means that the tape must produce the same quality of sound as it is played back, month after month, year after year.

If the manufacturer has complete control of his tape production processes, then serious variation should not occur. If there are variations in the thickness of the oxide, its composition, or its method of application to the plastic base, then there will be a variation in the performance of the tape. If the user gets too little signal in playback or too much, either is a serious tape fault.

IT IS SELDOM possible for the tape user to judge the quality of the tape he uses because faults and inconsistencies identical to tape failures may be caused by poorly adjusted or maintained tape recorders. Virtually any brand of tape will provide adequate results from the majority of nonprofessional recorders now on the market. However, if you want professional results, then reel-to-reel, batch-to-batch output consistency is important.

In the tests, we found some remarkable variations in marketed tapes for consumer use. Among those faults found most often are these:

- *Nonuniformity of oxide coating, causing signal-level variations or "dropouts" in which little or no signal was recorded.*

- *Pits or pocket voids, where air bubbles or dirt have caused very small pits in the oxide coating. In some cases the ring magnetization of the rim of these pits or holes will cause playback signal variation.*

- *Nonuniformity of plastic base surface, in which, if the plastic base has microscopic hills or valleys in its surface, the oxide coating, though perfectly smooth at the playing surface will vary in depth along the tape. This can cause that noise-behind-the-signal, perplexing to professional recording engineers as well as amateurs.*

- *Uneven slitting, in which the magnetic tape is processed and coated in wide rolls and must be slit to whatever marketable width is desired. Large roller knives must be employed in the slitting process. If these knives get dull or exhibit any heat change one to another, the tension of one slit edge of the tape varies from that of its other edge. This change of edge tension over the length of a reel of tape will cause erratic travel of the tape over the recording and playback heads.*

- *Poor oxide adhesion to the plastic base. While this fault is becoming more and more rare, it is still a factor to consider when buying "bargain" or used bulk tape. The drawbacks to good recordings are evident in the clogging effect of the loosened oxide powder.*

After the tests, we chose Audio Tape Type 51, made by Audio Devices, which through two years of tests and use, proved to be the most consistent of all the major tapes.

audiotape

WINS INDEPENDENT TAPE TEST BY LEADING HI-FI AUTHORITY

... as reported in **DOWN BEAT** magazine

The tape test described by Mr. Jordan emphasizes two very important facts. (1) Different brands of recording tape vary widely in output uniformity. (2) Of all the leading brands tested, standard plastic-base Audiotape rated highest in consistent, uniform quality.

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High Fidelity

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

This Issue. The question of whether or not we soon may face a shortage of qualified conductors, which our two leading articles deal with, was brought up indirectly by Jacques Barzun. Lately finished with his book *Music in American Life*, he wanted to write for us a commemorative piece on his friend Erich Kleiber. Considering this, we called Remy Van Wyck Farkas, artists-and-repertoire director at London Records, to ask him if there existed any substantial backlog of Kleiber tapes still to be issued as records. Sadly, Mr. Farkas admitted that the backlog consisted of a single *Eroica*. He proceeded then into a heartfelt plaint on the disappearance of the breed of great masters of the baton. He even, in a rare piece of intercompany generosity, voiced the hope that EMI-Angel would make the best possible use of the genius of Sir Thomas Beecham. It seemed to us that Mr. Farkas had a topic worth exploring, so we asked Mr. Barzun to go ahead, while we looked around for someone to contribute a companion article. Since Robert Charles Marsh had recently put out a book called *Toscanini and the Art of Orchestral Performance*, and had written articles on Beecham, Scherchen, and Rodzinski, we deduced shrewdly that he was interested in conductors and conducting, and asked if he'd be interested in discussing where new conductors come from. He was, and did so, last thing before leaving England for the United States.

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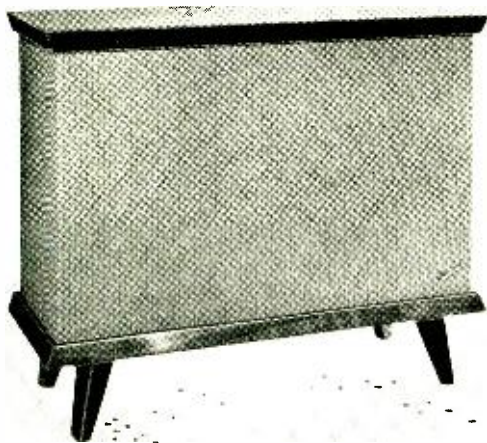
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SIR:

Long ago I realized that art, music, literature had been handed over to the advertising men of Madison Avenue I could hardly care to deny that journalism is an art of its own, but what such has to do with the realm of music when practiced by a Henry Pleasants is beyond me

[Pleasants writes, in *HIGH FIDELITY*, June 1956]: "The accomplishment of the microphone for the vocal art may be simply stated: it has restored the acoustical circumstances under which *bel canto* singing matured and flourished in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." Does this mean that we regularly hear Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, Judy Garland under the "acoustical advantages of the small baroque theater and the large baroque salon?" I thought it was Birdland, and our large cinema palaces, and noisy blaring atmospheres which gave jazz and its by-products of popular music their impetus.

"Around the turn of the century the trend to bigness and magnificence and forcefulness in classical music, the taste for the overpowering and the transcendental, was continued *ad absurdum* in the operas of Strauss, Berg, Mascagni, Giordano, Catalini, Cilea, and, to a lesser extent, Puccini." Earlier, Mr. Pleasants states that Verdi, Meyerbeer, and Wagner made the attributes of power essential and are therefore equally guilty. Follows a snide remark on the rank and file of opera and song-recital devotees. I put it that the rank and file of vocal enthusiasts know more about the subject than does Mr. Pleasants. Does one have to shout to sing *Rosenkavalier* and *Arabella*; does one have to shout in *L'Amico Fritz*, in *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Fedora*? And why Puccini "to a lesser extent?" You need more power to sing *Tosca*, *Butterfly*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Turandot*, *Fanciulla del West* than you do to sing any opera of Richard Strauss or Wagner. I don't want

Continued on page 9

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

LETTERS

Continued from page 4

Mr. Pleasants citing *Elektra* as a rebuttal either, for it simply won't do to categorize an entire output by a single possibly specific example.

As for this turn-of-the-century baloney — don't you need a big voice for Leonore and Florestan in *Fidelio*? Don't you need a big voice for Donna Anna and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*? Don't you need a big voice for Aeneas in *Troycens* (Berlioz); for *Medea* (Cherubini)? By the same standards, do you need a big voice for *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Debussy) or *L'heure Espagnole* (Ravel)?

I understand the theses of Mr. Pleasants to be the following:

1) Fitzgerald, Armstrong, Como, Sinatra, Crosby, Vaughan are great artists. (Is this a startling revelation? After all, the stupid rank and file that Mr. Pleasants belabors arrived at this conclusion long before Mr. Pleasants, as he himself admits.)

2) The microphone will (or can) restore proper (to Pleasants) values of the singing art: "It is not the singer who exploits the mike, as is the case with the jazz and popular singer; it is the mike, as regulated by the sound engineer, that exploits the singer." In what recording studio has Mr. Pleasants been working? Doesn't he know of the multiple tapes and echo chambers that are part and parcel of popular music today? Does he know that *class* artists like Sinatra, Como, Fitzgerald, Crosby have in their constant employ gifted orchestral arrangers who tailor the material to ideal fit for the interpreter, and that these men and women definitely consider the microphone as one of their vital components. He is quite correct in stating that popular artists exploit the microphone (with the necessary help of the engineer), but opera and concert personnel as a general rule will not and cannot tamper with *Beethoven, Verdi, Mozart, and Puccini*. The music is written down and, if you transpose it or harmonize it differently, you will only be kidding Mr. Pleasants.

Looking for authority, Mr. Pleasants believes that Chorley and Hanslick would have frowned *aesthetically* on the kind of vocalism we hear today. Who can speculate about this except Mr. Pleasants? It is, however, stated by Chorley that the end of the great

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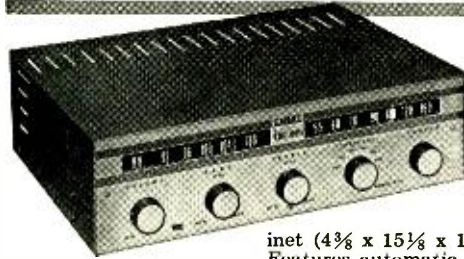
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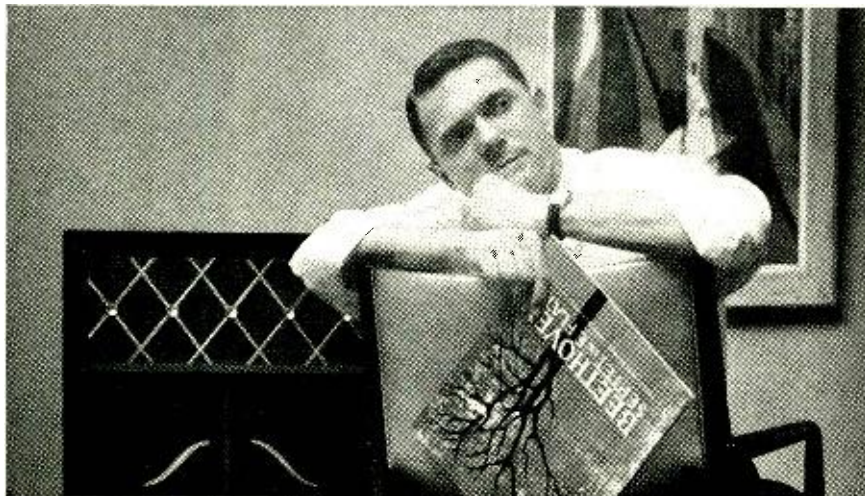
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LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

Luigi Lablache came when he could no longer manipulate "Suoni la tromba" (*Puritani*). He could no longer *sound the trumpet*—but perhaps Mr. Pleasants understands no Italian and missed the play on words.

Mr. Pleasants' article is so full of holes that practically every sentence is ludicrous. "Jazz and popular singing are notably free of this dependency upon the magnificent. The success of Mario Lanza with the popular music audience is an exception." An exception that involves *several million people*? And *Elvis Presley* is just another "intimate" artist? Rock and Roll for your baroque chambers? Well, if Armstrong, Vaughan, and Fitzgerald are *bel canto* exponents—won't lovable Louis, Sarah, and Ella be surprised!

Frankly, I wish Mr. Pleasants could move back into the days of Chorley and Hanslick, and let us poor fools continue to glory in the gargantuan sounds of the modern orchestra and the stentorian outbursts of Mario del Monaco, Renata Tebaldi, and company.

Remy Van Wyck Farkas
Director—Artists and Repertory
London Records, Inc.
New York, N. Y.

P. S. Frank Sinatra loves Italian opera and is addicted to the *verismo* school, like most Italians. I used to sell him records, so I know this. It should be obvious to anyone that the style of Sinatra is anything but intimate and is pure twentieth-century *verismo* carried into his type of material. He doesn't accent power because usually the material doesn't warrant it. However, when he attempted *Ol' Man River* a few years back, he put aside the microphone and gave it all he had, to show that he did have a voice.

Mr. Pleasants replies:

About 1770 Metastasio told Burney that he did not think there was then one singer left who could sustain the voice in the manner "the old singers used to do." "I endeavoured to account for this," Burney continues in his report of the interview, "and he agreed with me that theatrical music was become too instrumental; and that the cantatas of the beginning of the century, which were sung with no other accompaniment than a harpsichord or violoncello, required better singing than the present songs, in which the noisy accompaniments can

hide defects as well as beauties, and give relief to a singer."

What, one wonders, would Metastasio have thought of *Elektra* — or of Mr. Farkas' *Turandot* or *Fedora*? Or even of *Medea* and *Fidelio*?

I have merely said that the microphone, skillfully used by the most artistically gifted and accomplished of the popular and jazz singers, makes it possible to sing to large audiences with an intimacy and refinement of phrasing and enunciation which, for the reasons I cited, is no longer characteristic of most classical singing. I did not say that this is true of all jazz and popular singers. I did not mention rock 'n' roll, and I most certainly did not mention Elvis Presley. If Mr. Farkas thinks that *Arabella* and *Adriana Lecocq* are normally sung without shouting, and if he thinks that Sinatra's singing is not intimate, I suspect that he may be insensitive to the refinements I was talking about.

His familiarity with the Italian language should remind him that *bel canto* means beautiful song. And if he cannot hear the beauty in the singing of Sarah and Ella, I can only assume that he has been deafened by the *suono* of Del Monaco's *tromba*.

Henry Pleasants
Berne, Switzerland

SIR:

In order to make my Beethoven series, now running on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Trans-Canada Network, as complete as possible, I am most anxious to obtain a copy, in good broadcastable condition, of Vox PL 6820 — Beethoven's Cantata, *The Death of Joseph the Second*.

Some copies of this record must certainly have been issued, but so far the most painstaking search, here in Canada, in New York, at both American and English Vox, has failed to turn up a single one.

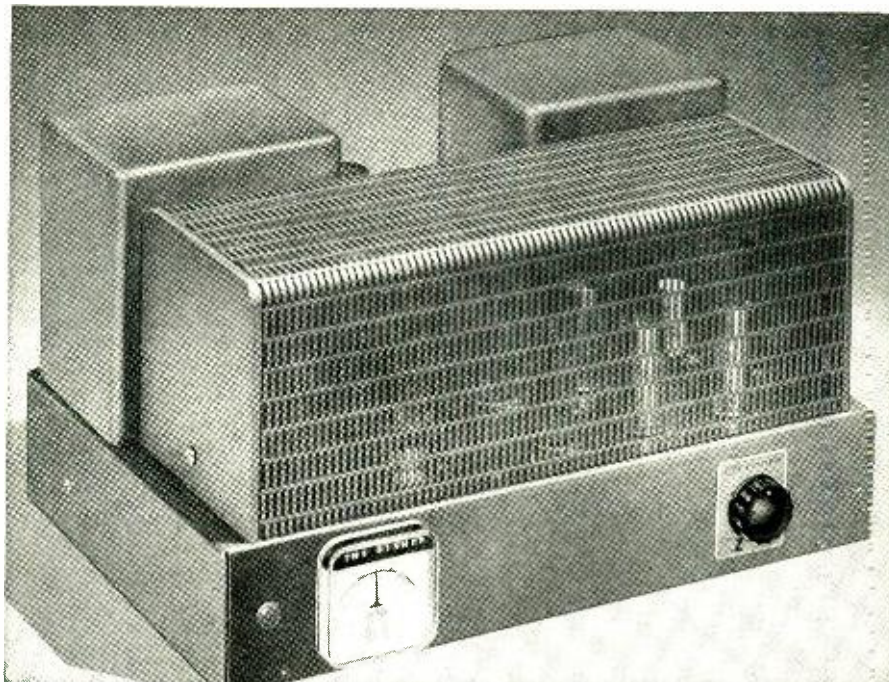
Will any reader who has a copy of this disk which he will either lend, give, or sell, please communicate with me at the address below.

Allan Sangster
P.O. Box 300
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SIR:

Congratulations on the article by James G. Deane on page 60 of the April issue concerning scratches and nicks on LP disks! I hope many other readers are vocal about this affront to the ears so that the record manufacturers will stop pushing defective merchandise onto the public. . . .

George Meyer
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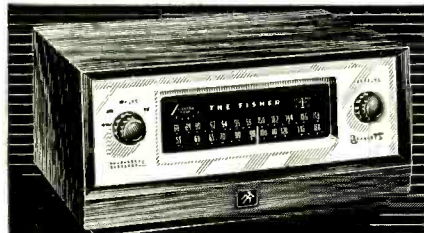
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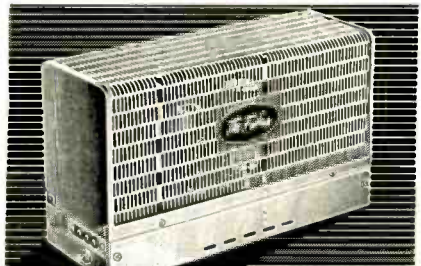
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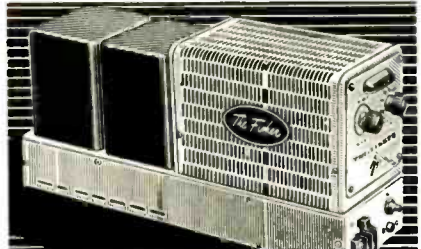
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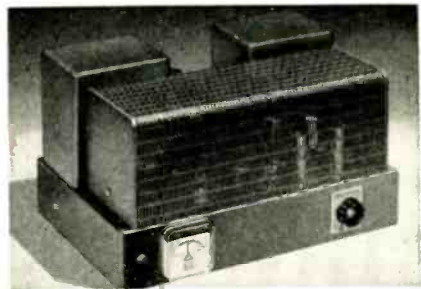
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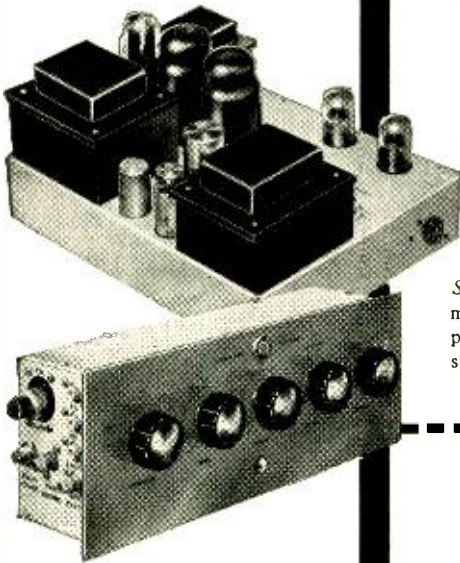
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Power output 35 watts. Output impedances 4, 7, 15 and 60Ω. Noise and hum -90 db from full output. Harmonic Distortion less than 0.1% at 15 watts, 0.3% at 35 watts. I.M. Distortion 0.4% at 25 watts, 0.5% at 30 watts, 0.72% at 35 watts. Damping Factor adjustable from 35 to infinity. Negative feed-back 26 db round amplifier.

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Controls: Bass, Treble, Low Pass Filter, Volume, Selector for tape, radio and microphone inputs and all standard recording characteristics. Low noise circuitry. Cathode follower output to power amplifier allows remote control up to 20 feet.

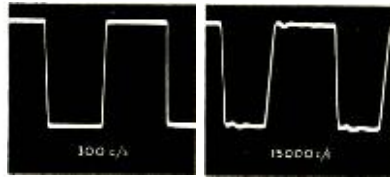
Leaflets giving fuller specifications and design data are available on request.

U.S.A. } Amplifier \$139.50
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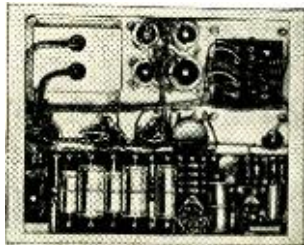
Prices slightly higher west of the Rockies



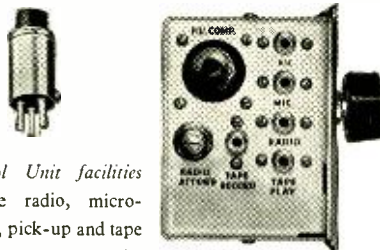
Wide-band response curve of amplifier, 2 cycles per second to 160,000 cycles per second, in comparison with the audible band 20 c.p.s. to 15,000 c.p.s., assures effective feedback.



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Subchassis view of amplifier showing fine workmanship, which ensures enduring reliability in performance. In the long run there is no substitute for quality.



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Continued from page 14

ed. Fold the corners back and staple them in place, using an ordinary office stapler. You now have a plastic cover that will slip over your turntable or changer. It is no beauty to look at, but it keeps the dust off."

Obit "Swap-A-Record"

The "Swap-a-Record" column, started some months ago, has had a merry and useful life, but we now feel it should be brought to an end. For one thing, it takes up space which we believe could be better (and more interestingly) used. Quite a few readers agree with this point of view; some have been so commercially-minded that they have suggested the "Trader's Marketplace" is the right column for record swapping and selling information.

And even the swappers themselves have dried up. A few still want to do some swapping, but availabilities have dropped to a relative trickle. Apparently, the swappers are all so busy swapping, unpacking new arrivals, card-indexing, and so forth, that it's going to take a while for them to figure out where they are and what they have left to swap!

So . . . adieu to the swap column. If any great crisis develops in the future on the swapping front, we'll keep an open mind and could be persuaded to reopen it.

Back Copies

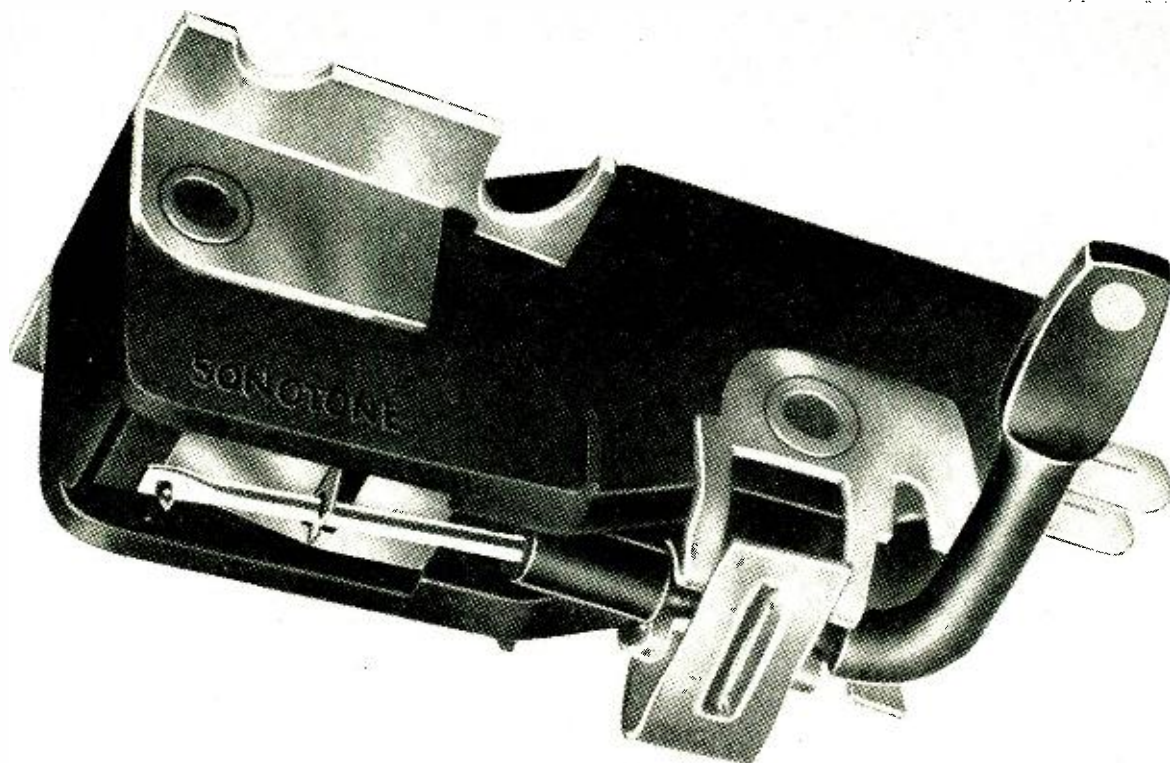
We should put a heavy black border around these paragraphs — they constitute an obituary notice for back copy lists.

After looking over the long lists which appeared in July, it would seem that, like the Swap-A-Record situation, the haves and the have-nots are now mutually acquainted and most transfers have been made. What is left is the normal flow of those who want to sell and those who want to buy. As HIGH FIDELITY's circulation grows, the number of people in this situation grows — and before we know it, we have used up a sizable amount of NWI space.

So, we'll publish a final list of haves who want to sell . . . and then, unless a real crisis develops somewhere, we'll let commercialism take

Continued on page 18

LISTENING QUALITY, SUPERB!



"...overall smoothness instantly apparent" says The Audio League, reporting on tests of the revolutionary new Sonotone Super-Fidelity Ceramic Cartridge.*

To the many other advantages of ceramic cartridges, now add response... "unusually smooth over its entire range". Those are the words of The Audio League—and there is no more respected authority for expert, impartial listening tests. Here are further authorized quotes from their April, 1956 report:

"...very substantial middle and bass performance. It gives the impression of a more substantial extreme bottom than one gets with a magnetic cartridge and any of the several moderately good commercial pre-amplifier-equalizer units..."

"...a most appealing sense of balance of the various portions of the spectrum..."

"...in view of its excellent listening quality, it must be considered an outstanding buy when used with an appropriate amplifier..."

Before you invest in another cartridge, get the full facts on the revolutionary new Sonotone "3" series.

Worth building your entire system around—for it gives you extremely important advantages no velocity type can match—including modest cost.

**Authorized quotation number 34 from Volume I, No. 12, April 1956, of The Audio League Report. Complete technical and subjective report available from The Audio League, Pleasantville, N. Y. Single issue \$.50, twelve issues, \$4.00.*

Only Sonotone's "Super-Fidelity" Gives You Such Sound—Plus These Advantages:

1. High voltage output eliminates need for pre-amplification.
2. Flat RIAA response without need for equalization (tone controls suffice).
3. Absolutely no magnetic hum.
4. Reduced noise from simplified circuitry.
5. Modest cost: single needle 3P-1D with diamond, \$30.00 list; turnover 3T-SD with sapphire-diamond, \$32.50 list.



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"Super HI-FI" ... Or FIDELITY?

by Paul W. Klipsch

If you are looking for "Hi-Fi" sound which is sensational or spectacular, you can get it very easily. All you need is a hodge podge of resonant enclosures, "super-tweeters" and the endless addition of extra speakers and adjustment knobs. But, on the other hand, if you want your reproduced music to be as nearly identical with the original as possible, you must leave the creation of spectacular sound sensations to the recording artist—not to your sound reproducing equipment. For if your equipment is to have fidelity it must not produce new sounds of its own: it must unobtrusively REproduce the original. And that is the one thing the KLIPSCHORN system is designed to do.

In the KLIPSCHORN system, to achieve REproduction, we use three carefully matched horns. Two of them—the Klipsch bass horn and Klipsch mid-range horn—have been developed in our own laboratories. The bass horn, of folded corner horn design has an air column sufficient to reproduce, without distortion, the lowest note on the organ and it maintains flat response up to the top of its assigned range, about "B" above middle "C" in the music scale. No other bass speaker of comparable size has ever been able to achieve this. Miniaturized bass speakers have been advertised, but so far no one has invented a miniature 32 foot wave length.

From "B" up to a little beyond the top "C" of the keyboard the mid-range horn takes over. Of straight axis design, it is free from the distortions characteristic of middle and high frequency folded horns. This horn, which required even more development time than the Klipsch bass horn, accounts for the exceptional clarity of the KLIPSCHORN in the range where most of our listening experience occurs.

The high frequency speaker is a horn type tweeter carefully selected for type and quality, mounted and ensemble tested by the manufacturer. It gives natural rendering of tones from high "C" to beyond the limits of hearing, without artificial exaggeration or peaking of the ultra high frequencies such as is found in most "super" tweeters.

We have settled on the use of these three horns with their individual driver units because our tests show that this combination affords the smoothest response of any combination tested. And we have tested practically every principal make of driver, foreign as well as domestic. If the addition of more speakers would improve the reproduction we would add them. If driver units were available which are superior to the ones we use, we would readily substitute them. If the insertion of controls would increase fidelity we would insert them. But we have found that these "extras" do not contribute to the fidelity of reproduction—they merely create artificial "Hi-Fi" effects which are distortions of the original.

In testing the KLIPSCHORN loudspeaker system, we supplement complete laboratory analysis with listening tests. In these tests, listeners are not asked merely "Does it sound good?," but we ask critical audiences to compare recorded sound, played through the KLIPSCHORN loudspeaker system, with the original sound, ranging from solo violin to a real pipe organ. Usually, from one half to three quarters of the audience is not able to distinguish the difference. Sometimes, with good room acoustics, we can fool all the observers.

Spectacular? No. But it is the REproduction of sound with fidelity.

Write today for your copy of the latest brochures on our finest sound reproducer, the KLIPSCHORN system and our medium priced reproducer, the SHORTHORN system.

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CORNER HORN LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEMS

*TRADEMARKS

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Continued from page 16

over and refer sellers to the Trader's Marketplace.

Back Copies Available

J. L. Kenner, 83 Mann Ave., Needham 92, Mass.; all except Nos. 22 and 34; \$25.00 postpaid.

F. G. Armstrong, The Hill School, Pottstown, Pa.; Nos. 1 through 40 to the highest bidder.

E. M. Harris, 281 Woodbine Ave., Rochester 19, N. Y.; all issues from No. 1; price not stated.

Walter Jilek, 2801 West 173rd St., Hazel Crest, Ill.; Nos. 1 through 42; price not stated.

R. S. Pomeroy III, Suite 206, 1,000 Lincoln Road Bldg., Miami Beach, Fla.; "Complete set through 1955, in good condition, including both record indexes. Shipped prepaid in USA to top bidder but for only \$1.00 above second high bidder. Minimum \$25.00."

Harry B. Dilworth, 807 North Wabash Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.; complete set to highest bidder.

Norman Jones, 17 Sullivan Ave., Farmingdale, N. Y.; complete set to highest bidder; plus postage.

Record Jackets

Reader Helen Fogel of Washington writes that the Diskeep Co., 1739 Connecticut Ave., N. W., Washington 9, D. C., sells a package of six "Diskeep Covers" for about \$1.00.

Thanks, Reader Fogel.



AUTHORitatively Speaking

Margaret Marshall, who discusses musical backgrounds for holocausts on page 30, has no special interest in fires as such. Her hobbies are painting, photography, and singing, whereof the last-named would almost seem to have outgrown its hobbyhood. She has sung in Seattle opera productions, and as soprano soloist at that city's outdoor Aqua Theater. As might be deduced from the foregoing, she lives in Seattle, where she attended the Cornish School of Music and the University of Washington. From nine to five she works as a secretary, returning thereafter to her free-lance writing, her hobbies, and the rest of her ménage—a Siamese cat who hates music.

The reason for Leland Windreich's concern over record jacket art (see page 28) is that he is a record collector—naturally—and hates to have to shudder when he displays a new acquisition to his friends. By occupation he is a librarian, and was initially a music librarian. Now he has branched into other areas—psychiatry, public utilities, food industries, geology. On the side he reviews books, mostly fiction and mostly for *Library Journal*.

BSO to USSR

DURING THE PAST YEAR we have been undergoing a Russian invasion. Focal points of the Soviet drive have been our recital halls and recording studios, which have fallen defenseless before such People's Heroes as David Oistrakh and Emil Gilels.

Apparently the American way to answer a move like this really is massive retaliation, and volunteers have not been lacking. Early this spring the clarion was sounded, in a published statement which ended: ". . . Ready and eager, if the President wishes, to be the first American orchestra to play in Moscow. (signed) Henry B. Cabot." Henry B. Cabot is, of course, the president of the Trustees of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and it is the BSO that will be the first American orchestra to play in the USSR. As a matter of fact, so far as anyone seems to know, it will be the first American orchestra to play in Russia at all. Before World War I, American orchestras, whatever their merit, were not much in demand in Europe, and ever since World War I such devices as the *cordon sanitaire* and the Iron Curtain have precluded junkets into Russia. (Just as a point of interest, no Russian orchestra seems ever to have played in America, either, a fact which, no doubt, is currently being mulled over by astute New York concert managements. To-varishchi seem to be SRO material nowadays, and might not 110 Comrades pull even better than two?)

Whatever the conclusions of New York managements, the Moscow management (singular) seems to have no misgivings about the allure of Bostonians. The Russian government, indeed, has plunged into show business with a surety and *sang-froid* not unworthy of a Billy Rose. The Ministry of Culture in Moscow, dealing directly with the BSO, handed out no-loss guarantees for four concerts with the greatest readiness, though the Orchestra does not actually expect to make a profit. (It doesn't make a profit in the United States either, of course.)

The BSO's overseas tour, which begins August 14, naturally will not be limited to Russia. Starting out with two chartered airplanes (and some space on the *Nieuw Amsterdam*), the Orchestra's 115 men, together with 40 wives, and 88 pieces of musical baggage occupying 1985.7 cubic feet and weighing 8 tons, will play 26-29 concerts (bookings were incomplete at the time of this writing) in 17-19 cities in 12 nations. Cities fairly firm in the itinerary include Cork, Dublin, Edinburgh, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, Leningrad, Moscow, Prague, Vienna, Munich, Stuttgart, Paris, Chartres, Leeds, and London. The portion of the tour west of the Iron Curtain will be subsidized in part by a government grant administered by the American National Theater and Academy.

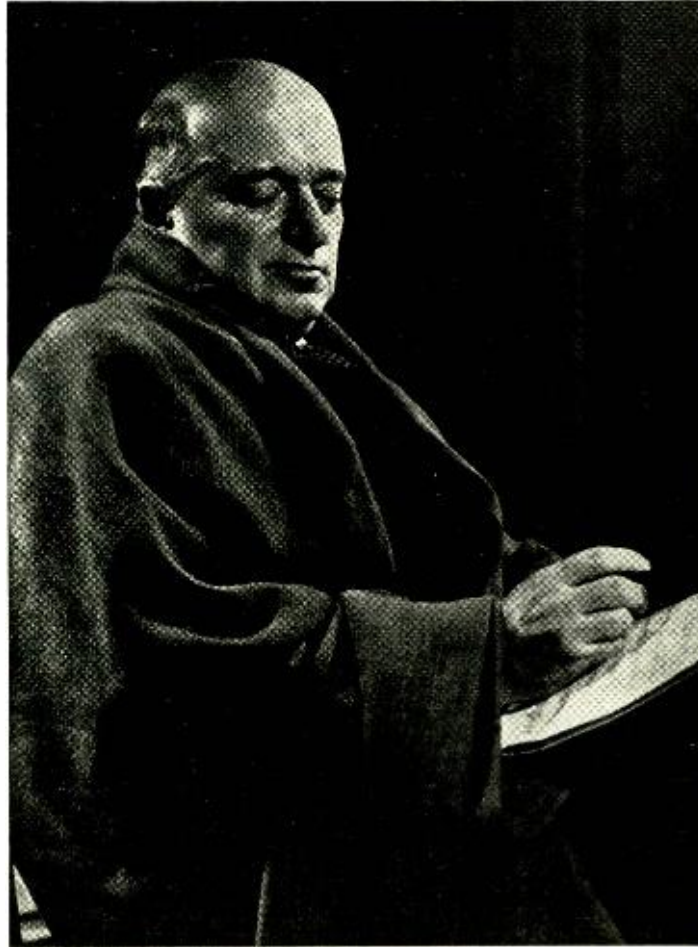
At Helsinki the Soviet Ministry of Culture takes over, flying the Bostonians to Leningrad (without their wives) for two concerts. Thence they proceed to Moscow, for two more, one of which may feature the Beethoven Ninth Symphony, with Russian soloists and chorus. They hope also to appear in joint performance with Oistrakh or Gilels, or both. (Oistrakh played with them in Boston last winter.) The Ministry also will furnish housing, meals, and entertainment, and the musicians already have been heard remarking to one another that the latter, as purveyed by Soviet officialdom to foreign guests, is supposed to be something really memorable. From Moscow, the Ministry will fly them to Prague, whence they will cross the Curtain again, back to Vienna.

It can be stated, not without a glow of vicarious pride, that at summer's beginning, the Boston Symphony Orchestra was facing its journey into Communism's heartland with the aplomb which Bostonians are reputed to bring to any adventure, however novel. There was to be no special supervision of personnel within the Curtain countries. They were expected, as a staff member put it, to get to rehearsals and performances on time, just as they must in Boston, and the rest of what they might do would be their own business, also as it is in Boston. However, it was thought likely that the State Department would send someone to brief them, before departure, on such matters as what not to try to photograph while in Moscow, what conversational topics to avoid, and the like. For the rest, reliance for the making of a favorable impression was left to natural Bostonian decorum.

That refers, of course, to deportment only. No one had the slightest doubt what kind of impression the BSO would make musically, and this is of considerable intercultural importance, if that is the word I want. There is growing awareness of the need these days to show people not only behind the Curtain, but in Western Europe as well, that America is not a soulless Power concerned purely with dollars and gadgets. It would be hard to think of a more potent argument than the flawless glowing sound of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, irrefutable evidence of devotion to and labor for the most spiritual of the arts.

Anyway, at the time of the BSO's advent, Muscovites seemed to be taking to American musicians as heartily as the American public had received last winter's Russians. Isaac Stern had passed through in triumphal progress; Jan Peerce had won a five-minute standing ovation after singing in *La Traviata* with the Bolshoi company. The Boston Symphony Orchestra had no slightest doubt of being a sellout attraction — just as it is everywhere else.

J.M.C.



ERICH KLEIBER: *the passing of a free spirit*

by JACQUES BARZUN

Herein the author of Music in American Life paints a word portrait of a friend, and illuminates one aspect of a question vital to the whole world's musical life: what are the ingredients of interpretive genius?

IN THE DEATH of Erich Kleiber last January the world has lost a very great artist, though the United States, for understandable reasons, is not sufficiently aware of it. It is one of the paradoxes of modern communications, so-called, that public notice is intense and concentrated on a few figures that revolve within a given orbit. Luminaries outside that orbit might as well belong to other universes. A living example is that of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, the baritone about whom musical Europe has been raving since the Edinburgh Festival of 1952: he could vanish from the scene tomorrow, the American public would hardly notice it: he has been here just once, last fall: he is still a stranger.

Kleiber's odyssey was of course something quite different. He did come to this country, and it was here that I came to know him, twenty-five years ago, in the

midst of the Depression, when he was being tried out as conductor of the Philharmonic. I was then near the beginning of my labors on the biography of Berlioz, and I wanted to hear as much of the music as I could. Since the repertory at that time consisted of the *Roman Carnival*, the three excerpts from the *Damnation*, and an occasional tossing off of the *Fantastique*, I used the simple device of a word and a two-cent stamp to arouse a little venturesomeness in conductors, especially newcomers.

During the 1930 season Kleiber had given a superb performance of the *Fantastique*. The first and last movements — the touchstones of conducting intelligence in that work — had been done with a control, animation, and sense of line that I have never heard equaled. Kleiber's rhythm, prime requisite for Berlioz, was faultless, and he had the art of balancing his dynamics so

that one actually heard everything going on at once, instead of merely knowing it from the score while being given a thick paste of sound.

Moved though I was, I find from my letters that diffidence prevailed and I waited till Kleiber's return in October 1931 before asking for more. I then compiled in German — and had vetted by a colleague — a message in which I respectfully requested a couple of things off the beaten track. I suggested *Harold in Italy* and the *Roméo* excerpts, including the Love Scene.

To my delight he played these, with the adagio, which had not been heard in New York since the days of Theodore Thomas. I expressed my gratitude. Kleiber replied suggesting that I come round after his next concert. Such was the beginning of a friendship sustained by correspondence and brief meetings here or abroad for a quarter of a century. Kleiber's lovable, devoted, omniscient wife, who was an American from Iowa, served as our indispensable go-between on paper, for his English was strictly utilitarian and my written German is of an angularity which might pass for archaic if it were not ludicrous and worthless for the exchange of ideas.

Fortunately, the year after our first acquaintance I went to Europe for eighteen months as a research fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies and spent a large part of that time in Germany. It was 1933-34, the dismal period of intellectual *Gleichschaltung* under Hitler's minions, to which the best antidote was recourse to the unverballed — music and painting. In Berlin, I followed Kleiber's season at the Staatsoper and really came to know him and his work.

As in every great mind, the most striking thing about him was indefinable, but if a single word can suggest the character of the unique, I should for Kleiber choose Vivacity. What I mean by it is something equidistant from the impetuous and the repressed. It is the quality of men in whom strong impulses are steadily harmonized by *quick* intelligence.

Men of slow judgment can have powerful minds, but they are at an obvious disadvantage in dealing with violent emotions. The strong and quick have vivacity. One is not surprised to find it in, say, Toscanini; we expect it from the culture to which he belongs. But there is always the possibility that the forms are there without the substance: there are many Italian conductors but only one Toscanini. And even he is a stranger to some of the artistic impulses which move a temperament such as Kleiber's. This is evident in the way the two men conducted Beethoven. Toscanini was always admirable, but without the right kind of strength. Kleiber (as one can verify from his recordings of the Fifth and Sixth) had both strength and lightness. The clinching example of Kleiber's amazing sinew struck me during his performance of *Parsifal* in Berlin twenty-two years ago: without tampering with tempos or using any specious tricks, he made me forget the clock. The tireless repetitions were saved by a truly angelic grace and I lost my fear that the Good Friday spell would end Monday morning.

It was only some years later, in Paris, that I saw Kleiber rehearse and I then understood more thoroughly why he had not greatly pleased the dowager minds which still swayed musical fashions in New York. He did not seem to conduct, that is, to earn his fee on the podium. All his histrionic ability went into rehearsal: there he gestured, danced, chattered, pantomimed his way into the subconscious of his players until the right musical utterance came out of their fingers and lungs. But it was not all comedy; he could be severe and — God help us all — impatient. This is but to say that he was an artist, a man who wants results and is appeased by nothing else. Once he had finished his work behind the scenes, all he had to do was call it forth again by quiet cues and reminders — nothing to see from in back.

It is not true to say that the test of musicianship in conducting is furnished by opera. Even in maestros talents can be fine, limited, and not less genuine because of this. But it is true that opera discloses the dramatic conductor, the one who in any work that allows it will stress the elements of vivacity as against those of decoration. That vibrancy, that compulsion to believe and be moved, takes precedence over the contemplation of design, which is for calmer moments. Now the printed score does not adequately record the dramatic elements. While design is evident, drama has to be imparted. And of all types of scores that need the vivifying injection, opera needs it most.

Kleiber felt all this and studied his means of vivification as deeply as he did the purely practical difficulties of performance. And that is no doubt how he managed to make *Wozzeck* a vivid reality for our generation. I remember his telling me, however, that for perfect bliss he would choose what he called the three F's — *Figaro*, *Fidelio*, *Freischütz*. I concurred in his choice from my selfish consumer's point of view, but wondered a little at the "bliss" of making *Fidelio* come right "Ah," he said with a toss of the hand, "there are ways, there are ways!" Though I never had the luck to hear his *Fidelio*, I do not doubt that he had "ways." Those who know his great recording of *Figaro* can confirm the surmise.

For his live work one had to go abroad. At last in 1944, Kleiber came once more to the United States. I



The Kleibers in Vienna, photographed shortly before he died.

heard him at Juilliard, where he put on *The Abduction from the Seraglio*: a memorable performance due not only to his seemingly effortless skill, but also to a good English translation by Robert Lawrence and Albert Stoessel, and an uncommonly able young cast. Not long after, the papers announced that Kleiber had been engaged by the Metropolitan for the following season. Good news, but not borne out by fact. Kleiber's orbit, as far as it was transatlantic, kept him in southern latitudes. Buenos Aires claimed him for her own and so did other Latin American cities as far north as Mexico but not beyond. In Europe, it was the magic square Vienna-Berlin-Paris-London.

Latterly London had really discovered him; that is, audiences did not merely listen and applaud, they knew what they were doing. This recognition was both expressed in and caused by the spreading renown of his recordings and the enthusiasm they aroused in connoisseurs. The Beethoven symphonies were a revelation to the jaded eardrum, even after the Weingartner re-pressings. London (the firm this time, not the place) would not let him go, though Westminster, whose adviser, Kurt List, knows a good man when he hears him, tried hard to entice him into their fold. It would be gratifying to add at this point that a solid backlog of Kleiber recordings existed on tape in London's vaults. But, I am told that there is only one, an *Eroica*, which we may have the opportunity of hearing this winter.

The upshot of the demand for his records was that at the time of his death Kleiber was scheduled to tour this country with the Vienna Philharmonic this autumn, sharing the task with André Cluytens.

In our present state of wide-awake receptivity to sound, there is no doubt that Kleiber would have at last crystallized in our minds the image of himself and his art, the deprivation of which has been one of our incalculable losses. We barely escaped a similar one when Toscanini emerged from the pit of the Metropolitan into the light of concert halls, but we muffed our chances with Kleiber by reason, I suspect, of his qualities. During the two critical decades of his mastery we paid our respects to the severity of high art through Toscanini, but actually indulged ourselves in semimusical trances, presided over by a succession of well-intentioned mediocrities, ranging from the orgasmic to the sentimental. All the while time was running on, and whatever may have been Kleiber's ambitions or desires regarding this country, he ended by showing us, as if in a final act of self-respecting indifference, that he did not mean to wait forever.

In one connection, it is true, Kleiber did receive a good deal of notice in the United States. This was apropos of politics and in a way not likely to make him congenial to music lovers less clear-minded than he. His background as an Austrian belonging to a family of unregenerate Imperialists re-enforced in him an artistic point of view on modern statecraft which it is difficult for the mass mind to appreciate. His was really a nineteenth-century outlook, but as so often happens with nineteenth-century ideas, it resolved for him the con-

fused choices that have faced contemporary artists, from Richard Strauss to Prokofiev and from Cortot to Gieseking.

Kleiber conducted in Berlin under the Nazi regime, in Milan under Mussolini, in Buenos Aires under Perón, and once again in Berlin under the Communists. Yes, but he broke with every one of them, openly, loudly, and explicitly as soon as each began to interfere on political grounds in artistic affairs.

As an Aryan (so-called), Kleiber was *persona grata* to Hitler, whereas Mendelssohn, a pious Lutheran of Jewish descent, was not. Word came to Kleiber to remove Mendelssohn from his programs. Kleiber removed himself. In 1936 in Milan, learning that Jews could not be opera subscribers at La Scala, Kleiber laid down his baton and departed. When the Peronistas were in power and interfering with the direction of the Colón in Buenos Aires, Kleiber refused to conduct. He toured the country under private management. The same lamentable tale was repeated eighteen months ago when the East Berlin government started defacing their own opera house to remove the inscription about "Frederick the Great, Friend of the Muses." Once more Kleiber dissociated himself, penning a letter of resignation which in an age of true friendship to the Muses would have covered with ridicule those to whom it was addressed.

The philosophy behind these acts of Kleiber's rests on the premise that an artist is not a political man, not militant except on behalf of the republic of art. This last is a full-time job which unfits him to be a useful ally in civil strife. The artist's partisanship and critical strength are given to art, just as the physician's knowledge and skill are given to the sick. When the state begins to treat art politically, then the artist expresses his solidarity with other artists and amateurs of art in the defense of their name and privilege.

This position is by no means perfectly logical or satisfactory, but it avoids some of the worst pitfalls of the other tenable ones. It begins at least with self-knowledge: very few artists, even supposing they have the time and interest, possess the ability to survive in politics. They perish there pointlessly like infants in a crowded freight yard. In the second place, Kleiber's principle certainly does not prevent any other musician, such as Casals, from engaging in political war if he is so minded.

To the objection that every artist is also a citizen and therefore has a duty to fight fascism or communism (in Russia it would be capitalism) it may be answered that no such duty exists in law or tradition. An ambassador is also a citizen, yet he has no duty to seek the overthrow of the government to which he is accredited; and he too receives from it smiles and civilities. In short, though coexistence is a difficult game, it is one which the artist has a special duty to master. If he moralizes his role too far he becomes a conceited fool: he cannot entertain dictators because of their crimes nor capitalists because of their profits; he refuses to countenance listeners who

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WHERE DO CONDUCTORS COME FROM ?

by Robert Charles Marsh



An imminent problem in musical supply here is analyzed by the author of the recent book, Toscanini and the Art of Orchestral Performance.

THE RETIREMENT of Arturo Toscanini after a career of legendary proportions has served, perhaps more than any other single event, to underline the fact that the majority of the most distinguished conductors of our time are past (or at least approaching) the age at which other men commonly withdraw from active public life. If conducting were no more demanding than, say, university teaching, this situation might be less a ground for concern; but conducting is, in fact, one of the most demanding of professions, involving, in addition to mental and emotional strain, the capacity to perform a physical chore which Artur Rodzinski once described to me as "in the same class as ditchdigging."

Pierre Monteux at 81 and Bruno Walter at 80 must therefore be regarded not only as superb musicians, but also as superb physical specimens, since their music reflects an expenditure of vigor which might tax men much younger. Five of the most renowned conductors familiar to American audiences are past 70: Sir Thomas Beecham (77), Sir Adrian Boult (75), Leopold Stokowski (74), Ernest Ansermet (73), and Otto Klemperer (71). It would be unrealistic to say that in every case these men are equal to their previous selves of a decade ago, but it would be just as unfair to undervalue their previous

achievements because they have since surpassed them. Time affects brain, muscle, and attitude, but in different ways.

America's "Big Three" orchestras all are led by men whose matured skills reflect mature years. Charles Munch of Boston is 64, while Dimitri Mitropoulos of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony has just turned 60. At 57, Philadelphia's Eugene Ormandy is the junior member of the group and younger than the conductors of three of the leading orchestras of the Midwest, George Szell of Cleveland being 59, Fritz Reiner of the Chicago Symphony 68, and Paul Paray of Detroit 70. Although all of these men can look forward to more than a decade of activity, the untimely deaths of Wilhelm Furtwängler at 69 and Clemens Krauss at 61, together with the tragic loss of Erich Kleiber in his sixty-fifth year, have served to remind us of the vulnerability of artists past middle life. Artur Rodzinski, who is only 62, has for some time curtailed his appearances and must be regarded as in a state of semiretirement.

Has the race of conductors died out?

Obviously not, for there are young conductors to be heard in both the United States and Europe, some promising, some dull yet competent, some inadequate. Ger-

many can take pride that her musical tradition is ably represented by Herbert von Karajan (who at 48 is internationally accepted as a major conductor), while Ferenc Fricsay and George Solti have offered remarkable performances which suggest finer ones to come. Guido Cantelli illustrates Italy's ability to produce at least one top-ranking conductor in each generation. There are, of course, others who could be named.

One fact that stands out in a survey of this type is that Americans are not well represented. British orchestras, by and large, are led by British conductors, Central European orchestras by men born in Central Europe, and so on, but American orchestras are still largely the province of the European-born, European-trained conductor. If we were a culturally backward people, this phenomenon might be easily explained; but in fact American composers have shown themselves able to dominate the light music of the world and to write serious music equal to most of that which Europeans are producing these days. American singers, instrumentalists, and orchestras have reached the highest levels of their art. Why not, then, an American conductor of commanding international reputation? I do not ask this out of mere chauvinism, but because I feel that the characteristics which a great conductor must possess are just as likely to appear in an American as anyone else. And it is worth asking whether, if these qualities do appear, they get the chance to develop in the public interest.

Let us approach these issues by means of a basic question: Can conducting be taught?

Having held for a time the title of professor of education at one of the large American universities, I am acutely aware of the tendency to believe that everything can be taught, but this is a part of the mystique that surrounds the incredibly complex process of transmitting ideas and skills from one person to another. It is always possible for those who depend on teaching for their livelihood to produce a course of study professing to lead to the achievement of any end, but here, as everywhere else in life, a certain degree of healthy skepticism is not out of place.

The skills which a great conductor requires are not of

the sort that, one feels, a comprehensive course in a conservatory can easily provide. Arturo Toscanini always has maintained that conductors were born to their vocation and that, while training might develop an inherent gift, it could not create one. Artur Rodzinski has repeatedly turned down offers to teach conducting because he feels that the really essential functions of a conductor are unteachable by formal means. Hermann Scherchen, on the other hand, has taught conducting for a number of years and even has written a textbook on the subject (*Handbook of Conducting*, Oxford University Press, 1933). It is worth noting, however, that Scherchen begins with a wary qualification in his first chapter title, "The Teachable Technique of Conducting," and that, indeed, his opening remarks are on the importance of the imagination. I have yet to find a way to teach anyone how to be imaginative.

This does not mean, on the other hand, that a person with a gift for conducting cannot learn by example a great many things which might serve to perfect his art. It is obvious that he can, just as it is obvious that to a large extent he must be self-taught. A great conductor is probably in the fullest sense his own master.

We are not misled, therefore, if we view the preparation of a conductor as similar to that of any professional, and if we say that his eventual position depends on the degree of his aptitude and the extent to which that aptitude has been developed by training and experience. In the case of a conductor, however, the training does *not* seem of necessity to be joined to any formal course of instruction.* Artur Rodzinski, in addition to his musical studies, acquired the degree of Doctor of Laws at the University of Vienna. Does it show in his Brahms? Arturo Toscanini, on the other hand, received very little formal education apart from a rigorous course at the Royal School of Music in Parma. Was this lack of conventional preparation ever apparent in his performances? The answer in both cases would seem to be

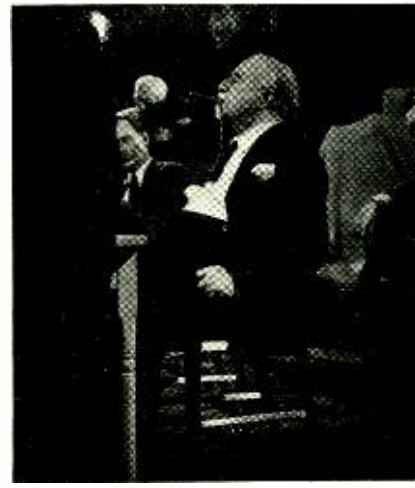
*Similarly, any attempt to set up formal prerequisites for a conductor leads to results that are often downright silly. For example, Scherchen says (p. 4): "It is indispensable that the student of conducting should play a string instrument well enough to be able to sit in an orchestra." I can think of several eminent conductors who, although thoroughly familiar with string instruments, have never been able to play them to anything approaching professional orchestral standards. What, then, is the point of such a rule, and why need it be regarded seriously?



Pierre Monteux



Bruno Walter



Sir Thomas Beecham

no. A remarkable man, given any opportunity to develop his abilities, will do remarkable things either because of or in spite of his formal education, and the claims of academicians must be judged in this light.

David Riesman has pointed out that, as American society grows older and more mature, the paths to the professions become more formalized. An implication of this, relevant here, is that the experience needed to develop a young conductor is apt to be open only to those who have taken a conservatory course. Yet two of the most distinguished conductors in the United States got their start under more flexible conditions. Leopold Stokowski became conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony after an education at Queen's College, Oxford, which included no formal instruction whatever in instrumental music (this he was obliged to secure elsewhere), and after a career as an organist. Eugene Ormandy went to the Minneapolis Symphony after showing his merits in radio and the pit of the Roxy Theater. If Cincinnati or Minneapolis were choosing a new conductor today, would either take an organist or the director of a theater orchestra? I doubt it; and the loss might be ours.

Conducting is an art requiring a complex of skills not commonly found in the same human being. Indeed, their existence in combination might suggest a paradox in personality. A fine conductor must be highly sensitive as an artist; but he needs as well to be a tough and capable disciplinarian, for unless he can command with force, he can never achieve the results his musicianship aims at. Fritz Busch was a conductor who, as his Glyndebourne recordings show, was capable of the most beautiful statements of classical scores; but from the incorrigibles of the Chicago Symphony of 1949 he could elicit very little of this delicacy. Artur Rodzinski, on the other hand, could have made a brilliant career as a top sergeant, and in consequence some of his performances sound too heavy, the product of overdiscipline.

A conductor needs to have a beat that musicians can follow, but it need not be anything like what one finds in a textbook of conducting. Scherchen, wisely, does not offer the range of model patterns which most authors provide, and his own beat is far more flexible than any shown in his book. A conductor is well advised, especially when appearing with many orchestras, to have a beat that is reasonably orthodox; but there is the classic example of Furtwängler, whose baton work was almost incomprehensible until one had learned his way of doing things, after which it became perfectly clear. Koussevitzky had one of the longest and most ambiguous downbeats on record, and there are all sorts of other examples. A good deal of what passes for "teaching conducting" is mainly teaching baton technique, and baton technique is actually a very minor part of a conductor's needed skills.

The same thing is true of pitch. Absolute pitch is useful to a conductor, but Koussevitzky lacked it, and who will suggest that he did not achieve all that a conductor might by way of creating great music and a

great orchestra? One eminent conductor now before the American public is notorious among musicians for his faulty pitch and inability to hear bad ensemble, and he has a British counterpart or two. There is a leading operatic conductor who suffers from a severe hearing-deficiency, and more than one orchestra has taken advantage of this to play all sorts of wrong notes, knowing that they would not be spotted. ("An orchestra is the cruelest animal in the world," Rodzinski once remarked to me.)

Score reading is a standard part of training conductors. I agree that this is important, but a great many conductors of reputation in the past hundred years have been able to read full score only with some difficulty — if at all. The idea that proficiency in conducting and proficiency in score reading go together is therefore as questionable as some other contentions.

The main function of a conductor is to know how to lead. He must have that degree of personal force which *commands* the efforts of his men to secure the performance he desires. It is this force that Toscanini, Rodzinski, and others regard as unteachable, yet without it, success as a conductor is inconceivable. Similarly, if a conductor can lead his men well and give them the sense of security and control they desire, he can overcome all sorts of faults — probably down to and including an inability to read music.*

The second essential quality a conductor must have is the ability to create a performance in his mind, so that he can compare the playing of his men with the critical standard of his own, felt intentions. No one has any business attempting to conduct until he can see a work as a whole and can indicate, in any given passage, exactly what he wants and how it fits into the whole he has conceived. This, I am inclined to think, is also unteachable, at least so far as concerns purely musical tutelage.

There are very few skills which one can learn well by means of theoretical instruction alone. One must learn to do the job by having an opportunity to do it and profit from making mistakes. Practice does not always make perfect, but a certain amount of practice is needed for minimal security in technique. Most conductors begin as professional musicians of another sort and, not infrequently by a lucky chance, get an opportunity to undertake the conductor's role.

It must be stressed that most conductors on their professional debut are inexperienced to a far greater degree than any other sort of musician in his early appearances before the public. The conductor must master an instrument that is not an object of metal, wood, and gut, but a complex aggregation of other human beings. Here lies another paradox: if the orchestra a young conductor faces is of professional standard, his failings will be ruthlessly observed and his results will be uneven; while if the players are not professionals, they will not be able, in all

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* Mr. Frank Sinatra, adept practitioner of a difficult art, overcame this handicap, when he led a Columbia Broadcasting System orchestra in a recording of music by Alec Wilder.

MUSIC
TO GET
ABDUCTED
TO



simony!

japery!

nepotism!

A WOWER! A SMASHEROO!
MAKES AN OBSOLESSENT BUM
OUT OF TELEMANN!

A POWER BRIGGS

A GREAT BIG UP-TO-DATE ARRANGEMENT
BY MORTON GHOUL

AND HIS UNION ORCHESTRA

J. S. BACH

THE ART OF THE FUGUE

Album Antics

by LELAND WINDREICH

IN THE DAYS of shellac records, album art was a matter of small concern to the classical record buyer. For one thing, the industry maintained a fairly high level of dignity in cover design, issuing albums which simply stated in legible type the title of the composition and the names of the artist and the composer. The rest was left to the imagination, and the listener was free to invoke any imagery—sacred or

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD M. POWERS



profane, personal or public — that the music might suggest to him. Toward the end of the 78-rpm era, the recording companies began to experiment by issuing albums with "Creations" on the covers. The majority of these were nothing more than good, clean fun. The most noteworthy example which at once comes to mind from yesteryear was a design for a recording of Sibelius' Symphony No. 1. Depicted on the album was a row of rock formations on a dark coastline. On close scrutiny, however, the roundest of the rocks turned out to be a replica of the head of Jean Sibelius.

The "Creation" made its appearance in what might be called the "Fantasia" era of music salesmanship — a period characterized by an exploitation, on the part of promoters of the gimmick, of the theory that the enjoyment of classical music is infinitely enhanced by some form of accompanying visual representation. By the time the long-playing record had arrived, gimmick had become gospel, and the "Creation" simply got out of control. The chronologically parallel rise of three other institutions which have contributed to the atrophy of the human retina and imagination — television, cinemascope, and the covers of paper-bound books — may well be responsible for the demise of the "Creation" and the emergence of the "Monster" and the "Atrocity."

The "Monster" is a legitimate offspring of the "Creation." It is, in effect, the product of unstable heredity. Or, the behaviorists might consider it a case of delinquency due to ineffectual discipline. One can trace the development of the "Monster" from the period in the late thirties (when some commercial artist's brush first perpetuated Sibelius' head in stone) to the present time (wherein another artist has graced a recording of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* with what appears to be the product of an ill-advised cross-pollination between a sunflower and Hector's famous ladylove, Henrietta Smithson).

The "Atrocity," on the other hand, is a bastard of the most forlorn type, remote from its dam and unable to claim a sire, due to the large number of potential suspects. It may well be a product of mass rape, and

its forefather could be any of a number of creatures currently engaged in designing flagrant layouts for newsstand-novel covers, giving endless new sizes, colors, and dimensions to the cinema screen, or flooding the television channels with ceaseless intrusive imagery.

The "Atrocity" utilizes the medium of photography exclusively. The number of long-playing records which bear photographs of one sort or another on the jackets is legion. A recording of Toscanini, for example, may feature the artist's likeness in one of an infinite number of poses, none of which may be in the least objectionable. Or, in the case of the RCA Victor recording of short pieces incorporated into a collection called *THE SMILING BACH*, the fact that the photograph of a marble bust of Bach depicts the composer in an intense frown is perhaps pardonable, since one can readily sympathize with the designer and his difficulties in trying to locate a smiling bust of Bach at short notice. What characterizes the "Atrocity," however, is the over-all insipidity of its conception, together with an ever-present statement of a glaring incongruity. Some specific examples will follow, but first a word about a blood-brother of the "Atrocity," a product of even more disreputable parentage: the "Misnomer."

The "Misnomer" is the result of a casual liaison between the recording promoters and the field of semantics. The new trend toward textual legend on album covers appears to indicate that the producers will go to any length to avoid letting the potential buyer know the content within.

Many devices are used to achieve this end, such as resorting to the premise that the part is equal to the whole. Thus, a recent Columbia album containing nearly a full hour of music from Khachaturian's *Gayne* ballet suites bears in bold letters across the jacket the title *SABRE DANCE*. The same company has put out a recording of Dvorak's *New World* Symphony; this fact is somewhat apologetically admitted in small print, while in blazing letters a banner indicates that the work "features GOIN' HOME." Collections of short musical compositions on a single long-playing disk are easy prey for the "Misnomer," which can easily be used to summarize such a series in one flamboyant phrase. Columbia has issued a program of orchestral pieces of various composers, conducted by Rodzinski, under the title of *RHAPSODY!*. Of the dozen or so works contained, none happens to be a rhapsody.

RHAPSODY!, as a matter of fact, also offers a fairly representative illustration of an "Atrocity." Pictured in technicolor are the head and shoulders of a young blonde female, in proportions so approximating life-size that one can almost count the pores in her complexion. Since she is clad in pink calico and seems to be reclining against a stack of hay, one would assume that the milieu surrounding her is a farm. The music, however, is not particularly bucolic in character. And this is far from being a unique example. Gigantic female faces appear in many "Atrocities." Another young woman's massive countenance is framed by

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Toward the Perfect-Pitch Machine

by FRITZ A. KUTTNER

This is the third and last of a series of articles on the nature and causes of the pitch-and-tempo error that defaces many a record these days. Here the author suggests some remedial measures to the industry.

THE PAST five years have witnessed a number of decisive improvements in recording and playback processes which greatly influenced the acoustical and sonic qualities of the records we buy. Certain other technological factors, however, of a predominantly musical significance have received but scanty attention. "Pitch fidelity" is one of these factors, quite possibly the most critical one at present, and the term signifies the degree to which the final playback reflects the true pitch and tempo of the original performance in the recording session.

Deviations from original pitches and speeds may occur as short-term distortions (flutter and wow) affecting individual tones, tone sequences, or intervals; or they may make their appearance as long-term infidelity falsifying the whole reference pitches of the original performance. The causes for these pitch distortions are of a twofold nature: mechanical imperfections of the transport system which moves the tape or disk of recording and playback equipment; or irregularities in the frequency and voltage of the power supply feeding the synchronous motors in the equipment.

As concerns quantity, tiny amounts of flutter or wow (as low as 1/10 of one per cent) can become audible and objectionable under extremely unfavorable conditions: long-held organ tones may, in this way, pick up an artificial vibrato not present in the original performance. Long-term deviations range from insignificant and hardly noticeable aberrations (an A-note which sounds at 438 cps instead of 440) to unbearable pitch distortions covering the interval of a minor third and more (A-523 cps instead of 440) in certain extreme cases.

Just as unpleasant and musically objectionable are certain irregularities where the reference pitches steadily change during playback, usually starting high in the outside grooves and ending low near the center of the disk. (Occasionally the opposite will be the case; pitches will rise toward the end of the record). This variety is the most sinister, since it cannot be remedied at home, even with a variable-speed turntable.

Investigating the causes and cures of these disk disorders has been interesting, because of the varieties of reaction provoked by my queries.

First of all, I had some heartening support from the industry when I made known the objective of my in-

vestigation. Several manufacturers helped with loan equipment: Garrard sent me their model 301, transcription turntable, Rek-O-Kut their model CVS-12, and H. H. Scott their stroboscopic model 710-A. Audak obliged with studio tone arms and HiQ-7 cartridges. Other companies volunteered information which was valuable in formulating conclusions. Some manufacturing enterprises were indifferent or even hostile, and a few of the very big firms tried to deflect me via their public relations departments. Usually, though not always, the degree of interest and co-operation seemed to vary inversely with size and prosperity. From the outside this looks sometimes like indifference although it may be just the normal pedestrian speed of very large industrial enterprises. The small fellow who has to run hard after the customer in order to stay in business, frequently is the man to whom we owe progress in performance and quality standards. The large outfits follow slowly, probably not until a certain amount of pressure is felt from the smaller, swifter competition. The sales department has to get worried.

So far as concerns the public, it can be said that the problem is comparatively new to them — it existed during the 78-rpm era, but seems to have troubled people less. Pitch problems become more serious the slower the motion of the turntable is. The 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm speed has created tonal difficulties yet unsolved, and for this reason, among others, I have doubts that the 16-rpm speed will come into general commercial use in the near future.* Most pitch-tempo troubles are the result of a chain of developments consisting of the following links: the introduction of tape as standard recording medium, of the LP disk, and of the synchronous motor with its idiosyncrasies and sensitivities. Additional factors are the disappearance of the speed-adjustment feature from most home turntables and, last but not least, the emergence in the market of scores or even hundreds of new record manufacturers who needed time and experience to master the finer skills of the craft. However, at first the public was so overwhelmed and gratified by the glories of new microphone and reproduction techniques, by the splendid silence of vinylite, and by the general convenience of the LP record, that they ignored the

* This statement is valid only for fine classical music recording. In the "Spoken Word" field where pitch and speed precision standards are less critical, the 16-rpm speed is making remarkable progress.

many pitch defects which slipped into the new recording and playback processes.

To put it another way, until quite recently we were so intoxicated by the wonders of high fidelity *sound* that we forgot to look for *musical* shortcomings. The last two years, however, have created a growing public awareness and unease about pitch fidelity. Harold C. Schonberg, music critic and record reviewer for *The New York Times*, lists a large number of disks he considers unacceptable or nearly so because of pitch troubles, in his recent *Chamber and Solo Instrument Music*, part of the Knopf trilogy, *The Guide to Long-Playing Records*. Philip L. Miller, of the Music Division of the New York Public Library, also gives the point considerable attention in his sister volume *Vocal Music*. Both authors expressed interest and gratification when they heard about my studies and forthcoming reports. Their reactions can be paraphrased as follows: High time that somebody went thoroughly and systematically into the problem; you have my full support.

Other critical comment concerning pitch problems is sporadically expressed in the press, mostly by record reviewers; during the last year or so such complaints have noticeably grown in number. As concerns reactions among the record-buying public, I can only judge from my contacts with musicians, music lovers, record collectors. Most of my friends and acquaintances interested in records now have become aware of the facts and keep complaining about them. To my surprise, I received a number of telephone calls while my studies were in progress: people unknown to me called to say that "just now a record is running on Radio Station XYZ which is a full semitone too high [or too

low] in pitch." Or that there is one "where the pitch is falling [or rising] from section to section." When I'd ask how they got my name and telephone number, they would explain that Mr. So-and-So had given it to them with the information that I was engaged in pitch studies of LP records. I can only assume that this type of intelligence travels fast in interested circles, by what is called in China the "bamboo radio." Beyond the horizon of such contacts I can only speculate on the degree to which the public is aware of the problem. But there is little doubt in my mind that the situation is ripe for remedial suggestions.

Here are my suggestions for possible improvements. Some of them are easily and immediately realized; others will call for much persuasion and a good deal of ingenuity and patient work on the part of manufacturers and recording engineers.

(1) The tape speed in good professional tape equipment must be *continuously* supervised and, if necessary, adjusted before and during recording or mastering playback. The capstan motors in such equipment must be made independent of the hazards of the power supply. Part of this objective could be achieved with the help of the Ampex 375 power-control unit — which, however, is expensive and does not include the speed-adjustment feature. I have information that C. G. Conn Ltd.* plans to produce a motor-control system which will fulfill both functions in a high-precision way: absolutely even run of the synchronous capstan motor plus a continuous and instantaneous speed-variation feature. This instrument would work with a high-precision tuning fork whose steady 60-cycle frequency steers the syn-

* Electronics Division, Elkhart, Ind.



With stroboscopic frequency meter, the author checks steadiness of a 440-cycle tone recorded for reference on tape recorder.

chronous motor, while sliding weights running on the fork's prongs adjust the fork frequency within about $\pm 3.5\%$ from standard specifications. The degree of speed variation can be controlled, and read on a meter scale, with an accuracy of ± 1 cent in terms of pitch deviation. This fine instrument may be available very soon and should cost somewhere around \$400, a bargain for every conscientious recording outfit.

(2) The tape speed must be made measurable *continuously and instantaneously* before and during recording or mastering playback. Several gadgets have been developed for this purpose, priced from a nickel upwards to fifty dollars and more for a precision-tooled stroboscopic wheel. None of these devices is quite precise enough for the purpose. Even the finest stroboscopic wheel won't indicate flutter and wow caused by the power supply: if the power frequency drops a small amount, the tape (and the strobe wheel) will run slower, but so will the light flickers of the neon bulb illuminating the stroboscopic disk, and the strobe pattern will show unchanged speed. Furthermore, if you push this measuring wheel too hard against the tape, both will slow down by what amounts to a braking effect; if you don't press hard enough against the tape, there will be some degree of tape slippage against the strobe wheel — how much, nobody will ever know. But we do know that measuring tolerances in this business ought to be smaller than .1 per cent. There is only one absolutely precise and reliable way that I can think of to measure tape speeds *continuously and instantaneously*: print a stroboscopic pattern on the outside of every high-class professional recording tape, for example eight strokes per inch of tape, each 1/16-inch thick. I have tried to coax one of our major tape manufacturers into bringing out such a tape as standard material for professional tape recording, even pointing out that it would bring a premium price. I was handed over to the public relations office, where I was treated with the gentle politeness and indulgence customary in the handling of well-meaning cranks. In contrast, another manufacturer discussed the possibility with me seriously and at length, consulting with his sales department and various other divisions. Their conclusion was that it had no commercial potential whatever: the record makers did not want strobotape and would not pay the premium price for it. But this is no reason to be discouraged, in my opinion: if the giants won't do it, the smaller companies will make it as a competitive item, and I venture to predict that in less than a year from now stroboscopic recording tape will be available in the market. Then the only accessory still needed will be a small oscillator-regulated power supply for the neon bulb which is to illuminate the strobe pattern on the tape at a steady unchangeable 60 cycles, no matter what happens in the power supply or in the speed regulator driving the capstan motor.

(3) Find out what makes pitches rise or fall drastically over long-range periods of recording. If the tape recorders are at fault (as I am inclined to suspect), improve the tape-transport mechanism and eliminate any pulling

or dragging influences which might throw the capstan off its specified speed.

(4) Get yourself a stroboscopic frequency meter;* one belongs in the laboratory of every first-rate record producer. No other instrument is fine enough to measure musical pitches and pitch deviations at an accuracy of one cent, or hundredth of a semitone (which is the measuring accuracy called for in musical recordings). Be happy with your oscillators and signal generators whenever you are dealing with "signals" and *electronic* frequencies; they may be fine for this type of work, but I have used many of them and still have to find one whose calibration stays correct within less than $\pm 2.5\%$ over the audible range. This is an outrageous tolerance for musical pitch definition. There is, at present, only one sufficiently accurate way to measure flutter and wow in terms of *musical* tolerances: again the stroboscopic frequency meter which, incidentally, can contribute a great deal of information towards analysis, classification, and tolerance limits of musical distortions. The instrument is also the finest and fastest tool for checking speeds or flutter and wow in the factory inspection of turntables.

(5) To recording turntables the C. G. Conn power control will bring considerable protection against pitch-infidelity and flutter and wow originating in the power supply. This recommendation is also valid for practically all radio stations with transcription equipment, furthermore for calibration and factory inspection of all professional disk-cutting lathes. (I am, of course, aware that some flutter and wow has mechanical causes which cannot — as yet — be controlled by electronic means.)

(6) For high-class home turntables the Conn control system is, of course, much too expensive. But I am sure that in the future, maybe in two years or less, mass-produced and simplified versions of this control system will be available for home turntables. These should give us complete speed control and adjustment plus a high degree of freedom from electric flutter and wow, especially in small towns and rural areas.

The preceding are the major technological improvements to which I have hoped to draw the attention of the industry and public alike. Here follow a few minor items which should also prove useful to record makers and which will cost small effort and little money:

(7) Set up a stroboscopic frequency meter in every recording session and measure the reference pitch of the performers before recording, e.g., the violin's, or piano's or oboe's middle A. Then add to the printed notes on the sleeve the information: "Recorded at A-441 cycles." This information will help toward continuous pitch control throughout the recording session and all further processing steps. It will also be very useful to the music lover in the home.

(8) Record a tuning tone (for example A-439) on the first (and last?) groove of each side of a disk and make sure the tuning tone is

Continued on page 85

* Representative for the recording and radio industries: Lang Electronics Inc., 507 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

by  Roland Gelatt

music makers

MY TRAVELS this summer have taken me to Bridgeport and the studio of William H. Seltsam, founder of the International Record Collectors Club, which will observe its twenty-fifth anniversary next year. The IRCC, as all good discophiles should know, purveys vocal recordings from the past—either reissues of very rare material or editions of hitherto unpublished disks and cylinders. Its headquarters are in Mr. Seltsam's home at 318 Reservoir Avenue, a frame house in a semi-industrial section of Bridgeport, from whence a large correspondence is maintained with opera singers, collectors, and record companies the world over. Passing his home on the road, you would never suspect it to be the repository of unique and invaluable musical documents.

The house harbors vast numbers of old recordings, but the rarest and most fascinating of them all are undoubtedly the brown wax cylinders recorded by Lionel Mapleson from 1901 to 1903 at actual performances in the Metropolitan Opera House. Bill Seltsam first became aware of the existence of these cylinders in the early 1930s. They had been recorded by Mapleson, librarian at the Met from the early days until 1937, for his own pleasure and had been heard only by a very few people in the privacy of his office. Seltsam felt they should be heard more widely and in 1935, fortified by a letter of introduction from his friend Geraldine Farrar, he paid a visit to Mapleson and proposed re-recording the cylinders for issue on IRCC disks. The aged librarian showed little enthusiasm; the old recordings, he said, were very dim and most probably unsuitable for general consumption. At length, to soften Seltsam's disappointment, he took two cylinders out of his desk drawer. "There's almost no sound left on these," he said, "but you can have them to experiment with." Unlike most of Mapleson's cylinders, which were carefully identified, these two had no markings at all. There was no telling what had originally been recorded on them, but Bill Seltsam accepted them gratefully and promised to keep Mapleson informed of results.

It took two years of trial-and-error tinkering before Seltsam was able to coax from the cylinders sufficient sound to be heard on an electrically transcribed disk. When he finally discovered what one of these supposedly unplayable cylinders contained, however, the effort seemed far from wasted; for in the tiny brown grooves was the impress of Nellie Melba's voice as it had electrified a 1901 audience in a *cabaletta* from *Les Huguenots*. Lionel Mapleson died before he could hear Seltsam's results, but his son was well impressed and turned over the entire collection of cylinders to the IRCC.

Last year a selection of Mapleson recordings (including the *Huguenots* excerpt by Melba) were issued on an IRCC ten-inch LP. This fall another Mapleson LP will be forthcoming. Bill Seltsam played me the tapes from which this disk will be cut; and though I should not anticipate James Hinton's review, I think I can safely predict that he—and all *aficionados* of singing—will find it stupendous. There are thrilling excerpts from Act II of *Tosca* in a 1903 performance featuring Antonio Scotti, Emilio De Marchi (who created the role of Cavaradossi), and Emma Eames, singing here with a passionate vibrancy quite undisclosed in her disappointing Victor records. Jean de Reszke's brilliant high notes pierce excitingly through the noise level of some 1901 recordings of *L'Africaine*, and a surprisingly well-recorded "Ride of the Valkyries" is notable for Schumann-Heink's dominating utterances as Waltraute. But it is again Melba who steals the show with her unconcerned vaulting of coloratura hurdles from *Faust*, *Lucia*, and *Le Cid*.



AS A FOOTNOTE to last month's article by Charles Edward Smith ["A New Breed of Cats"] describing the double lives led by Friedrich Gulda and Benny Goodman, be advised that RCA Victor will offer microgrooved substantiation of these musicians' versatility. In New York on June 28, RCA's engineers recorded the jazz-

playing Mr. Gulda for a just-issued LP entitled *Gulda Plays at Birdland*. In Tanglewood early in July, Victor recorded the Mozart-playing Mr. Goodman with members of the Boston Symphony for a forthcoming LP that will couple the Clarinet Concerto and the Clarinet Quintet. Incidentally, the Birdland disk of Friedrich Gulda (heretofore an exclusive London artist) will appear in this country on the Victor label, tangible evidence that the new alliance is beginning to take shape. To give the event some kind of symbolic significance, perhaps, both London's Julius Katchen and Victor's Gary Graffman were in the audience at Birdland on the night Gulda was recorded.



EPIC'S head of classical artists and repertoire, Charles Schicke, recently returned from a visit to Holland full of admiration for Dutch hospitality and for the handsome Philips headquarters there. This giant electrical company has only recently gone into the record business and has spent large sums of money—not always wisely—on ambitious undertakings. Schicke reports that Philips is seriously starting to invade the domain of opera recording now dominated in Europe by EMI and Decca-London. Already on tape are Charpentier's *Louise* (recorded in Paris), Prokofiev's *Love for Three Oranges* (recorded in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia), and Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* (recorded in Naples). The latter is the first fruit of a contract between Philips and the Teatro San Carlo, one of Italy's major opera houses. An opera management can furnish many of the ingredients of a good recording (orchestra, chorus, *comprimarii*) but it cannot supply the world-famous stars, who make their own recording commitments. As a result, Philips is proceeding slowly with its San Carlo program, waiting until it can lure to its roster some singers currently under contract to other companies. Schicke says that the lures—in the form of large royalty guarantees—are beginning to interest some well-known artists.

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30			
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10	maximum rating obtained from hand-built prototype utilizing selected matched components. Production varies from 25 watts to 35 watts maximum.	average rating of production sample. Production varies from 30 to 40 watts output.	minimum rating which all production must pass in final test. Production varies from 35 to 42 watts.
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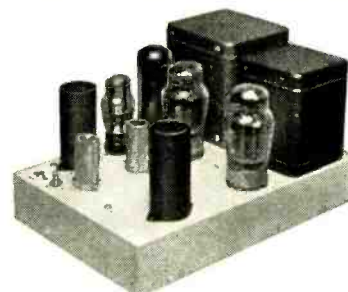
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Records in Review

Reviewed by PAUL AFFELDER NATHAN BRODER C. G. BURKE RAY ERICSON
ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN ROLAND GELATT JOAN GRIFFITHS JAMES HINTON, JR.
ROY H. HOOPES, JR. JOHN F. INDCOX ROBERT KOTLOWITZ
HOWARD LAFAY JOHN S. WILSON

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CLASSICAL

BACH *The Little Organ Book*

E. Power Biggs, organ.
COLUMBIA KSL 227. Three 12-in. \$17.98.

The forty-five chorale-settings of the *Orgelbüchlein* are beautifully played here. Schweitzer has pointed out that the settings were inspired by the emotions and events represented in the texts of the chorales and that to play these works properly it is essential that the performer know those texts. Biggs has evidently absorbed them thoroughly. This is apparent not only in his choice of tempos and registrations but also in the excellent notes he has written. There is only one aspect of this fine set with which the present listener would take issue. Each setting is preceded by a statement of the chorale simply, but fully, harmonized. Now in theory this is a very good idea. Most of us are not familiar with the original chorale tunes; Bach's Protestant German contemporaries were, and could easily recognize them, no matter how much he embellished them. But in actuality, as we hear each time first the simple four-part harmonization, then Bach's more elaborate version, the effect is of a theme with one variation—an unsatisfying form in this type of music. The impact of Bach's wonderful setting is weakened: its principal melody and basic harmonies have already been heard; and instead of being an independent little poem, it becomes—a variation.

Biggs announces that he will continue this plan in forthcoming recordings. It is hoped that he will consider other ways of achieving the same goal—perhaps playing only the unharmonized tune first.

The notes, by the way, also contain the complete score of the *Little Organ Book*.
N. B.

BACH *Organ Music*

Tocatta and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565; Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543; Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582; Chorale Prelude, *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 659
Claire Coci, organ.
VOX DL 210. 12-in. \$4.98.

This is less interesting as a little recital of Bach than as a demonstration of some of the capacities of the remarkable organ in the Chapel at West Point, said to be the fourth largest organ in the world, an instrument that is capable of thunderous power and ghostly whispers. Miss Coci resists the temptation to run wild among the some nine hundred stops, and her registrations are for the most part tasteful. The recording is a triumph of audio engineering, combining spaciousness with clarity. This may not be the ideal instrument for baroque music, but it should be perfect for César Franck, which it is announced Miss Coci will offer next. N. B.

BACH *"Bach for Percussion"*

New York Percussion Ensemble, Harold Glick, cond.
AUDIO FIDELITY AFLP 1812. 12-in. \$5.95.

I have never been aware of any deep-felt need for percussion arrangements of the organ music of Bach, and after listening to this effort I cannot say I have changed my mind. It is initially a shock to anyone familiar with, say, the Tocatta and Fugue in D minor to hear it reduced to a series of repetitive rhythmic patterns. In fact, Bach for percussion is lots of fun

for about five minutes. After that it becomes a bore.

The recording is quite good, though not quite as crisp and well defined as some other percussion show-off disks I have heard. Balance is good, and the record is very cleanly recorded, even on high-volume passages.
J. G. H.

BACH *St. Matthew Passion*

Corry Bijster, soprano; Annie Delorie, alto; Willy van Hese, tenor; Carel Willink, bass; Amsterdam Oratorio Chorus; Vredescholen Boys' Choir; Rotterdam Chamber Orchestra, Piet van Egmond, cond.
CONCERT HALL CHS 1255. Three 12-in. \$11.94.

There are a number of good qualities in this performance. The tempos seem right, and Egmond conveys much of the drama of the Passion. The work is performed complete; the problem of getting the entire composition onto three disks is neatly solved by repeating only the opening ritornel in most of the *da capo* arias. Willy van Hese, who sings the tenor arias as well as the role of the Evangelist, and Carel Willink, who does all the bass parts including that of Jesus, have attractive voices and employ them skillfully. The ladies, unfortunately, are less commendable, the soprano being decidedly second-rate. In the string accompaniments to the utterances of Jesus one misses the soft glow that has been likened to a halo; the strings here are thin and sharp, and the first violin is often too prominent.

The sound is generally satisfactory, except at the beginning of Side 1, where it is rather pinched, and in the numbers for double chorus, where it is not as clear as it could be. In short, this performance, which throws off some sparks but seldom bursts into flame, does not challenge the pre-eminence of Scherchen's on Westminster.
N. B.

BACH

Suite for Unaccompanied Cello, No. 3, in C: Bourrée—See Kodály: Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello, Op. 8.

BARSANTI

Concerti Grossi, Op. 3, Nos. 4 and 10—See Cimarosa: Concerto for Two Flutes and Orchestra, in G.

BARTOK

Mikrokosmos

Edith Farnadi, piano. WESTMINSTER XWN 18182/84. Three 12-in. \$11.94.

An extremely sensitive and poetic performance of the Bartókian colossus, different in many emphases from the recently released Sandor version on Columbia but neither superior nor inferior to it. The work consists of 153 short pieces comprising a complete graded course in piano technique and simultaneously a complete course in the harmonic and contrapuntal world of Béla Bartók. The virtuoso pieces at the end, especially the Six Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm, are frequent enough on recital programs, but the real wonder of the collection, from the point of view of the record listener, is the series of subelementary five-finger exercises at the beginning. Every rule of common sense says these should be dull listening after the naïve charm of first acquaintance has been dissipated; instead, they grow more and more fascinating. Book I of Mikrokosmos confirms Bartók's genius as does nothing else. A. F.

BLOCH

Sonatas for Violin and Piano, Nos. 1 and 2

Rafael Druián, violin; John Simms, piano. MERCURY MG 50095. 12-in. \$3.98.

Thirty years ago, when Bloch's first violin sonata was new, it seemed to his friend Alex Cohen and, obviously, to Bloch himself to embody ideas of "obstinate violence" and "massive brutality." Consequently Bloch wrote his second violin sonata as a kind of mirror image of the first: it is subtitled "Poème Mystique" and Bloch says its theme is "faith and serenity." With the passage of the decades, the first sonata has come to sound rather less brutal and the second rather less serene. Both have mellowed rather than aged; both reveal Bloch as a great master of the epic-declamatory style; both are "poèmes mystiques" of tremendous dramatic impact and gorgeous color. Finer performances and recordings would be very difficult to imagine. A. F.

BORODIN

Quartet No. 2, in D

†Shostakovich: Quartet No. 1, in C, Op. 49

Armenian State String Quartet ANGEL 35239. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

Both these quartets are scarcely more than blown-up salon pieces, and they are made to sound all the more salonlike by the smooth-as-silk, top-of-the-string style of the Armenians' interpretation. A. F.

BRAHMS

Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 1 in G, Op. 78; No. 2 in A, Op. 100

Leonid Kogan, violin; Andrei Mitnik, piano.

ANGEL 35332. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

Leonid Kogan, a young Soviet musician and former pupil of David Oistrakh, has been represented here so far by only a handful of disks, mostly inferior. This is the first recording I have heard that has really done him justice. Kogan has evidently absorbed much of the technical security and tonal polish for which Oistrakh is noted, and he seems to go further than his teacher as an interpretative musician. His performances of the first two Brahms sonatas are not only technically assured but musically probing. In addition, the violinist enjoys exemplary collaboration from Andrei Mitnik, a pianist who knows how to play sonatas as part of a two-man team. Altogether, this disk ranks with the leading versions of the two sonatas. P. A.

CHAVEZ

Sonatina for Violin and Piano—See Surinach: Doppio Concertino.

CHOPIN

Piano Music

Ballade in F, Op. 38; Nocturnes in F minor, Op. 55, No. 1, and C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 1; Waltzes in G-flat, Op. 70, No. 1, and D-flat, Op. 64, No. 1; Mazurkas in C-sharp minor, Op. 30, No. 4, A minor, Op. 67, No. 4, and B minor, Op. 33, No. 4; Impromptu in A-flat, Op. 29; Scherzo in B-flat minor, Op. 31.

Witold Malcuzyński, piano.

ANGEL 35171. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

It seems to me that Malcuzyński sometimes abuses the license of rubato, but others might not agree. I find this element disturbing in the opening section of the ballade, which should be simplicity itself, and in one of the mazurkas, where the rhythm loses in basic shape. But no fault could be found with the pianist's blandishing tone and clean textures. The waltzes and the impromptu stand out for their charming combination of delicacy and fleetness; the scherzo is equally fine, with its strength and lyricism, and Mr. Mal-

cuzyński knows enough not to anticipate climaxes in plotting his well-proportioned reading. R. E.

CIMAROSA

Concerto for Two Flutes and Orchestra, in G

†Barsanti: Concerti Grossi, Op. 3, Nos. 4 and 10

Jean-Pierre Rampal, Robert Hériché, flutes; Orchestre de Chambre des Concerts Lamoureux, Pierre Colombo, cond.

OISEAU-LYRE OL 50008. 12-in. \$4.98.

The fast movements of the Cimarosa concerto, which dates from 1793, have a Mozartean grace and charm, and the Largo is pure Italian song. Little is known about Francesco Barsanti (1690-1760), an Italian active in Britain. The two concertos by him presented here are pleasant works with some rather unusual ideas about orchestration: No. 4 features horns and drums, and No. 10 makes effective use of a trumpeter, drums, and a muted solo violin. Acceptable performance and recording. N. B.

COPLAND

Music for Movies

†Weill: Music for the Stage

M-G-M Chamber Orchestra, Arthur Winograd, cond.

M-G-M E 3334. 12-in. \$3.98.

Music originally written for movie scores cannot always be successfully salvaged for the concert hall. Copland conducts a very successful salvage operation, however, with two nostalgic, atmospheric movements suggesting broad landscapes—"New England Countryside" from The City, and "Barley Wagons" from Of Mice and Men. The other three movements he offers here are rather trifling, but they all go to make up an effective pop concert suite. The Weill, drawn from that composer's Broadway musical comedies, is merely trash. Recording and performance are of the best. A. F.

DEBUSSY

Préludes, Books 1 and 2

Friedrich Gulda, piano.

LONDON LL 1289/90. Two 12-in. \$7.96.

Having demonstrated his prowess in Beethoven and Chopin, the versatile Mr. Gulda now shows us how artfully he can manage the prismatic tone-painting prescribed by Debussy in the twenty-four Préludes. Gulda cannot command the shimmering sonorities of Gieseking (who can?), but he plays these difficult pieces with fluency and a sensitive appreciation of their poetic intent. If he can do so well today, he may turn out to be the successor to Gieseking in this repertoire ten years hence. As of now, this is the best-engineered version of the Préludes in the catalogue. R. G.

DELIBES

Coppélia, Suite; Sylvia, Suite

Orchestra of the Paris Opera, Pierre-Michel le Conte, cond.

CAPITOL P 18001. 12-in. \$3.98.

Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.

WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7027. 12-in. \$7.50.

ADVERTISING INDEX

Table listing advertising companies and their corresponding page numbers: Angel Records (63), Bradley Mfg. Co. (65), Capitol Records (62), Concert Hall Society (53), Columbia Records (49), D & S Enterprises (65), Decca Records, Inc. (51), Elektra Records (65), Leslie Creations (65), London International (55), Music Box (56), Nuclear Products Co. (63), Record Market (65), Record Review Index (58), Robins Industries Corp. (65), Schwann, W. (57), Vanguard Recording Corp. (62), Vox Productions, Inc. (59), Westminster Recording Co. (47).

In both suites Le Conte includes two more movements than does Boulton. By way of compensation, the Westminster recording is wider in range, especially in the bass, though Capitol's is perfectly satisfactory for anyone not anxious to show off his latest corner enclosure. In each case the performances are good. P. A.

DVORAK

Trio in E minor ("Dumky"), Op. 90
†Smetana: *Trio in G minor, Op. 15*

David Oistrakh, violin; Sviatoslav Knushevitzky, cello; Lev Oborin, piano.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18175. 12-in. \$3.98.

Dvorak's *Dumky* Trio is an unusual work, each of whose six movements is a "dumka," or series of musical thoughts, a sort of fantasia comprising both slow and fast, dancelike sections. Its serious, thoughtful quality requires more than one casual hearing for full appreciation. The Smetana Trio, on the other hand, has an immediate appeal. Like the familiar *From My Life* Quartet, it grew out of a personal tragedy, the loss of the composer's five-year-old daughter, but it doesn't wear its heart on its sleeve and is imbued with dramatic power and a wealth of fine melody.

Fortunately, the recording itself does not mirror the undue emphasis given on the jacket to Oistrakh alone. Knushevitzky and Oborin have played with him many times, and here the three artists present a well-integrated performance of both works. If anyone can be said to dominate, it is the cellist Knushevitzky, whose warm tone and expressiveness are something to hear.

The reproduction is slightly better in the Smetana, where the tones of the three instruments have been captured with good balance and naturalness; in the Dvorak the violin is occasionally shrill and the piano is sometimes lost in the background. All in all, though, this is far better than many Soviet tapes, and both the music and the performances are worth attention. P. A.

FAURE

Sonatas for Cello and Piano: No. 1, in D minor, Op. 109; No. 2, in G minor, Op. 117

Monique Fallot, cello; Guy Fallot, piano.
LONDON DTL 93050. 12-in. \$4.98.

Fauré's two cello sonatas were both written toward the end of his long and fruitful life, the first when he was seventy-two, the second five years later. Compared to the violin sonatas, the music here seems more contrived and less inspired, though it does reach some distinctive heights in the slow movement of the G minor Sonata. The two Fallots present the music discreetly, without much conviction or tonal opulence. P. A.

FRANCK

Quartet in D

Loewenguth Quartet.
EPIC LC 3227. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Loewenguth ensemble treats this admirable quartet somewhat more lightly and vivaciously than did the Parrenin Quartet on a recent Westminster issue. It is a highly acceptable performance, but I prefer the dramatic approach of the Parrenins, also Westminster's warmer, better-balanced reproduction. P. A.

FRESCOBALDI

Harpsichord Music

Toccata in G minor; Partite 12 sopra l'aria di Ruggiero: Capriccio sopra la Battaglia; Aria detta la Frescobalda.

†Scarlatti: *Sonatas: in D minor, L. 423; D, L. 461; G minor, L. 488; C, L. 205; B minor, L. 449; A minor, L. 429*

Sylvia Marlowe, harpsichord.
CAPITOL P 8336. 12-in. \$3.98.

Girolamo Frescobaldi, organist at St. Peter's in Rome early in the seventeenth century, was one of the first of the great keyboard composers. Those who know only the lovely sacred pieces of his *Fiori musicali* in the excellent organ recording by Noehren will find the more robust, secular side of Frescobaldi's art represented here. The *Capriccio*, with its imitations of trumpet calls and drum rolls, is a fairly conventional battle piece, but the other

works are imaginative and rich-sounding. Miss Marlowe gives expression to the different moods of the variations by judicious changes of registration. The Scarlatti pieces are nicely played too, though one finds oneself sometimes wishing that the over-all rhythmic conception had a firmer spine. Miss Marlowe's instrument sounds especially attractive here, and it has been given full and natural recording. N. B.

GLANVILLE-HICKS

Sinfonia Pacifica; Three Gymnopédies
†Surinach: *Hollywood Carnival*

M-G-M Chamber Orchestra, Carlos Surinach, cond.
M-G-M E 3366. 12-in. \$3.98.

Peggy Glanville-Hicks wrote her *Sinfonia Pacifica* on a voyage to Australia, and that, apparently, is the reason for its title. The

Exploring the Piano with Bela Bartok

BELA BARTOK produced twenty-eight works for piano solo, twenty of which are included in this monumental release. To be sure, five of those twenty works are here represented only in part; nevertheless the four disks provide an all but encyclopedic survey of Bartók's output for solo piano, performed with high authority by one of his leading pupils and beautifully recorded. The works omitted are mostly early pieces of secondary importance.

The contents of the four records are as follows:

9801 — *Sonatina*; 24 pieces from the last three volumes of *Mikrokosmos*; 17 Hungarian folk tunes from the collection entitled *For Children*.

9802 — *Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs*; 11 Slovakian folk tunes from *For Children*; *Two Elegies*; *Six Rumanian Folk Dances*; *Fantasy II* from *Four Piano Pieces*; *Seven Sketches*.

9803 — *Sonata*; *Fifteen Hungarian Peasant Songs*; *Three Rondos*; *Rumanian Christmas Carols*, both series; *Suite*, Op. 14.

9804 — *Out of Doors*; *Ten Easy Pieces*; *Allegro Barbaro*; *Nine Little Piano Pieces*; *Three Burlesques*.

Each of these four disks is a separate anthology containing early and middle-period works (Bartók did not write for piano solo in the last phase of his career). The early compositions, such as the *Two Elegies* and the *Fantasy*, reveal a very romantic Bartók strongly beholden to Liszt, Brahms, and Chopin. Most of the piano music falls, however, into the period when Bartók had gone on from the nineteenth-century tradition to explore Central European folk music both extensively and profoundly. He makes magnificent transcriptions of Hungarian, Rumanian, and Slovakian songs and dances, composes virtuoso studies on themes he had collected, and creates altogether original works in idioms suggested by folklore.

This music also falls into the era of Bartók's activity as a piano teacher — which explains the large number of collections of very short movements and works ad-



Andor Foldes

dressed to performers with little or no technique. Few of Bartók's piano compositions are works of a size and intricacy comparable to his concertos or string quartets. The most important of these are the *Out of Doors* Suite, which contains one of the most remarkable nocturnes in modern music, and the clangorous, intensely percussive *Sonata*, which comes close to shattering the piano as well as the conventional approaches to its use.

Bartók wrote more piano music than any other major composer of modern times, but it is not possible to trace the curves of his entire career through this one medium. Perhaps his greatest achievement as a writer for piano lay in the creation of very simple pieces for beginners which are none the less great works of music worthy of all the care and subtlety a virtuoso like Foldes can bestow upon them.

ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

BARTOK: Piano Music

Andor Foldes, piano.
DECCA DL 9801/4. Four 12-in. \$3.98 each.

work exemplifies this composer's recently attained conviction that harmony preoccupies modern musicians unduly; she aims, as she says, to "reassert the right of the melodic and rhythmic elements as the primary structural forces." This program would be more convincing if Miss Glanville-Hicks' melody did not imply harmony of a rather banal sort at almost every turn. The symphony is pleasantly tuneful, however, and brightly scored. The three *Gymnopédies* are old pieces of hers in the grave, quiet vein of Erik Satie's compositions bearing the same title. Surinach's *Hollywood Carnival* is an amusing trifle developed from the score to a UPA animated cartoon. Recordings and performances are superb. A. F.

HAYDN

Quartets: No. 40, in C ("The Bird"), Op. 33, No. 3; No. 72, in B-flat ("Sunrise"), Op. 76, No. 4

Quartetto Italiano.
ANGEL 35297. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

Both must be esteemed highly, especially the swooping *Bird* in a flight of tender, natural grace unweighted by the voluptuous languors so familiar and so often misplaced in the Italian Quarter's scheme of play. When they are on the scent, these musicians are not surpassed by any quartet, and their errors are to a degree venial in that they are caused by the headiness of their richly perfumed playing. A little of this veils the last two movements of the *Sunrise*, where a little more energy in exchange for a few refinements of nuance would have been beneficial. Columbia ML 4923 and Haydn Society HSQ 20 carry the best of the recorded *Sunrises*, but the new *Bird* will as a whole be preferred to the fine version of the Schneider Quarter, except for those to whom the crisp purity of the latter's sonics (Haydn Society HSQ 20) prevails over the more undulant performance. The Angel sound is commendable, excellent for the *Bird*, with a high output that will make its best effect at a low volume of reproduction. C. G. B.

HAYDN, MICHAEL

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in B-flat

†Rosetti: *Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra, in E-flat*

Vienna Orchestral Society, F. Charles Adler, cond., with Walter Schneiderhan, violin, and Leo Cermak, bassoon.
UNICORN 1018. 12-in. \$3.98.

Expressing gratitude to the Messrs. Unicorn for assembling scores from the parts of this pair of eighteenth-century German fragilities, we must not hide dismay at the disconsolate, timid, and unconvincing presentation by the conductor and orchestra. Haydn's brother's concerto is a routine mixture of rococo and baroque, distinguished by a shapely but overlong adagio. The Rosetti work—called a *concertino* in spite of standard length—is lighter, more inventive, and more memorable. One of those tiny orchestras so dear to the phonograph has been used, and as usual, sounds raw. C. G. B.

HINDEMITH

Sonatas (4)

Harry Sevenstern, trumpet; Jos D'hondt, clarinet; Arnold Swillens, bassoon; Francis Tursi, viola; José Echaniz, piano; Henri Duval, piano.

CONCERT HALL CHS 1250. 12-in. \$3.98.

The sonatas for trumpet, clarinet, and bassoon were all recorded in Holland, with Duval as pianist in each. The viola sonata, by Tursi and Echaniz, was done in this country, is considerably superior in sound to the other three, and is the only one of the series not previously available in at least one LP version.

The viola sonata belongs to Hindemith's romantic, Brahmsian youth, when every sonata had to traverse a world of varied expression and music spouted from this composer as copiously and excitedly as oil from a Texas gusher. The sonatas for wind instruments date from the late Thirties, and they represent an entirely different point of view. Each is terse, strongly unified, and aims at expressing the essential character of the principal instrument—noble severity in the trumpet, fluent lyricism in the clarinet, and a kind of fragile wistfulness in the bassoon. Tursi's performance of the viola sonata is superb. The other performances are adequate and might have sounded better than that if the recording had been better. A. F.

HINDEMITH

Theme and Four Variations (The Four Temperaments); Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes by Carl Maria von Weber

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Paul Hindemith, cond.
DECCA DL 9829. 12-in. \$3.98.

Two of Hindemith's most popular orchestral pieces, here recorded for the first time under the composer's direction. The result is a revelation so far as *The Four Temperaments* is concerned. This set of variations, with obbligato piano and violin, has been recorded several times before, but never with so profound and moving an effect. Each movement represents one of the four "temperaments" of medieval physiology—the melancholic, the sanguine, the phlegmatic, and the choleric—and each is a genuinely philosophic expression, or at least so it seems under the spell of Hindemith's magnificent conducting and Decca's beautiful recording. The *Symphonic Metamorphosis* on the other side is a brilliant bravura piece, and it is likewise gorgeously presented. A. F.

KODALY

Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello, Op. 8
†Reger: *Suite for Unaccompanied Cello, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 131C, No. 2*
†Bach: *Suite for Unaccompanied Cello, No. 3, in C: Bourrée*

Zara Nelsova, cello.
LONDON LL 1252. 12-in. \$3.98.

Music for an unaccompanied stringed instrument requires something special from a performer. Tone and technique must be taken for granted and the entire concentration must be upon maintaining the listener's interest by means of phrasing and a

feeling for contour. Zara Nelsova is well equipped to do just this. Particularly welcome is the classic-style Reger Suite No. 2, which receives its first complete recording on this disk. The modern, endlessly inventive, Hungarian-flavored Kodály sonata is a piece that contains just about every trick in the book. Here Miss Nelsova must play second fiddle—or rather, second cello—to Janos Starker, who gives a far more vibrant and a more complete account of this work on a Period disk, for Miss Nelsova, in order to get as much as she does on a single record, makes several cuts in the sonata, depriving us of some fascinating passages. P. A.

LISZT

Hungarian Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra—See Tchaikovsky: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1.*

MACHAUT

La Messe de Notre Dame; Ten Secular Works

Pro Musica Antiqua (Brussels), Safford Cape, dir.
ARCHIVE ARC 3032. 12-in. \$5.98.

Machaut's Mass, written about the middle of the fourteenth century, "is a work of great historical importance. It is the earliest known complete polyphonic setting of the Ordinary of the Mass by one man." So Gustave Reese, in his monumental *Music in the Middle Ages*. This is the second appearance of the Mass on LP. The first, in a performance by the Desoff Choirs, embodied a quite different approach. The conductor, probably on the strength of an unfounded assertion that the Mass was composed for a coronation, used a large chorus and brasses. Here the work is sung by four solo voices, mostly *a cappella*, but instruments join in discreetly now and then. This is music of a strange and stark nobility, and its complex rhythmic organization, curious harmonies, and open final chords should offer no problems to any listener accustomed to very old—and very new—music. The secular pieces comprise a rondeau, a motet, a *complainte*, two *virelais*, and five *ballades*; they have a courtly, melancholy grace.

All the music is well performed by Cape's crack ensemble of singers and players, the latter using modern reconstructions of instruments popular in Machaut's time. The original texts are supplied, but no translations. As in most of the previous issues in this fine series, the recording is splendid; and this time there are visible bands between pieces or movements. N. B.

MEDELSSOHN

Overtures

Ruy Blas: The Hebrides; Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage; Fair Melusina.

Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18163. 12-in. \$3.98.

Boult has a compelling, if not always completely successful, way with these well-loved overtures. Generally speaking, the dramatic pieces—*Ruy Blas* and *Melusina*—are more agreeably realized than their more picturesque partners; in the latter the

outlines are bold and rugged, but the inner details are not always convincing. Good work from the orchestra and excellent Westminster sound. A rival recording of the identical overtures, well played and persuasively directed by Schuricht, is available on London LL 1048, and that shades the present entrant by quite a little. This recording is one of a new series by Westminster, popularly priced at \$3.98, with a sleeve that compares quite favorably with twelve-inch jackets issued by competitive companies.

J. F. I.

MIASKOVSKY

Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in C, Op. 66—See Saint Saëns. *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 1.*

MONTEVERDI

Orfeo

Margot Guillaume (s), La Musica, Proserpina; Hanni Mack-Cosack (s), Euridice; Jeanne Deroubaix (ms), La Messagera, La Speranza; Hildegard Wild (ms), Ninfa; Helmut Krebs (t), Orfeo; Horst Günter (b), Plutone; Peter Rot-Erhang (bs), Caronte; and others. Chorus of the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik (Hamburg) and Orchestra of the Sommerliche Musik-tage Hitzacker, 1955, August Wenziger, cond.

ARCHIVE ARC 3035/36. Two 12-in. \$11.96.

Listened to with a well-tuned ear, Monteverdi's *Orfeo* is still, after 350 years, a noble and very deeply moving opera. But down the centuries, at least partly because of the gradual disappearance of the pre-baroque instruments called for in the score, it tended to be given less and less until it had virtually disappeared. Then, early in this century, there was a revival of interest, and it was given in a number of different realizations for modern or semi-modern orchestral resources—by D'Indy, Malipiero, J. A. Westrup, Orefice, Respighi, Hindemith, Carl Orff, and other composers. There has, however, been an increasing trend towards performing *Orfeo* with old instruments if possible, and the Deutsche Grammophon-Archive performance is quite scrupulous in this regard. It is as dedicatedly scholarly a reconstruction as could be hoped for, and, what is more, the gamba, chitarrone, cornett, and other players seem to be fully in control. One of the most beguiling things about the performance, in fact, is the patina of the instrumental mass.

The singers are for the most part quite good so far as tone and intonation go, with Helmut Krebs (who is a Shepherd in the older Vox set) better than competent in the title role, Margot Guillaume singing with lovely tone as La Musica and Proserpina, Bernard Michaelis (who just misses being a true countertenor) and Fritz Wunderlich very good indeed in the First and Second Shepherd parts, and Jeanne Deroubaix particularly telling in the crucial role of the Messenger who brings word of Euridice's death. The only over-all complaint is that throughout the cast the command of Italian is quite variable, so that there is a scattering of impure vowels and half-wrong accentuations. But in view of the total accomplishment that is no killing matter,



Orfeo at 350 is noble as ever.

and August Wenziger keeps troubles at a minimum. The recording, of chamber-hall perspective, is clean and consistently balanced. All told, this is much better than the alternative LP versions and can be very highly recommended. Full text and translation, good notes, and all the technical musical data anyone could wish.

J. H. JR.

MOZART

Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra, in B-flat, K. 191

German Dances, K. 509

Marches (2): in D, K. 335, Nos. 1 and 2

Mozarteum Orchestra (Salzburg), Ernst Märzendorfer, cond.; Rudolf Klepae, bassoon.

DECCA DL 9834. 12-in. \$3.98.

The marches served as prelude and postlude, respectively, to the *Posthorn* Serenade. Only one has been recorded before, not well. Here both are robustly given, in the easy spirit of geniality which characterizes the entire disk. The disciplined suavity of the best American orchestras is not part of the Salzburg equipment, nor is it called for, except perhaps in the Bassoon Concerto. The German Dances are given with a gruff jollity underlined by a sound according weight to the bass and the drums, with the violins distant. This version is certainly to be preferred to the others, in spite of inadequate contrast between rusticity and urbanity, everything here being rustic. The concerto is comfortable in the fat solo tone and rolling delivery bestowed on it, not that this will be favored over outstanding editions by Vox and London.

C. G. B.

MOZART

Die Zauberflöte

Corry Bijster (s), Pamina; Marilyn Tyler (s), Queen of the Night; Corry van Beckum (s), First Lady; Nel Duval (s), Papagena; Henrietta Sengers (s), First Boy; Lidy van der Veen (ms), Second Lady; Jo van de Meent (ms), Third Lady; Ilse Bresser (ms), Second Boy; Maria Toussaint (ms), Third Boy; David Garen (t), Tamino; Chris Taverne (t), Monastatos; Chris van Woerkum (t), First Armed Man; August Gschwend (b), Papageno; Paolo Gorin (b), Speaker; Guus Hoekman (bs), Sarastro; Eugene van Dongen, Second Armed Man. Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, Alexander Krannhals, cond.

MUSICAL MASTERPIECE SOCIETY M 2033-OP 21. Two 12-in. \$5.90.

Exceptionally among operas in the Musical Masterpiece Society list, the third Mozart-bicentennial *Zauberflöte* is not a telescoped "concert" affair but an inclusive presentation—inclusive, at least, in the sense generally applicable to recordings of the work. That is, the spoken lines are all omitted, as in the other sets save for the new Decca, but the music is all there in spirit and, usually, in something close to truth. None of the individual voices comes up to the standards set by the better opposite numbers on LP, but they are mostly fresh and fairly balanced in the casting. The style is clean and just, and the total performance, fleet rather than profound, has an attractive *esprit* that makes rehearing no chore at all, if no unmarred delight either. As Pamina, Corry Bijster sings with somewhat uneven scale but with warm honesty that only sometimes relaxes into placidity, and Marilyn Tyler, granting her some tight squeaks in the cruel coloratura, makes more of an effect as the Queen of the Night than some more famous sopranos have. David Garen has developed vocal personality since his New York City Opera days; his Tamino is live and musicianly. The Papageno, August Gschwend, is pleasantly bright and nimble, once the ear has got used to his multiple ways of coloring tones; and Guus Hoekman, though his voice is hardly bassy enough, is (what is that phrase?) a dignified Sarastro. The rest are in similar case—not great but mostly quite acceptable.

Alexander Krannhals' reading is swift, crisp, and assured. The sound is clear, though not spacious, the voices a bit too forward for ideal balances. Notes are included, but the review copy lacked a libretto. All told, no substitute for the better, more elaborate sets, but not at all a bad buy for the money.

J. H., JR.

MOZART

Divertimento No. 15, in B-flat, K. 287
Symphony No. 39, in E-flat, K. 543

NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.

RCA VICTOR LM 2001. 12-in. \$3.98.

The symphony is recorded from a 1948 broadcast; the divertimento is in new transference from the 1950 recording, originally presented on both sides of a ten-inch disk. No one has ever played the Symphony No. 39 faster and it is doubtful that anyone will try. The amazing resilience of the music can hardly be better attested than by this precipitate attack which metamorphoses it from a sunny idyl into an insistent call to arms. Acknowledging that the andante at this brisk clip is a dead loss, we ought still to recognize that the imperious first movement, the ferocious minuet, and the foaming finale, in a performance without forebear, are no less authoritative and a good deal more effective than many conventional, daintier exhibitions. The forceful registration has artificialities of tone and balance indicative of efforts to rejuvenate it.

Warmer in sound than its first edition, the divertimento is still crippled by the amputation of its second minuet. The performance of the rest is distinguished by swift grace and magical playing by a small force of violins, the remaining strings and the pair of horns slighted to conform with custom.

C. G. B.

a drinking song with a jolly refrain, two are pastoral in mood, and *When the cock* contains some delightfully naïve tone-painting. Pure, clear singing and good playing. N. B.

REGER

Suite for Unaccompanied Cello, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 131c, No. 2—See Kodály: *Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello*.

REVUELTAS

Three Pieces for Violin and Piano—See Surinach: *Doppio Concertino*.

ROSETTI

Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra, in E-flat—See Haydn, Michael: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in B-flat*.

ROSSINI

William Tell: Ballet Music—See Johann Strauss: *Le Beau Danube*.

SCARLATTI

Sonatas—See Frescobaldi: *Harpsichord Music*

SAINT-SAËNS

Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 1, in A minor, Op. 33
†Miaskovsky: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in C, Op. 66*

Mstislav Rostropovich, cello; Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 2016. 12-in. \$3.98.

Every so often Saint-Saëns' glittering concerto emerges to remind us that it still has an undeniable public appeal—and an even greater one for virtuoso cellists. Its latest advocate, the young Russian cellist Rostropovich, gives it a taut, virile performance that has good style and plenty of thrust. His tone, while fairly warm, tends to become edgy, and the intonation is not always firmly in the middle. This is most noticeable when he is trying to keep abreast of Sargent's healthy accompaniment, an accompaniment not always notable for delicacy.

The Miaskovsky work is new to records. In this misty, neoromantic score, the cello is less of a solo instrument than a very close part of the orchestra, and no dazzling display of technique is called for except in the very short cadenza of the second movement. In its reflective way, this is a deeper and more heartfelt work than its companion. It is difficult to imagine it being more perceptively performed. Rostropovich's tone here is a shade lighter, it sings more, and the consistent lyrical context of the music seems to me to be more suitable to his artistry. This is a sensitive, free-flowing performance of an endearing work and an auspicious index of the Soviet cellist's abilities. J. F. I.

SHOSTAKOVICH

Quartet No. 1, in C, Op. 49—See Borodin: *Quartet No. 2*.

SIBELIUS

Symphonies: No. 6, in D minor, Op. 104; No. 7 in C, Op. 105

Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. ANGEL 35316. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

Herbert von Karajan's previous Angel-recorded interpretations of Sibelius have been overly romantic and round-edged. In the present pair of readings he seems to be a changed man. There is far more vitality and incisiveness in his approach, and he is content to let the music speak in its rough-hewn native tongue without any questionable refinements. Compelling as these performances are, however, they still do not displace the recordings by Anthony Collins (London) in my affection. I prefer Collins' greater expansiveness in the Sixth, especially in the Finale, and his closer adherence to the printed score in the Seventh. P. A.

SMETANA

Trio in G minor, Op. 15—See Dvorak: *Trio in E minor*.

STRAUSS, JOHANN II

Le Beau Danube

Orchestra of the Paris Opera, Manuel Rosenthal, cond. CAPITOL P 18006. 12-in. \$3.98.

Le Beau Danube

†Rossini: *William Tell: Ballet Music*

London Philharmonic Orchestra, Jean Martinon, cond. LONDON LL 1383. 12-in. \$3.98.

Originally conceived by Massine, in 1924, as a ballet in two acts, *Le Beau Danube* was revised in 1933 and compressed into a one-act ballet. In this form it has remained a permanent and popular fixture in the repertoire. The music, tastefully orchestrated by Désormière, is a series of melodic excerpts from Strauss operettas and waltzes which have been woven into a consistently pleasurable whole. We are now offered two LP versions of the complete ballet, where none existed before. Each is directed by a Frenchman; but where Martinon has the superb London Philharmonic at his command, Rosenthal must settle for the less virtuosic Paris



Saint-Saëns glitters for Rostropovich.

Opera Orchestra. It is a handicap Rosenthal cannot overcome, for at all points the English players are superior to the Frenchmen. Theirs is a more buoyant and fanciful performance, the conductor keeping it all nicely "in the air," lighthearted in feeling, and with fine appreciation of the

sly touches of humor that run throughout the score.

Rosenthal takes it a trifle more leisurely, and the over-all feeling is more earth-bound, though I do not mean this to imply "heavy." It is a good routine performance and would be acceptable enough in the theater, but on records I hardly think that is quite good enough. Capitol's sound seems thin too, compared to the brilliance and depth of that found on the rival recording. J. F. I.

STRAVINSKY

Apollon Musagète; Renard

Orchestre de la Suisse Romand, Ernest Ansermet, cond. (with Michel Sénéchal (t), Hugues Cuenod (t), Heinz Rehfuß (b), Xavier Depraz (bs), and Istvan Arato, cimbalom, in *Renard*). LONDON LL 1401. 12-in. \$3.98.

The suave, romantic-sounding, but classically inspired string sonorities of *Apollon* are finely registered here, and the performance is excellent if not quite the last word. *Apollon* is one of the most elegant "white ballets" ever composed, and so the barnyard buffooneries of *Renard* contrast with it extremely well. *Renard* is not a ballet for lovely girls in white but for acrobats, and their accompaniment is not for a grandly resonant string orchestra but for a grotesque chamber ensemble including five singers and a cimbalom. The recording is very good, the performance first rate, but the singing is entirely in French and no text is provided. Unfortunately the Robert Craft recording for Dial, which is sung in English and therefore preferable for American consumption, has disappeared from the catalogue. A. F.

STRAVINSKY

Les Noces; Mass; Pater Noster; Ave Maria

Netherlands Chamber Choir, with instrumental ensembles and soloists, Felix De Nobel, cond.

EPIC LC 3231. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Hillis recording (Vox) offers *Les Noces* in understandable English, the Rossi (Vanguard) in authentic Russian; this one offers it in a language purporting to be French. The performance of it is reasonably good, despite the wobbly voices of the female soloists, while the Mass is very well done, though it lacks the pure, objective tone of boys' voices, which Stravinsky desires. The two little motets are too slight to matter. The annotations, by Klaus George Roy, are unusually copious and highly informative. A. F.

STRAVINSKY

Le Rossignol

Janine Micheau (s), the Nightingale; Jean Giraudeau (t), the Fisherman; Lucien Lovano (b), the Emperor; and others. Chorus and orchestra of Radiodiffusion Française, André Cluytens, cond. ANGEL 35204. 12-in. \$5.98.

Stravinsky began work on this opera in 1909, finished the first of its three miniature acts, and then—for various reasons—put it aside for four years. During

Continued on page 48

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Janine Micheau

those four years he composed *The Fire Bird*, *Petrouchka*, and *The Rite of Spring*; and when he returned to *Le Rossignol* he found his style had changed completely. He hesitated a long time before resuming this score at all, but finally decided to go ahead without rewriting its first act because the atmosphere of that act is quite different from the atmospheres of Acts II and III. The result is a work which begins in an idiom obviously influenced by the Debussy of the *Nocturnes* and ends in an idiom close to that of the *Rite*. Stravinsky, one suspects, has always been uneasy about this, and that helps to explain why *Le Rossignol* has not been recorded until now.

The stylistic inconsistencies of the score are no real cause for concern, however, and they are far overbalanced by the humor, brilliance, and philosophic fascinations of this extraordinary piece. The libretto is derived from a familiar story by Hans Christian Andersen. The emperor of China appoints a nightingale as his court singer; then he receives a mechanical nightingale as a present from the Mikado, and the real bird flies away. In the third act, Death sits on the emperor's chest and the mechanical nightingale is broken, whereupon the living nightingale returns and charms Death away with his song.

All of this is set, after the impressionism of the first act, in a manner distinguished for its tense rhythms, its elaborately mosaic-like interweaving of short themes, and its coruscating, richly bejeweled orchestration. The libretto, by S. N. Mitusov and Stravinsky himself, is a typical European *chinoiserie*, with dozens of faocily garbed little figures scurrying about, and the music — which makes much use of a "Chinese" pentatonic scale — is in keeping; but there are some wonderfully lyrical moments in the score, too, and some as ominous and awe-inspiring as the *Rite* itself.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the opera is the nightingale's song. The problem here was to write a coloratura aria that should move one with its poetry and at the same time sound wild and free. For Stravinsky's solution to this problem, and for Mlle. Micheau's solution to the problem of singing it, one must turn to the disk. Both solutions are superb.

The recording recently won the Grand Prix du Disque, and it is eminently worthy of that honor on every count. A. F.

SURINACH

Doppio Concertino.

Anahid Ajemian, violin; Maro Ajemian, piano; M-G-M Chamber Orchestra, Carlos Surinach, cond.

†Chávez: *Sonatina for Violin and Piano*
†Revueltas: *Three Pieces for Violin and Piano*

Anahid and Maro Ajemian.
M-G-M E 3180. 12-in. \$3.98.

Surinach's concertino, commissioned by the Ajemian sisters last year, is scored for solo violin and piano with a small chamber ensemble of wind and percussion instruments plus string bass. It is actually a virtuoso piece for all concerned, and an extremely brilliant one, making much use of the Spanish folk idioms of which the composer is a past master. The M-G-M annotator, Edward Cole, justly compares it with the quasi-orchestral chamber works of Bartók, by which it may very well have been influenced; at all events, it handles its folk modes and rhythms in a sionilarly forceful and challenging way. The Chávez sonatina is more than thirty years old; it was one of the first works by this composer to display his interest in Mexican Indian material, and it remains one of his best. The taut, monumental, severe, and grandly simple attitude of Chávez is instructively contrasted with the more conventional approach of Revueltas, whose pieces — also based on Mexican Indian folk themes — are full of wrong notes to make them sound "modern" but remain essentially romantic transcriptions. They are good ones, though, especially the *berceuse*-like slow movement. Recordings are magnificent, and so is the playing. A. F.

SURINACH

Hollywood Carnival — See Glanville-Hicks: *Sinfonia Pacifica*.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in B-flat minor, Op. 23

†Liszt: *Hungarian Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra*

Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond.
LONDON LL 1423. 12-in. \$3.98.

Two comparative youngsters here have a fling at two old war horses, with results that are, to say the least, exciting. We have had some fine recordings from Katchen, but I think all must defer to this powerful and brilliant performance of the Tchaikovsky concerto. His forceful handling of the first movement and the high tension of the finale are both samples of exhilarating pianism, and his delicacy of touch in the andantino is in its own way just as impressive. The companion piece by Liszt is performed with intense drive, great technical finesse, and a fine sense of the "grand manner." It well outdistances competitive versions. Pierino Gamba, at nineteen, can hardly be expected to have the insight of a Reiner, yet his handling of

the orchestra is extremely knowing. True, he shows an occasional tendency to distend a phrase a trifle in the Tchaikovsky, but otherwise his is a spirited if not very subtly shaded reading. The Liszt goes well for him, though the playing is not always crisp or well defined. London's engineering is first-class in all respects. J. F. I.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 4, in F minor, Op. 36

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.

RCA VICTOR LM 1953. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is a generally cool, detached reading, relieved only by a few powerful moments, which are not enough to save it from falling into the slightly-above-routine class. When the conductor is seized by the power of the music, as in the closing moments of the first movement, and more particularly in the finale, the interpretation catches fire. Elsewhere it merely smolders. RCA Victor's engineers, who seem to have solved the problem of capturing the true sound of this orchestra, have done their job well. The finale is a riot of powerful and lustrous sound; here, at least, this disk is the equal of any previously recorded version. However, the early Kubelik performance on Mercury 5003, which is more consistently of a piece and whose sound is still remarkable, remains my favorite. J. F. I.

TURINA

Piano Music

Danzas fantásticas, Op. 22; Danzas gitanas, Op. 55, Series 1; Mujeres españolas, Op. 17; Le Jeudi Saint à Minuit.

José Echániz, piano.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18185. 12-in. \$3.98.

Mr. Echániz continues to work his way through the Spanish piano literature. The style must be second nature to him by now; certainly he handles it with much authority, when his technical resources are not overtaxed, and this Turina disk suggests greater warmth in his playing than was evidenced in previous disks. The best-known of these works are the *Danzas fantásticas*, because of their currency in the composer's own orchestral version. The three movements are richly harmonized and the second, *Ensueño*, a long, atmospheric piece, is outstanding for its rocking $\frac{3}{8}$ meter. The three portraits of Spanish women (*Mujeres españolas*) recall the fact that Turina studied with Moszkowski: still Spanish in color, the music is on a salon level, lightly elegant, gracefully humorous, always charming. The *Gypsy Dances* are short works of mild interest. *Le Jeudi Saint à Minuit*, however, is exceedingly lovely; it evokes a slow religious procession, and Mr. Echániz gives it a muted and very beautiful performance. R. E.

VIVALDI

Concertos for Oboe and Orchestra: in F, P. 306; in D minor, P. 259 (Op. VIII, No. 9); Concerto in B-flat for Oboe, Violin, and Orchestra, P. 406; Concertos for Orchestra: in F, P. 292; in A, P. 235

Continued on page 50

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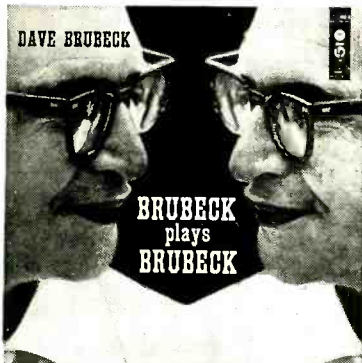


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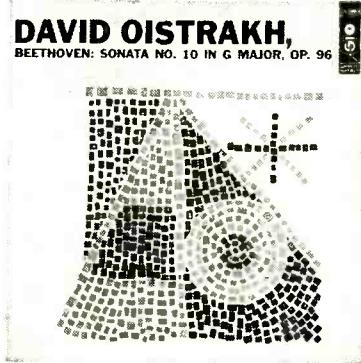


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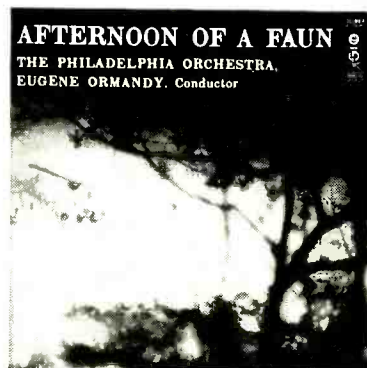


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ON COLUMBIA RECORDS

Claude Maisonnette, oboe; Georges Alès, violin; Ensemble Orchestral de L'Oiseau-Lyre, Louis de Froment, cond.
OISEAU-LYRE OL 50073. 12-in. \$4.98.

Not a single dud here. The opening movements are mostly cheerful and contain much of thematic, harmonic, and rhythmic interest. Outstanding among the slow movements are the *Grave* of the F major Oboe Concerto, for oboe and unison violins only but satisfying nevertheless; the Andante of the Concerto for Orchestra in the same key, with its unusual depth of emotion; and the Andante molto of the A major Concerto, a lovely, melancholy song. On the same high plane are the finales, especially the chirping, light-footed one of the F major Concerto for Orchestra; the dramatic one of the D minor Concerto; and the gay one of the A major, whose theme begins exactly like Beethoven's well-known Contradance in C. Soloists and orchestra are excellent. The recording is a little overbright, and a sensitive microphone has picked up the clicking of the oboe's key mechanism, but neither of these faults is pronounced enough to be annoying. N. B.

WEILL

Der Jasager

Josef Protschka (boy soprano), The Student; Lys Bert (ms), The Mother; Willibald Vohla (b), The Teacher. Düsseldorf Children's Chorus and Düsseldorf Chamber Orchestra, Siegfried Köhler, cond.
M-G-M E 3270. 12-in. \$3.98.

Written in 1930, two years later than *The Threepenny Opera*, *Der Jasager* was a contribution by Kurt Weill and his librettist, Bert Brecht, to the developing literature of *Gemeinschaftsmusik*—that is, music-for-common-use. Like works of the same period by Paul Hindemith and Ernest Krenek, like Benjamin Britten's *Let's Make an Opera*, and like Weill's own later *Down in the Valley*, it was designed to be produced in schools, in this case either with or without adults in the cast. However, it turned out to be quite a bit more than just a "children's opera." Brecht and Weill both were much troubled by their times, and both were masters in their crafts. The result of their collaboration was, and is, a singularly unsettling little fable.

The action, based by Brecht on an old Japanese *no-gaku* plot, tells of a small boy who importunes his sick mother and his teacher until they allow him to set off on a journey across the mountains with the teacher and a group of older students; on the other side he is sure he can get medicines that will make his mother well. In the mountains he himself sickens and can travel no farther. According to ancient custom, he has the option (provided by Brecht; in the *no* the outcome is inescapable) of having his companions turn back with him or of allowing himself to be cast off of a cliff so that the party may be rid of a fateful encumbrance. He will not ask them to turn back. Will he let custom be followed? "Ja," he says, very simply; but will the others search for the medicine his mother needs? They take his flask, and gently drop him to his death. Then they restate the moral that opened the opera: "Understanding

and participation are necessary to learning." By setting the common welfare above his life, the boy has proved his true understanding.

Whatever philosophical debate there might be over this, the little tale is simply and touchingly told, with classic economy of words and stark theatrical line. A parallel economy obtains in Weill's music, but by no means does he make things easy for the performers; the ranges required are not extreme, but the demands of breath, rhythmic precision, and cleanliness of phrasing are unyielding. The harmonies are faintly pseudo-oriental at times, but in the rhythms and twists of phrase the score is all Weill—on occasion straight out of *Mabagony* and *Die Dreigroschenoper*. The bright particular star of the M-G-M recording, prepared under the supervision of Lotte Lenya Weill, is the exceptionally gifted boy soprano Josef Protschka, who sings most expressively and (even more remarkable for one of his kind) on pitch. The other principals are grownups—Lys Bert, as the Mother, and Willibald Vohla, as the Teacher. Both are very good, and the children of the Düsseldorf chorus do notably well with some not-easy counterpoint, under Siegfried Köhler's well-paced direction.

Good notes by Edward Cole, but no text at all—a fact that counts negatively even though the German is school-level. The sound is quite good. Not of universal appeal, perhaps, but highly recommended.

J. H., JR.

WEILL

Music for the Stage—See Copland:
Music for Movies.

More Briefly Noted

PEOPLE who want to hear Bach multi-keyboard concertos with pianos instead of harpsichords may be interested in a disk containing the *Concertos for Three Pianos*, in C, BW 1064, for Three Pianos in D minor, BW 1063, and for Four Pianos, in A minor, played by Gisèle Kuhn, Georgette Astorg, Livia Rev, and Monique Mercier, and the Champs Elysées Theater Orchestra led by Arthur Goldschmidt (London DTL 93053). The performances are good, the recording not very. As bonus London adds transcriptions for string orchestra of two organ works, the chorale prelude "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland" and the "Little" Fugue in G minor.

Of *Bach Organ Music* played on the organ, there is a potpourri by Virgil Fox on RCA Victor LM 1963 that evidences more virtuosity than judgment. More important are Volumes II and III of the complete *Bach Organ Works* being issued piecemeal by Westminster, with Carl Weinrich playing the old organ of the Church of Our Lady at Skänninge, Sweden (WN 18148; WN 2205; two 12-in.). Volume II contains the D minor Toccata and Fugue, the Alla Breve in E, the Toccata in E, and the Canzona in D minor. Volume III consists of the third part of the *Clavierübung*. Sound and performance are admirable, but may or may not bear comparison with the Deutsche Grammophon Archive versions by Helmut Walcha.

Hardly in the running is another *Bach organ collection*—some of the most familiar preludes, fantasias and fugues—played by André Marchal on the organ of the church of Saint-Eustache, Paris (London DTL 93056), an instrument which sounds ill suited to the music.

On another London disk (DTL 93058) are four *Bach Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord*, played by Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute, Robert Veyron-Lacroix, harpsichord, and Jean Huchot, cello. Adequate in both performance and engineering, they are still unlikely to displace the Wummer-Valenti (Westminster) set or even the aging Baker-Marlowe (Decca).

Westminster fares less well with a newer *Bach offering*, a five-disk set of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* (WN 5501) played by Joerg Demus with tasteful restraint and not much else, though the piano sound is good.

Bach admired his contemporary, *Georg Böhm*, of whom Archive now offers us *Seven Organ Works* (ARC 3037), tastefully performed on Böhm's own organ (Lüneburg) by Hans Heintze. For specialists only.

Skipping across two centuries, we encounter two works of *Benjamin Britten*, recorded originally some time ago on separate ten-inch disks, offered now together on a twelve (London LL 1336). They are the *Ceremony of Carols*, in which the composer conducts the Copenhagen Boys' Choir (in English) and *A Simple Symphony*, in which Eugene Goossens leads the New Symphony Orchestra of London. Both are engaging works, very well performed and recorded.

Back to the baroque: Volumes II and III of the *Complete Organ Works of Buxtehude* (whom Bach admired more than Böhm) have been issued by Westminster (WN 18149; WN 18193) in performances by Alf Linder that maintain the high standard set in Volume I. The notes contain the exact registrations used in each piece.

From Buxtehude's organ to the guitar is a long jump, especially when Andres Segovia chooses to play—with members of the Chigi Quintet—a showy but superficial Quintet for Guitar and Strings by Castelnuovo-Tedesco (Decca 9832), though both his playing and Decca's engineering are unexceptionable. The flipside contains short works by Haug, Llobet, Scriabin, and Villa-Lobos. Strictly for Segovia-addicts.

The Siena Pianoforte, which sounded so beguiling at first, is beginning to wear out its welcome. Its thin, harplike jingle is not at all suited to the opalescent music of Debussy, and it is a shame that Marisa Regules could not be heard in this repertoire on a proper instrument (Esoteric ESP 3003).

Another recoupling is that by Westminster (WN 18066) of the *Dvorak Quintet* in G, Op. 77, performed by the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet with Josef Hermann, double bass, with the Sonata in F, Op. 57, and Four Romantic Pieces, Op. 75, the latter works being performed by Peter Rybar, violin, and Franz Holletschek, piano. All are pleasant, if not important.

Latest in the Louisville Orchestra's subscription issues (LOU 55-3) is a disk combining Krenek's *Transparencies*, a twelve-

tone suite of most ingenious items titled "Flashes," "Waves," "Knocks and Dashes," and the like, with an undistinguished *Magnificat* by the Argentinian Roberto Caamano. Ingenious, too, are Liszt's Twelve Transcendental Etudes, especially in their exploitation of piano tone, but on Vox PL 9690 Alexander Borovsky does them much less than justice.

Different troubles beset the latest two of Epic's Mozart series conducted by Bernhard Paumgartner—the Piano Concertos Nos. 6 and 14, with Hans Henkemans as soloist, and the Symphonies Nos. 28 and 31. The performance is a little rough, the sound uninviting.

Continuing excellence, however, marks the fifteenth (!) volume of Scarlatti Sonatas rendered by Fernando Valenti and his durable harpsichord (Westminster WN 18170) — still fresh, vital, new.

New, too, to many of us are some of the songs in the Oiseau-Lyre collection (OL 50045) of Schubert Lieder sung by Bruce Boyce, with Dorel Handman at the piano. Unfortunately, Mr. Boyce is not up to his material—especially such uncommon fare as *Schwager Kronos* and *Dem Unendlichen*.

From Russia comes a new Shostakovich Fifth Symphony, with Eugene Mavrinsky conducting the Leningrad Symphony Orchestra (Vanguard VRS 6025). It wasn't, in any sense, worth waiting for.

Hardly more satisfactory, except in engineering, is the Sibelius Second as performed by the Philharmonia Orchestra under Paul Kletzki (Angel 35314) lightened and speeded out of its simple, massive effectiveness.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

BELL, DRUM, AND CYMBAL

Saul Goodman, percussion; Saul Goodman and Leonard Sterling, narrators. ANGEL 35269. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

If anybody had asked me a week ago whether I could endure yet another percussion demonstration record, I would have said, emphatically, "No." However, *Bell, Drum, and Cymbal* was a pleasant surprise; it is one of the best of the species heard to date.

Vox's *Spotlight on Percussion* set the model for the first part of this disk, which is a guided tour of the battery section of an orchestra, with highly informative and entertaining narrative by Leonard Sterling and Saul Goodman, interspersed with demonstrations of the instruments under scrutiny. All of the major (and many minor) percussion instruments are discussed in the light of their present-day usage and some of their earlier uses in well-known works. The latter section of *Bell, Drum, and Cymbal* is devoted to multiple-part arrangements of two familiar compositions—*My Country 'Tis of Thee* and *Danse macabre*—both played entirely by Saul Goodman, courtesy of multiple-track tape recording. They come off surprisingly well in their percussive guise, largely because of imaginative use of pitched percussion instruments, and partly

because both numbers, the *Danse macabre* in particular, seem to lend themselves to this treatment. I'm sure there has never been a more skeletal-sounding *Danse macabre* committed to disks.

The recording is excellent—a little less close-to than is usual with demonstration records. However, there is some really high-powered sound here; crisp, well-balanced, and very clean except near the inner grooves on the second side, where the high recording level and close groove-spacing sacrifice some quality. J. G. H.

ALFRED DELLER Recital

Buxtehude: *Jubilate Domino* (solo cantata); Fugue in C (organ); *In dulci jubilo*

(cantata, three voices). Thomas Campion: *Never Weatherbeaten Sail; Most Sweet and Pleasing Are Thy Ways, O God; Author of Light*. Anonymous (c. 1615): *Miserere My Maker* (voice with lute). Francesco da Milano: *Fantasia* (lute).

Alfred Deller, countertenor; Eileen McLoughlin, soprano; Maurice Bevan, bass; Desmond Dupre, lute, viol da gamba; Eli Goren, violin; Leonard Friedman, violin; Anne Shuttleworth, cello.

OISEAU-LYRE OL 50102. 12-in. \$4.98.

Alfred Deller, as one of the most active exemplars of a technique now in decline, has the distinction of strangeness added to that of artistic accomplishment. In fact, by virtue of both—and by the grace of records—he has acquired a following of



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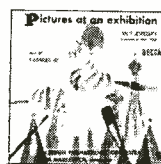
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Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B Minor ("Pathétique"). DL 9811

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admirers surely larger and more widely distributed than any other countertenor could possibly have claimed in the past, when this type of voice was much commoner. His latest record is properly the "recital" it is entitled only in its second half—a point worth making mainly because the Buxtehude concerted pieces are the most delectable, and most extended, of the lot. Mr. Deller is in good form in the exultant *Jubilate Domino*, but the real treasure is *In dulci jubilo*, with its exquisite three-part setting of a text, in Latin and German mixed, of love for the infant Jesus, for His mother, for God the Father, and of gentle longing for Heaven. The treatment is in fact complex, but the total effect is one of consummate simplicity and tender, serene faith. In between comes a

jaunty performance of the little Fugue in C, played on an unidentified organ that sounds to be (action and all; it is recorded very close-to) either a *portatif* or a tiny *positif*, but that is in any case one with a sweet, ingenious way of speaking.

The second side is devoted to lute-accompanied songs, mainly by Thomas Campion, the Elizabethan physician who was also a first-class lyricist and composer. Each in its way is lovelier than the others; there is no point in distributing adjectives amongst them. So far as I know, none of the music in either group is to be had otherwise on LP.

The recording is intimate and clear. Full texts; no notes at all—not even a first name for Campion. On the special side, perhaps, but most desirable. J. H., JR.

A Very Slightly Too Happy Fella



Composer Loesser at recording session.

WHATEVER may turn out to be the long-term reputation of Frank Loesser's *The Most Happy Fella*, it is presently a well-entrenched success in New York, and has also the remarkable, if quite extrinsic, distinction of being the first Broadway musical show ever to be recorded in truly theater-complete form.

Goddard Lieberson has "produced for records" an admirably true image of what the newest Loesser success sounds like from center-aisle seats in the theater. The subjective effect of the full-length set is that of a very special, cost-no-object issue, and it might as well be enjoyed. The companion single is a hits-of-the-show excerpt, less posh but very well done.

The book of *The Most Happy Fella* is based on Sidney Howard's *They Knew What They Wanted*, with the play's economic and religious issues deleted and the erotic triangle diluted. So, in this telling, the triangle itself fades (the bride is really a nice girl who slipped once in an off-moment); the love story is treated as a sort of Beauty-and-the-Beast idyl; and the knotty ideas that formed the weft of the play are replaced by secondary love themes, with the whole pattern blocked out so as to fit neatly in between production numbers of various types, one for every showgoer's taste. A pity, too, because it has, even now, the germ of an adult plot.

The score, orchestrated for Loesser by Don Walker, is extensive; there are some thirty musical numbers, with only about twenty-odd minutes of spoken dialogue; almost all of the words are spoken, though, when the action is crucial. But relative to the top level of Loesser's pop songs, most of it is more notable for the variety of

its cliché-sources than for memorability. But "Standing On the Corner" is, of course, quite juke-boxable; and "Somebody Somewhere," if not the greatest, is very good. The "Abbondanza" trio is (intentionally, one hopes) as funny as "Wunderbar" but I dislike "Sposalizio" even more than its old relative, "Funiculi-Funicula."

The cast is primarily a group chosen for voice, but the general level of acting is acceptable. Robert Weede would be even more effective than he is if he weren't stuck with so many fearsome lines to read in dialect. Vocally, Mr. Weede has been in better form, but he husbands his resources with veteran skill. As the mail-order bride, Jo Sullivan sings purely and communicatively. The others are satisfactory.

All told, the show comes across on records well enough—except for the production numbers, frustrating to hear with no stage in view. No text, but none is needed, for the diction is uniformly good. For most purposes, the single disk ought to do, since it has the best tunes. Still, if this full-length set sells, maybe Columbia will do all of *My Fair Lady*.

JAMES HINTON, JR.

THE MOST HAPPY FELLA

Music and lyrics by Frank Loesser. Book based on Sidney Howard's Pulitzer Prize (1925) drama *They Knew What They Wanted*. Complete performance by the original cast: Robert Weede, Jo Sullivan, Susan Johnson, Mona Paulee, Shorty Long, Art Lund, Arthur Rubin, Rico Froelich, John Henson, Keith Kaldenberg, Lee Cass, and others. Orchestrations by Don Walker. Orchestral and choral direction by Herbert Greene.

COLUMBIA O3L 240. Three 12-in. \$14.94.

THE MOST HAPPY FELLA (excerpts)

Act I: *Prelude; Oob. My Feet; Somebody Somewhere; The Most Happy Fella; Standing on the Corner; Joey, Joey, Joey; Rosabella; Abbondanza; Sposalizio; Don't Cry.*
Act II: *Happy To Make Your Acquaintance; Big "D"; How Beautiful the Days; Warm All Over; I Like Everybody; Mamma, Mamma; Song of a Summer Night; Finale.*

(Original cast, as above.)

COLUMBIA OL 5118. 12-in. \$4.98.

EASTMAN SYMPHONIC WIND ENSEMBLE

Marching Along

The U. S. Field Artillery; The Thunderer; Washington Post; King Cotton; El Capitán; The Stars and Stripes Forever; American Patrol; On the Mall; Lights Out; Colonel Bogey; The Billboard; Barnum and Bailey's Favorite.

Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fennell, cond.

MERCURY MG 50105. 12-in. \$3.98.

A second volume of "marching" marches, played by the Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble, that does not strike me as being as successful as the first release (MG 50080). I suspect a change in mike placement. Where the first issue gave us excellent sound seemingly coming from a sensible distance, this recording brings it too close, almost as if the band were walking over and around the listener. The instrumental quality seems a little lighter and the playing more buoyant than before, and there were times when I felt I might well be listening to a good college band, so exuberant are the performances.

J. F. I.

GREGORIAN CHANT

Easter Mass; Pieces from the Office

Choir of the Monks of the Abbey of Saint Pierre de Solesmes, Dom Joseph Gajard, cond.

LONDON LL 1408. 12-in. \$3.98.

The first band on Side 1 is devoted to the bells of St. Peter's Abbey. Together with the twittering of some neighborhood birds, they make a very pleasant, if somewhat protracted, sound. Six movements from the Proper of the Easter Mass follow. Wonderful music, beautifully performed. The same movements plus two from the Ordinary of the Mass, sung as well and recorded without the slight reverberation audible here, are offered on an Angel disk (35116), while the entire Proper and Ordinary, not quite as sensitively performed or as clearly recorded, may be heard on Archive ARC 3001. Neither Angel nor Archive, however, offers the Invitatory, three hymns, and four antiphons on Side 2 of the present record.

N. B.

WALTER KRAFT

South German Baroque Organ Music

Walter Kraft, organ.

VOX DL 223. Three 12-in. \$14.94.

There are some splendid pieces in this generous collection, such as Pachelbel's tense and improvisatory Toccata in C minor; his lovely Ciacona in F minor, built on a four-note descending figure; Muffat's rich and imaginative Toccatas in D minor and C minor; and Speth's powerful Toccata in F minor. Pachelbel's Partita on *Was Gott tut* has one curious, crawling, chromatic variation, but the other variations do not avoid monotony. Most of the other works seem more interesting from a historical point of view than from an aesthetic one. They are capably played on one or the other of the two organs in the Benedictine Abbey of Ottobeuren in south Germany, built about the middle of the eighteenth century. These are very

handsome instruments, to judge by the illustrations in the booklet, but do not seem to be ideally suited for recording. The softer stops, which Kraft favors particularly in the Froberger pieces, sound gloomy and not very efficient; and the sound often has a boominess and lack of clarity that are "real" enough but far from advantageous to the music. N. B.

MARGUERITE NAMARA *Songs and Arias*

Hahn: *Mozart: La lettre*. Satie: *Je te veux*. Chopin (arr. Pauline Viardot-Garcia): *Three Mazurkas: Aime-moi: Coquette: L'Oiselet*. Debussy: *Fleur des blés*. Hahn: *Le plus beau présent*. Tosti: *Pour un baiser*. Arr. Namara: *Adios Granada; Street Cries of Spain: Sevillanas*. Falla: *Nana*. Polo. Bizet: *Carmen: Seguidilla: Habanera*.

Marguerite Namara, soprano; self-accompanied on piano and spinet.

INTERNATIONAL RECORD COLLECTORS' CLUB IRCC L 7009. 10-in. (By mail, \$4.00 plus shipping charges, from maker, 318 Reservoir Avenue, Bridgeport 6, Conn.)

So fugitive is fame on earth that there may be some amongst the fresher levies of music and theater enthusiasts who know Marguerite Namara, if at all, only through her more recent appearances in plays—notably through her superbly *grande-dame* Mme. Darushka in Rose Franken's *Claudia* in the 1940s. She was born in Cleveland in a year not far from 1888, and made her operatic debut, in *Faust*, at Genoa in 1908. Now, according to the notes that come with it, this release of performances in her studio during the past few years marks her forty-fifth anniversary as a singer; feminine arithmetic, like music, is one of the subtler arts. She came to the Chicago Opera in 1919, singing Micaela to Mary Garden's Carmen, and in 1921 she sang the title role in *Thaïs*. The notes quote Miss Garden as saying, "No more Thaïs for me; it's yours from now on." No doubt it was said. But Miss Garden resumed the role the very next week, and until after 1930 no one else sang it in Chicago—a higher compliment, perhaps, than words. Or perhaps not. In any case, Miss Namara went from Chicago to Paris, making her debut in 1923 in *La Traviata* and going on to sing Mimì and Manon before shifting her energies to other matters—films, silent and sound, including *Gypsy Blood*, the first with-sound *Carmen* movie; operetta; and legitimate theater.

Almost automatically, the main interest about a disk of this sort is extrinsic, as a memorabilia of a vital personality. Yet in this case it is not entirely so. For the voice, if not imaginably young, is the remains of one that must have been very lovely, and there is no mistaking a basically fine technique. There is a considerable lot of erratic, swooping tone, but the moments of real uncontrol are relatively few and brief, and this in repertoire that makes no concessions to lack of *agilità*. The Viardot-Garcia arrangements of Chopin mazurkas are as charming as they are difficult and rare, and the song from Reynaldo Hahn's music for Sascha Guitry's *Mozart* is a delight—if no such delight here as it is in the ancient Yvonne Prin-

temps 78 rpm. The *Carmen* arias are fascinating interpretatively, especially the highly unconventional *Seguidilla*, done "as a real gypsy would," with free accent, raw laughter, and stampings; it may traduce Bizet, but it has its own appeal. The sound is variable, about what might be expected of home-studio recording, but not bad. No texts, scanty notes on the music. A special taste, but fun for the few.

J. H., JR.

More Briefly Noted

VINTAGE vocal music continues to come forth, the prime crop on the current market dating back to Tudor times, from which the Deller Consort on Vanguard (BG 554) brings us Volume II of *The English Mad-*

rigal School. Countertenor Alfred Deller, as both singer and conductor, is mainstay of the performance, in impeccable taste. Mainstays of the musical content are the Messrs. Tallis, Weelkes, and Wilbye; and no one appreciative of perfect union between the language of England and that of music could ask a worthier trio.

From some centuries earlier comes the Requiem sung in the Archive disk (ARC 3031) of *Gregorian Chant* by the monks of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Martin. Less polished in delivery, it is more complete than the version made recently for London by the monks of Solesmes. Temporally subsequent but strictly secular is a set of pieces put forth on London W 91116 by the Ensemble Monique Rollin, called *Music of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Performers are a soprano and an ancient instrument trio; composers in-



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"Dialing Your Disks" Reprints

Reprints of the "Dialing Your Disks" equalization table on this page are now available on separate paper cards, which can be kept near your control unit for ready reference. The cards are as detailed and up-to-date as we can make

them, and will be kept current as additional information is received from record manufacturers. Cost is 25 cents for two cards, mailed flat in a non-crush manila envelope. Write to "Dialing Your Disks," HIGH FIDELITY, The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. Cards will be sent by return mail.

Dialing Your Disks

All LP disks are recorded with treble boost and bass cut, the amount of which often varies from one manufacturer to another. To play a disk, the bass below a certain turnover frequency must be boosted, and the treble must be rolled off a certain number of decibels at 10,000 cycles. Recommended control settings to accomplish this are listed for each manufacturer. Equalizer control panel markings correspond to the

following values in the table below: ROLL-OFF — 10.5; LON, FRRR, 12; AES, RCA, Old RCA, 13.7; RIAA, RCA, New RCA, New AES, NARTB, ORTHOphonic, 16; NAB, LP, COL, COL LP, ORTHOacoustic. TURNOVER — 400: AES, RCA, 500C; LP, COL, COL LP, Mod NAB, LON, FFRR, 500R. RIAA, ORTHOphonic, NARTB, New AES, 500; NAB: 630; BRS, 800; Old RCA.

All records produced under the following labels are recorded with the industry-standard RIAA curve (500R turnover; 13.7 rolloff): Angel; †Atlantic; Bethlehem; Classic Editions; Clef; EMS; Epic; McIntosh; MGM; Montilla; New Jazz; Norgran; Prestige; Romany; Savoy; Walden. Labels that have used other recording curves are listed below.

RECORD LABEL	NEW		OLD
	Turnover	Rolloff	Record No. or Date: Turnover, Rolloff
Allied	500	16	
Amer. Rec. Soc.	400	12	
Arizona	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Audiophile	500	12	
Bach Guild	500R	13.7	No. 501-529: 500, 16
*Bartok	500R	13.7	No. 901-905, 308, 310, 311: 500R, 13.7 No. 906-920, 301-304, 309: 630, 16
Blue Note Jazz	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12
Boston	500C	16	
*Caedmon	500R	13.7	No. 1001-1022: 630, 16
Canyon	500R	13.7	To No. C6160: 400, 12
Capitol	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Capitol-Cetra	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Cetra-Soria	500C	16	
Colosseum	500R	13.7	To January 1954: 500, 16
*Columbia	500R	13.7	To 1955: 500C, 16
Concert Hall	500R	10.5	To 1954: 500C, 16
*Contemporary	500R	13.7	No. 3501, 2501, 2502, 2505, 2507, 2001, 2002: 400, 12. No. 2504: 500, 16
†Cook (SOOT)	500	12-15	
Coral	500	16	
Decca	500R	13.7	To November 1955: 500, 16
Elektra	500R	13.7	No. 2-15, 18-20, 24-26: 630, 16. No. 17, 22: 400, 12. No. 16, 21, 23, 24: 500R, 13.7
Esoteric	500R	13.7	No. ES 500, 517, EST 5, 6, 100, 12
Folkways	500R	13.7	To 1955: 500C, 16
*Good-Time Jazz	500R	13.7	No. 1, 5-8: 500, 16. No. 3, 9-19: 400, 12
Haydn Society	500C	16	
HMV	500R	16	
Kapp	500R	13.7	No. 100-103, 1000-1001: 800, 16
Kendall	500	16	
*London, Lon. Int.	500R	13.7	To No. 846: 500C, 10.5
Lyricord	500	16	
*Mercury	500R	13.7	To October 1954: 400, 12
Nocturne	500R	13.7	No. LP 1-3, 5, XPI-10: 400, 12
Oceanic	500C	16	
*L'Oiseau-Lyre	500R	13.7	To 1954: 500C, 10.5
*Overtone	500R	13.7	No. 1-3: 500, 16
Oxford	500C	16	
Pacific Jazz	500R	13.7	No. 1-13: 400, 12
Philharmonia	100	12	
†Polymusic	500	16	
RCA Victor	500R	13.7	To September 1952: 500 or 800, 12
Remington	500	16	
Riverside	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12
Tempo	500	16	
Transradio	500C	16	
Urania	500R	13.7	No. 7059, 224, 7066, 7063, 7065, 603, 7069: 400, 12. Others: 500C, 16
Vanguard	500R	13.7	No. 411-442, 6000-6018, 7001-7011, 8001-8004: 500, 16
Vox	500R	13.7	500, 16 unless otherwise specified.
*Westminster	500R	13.7	To October 1955: 500C, 16; or if AES specified: 400, 12

*Currently re-recording old masters for RIAA curve.
†Binaural records produced on this label have no treble boost on the inside band, which should be played without any rolloff.

clude Dufay, Machaut, Ockeghem and the ubiquitous Anon. Less impressive is an assortment of works called (not quite accurately) Renaissance Choral Music issued by Unicorn (UN LP 1025), sung by the Chorus Pro Musica of Boston, under Alfred Nash Patterson. The un-Renaissance composers include Heinrich Schütz, William Byrd, and King John of Portugal, all as good at their craft as, unfortunately, the Boston singers are not. More picturesquely labeled is Westminster's collection Music at the King's Chapel, the kings in point being Louis XIV and Louis XV of France. The record (WN 18167) features Jean Girardeau, tenor, and more antique instruments, in music by such as Charpentier, Lalande, and Couperin, very worthwhile, fetching, all well done in excellent sound. Spanning all the centuries thus far encompassed, there has come from St. Bernard's Seminary (Kendall LP 342) a sort of Catholic liturgical omnibus labeled simply St. Bernard's Seminary Choir: good and unaffected singing of music that begins with plain chant and continues through the corniest of Victorian hymnody.

Recitals are always with us. They can be effective through pure mastery of an instrument, and this does apply to Capitol P 8338—Leonard Pennario: Concert Piano Encores. However hard Liszt and Debussy made the task, Pennario makes its accomplishment sound like (very exciting) child's play. Unhappily, the same cannot be said for the efforts of Pedro D'Andurain in his Violin Recital (Capitol P 18001). The works performed are light, brisk, and contemporary, but the performance is short of conviction and ill recorded.

An unfortunate schematic consistency is responsible for the dullness of Volume II of History of the Dance Form, featuring harpsichordist Erna Heiller, on Unicorn LP 1027. The slow evolution of the *courante* may enthrall the scholar, but it palls upon the weary layman, however well portrayed.

For the incomplete opera lover: three items. One identified as Mario del Monaco: Operatic Recital contains arias from various complete opera recordings which the tenor has made for London (LL 1333), and in which he has not invariably been the main attraction. Presumably there exist now female teen-age Del Monaco fan clubs. This is for them. For another ill-defined segment of the not-quite-opera-lovers, Herbert von Karajan offers on Angel 35307 Baller Music from the Operas, which is just what it claims to be, and very pretty too, though not very operatic. More operatic is London's excerpt-assembly of Most Famous Operatic Choruses (LL 1346), presenting the Saint Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra of Rome, conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli and Alberto Erede, singing precisely the choruses you expect them to.

People who crave Hispanic atmosphere may get it through a record titled Pilar Lopez (Capitol P 18003), which consists of a dance suite arranged from works of famous Spanish composers by Ernesto Halffter and performed by the musicians and dancers of the Pilar Lopez troupe. Only *aficionados* will get much out of it. Almost the same qualification applies to Vicente Gomez playing the guitar suite he composed for the film, *Goya: His Life and Works*. Which isn't intended to mean that it is bad. It isn't. But there is other

music to which Gomez's extraordinary guitar technique might better have been applied. The engineering is first-rate.

THE MUSIC BETWEEN

EDDY DUCHIN

A Tribute to Eddy Duchin

Eddy Duchin, piano.
COLUMBIA CL 2576. 10-in. 2.98.

The Eddy Duchin Story

Eddy Duchin, piano.
COLUMBIA CL 790. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Fabulous Eddy Duchin and his Orchestra

VIK LX 1043. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is Hollywood's year to eulogize Eddy Duchin, and a spate of old recordings by that master is now upon us. Duchin's talents were limited, but all the gifts he possessed were used. He had a great love for quick, shifting chords that sometimes moved like quicksilver over a piano. He was fond of sudden extremes in dynamics, cleanly and sharply articulated. The total effect, strangely enough, was not impressionistic but extremely precise. It was sophisticated and innocent at the same time.

He has been served well by both LPs, which together contain much of his most typical work. Vik's Duchin collection includes many vocals by such varied soloists as Buddy Clark, Harold Arlen, and Lew Sherwood. The movie soundtrack recording featuring the piano playing of Carmen Cavallaro (Decca DL 8289) is also interesting. There is more gloss, more pedal, more ripeness here than Duchin ever gave his material, and hence distinguishable from the original, though not intensely so. All four albums are representative and welcome, the three by Duchin himself doubly so.

R. K.

ELLA FITZGERALD

Sings the Cole Porter Song Book

Ella Fitzgerald; Buddy Bregman and his Orchestra.

VERVE MG V-4001/2. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

Here and there, en route through this wonderland of thirty-two Porter songs, one realizes that not every tune exactly fits the great Ella, and vice versa. As examples: *Night and Day*, which has been slaughtered too often for any singer to handle with ease these days, *So in Love*, or even *Don't Fence Me In*. But there the complaints stop, for the rest of the album is a collection of distinguished riches, and it is difficult to think of any other contemporary pop singer capable of sustaining its high level.

R. K.

MORTON GOULD

Music for Summertime

Stormy Weather: Smoke Gets in Your Eyes; Pavane; Shadow Waltz; Star Dust; Where or When; Summertime; Beyond the Blue Horizon; Cresta Blanca Waltz; Orchids in the Moonlight; Over the Rainbow; Time on My Hands.

Morton Gould and orchestra.

RCA VICTOR LM 2006. 12-in. \$3.98.

Don't take the title of this recording too literally and assume that this is music suitable only for the balmy days of summer. If you do, you'll certainly be missing one of the most enjoyable disks of its kind to be released this year. These old standards have a year-round appeal, and decked out in Gould's inventive and attractive arrangements they sound better than ever. Gould keeps the melody floating clearly and freely over interesting and unusual accompaniments, without ever resorting to some of the "tricks" so popular with current arrangers. Beautifully played, and reproduced in most striking sound, this is a record that can be unreservedly recommended.

J. F. I.

THE KING AND I

Sound-track recording featuring Deborah Kerr, Yul Brynner, Rita Moreno, Terry Saunders, and Carlos Rivas.

CAPITOL W 740. 12-in. \$4.98.

Having found the Hollywood versions of *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel* much inferior to the Broadway productions, I am delighted with what the West Coast studios have made of *The King and I*. Deborah Kerr, even in the face of the handicap of Gertrude Lawrence's memorable performance, is absolutely bewitching, at least on the record. She wisely makes no attempt to follow the Lawrence characterization, but makes Anna seem a stricter governess, more of a disciplinarian than her predecessor, but no less enchanted by her environment, her pupils, and, in her odd way, the king. It is a valid, and well-rounded characterization, and Miss Kerr—a surprisingly accomplished vocalist—is delightful in *Getting to Know You*, poignant in *Hello, Young Lovers*, and immense fun in *Shall We Dance?* I think she misses the mockery Miss Lawrence brought to *Shall I Tell You What I Think of You?*, but in *I Whistle a Happy Tune* she is just perfect.

As the king, Yul Brunner repeats his remarkable Broadway portrayal, sounding now a trifle more imperious and slightly older. It is a convincing performance, more so now than before, since he is pitted against a seemingly more determined adversary. The remainder of the cast do not measure up to the Broadway performers. The reproduction, from the original sound track, is typically high-powered, and this has a tendency to make things a trifle heavy and overdramatic.

J. F. I.

A NIGHT AT THE APOLLO

Apollo Band of the Year; Coles and Atkins; George Kirby; The Keynoters; Jackie Mabley; Amateur Show.

VANGUARD VRS 9006. 12-in. \$4.98.

The long-celebrated Apollo, located in Harlem, remains one of America's few music-halls, a theater that has its own style, its own humor (some of it incomprehensible to outsiders), and its own extraordinarily responsive audience. For all time, it is now preserved, and I urge you to have a listen, if only for the quick-building laughs brought on so easily by Jackie Mabley and the raucous fun of the horrible amateur show. Not all of it will entertain; almost all of it will interest. There are affectionate

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ROBERT FARNON: *I'm a Dreamer, Two Little Girls in Blue, The Way You Look Tonight*

TED HEATH: *Manhattan, They Didn't Believe Me, Love is Here to Stay*

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★

The Music Box

MAIN STREET

GREAT BARRINGTON, MASS.

notes by Langston Hughes, who knows his Apollo well; and in case you're wondering, the Apollo "Band of the Year" is the big Basie outfit, disguised in nomenclature for contractual reasons. R. K.

FOLK MUSIC

by Howard LaFay

ARCHIVE OF AMERICAN FOLK SONG*Anglo-American Ballads*

The House Carpenter: The Farmer's Cursed Wife: The Gypsy Davy: Barbara Allen; Pretty Polly: The Rich Old Farmer; The Devil's Nine Questions: Old Kimball: One Morning in May: The Little Brown Bulls: The Sioux Indians: Lady of Carlisle: Pretty Polly: It Makes a Long Time Man Feel Bad: O Lord Don't 'Low Me To Beat 'Em.

Edited by Alan Lomax.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AAFS L1. 12-in. (Available from the Library of Congress, Division of Music, Recording Laboratory, Washington 25, D. C. Price: \$4.50 plus federal tax.)

A reissue on LP of a great 78-rpm collection that has been a Library of Congress best seller for fifteen years. While the sound has been improved in the process of transferal, particularly in respect to surface noise, it still remains a long, far cry from anything resembling hi-fi. However, sound is a minor consideration in the evaluation of this release, which features singers and songs belonging to the pure stream of Elizabethan tradition that astounded the British folklorist Cecil Sharp when he found intact in the Southern mountains 400-year-old ballads that had been long forgotten in their native England. Today the timeless isolation of the Ozarks and the Appalachians is ended; radio, highways, industrialization, and the sophisticating influence of Army life on a generation of draftees have, for the most part, dried up the ancient stream. This invaluable recording, made in the Thirties, offers that old musical heritage in its last efflorescence.

John and Elizabeth Lomax, Charles Draves, and Alan Lomax recorded the bulk of the material. The singers are often flat, often off-key. Some of their voices are cracked with age. But beneath the blemishes lies that pristine stream in all its abiding beauty. This is the way it was and can never be again. Recommended to everyone interested in folk music.

ARCHIVE OF AMERICAN FOLK SONG*Afro-American Spirituals, Work Songs, and Ballads*

Trouble So Hard: Choose Your Seat and Set Down: Handwriting on the Wall: The New Buryin' Ground: Lead Me to the Rock: The Blood Strained Banders: Run Old Jeremiab: Ain't No More Cane on This Brazos: Long Hot Summer Days: Long John: Jumpin' Judy: Rosie: I'm Going to Leland: Look Down That Long Lonesome Road: The Grey Goose: John Henry.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AAFS L3. 12-in. (Available from the Library of Congress, Division of Music, Recording Laboratory, Washington 25, D. C. Price: \$4.50 plus federal tax.)

Another LP reissue of notable staples from the 78-rpm catalogue of the Library of Congress, this one offering a brilliant collection of Negro spirituals and work songs recorded *in situ*. The spirituals stem from tiny backwoods churches in the Deep South, the work songs from Southern prison camps, last strongholds of mass manual labor in the machine age. By contemporary standards, the sound is virtually inadmissible, yet the fire, the dignity, the profound realism of the songs transcend any sonic strictures. Witness the haunting, contrapuntal beauty of *Lead Me to the Rock*, a spiritual sung by two convicts in a Mississippi prison. The work songs, complete with interpolated grunts of effort and bite of axe or hoe, are raw and impelling in their dynamism. In summary, a classic of its kind.

ENSEMBLE OF THE BULGARIAN REPUBLIC*Music of Bulgaria*

Soloists, chorus, and orchestra of the Ensemble of the Bulgarian Republic, Phillipe Koutev, cond.

ANGEL 65026. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Ensemble of the Bulgarian Republic, an assemblage of singers and dancers recruited from the "peasantry" of that Balkan country, scored a smash hit last spring in Paris, where usually such manifestations of *le folklore* receive cool, hypercritical appraisal and where this vivid, exciting disk was made. Bulgaria, rugged and mountainous, has not yet succumbed to the great unifying influences of twentieth-century communications. Villages and provinces, secure in their isolation, still preserve their ancient musical heritage. Under the sure direction of Phillipe Koutev, the ensemble gives expert expression to the wild, dissonant—yet frequently tender—music of their countrymen. Satisfactory sound, but no texts and no translations.

ED McCURDY*Blood, Booze 'n Bones*

Darlin' Cory: Josie: The Dublin Murder Ballad: Four Nights Drunk: Cowboy's Lament; Kentucky Moonshiner; No More Booze: Farewell to Grog: Portland County Jail; Banks of the Ohio; John Hardy; The Pig and the Inebriate; Stackerlee; Lamkins: Yo Ho Ho: Lulu: The Drunkard's Doom.

Ed McCurdy, baritone; with banjo accompaniment by Erik Darling.

ELEKTRA EKL 108. 12-in. \$4.98.

Ed McCurdy's intelligence and ability to crystallize the essential mood of a ballad more than compensate for the limitations of his granular voice. In the present collection for example, he manages to transmute the threadbare clichés of the often burlesqued *Fifteen Men on a Dead Man's Chest* into an evocation of murky doom. For those who know McCurdy's work, suffice it to say that he is in peak form; for those who do not, here is a splendid introduction. The engineering is outstanding.

GEORGE SAWAYA TRIO
Arabic Songs of Lebanon and Egypt

George Sawaya Trio and Female Chorus.
FOLKWAYS FP 925. 10-in. \$4.25.

The exotic, repetitious rhythms and refrains of these Middle Eastern love songs are part of a musical culture that is almost unknown to the average Westerner. Their presentation by the Sawaya Trio is wholly idiomatic, and Folkways has obliged with high quality reproduction. An accompanying booklet contains texts in the original Arabic as well as English translations.

ROGER WAGNER CHORALE
Folk Songs of the Frontier

Home on the Range; Night Herding Song; Snag-Tooth Sal; O, Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie; Green Grow the Lilacs; The Old Chisholm Trail; Goodby, Old Paint; Whoopie-Ti-Yi-Yo; The Trail to Mexico; I'm a Poor Lonesome Cowboy; The Buffalo Skinners; Little Joe the Wrangler; Curtains of Night.

Roger Wagner Chorale.
CAPITOL P 8332. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Roger Wagner Chorale's second excursion into the realm of American folk song results in a virile, evocative treatment of an expertly chosen, expertly arranged group of Western ballads. True, the finished product is in the nature of a hybrid, tempering a rough-hewn folk art with polished professionalism. But it is an eminently successful hybrid. For the "original settings" contrived by Roger Wagner and Salli Terri go to the heart of these songs, capturing by turns the vast loneliness of the Western frontier, the inherent poignancy of a cowhand's life, and the fitful merriment which made that life bearable.

A comparison with the Norman Luboff Choir's recent *Songs of the West* (Columbia CL 657) is inevitable, particularly since no less than six ballads are represented on both records. The Luboff group's performance is no mean achievement, and anyone who possesses it is well fixed for Western songs; but it does no discredit to point out that the Wagner Chorale is very close to the nation's top vocal organization and is heard here at its best. Additionally, Capitol has supplied faultless engineering; in fact, the "presence" of this record is almost startling. Recommended.

THE BEST OF JAZZ

by John S. Wilson

BOBBY BROOKMEYER—ZOOT SIMS
Tonight's Jazz Today

Bobby Brookmeyer, valve trombone; Zoot Sims, tenor saxophone; Hank Jones, piano, celeste; Wyatt Ruether, bass; Gus Johnson, drums.

STORYVILLE 907. 12-in. 36 min. \$3.98.

Brookmeyer, Sims, and Hank Jones are among the most consistently rewarding musicians playing jazz today, and it follows that a disk combining their talents should

be of more than passing interest. Sims swaggers his way through it with his typically alert sense of phrasing, Brookmeyer's playing is thoughtful and brooding, and Jones attends the piano with light, expertly directed airiness. The rhythm is rugged on every selection except one, *How Long Has This Been Going On*, which is taken at a glutinous pace.

ELLIOT LAWRENCE
Tiny Kahn and Johnny Mandel Arrangements

FANTASY 3-219. 12-in. 37 min. \$3.98.

Elliot Lawrence is flying the big-band colors with heartening vigor, even in this day when big bands hardly exist at all. The Lawrence band is a week-end group made up of top New York studio men including Al Cohn, Nick Travis, Ernie Royal, and Eddie Bert; on this disk, Zoot Sims is added to the regular personnel and Urbie Green substitutes for Ollie Wilson, one of the regular trombonists. They specialize in vigorous big-band playing of a kind that has almost disappeared from the jazz scene. This is particularly true of the side devoted to the arrangements of Tiny Kahn, whose direct, uncomplicated, and thoroughly swinging music is performed by Lawrence's band with happy zest. This is as good big-band jazz as you will hear anywhere today.

THE MODERN JAZZ SEXTET

Tour de Force; Dizzy Meets Sonny; Old Folks; What's New?; How Deep Is the Ocean?; Mean to Me; Blues for Bird.

Dizzy Gillespie, trumpet; Sonny Stitt, alto saxophone; John Lewis, piano; Percy Heath, bass; Skeeter Best, guitar; Charlie Persip, drums.

NORGRAN MG N-1076. 12-in. 42 min. \$3.98.

The title of this disk, suggesting an association with the Modern Jazz Quartet, is a mite misleading. John Lewis and Percy Heath of the Quartet are present, but they are thoroughly outnumbered, and the approach is that of the out-and-out blowing session rather than the Quartet's carefully organized, developed, and rationalized conceptions. This quibble aside, the disk is an admirable showcase for the stirring alto saxophonist Sonny Stitt, who—practically alone among modern alto men—has achieved a reasonable suppleness of tone. He roars through *Tour de Force* and *Dizzy Meets Sonny* with ingenious gusto, falls into an unbecoming shrillness on the ballad *Old Folks*, and joins with Dizzy Gillespie in an intriguing *Blues for Bird*. On this selection Lewis plays some entrancingly low-down blues piano and is consistently interesting in all his solos. Gillespie is erratic—blatant and unimaginative on *Tour de Force*, spurred to exciting heights by Stitt's challenge on *Dizzy Meets Sonny*, simple, almost without gimmicks, and quite moving on *Blues for Bird*. The disk has its lumpy moments but the work of Stitt and Lewis give it distinction.

BUD POWELL
Piano Interpretation

Conception; East of the Sun; Heart and Soul; Willow Groove; Crazy Rhythm; Wil-

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low Weep for Me; Bean Ann the Boys; Ladybird; Stairway to the Stars.

Bud Powell, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Art Taylor, drums.
 NORGRAN MG N-1077. 12-in. 39 min. \$3.98.

On this disk the playing of Bud Powell, widely considered the dean of modern jazz pianists, is essentially melodic, his single-note developments soundly and economically organized, so that the basic swinging quality in his playing is always apparent. It is especially clear on such slow ballads as *Willow Weep for Me*, which never loses its impetus, thanks to Powell's prodding, searching style combined with Art Taylor's imaginative drumming and George Duvivier's strong, consistent bass line. The general direction of these performances is toward a popularization of Powell, extending to a very Garneresque approach to *Stairway to the Stars*.

TONY SCOTT QUARTET
Both Sides of Tony Scott

Cry Me a River; My Funny Valentine; Star Dust; More Than You Know.

Tony Scott, clarinet; Mundell Lowe, guitar; Teddy Kotick, bass; Shadow Wilson, drums.

Counterpoint Pleasant; East Coast, West Side; You and I; Everything Happens to Me.

Scott; Dick Garcia, guitar; Milt Hinton, bass; Osie Johnson, drums.
 RCA VICTOR LPM 1268. 12-in. 40 min. \$3.98.

Tony Scott's incurably romantic pursuit of the clarinetist's grail — the modern jazz interpretation carried on a robustly swinging beat — is continued on this disk. He comes closer and closer to his goal. This time there is no denying his masterful technique, an aspect of his playing which has sometimes seemed a long time a-coming. I cannot recall any jazz clarinetist who has played with the sustained delicacy that Scott reveals on this disk. His two long *ad lib* performances, *Counterpoint Pleasant* and *East Coast, West Side*, are superb fulfillments of a jazz clarinetist's potential. Most of the ballads on this disk, however, are something else again. The level of technical skill remains constant but the tempos are deadly unto tedium. If there really are two sides to Tony Scott, as the title of the disk suggests, they ought to be introduced to each other. His ballad side could learn from his swinging side.

RICHARD TWARDZIK TRIO

A Crutch for the Crab; Albuquerque Social Swim; Bess You Is My Woman; Yellow Tango; 'Round About Midnight; I'll Remember April.

Richard Twardzik, piano; Carson Smith, bass; Peter Littman, drums.

You Stepped Out of a Dream; Don't Worry 'Bout Me; Bock's Top; Yesterday's Gardenias; At Last; Backfield in Motion.

Russ Freeman, piano; Joe Mondragon, bass; Shelly Manne, drums.
 PACIFIC JAZZ 1212. 12-in. 40 min. \$3.98.

Although it is becoming increasingly difficult in the jazz piano field to tell the players without a score card, Twardzik, who died in 1955 at the age of twenty-four, was an original mind whose approach was certainly distinctive. His sardonic imagination seized on whatever means of expression suited his ends. His version of *I'll Remember April* is a hard-driving adaptation of the modern piano style, while sly needling marks his *Albuquerque Social Swim*. *Yellow Tango*, the most successful of these generally excellent performances, is a delightful mélange of appealingly melodic passages and varied interplays of rhythms in which bass and drums disport as equals with the piano. The disk is of special value because it contains very good examples of the work of an original jazz musician and because it is one of the very few recordings that he made. The Russ Freeman Trio selections are reissues of recordings previously released on a ten-inch LP.

Other August Jazz

The Sudden Getz: For no significant reason, the recording companies seem to have made this Stan Getz month, five Getz disks having appeared simultaneously, including the monthly choices of the two jazz record-of-the-month clubs. For a musician who is widely considered the tenor-saxophone influence of the Fifties, Getz's work on disks is more often than not routine. He is at his best, however, on *The Stan Getz Quintet at Storyville* (ROOST 2209. 12-in. 34 min. \$3.98), recordings made several years ago by the group that provided Getz with much of his reputation. His playing has strength and cohesiveness as he is spurred on by the challenge of guitarist Jimmy Raney and pianist Al Haig and given sound support by Tiny Kahn on drums and Teddy Kotick on bass. The six selections — *Pennies from Heaven; Move; Parker; Thou Swell; The Song Is You; Mosquito Knees* — are among the more memorable small-group performances in recorded jazz.

Six of Getz's performances with the impressive pianist Bengt Hallberg and other Swedish sidemen make up one generally satisfactory side of *The Sound* (ROOST 2207. 12-in. 32 min. \$3.98), but two Getz quartets which contribute to the reverse of the disk are of little consequence. The Jazztone Society's *Stan Getz* (JAZZTONE J-1230. 12-in. 37 min. By subscription) is taken from the Roost files and includes selections by the two quartets heard on Roost 2207, the excellent quintet on Roost 2209, and by another, less spirited quintet. The consequent gamut extends from mediocre to superb. The Getz collection from the American Recording Society, *The Cool Jazz of Stan Getz* (ARS 407. 12-in. 40 min. By subscription), appears to be of more recent vintage, made at a time when Getz's playing has fallen into a rut of listlessness, though there are sparkling moments on the disk contributed by Lou Levy, a wonderfully rhythmic pianist, and by the perceptive valve trombonist Bob Brookmeyer. It is Brookmeyer again who is the saving grace of some other new Getz performances, *Interpretations by the Stan Getz Quintet, No. 3* (NORGRAN MG N-1029. 12-in. 36 min. \$3.98).

Piano Men—and a Woman: *Jazz for the Carriage Trade* (PRESTIGE 7032. 12-in. 36 min. \$4.98) by the George Wallington Quintet puts more emphasis on the work of alto saxophonist Phil Woods and trumpeter Donald Byrd than on that of pianist Wallington, who is a capable and restrained single-note swinger. Both Woods and Byrd enliven the atmosphere at times despite the disturbing shrillness of their tones. One side of *Mel Powell Out on a Limb* (VANGUARD VRS 8506. 12-in. 41 min. \$4.98) is devoted to fussy, over-elaborate septet performances; the other side, on which Powell leads a quintet in a more direct, swing-touched vein, is animated by occasional appearances of the warm-blooded trumpet of Ruby Braff. Braff's rich-toned horn style also dominates *Two by Two* (VANGUARD VRS 8507. 12-in. 49 min. \$4.98), a relaxed collection of Rodgers and Hart tunes played by Braff and pianist Ellis Larkins. The first American recordings by the German pianist Jutta Hipp, *Jutta Hipp at the Hickory House, Vol. 1* (BLUE NOTE BLP 1515. 12-in. 42 min. \$4.98), reveal nothing that might be termed distinctively Hipp, though her playing is brightly à la mode.

Progress?: English jazz musicians, who started producing passable impressions of the early New Orleans style about ten years ago, have now caught up with the bop period. *Modern Jazz* (LONDON LL 1185. 12-in. 40 min. \$3.98), recordings of a London concert in 1954, offers groups led by Don Rendell, Ken Moule, and Tony Crombie going through a process of development that was fairly well completed over here by the end of the Forties. The latest in the RCA Victor Jazz Workshop series, *Billy Byers* (RCA VICTOR LPM 1269. 12-in. 39 min. \$3.98), eschews adventure for a pleasantly unpretentious swinging groove that provides an apt framework for Byers' honest, burry trombone. Columbia's first venture into experimental jazz, *What's New* (COLUMBIA CL 842. 12-in. 48 min. \$3.98), enlists the services of a pair of dedicated cross-breeders, Teo Macero and Bob Prince. What little evidence of jazz there is in Macero's compositions is almost completely buried by his fascination with modern composing techniques. Prince writes with more warmth, but even so his music is more apt to prattle than to sing. Investigation of a different kind is apparent on *Scobey and Clancy* (GOOD TIME JAZZ L-12009. 12-in. 39 min. \$4.85), whereon Bob Scobey's Frisco Band and singer Clancy Hayes have dug up a pair of deservedly obscure Irving Berlin tunes, *At the Devil's Ball* and *I Want to Go Back to Michigan*. They make up for this, though, with an invitingly languid performance of *Lights Out Blues* and several sturdy Scobey solos.

On the Outer Fringe: The Sauter-Finnegan band, which started out so promisingly a couple of years ago, has, with *Adventure in Time* (RCA-Victor LPM 1240. 12-in. 40 min. \$3.98), "an album of percussion music," worked its way into a very lonesome corner. The percussive elements include a variety of things which can be whacked, some tongued wind instruments, and a stricken voice reading a poem. It's a curiosity that is occasionally interesting. *Duane Tatros' Jazz for Moderns* (Contemporary C 3514. 12-in. 34

min. \$4.85) enlists several top West Coast musicians (Jimmy Giuffre, Shelly Manne, Bill Holman, Lennie Niehaus, and others) in cleanly executed performances of some foggy attempts by Tatros (as the notes put it) "move jazz into new areas by removing some of the harmonic limitations which have kept it . . . in the nineteenth century." It's a good plug for the nineteenth century.

THE SPOKEN WORD

CAESAR

Selections from Caesar's *Commentaries*, read in Latin and in English translation, with an introduction, by Moses Hadas. FOLKWAYS FP 97/6. 12-in. \$5.95.

Here are afforded recollections of things past with a vengeance—of the ablative absolute and the subjunctive mode and the third declension. And besides the dim memory of struggle, at sixty lines a night, with the agonizing perplexities of an inflected tongue, are the still vivid scenes of the lone standard-bearer of the Tenth Legion throwing himself overboard from his puny vessel and advancing on the shores of Britain, of the marvelous engineering feat which resulted in the bridging of the Rhine, and of Caesar himself on the verge of battle addressing those soldiers whose blood he had "never willingly squandered."

I very much doubt that the average thirteen-year-old can appreciate Caesar—the beautiful logic of his language, the highly deceptive simplicity with which he composed a sophisticated apologia, the ambiguities of the personality itself. It is good to be given another opportunity at understanding; and thanks are owing to Folkways and to Mr. Hadas for providing it.—The record is accompanied by a brochure with the texts in both Latin and English, the latter seeming to me a model of translation which preserves literal meaning and dignity of tone without being awkward or stilted.

J. G.

HERB SHRINER *On Stage*

Orchestra conducted by Milton Delugg. COLUMBIA CL 774. 12-in. \$3.95.

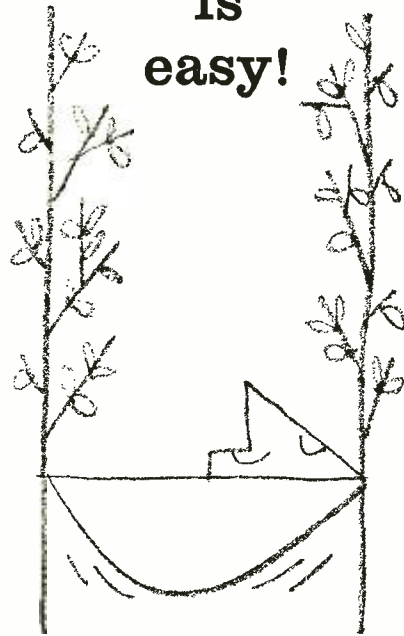
Herb Shriner (who is from Indiana, as almost everyone knows) was trying to recall why he left home—then he remembered: It seems that one day he was playing ball with a bunch of the fellows and ran out of town to catch a fly—and never got around to going back.

Well, that's the way Shriner is and there is quite a bit of him on this record. And as if that isn't enough, he does a little singing and harmonica playing just to make sure there is something for everyone.

It's a pretty jolly record; the kind that you buy, play a couple of times, then put away and bring out only when your friends come in. And, if you have enough friends—well, it's a pretty good buy.

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AMERICANS *on microgroove*



a discography by RAY ELLSWORTH

part II

WHEN WORLD WAR I ended and cultural communication with Europe was resumed, American composers realized that native musical expression would need a vigorous shake-up if it were to keep pace at all with the innovations coming from the studios of men like Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Bartók, and Schoenberg. Many avenues were explored in the ensuing experiments, but none more assiduously than that of jazz. In the early 1920s jazz had already conquered the United States and was quickly spreading over the entire globe. What better way to strike a new note in our national music, the forward-looking American composer asked, than to draw upon this uniquely American and indubitably popular idiom? Almost overnight, jazz-inspired scores began to be composed—and a few of them to be heard. The practitioners of symphonic jazz were many, but one composer towered over all others—George Gershwin of Tin Pan Alley.

Gershwin knew jazz—the popular, danceable variety, anyway, if not the pure New Orleans product—and he learned enough about technical devices and formal structures to enable him to do something big with what he knew. His *Porgy and Bess*, an opera in three acts and nine scenes which has been heard and applauded all the way from San Francisco to Moscow, is a veritable towering masterpiece, of the sort to which a critic can direct no comment more adverse than “I happen not to like it” without seeming a fool. Columbia offers *Porgy* complete (SL 162, three records) in a gripping production by Goddard Lieberson, with a first-rate cast and good engineering. Decca offers a disk of excerpts by the original cast—including Todd Duncan—conducted by Alexander Smallens; old but sonically acceptable. Gershwin's other “serious” compositions are known to everyone: the *Rhapsody in Blue*, for piano and orchestra; *An American in Paris*, a tone poem for orchestra; the Concerto in F, for piano and orchestra; the short but lively *Cuban Overture*; and several Preludes for solo piano. The best omnibus collection is Columbia ML 4849, which contains the *Rhapsody in Blue*, the

Concerto in F, and *An American in Paris* and which features Oscar Levant, a sympathetic Gershwin interpreter, as piano soloist. Arturo Toscanini has given his particular kind of illumination to *An American in Paris* (RCA Victor LM 9020), and some may want the record for that reason. An abbreviated version of the *Rhapsody* performed by Paul Whiteman and Orchestra (RCA Victor LPT 29) may attract because it has Gershwin playing the piano part, but prospective purchasers should be warned that the sound is low-fi.

It has been said that George Gershwin opened the doors of the concert hall to jazz music, but this is not quite accurate. The *Rhapsody in Blue* dates from February 1924. However, the Frenchman Darius Milhaud's jazzy *Création du Monde* already had been heard by then, and so had the music of another jazz-conscious American, John Alden Carpenter, probably the first serious composer to give real attention to jazz. A pupil of John Knowles Paine, an aristocratic New Englander with Puritan ancestors, Carpenter broke early with the locally dominant German tradition and became a sort of musical American cosmopolite. He is known to concertgoers for a light-hearted orchestral suite called *Adventures in a Perambulator* (Concert Hall 1140) as well as for his two jazz ballet scores: *Krazy Kat* (1921), inspired by the George Herriman comic strip, and *Skyscrapers*, commissioned (though not produced) by Diaghilev and first performed at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1926. The latter pair of works can be heard complete, adequately performed, on American Recording Society (ARS) 37.

Down through the years following the First World War, serious composers of various persuasions gave brief recognition to jazz, writing one or perhaps two compositions in the idiom, turning away from it thereafter. Few such works are familiar today, fewer still are on records. If jazz as a source of American flavor waned rather quickly then, it was probably because the young composers returning from apprenticeship in France found they could easily do without it. The new European influences did not, as the older ones seemed to

have done, sap our musicians of their vitality. If anything, these new ideas kindled creative vigor. The note of restlessness, the rather savage clang and clatter associated with the new European music was easily adapted to an America that was itself full of restlessness. This fiery process of amalgamation was to enliven a most significant decade in American music. The new and the old were joined in battle, and this time the new was really new. We may today tend to think of that period in terms of the “jazz age,” the flapper, and a pervading irresponsibility, but we must remember that there was very little of the frivolous in this musical locking of horns. The conservative tradition, entrenched in the schools, strong with carried-over prestige, continued to dominate the concert halls. But the adventurous young men,—Sessions, Ruggles, Harris, Riegger— with their experiments and imported new techniques, took surprisingly little time to fight their way to recognition. Accused of frivolity they may have been; guilty of it they were not. We know that now, because nearly all of their works embody something of the techniques that have become standard usage in music making today.

On the other hand, composers important both to the decade and to subsequent American music continued to employ melody and harmony and orchestral timbre in ways basically like those of the classic-romantics. Despite its conservative foundation, the music written by these composers is far from negligible. There is no belittling the achievements of Deems Taylor, Leo Sowerby, Howard Hanson, Virgil Thomson, Randall Thompson, and Douglas Moore, and their music is more readily approached and comprehended than that of their more experimentally-bent contemporaries.

Deems Taylor, known to a wide audience as a critic and radio commentator, is the only American composer to date to have had two operas introduced by the Metropolitan—*The King's Henchman* (1927) and *Peter Ibbetson* (1931). Both of them were lavishly produced, and occasioned much excitement, great publicity, and gratifying business at the box office.

Yet the critics were not pleased. *The King's Henchman* had a rather gloomy, Tristanesque kind of story, set in tenth-century England, with quasi-Wagnerian music to complete the likeness. *Peter Ibbetson* was a drawing-room tragedy after the Du Maurier novel, and its light, facile music was thought too weak to support the drama. Neither opera has established itself in the repertory, or been recorded on LP. However, music from both operas was once in the 78-rpm catalogues of both Columbia and Victor, and the old Victor recording of a slice of Act III of *The King's Henchman* has turned up on a Lawrence Tibbett recital (RCA Camden CAL 171). Other music by Taylor to reach LP is all from orchestral works (though he wrote a third opera, *Ramuntcho*), a short work called *Portrait of a Lady* (ARS 23), and some incidental music composed for a stage play, *Casanova* (Allegro-Elite LP 3150). Generally, his music is intelligent, witty, well made, and listenable. He belongs to the older tradition completely. And for the most part so does the Midwesterner Leo Sowerby, whose first success, an orchestral suite called *From the Northland* (1922), has been recorded together with another descriptive work, the 1929 tone poem *Prairie*, on ARS 14. Both are skillful, evocative examples of conventional scene painting in music. Sowerby's only other large work to reach LP so far, the B major Symphony for Organ (Kendall LP 2552), is a first-rate piece, marked by considerable dissonance.

Howard Hanson, like Deems Taylor, is best known today for activities other than composing—he is director of the Eastman School of Music and conductor of the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra. Hanson has followed his creative career undeterred by the fact that his music may sound old-fashioned to some ears. As Irving Kolodin has observed, "His kind of frankly personal, unvarnished emotionalism is a little out of fashion in contemporary musical circles, where to be contemporary is often more highly valued than to be musical."

Hanson's opera *Merry Mount*, commissioned and produced by the Metropolitan in 1934, stands comparison with the Deems Taylor operas in the excitement and speculation that it aroused in its day. Like the Taylor operas, *Merry Mount* was given a lavish production and was attended by no little publicity. But, again like Mr. Taylor's efforts, the work failed to stick in the repertory. The critics had familiar complaints: the work was derivative and, even though given the advantage of a native subject (New England witchcraft), was too deeply committed to European models to justify any claim to real originality. In its case, too, a solitary excerpt has turned up on the RCA Camden LP featuring Lawrence Tibbett. Hanson's other major works include five symphonies, a piano concerto, two organ concertos, and several large choral works. Much of this music has been recorded on LP, mostly with the composer conducting. I find the symphonies of chief interest. Hanson has been called "the American Sibelius" because of the far-north flavor that gets into most of these works—all of which, incidentally, have been recorded. My favorites are the unabashedly romantic Symphony No. 2

(Columbia ML 4638) and the Symphony No. 5, called *Sinfonia Sacra*, which is splendidly recorded and performed on Mercury MG 40014.

Virgil Thomson approximates in his music the wit, intelligence, and good taste which distinguished his music criticism in the *New York Herald Tribune* from 1940 to 1954. An eclectic of a peculiar sort, Thomson's impish radicalism is not in his technique nor in his tonality, but rather in his irreverent attitude toward the stuffy. As a composer, he has received the most *réclame* for his opera *Four Saints in Three Acts*, to words by Gertrude Stein. This and his later stage work, *The Mother of Us All*, also to a Stein text, seem to have evoked in the minds of many an image of Thomson as the indefatigable Paris-based American ex-expatriate, 1926 model, bent on antibourgeois mischief with a twinkle in the eye and no harm done. This view does scant justice to the deep roots Thomson has put down in his native soil. His use of American folk material (particularly hymn tunes) is extensive and exceedingly tasteful. In both of his operas he mixes a rich variety of Americana (from revival hymnody to popular song idiom) with the supposedly alien accent of an Erik Satie, and he achieves a singular and delightful rightness in context. *Four Saints in Three Acts* has been recorded in slightly abridged form with Thomson conducting and directing an excellent all-Negro cast (RCA Victor LCT 1139). *The Mother of Us All* is so far available only in an orchestral suite played by Werner Janssen on Columbia ML 4468, which record also contains Thomson's impressive Cello Concerto, with Luigi Silva as soloist with the Janssen orchestral forces. At least one highly responsible critic (Alfred Frankenstein) has declared this work to be "the best cello concerto since Haydn." Alas, both LPs have been marked for deletion.

Thomson's other music is well repre-



Copland, Thomson, Schuman, Cowell.

sented on LP. He has composed some first-rate movie scores, among which the *Acadian Songs and Dances* from Robert Flaherty's *Louisiana Story* (Decca 9616) and *The Plough That Broke the Plains* from the Pare Lorentz film (Decca 7572) are especially enjoyable. Thomson's music from another Lorentz movie, *The River*, is on ARS 8, one of that company's happier recordings. His ballet suite *Filling Station* (which consists principally of very clever variations on *We Won't Go Home Until Morning*) is to be heard, in very high fi, on Vox PL 9050, coupled with Hershey Kay's *Western Symphony*, and he has ten enchanting piano études on a ten-inch Decca disk (4083).

Randall Thompson, another in this "orthodox" group, should certainly be known to a wider public than he is. His Symphony No. 2 (ARS 45) shows modernity chiefly in its sparse instrumentation and economy of means; otherwise it is traditional, and has a beautiful second movement built on a *Deep River* kind of theme. Thompson is also represented by his *Testament of Freedom* (Mercury MG 40000), a choral work of simplicity and grandeur, and by a Quartet in D minor (Concert Hall 1092). Douglas Mocce, too, belongs among the conservative composers. His Symphony in A, though not programmatic, nevertheless manages to convey a pleasant American flavor in a recording no more than satisfactory (ARS 45), and his Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, well reproduced on Columbia ML 4494, is a conservative, melodic, listenable chamber work. Moore is known also for his "folk-opera" *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, not recorded.

Mention should be made too of Cleveland's Herbert Elwell, whose ballet score *The Happy Hypocrite* (ARS 37) is a stunning work, deserving of much more popularity than it enjoys; of Burrill Phillips, who has written a wholly delightful orchestral piece called *Selections from McGuffey's Reader* (ARS 38), evoking the quaint New England landscape of Grandma Moses' paintings; and of Robert McBride, whose lively Violin Concerto (ARS 116) should stir any American's affections at first hearing.

Between these composers of traditional tendencies and the out-and-out experimentalists there are a number of composers who might be called eclectics or conservative-moderns. Though they have not stayed in the romantic mainstream, they have nevertheless written largely in accessible styles. A good example is Paul Creston, one of the most powerful and attractive of contemporary American composers. His music is modern without being harsh, emotional without being sticky, and informed generally by a sincerity that inspires respect. Creston is in the LP catalogue with his Second and Third Symphonies, performed by Howard Mitchell and the National Symphony in estimable sound on Westminster WL 5272, songful, stately, compositions; a fine String Quartet (Capitol P 8260); *Invocation and Dance*, a sturdy study in rhythm (Columbia KL 5039); and a Sonata for Saxophone and Piano (Columbia ML 4989), well wrought if lightweight. Other composers in this "conservative-modern" group are Samuel Barber and Gian-Carlo Menotti.

Samuel Barber, perhaps the most frequently performed American composer of stature living today, possesses the rare faculty of being able to touch greatness and the heart of the listener at the same time. His short and very moving Adagio for Strings, Op. 11, has been performed by practically every major orchestra in the world, including the NBC Symphony under Toscanini. The Maestro's recording exists only on 78 rpm, but there are three good performances on LP. Barber reversed the process most young composers seem to go through, from radicalism to sanity, and has instead gone from traditionalism in early works to modernisms—though not very frightening modernisms—in his later ones. Of his romantically-styled



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works, the listener will find one or more of the following worth attention: *School for Scandal Overture* (RCA Camden CAL 205; Mercury MG 40002), *Music for a Scene from Shelley* (ARS 26), Sonata for Cello and Piano (Concert Hall 1092; Stradivari 602), Symphony No. 1 (Mercury MG 40014), Concerto for Cello and Orchestra (London LPS 332), and *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* (Columbia ML 2174). The latter, a setting for soprano voice and chamber orchestra of a prose poem by James Agee, is as tasteful a bit of Americana as you are likely to find anywhere. The works in which Barber experiments with modern techniques are the *Capricorn Concerto* (Concert Hall 1078), the *Symphony No. 2* and *Medea Suite* (both on London LL 1328), and his *Piano Sonata* (RCA Victor LM 1113). Also notable are his songs, in particular the somberly beautiful setting for baritone and string quartet of Matthew Arnold's poem *Dover Beach*, once a collector's item on 78 rpm (because Barber himself sang it with the Curtis String Quartet), now available on LP as part of Paul Hume's *Critic's Choice* collection (RCA Victor LCT 1158). Notable also is the cycle *Hermit Songs* (Columbia ML 4988), sung by Leontyne Price with Barber at the piano. These are settings of texts written by thirteenth-century scholar-monks on the margins of manuscripts, some of them mystical, most of them a little ribald.

Gian-Carlo Menotti, born in Milan in 1911, came to America when he was seventeen to study at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. He has lived here ever since, writing operas in English, and has become a vital figure in the American musical scene. His first works, written in his twenties, are modern pieces in the old *opera buffa* style—*Amelia Goes to the Ball*, *The Old Maid and the Thief*, *The Telephone*—light, deft, amazing works from so young a man. His full-length, serious operas—*The Medium*, *The Consul*, *The Saint of Bleeker Street*—have put him in the front rank of modern composers. In 1951 he wrote a short operafantasy, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, which has already become a Christmas classic. Menotti exhibits a consummate craftsmanship, an imagination refreshingly vivid and bold, and a sense of theater hard to match. If his operas do have certain shortcomings (critics point to his closeness to Puccini, his thin veneer of modernism, his wild melodrama, his resort to theatrical shock-effects), they nevertheless throb with life on the stage, the television screen, or records.

All but two of Menotti's operas (*The Old Maid and the Thief* and *The Island God*) have been recorded. Since in most cases the recordings have been made with the original casts, supervised by the composer, their authenticity is patent. There is a choice of recordings only in the case of *The Medium*, which is available on Columbia OSL 154 and on Mercury MGL 7, both of them two-LP albums. The Columbia set features the original Broadway cast and has *The Telephone*, this opera's perennial curtain-raiser, as a bonus. The Mercury set was taken from the sound track of the Italian-made movie, and features—in addition to Marie Powers, who sings in both sets—Anna Maria Alber-

ghetti, the extraordinary young Italian soprano. Menotti also has two instrumental efforts in the catalogues: a ballet suite, *Sebastian* (RCA Victor LM 1858) and a Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (RCA Victor LM 1868), both piquant and tuneful works in the romantic tradition, well performed and reproduced.

While many musical innovations were imported from Europe, America had its own share of men unhappy with the musical *status quo*. The decade of the Twenties is usually considered the era of nonconformity, but some rugged individualists were kicking over the traces before then. Thus, though George Antheil seems to have won the title of American music's *enfant terrible* with his antics of the mid-Twenties, we find Henry Cowell (no negligible "bad boy" himself) hitting the piano keys with his elbows to produce "tone clusters" in 1912, at the tender age of fifteen. Carl Ruggles produced a savagely dissonant work called *Angels* as early as 1921. A number of other composers—some still at work, some now lost in obscurity—cultivated new sonorities in the years before the Twenties burst upon us. For those music lovers who delight in the strange, who like to be puzzled and astonished, this area of musical Americana can be a positive paradise.

If we are to examine the experimentalists chronologically, we should begin with Charles Edward Ives. Born in Danbury, Connecticut, in 1874, the son of a bandmaster and music teacher, Ives was a solitary Yankee, half businessman, half musician, vigilantly self-reliant, independent, and determinedly homespun. He not only began experimenting with such standard devices of modernity as polytonality, extreme dissonance, tone clusters, quarter tones, wide melodic skips, etc., in the 1890s (before even the most advanced Europeans did), but he created important, large-scale, lasting music as well. However, he composed nights and Sundays only, worked regularly at his successful insurance business, refused to enter the musical arena, and was little known to his contemporaries. He provided no leadership to American musicians, exerted no influence. By the time his music began to be heard (his Second Symphony, written in 1902, was not performed at all until 1951), almost all of his independently worked out inventions already had become familiar devices on the gadget-rack, imported from Europe.

The importance of this man, however, does not end with what he invented or when he invented it. It lies in his music, its vigor, its deep-grained Americanism. A musical nationality was not with Ives, as with some composers, a sort of cloak to don when he wished to "communicate" with his fellow Americans; it was integral to his personality. The average music lover may be put off by all the reference to extreme modernism in the music of Ives. In truth, much of it is "difficult" and necessitates a certain amount of cultivation before it will yield its pleasures fully. However, there are points of contact in Ives, where the curious listener can sample the flavor without undue strain on his ears.

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468) serves as a good introduction; it is reflective, craftsmanlike, melodic, almost a chamber symphony. For this work, written in 1911, Ives received the Pulitzer Prize in 1947. His highly individual songs are another contact point. Helen Boatwright sings twenty-four of them, with John Kirkpatrick at the piano, on Overtone LP-7, a disk that has been deservedly much praised. Do not be put off by the naïveté of some of Ives's texts; listen to the music. The famous *Concord Piano Sonata* is rough going for most people, but worth the trouble of acquaintance; John Kirkpatrick, one of the few pianists to attempt this nearly unplayable work, has recorded it on Columbia ML 4250, a performance likely to go unchallenged for some time. Ives wrote four symphonies—one of which (the Fourth, composed in 1910) has yet to be performed in its entirety, let alone recorded—plus choral and chamber music works, some of which are finding their way into the catalogue. Outstanding are the four sonatas for violin and piano recently issued on Mercury MG 50096/7, in performance by Rafael Druian and John Simms. Perhaps better played was the version No. 2 by Patricia Travers and Otro Herz on Columbia ML 2169, but this tencher was withdrawn in March.

Vermont Carl Ruggles is often mentioned along with Ives among experimentalist Americans. Indeed, there are similarities of personality and reputation. Like Ives, Ruggles is an individualist, self-taught, homespun, determined to go his own way. His music is apt to display cyclopean concepts, expressed in savage dissonance sometimes slightly reminiscent of sounds made by Schoenberg. Such a work is his 1921 piece *Angels*, scored for six muted trumpets, and the orchestral *Men and Mountains*. His music has been little performed, and only recently has any of it been recorded. Columbia has issued the *Lilacs* bit from *Men and Mountains*, together with *Portals*, a short string piece, and the four *Evocations* for solo piano (Columbia ML 4968)—a small sampling for so complex a musician, but worthwhile for all that.

Of course, there are other composers of reputation who could be included with Ives and Ruggles among the experimenters. A representative roll call would certainly name Henry Cowell, George Antheil, Edgar Varèse, John Cage, and Harry Partch. Though not experimentalist in the same way, Adolph Weiss, Wallingford Riegger, and Ben Weber are native-born composers who have adopted Arnold Schoenberg's twelve-tone system for most of their compositions and who can be considered here too.

In some ways it is unfortunate that Henry Cowell had the "experimental" label pinned on him early in his career, for he is more properly an eclectic. He has experimented not only with "tone clusters," but also fruitfully with rhythmic values, inventing (with Leon Theremin) a gadget called "Rhythmicon" designed to reproduce all kinds of rhythms and rhythmic combinations. Cowell also has used Americana to rich effect, particularly in his Hymns and Fuguing Tunes, two of which have been recorded in rather stodgy performance by F. Charles Adler and a Viennese orchestra on Unicorn 1011. It

is for his symphonies, however, that Cowell most merits the attention of the music lover. He has written eleven of them to date, three of which are available on disks; they are works of novelty, beauty, and emotional power.

George Antheil is probably the only serious composer to cause a riot in Carnegie Hall. His *Ballet mécanique*, scored for ten pianos, airplane propeller, and other noisy gadgets, raised the commotion in 1927 and gave Antheil fame as the "bad boy" of American music. Antheil had lived in Paris for a time, breathing the new air of Stravinsky and Les Six, and the *Ballet mécanique* was his contribution to the daring of the day. Recorded recently (Columbia ML 4956), it has caused no riots in the record stores but has revealed itself as music of very considerable complexity and interest. The mechanistic symbolism that governed its composition, however, has not proven capable of much development, and Antheil now has abandoned it. Latest of his works to stir attention was the television ballet music *Capital of the World*, superbly recorded on Capitol P 8278. Most of the catalogue listings under his name are minor Antheil. An exception is his Fifth Symphony (SPA 16)—brilliant, but with the influence of Shostakovich heavily upon it.

French-born Edgar Varèse came to the United States in 1916, has lived here ever since, and is considered an American composer. His musical bent toward "the art of noises" was formulated, however, in Europe. He has remained uncompromising in his attitude, which is that of a scientist rather than that of an intuitive artist. A sampling of Varèse is provided on EMS 401; the titles manage to convey something of his musical ideas: *Density 21-5*, *Intégrales*, *Ionization*, *Octandre*. The third-mentioned of these is, of course, familiar to most veteran audiophiles, having been the hi-fi marvel of 1951. Varèse has created a strange world of abstract sound, varied, complex, and impressive, but not easily entered.

John Cage is another composer primarily interested in percussive effects. Cage is famous for his "prepared piano" (what one critic has dubbed his "well-tampered clavichord"), which is an ordinary piano with the strings muted and otherwise transformed by an assortment of small objects. This he uses in conjunction with a highly individual rhythmic system; the weird, gamelangelike results can be heard on two Dial LPs (19/20). Cage has also written a composition for twelve radios, to be turned on and off, as well as a piece called *Four Minutes and Forty-four Seconds*, in which the concert pianist (it is a piano work, presumably) sits in silence for four minutes and forty-four seconds: if these are ever recorded, Emory Cook will no doubt be the man to do it.

Harry Partch, of Marin City, California, is the connoisseur's delight in the field of musical experimentation. His works are scored largely for instruments of his own invention, and are based on a forty-three-tone-to-the-octave system of acoustic (not equal) intonation, a system introduced by Mr. Partch and explained in his book *Genesis of a Music* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1949). Some of Mr. Partch's instruments: a "marimba eroica," built



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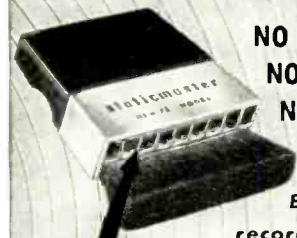
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of three "large" redwood blocks with resonators; a "brass marimba" of eleven spruce blocks with red wood resonators; a "kithara," patterned after an ancient Grecian vase design, with seventy-two strings of equal length; and "cloud-chamber bowls," the tops and bottoms of Pyrex carboys from which the centers have been cut. Odd as some of Mr. Partch's thinking may sound at first glance, a little inspection reveals that it contains no small amount of old-fashioned horse sense. He has recorded some of his music on two sets of LPs; they are of professional sonic quality and are available from him at Box 387, Marin City, California. The first, *Plectra and Percussion Dances* (one LP, \$7.50) contains three works notable for rhythmic subtlety and imagination; the sounds are uncanny but the thought is musical. A more ambitious undertaking is his *Oedipus* (two LPs, \$12.50), an abbreviated modern version of the Sophocles tragedy by Mr. Partch and Jordan Churchill, with Partch's original music much in evidence. This is a major experiment in modern music-drama, and largely a successful one, wherein the music artfully underlines the spoken (not sung) words. It is a rather astonishing accomplishment.

When Arnold Schoenberg introduced his twelve-tone system of composition to the musical world in the first quarter of the century, he was making history of a sort different from Antheil's with his "mechanical music" or Cowell's with his "tone clusters." The system produced not just a "new sound" but a new way of writing music. In America a rather large number of musicians have used the system in parts of their work; however, the three men cited previously—Weiss, Riegger, and Weber—are those who have used it most consistently and so have become known as twelve-tone composers.

Adolph Weiss, born in Maryland in 1891, was one of Schoenberg's earliest American followers, having, as a young man, studied with him in Vienna. None of his works has yet been recorded, though critics are agreed that they have considerable merit. Wallingford Riegger has been somewhat more fortunate. This composer recently (1955) celebrated his seventieth birthday amid an accumulation of belated honors and serious attention. His early works were romantic, but in 1927, with his *Study in Sonority*, he struck out in the experimental vein he has followed ever since. His first work employing a twelve-tone row came in 1931, a piece for orchestra called *Dichotomy*, and in the ensuing years he has written with increasing distinction in the twelve-tone system, or slight variations thereof. His Third Symphony, written in 1948, is Riegger at his most impressive, and it has been reasonably well recorded by Columbia (ML 4902), with Howard Hanson conducting the Eastman-Rochester Symphony.

Ben Weber, born in St. Louis in 1916, is one of several young men attracted to the twelve-tone method, and he has put it to excellent use. Most of his compositions have been chamber works, though he has written a ballet called *The Pool of Darkness* and a *Symphony on Poems of William Blake*—this last recorded by Leopold Stokowski (RCA Victor LM 1785). The American Recording Society

has issued his moving *Concert Aria After Solomon* for soprano and orchestra (ARS 10).

The foregoing survey is an effort to chart the main streams that American music has followed. Composers, however, have a way of eluding categories. The bulk of American music since World War I reflects a mixture of all these influences, without any one of them dominating. Thus there are many composers who cannot be lumped under a technique—indeed, there are too many for comfort, since dealing with each facet of each would take a volume. Certainly, any list of contemporary Americans would have to include Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Roger Sessions, William Schuman, Walter Piston, Marc Blitzstein, and Leonard Bernstein. Most of these writers are older men and established in the American musical hierarchy—Bernstein as to actual age excepted, though certainly he is firmly established. The list of younger men of remarkable talents active today is much longer than space allows in this survey. But with that proviso made, another representative sampling might be: Norman Dello Joio, Peter Mennin, David Diamond, Alan Hovhaness, Arthur Berger, and Harold Shaper.

The first of the older composers listed above to emerge on the American scene was Roger Sessions. Born in 1896 in Brooklyn, Sessions entered Harvard at fourteen, later studied with Horatio Parker at Yale, and also with Ernest Bloch. He won attention first with his incidental music for a performance of Andreyev's tragic drama *The Black Maskers*, given at Smith College in 1923. In 1928 he fashioned a symphonic suite in four movements from this music, and it has remained his most popular work (ARS 115). It is exciting, colorful, dramatic, and uncompromisingly modern—not a whiff of the archaic about it. Sessions has since followed an ascetic musical path which has kept his music from a wide public. He is, nevertheless, on LP with some important achievements—his Second Symphony (Columbia ML 4784) and the Piano Sonata No. 2 (Music-Library 7003), both works "difficult" but highly regarded.

Marc Blitzstein is a major contributor to our musical life, not yet to be encountered on a record rack at all, although Westminster promises to remedy this lack very soon. He has written two remarkable musical plays, *The Cradle Will Rock* and *No For An Answer*, also an opera, *Regina*, made from the Lillian Hellman play *The Little Foxes*, and a powerful symphony, *The Airborne*. To date Blitzstein has been a victim of record company economics; his best work has been for the stage, and large-cast recordings are expensive, even when the works are in the public domain. Whatever the problems, they should be solved. Blitzstein is a greatly gifted composer who successfully fuses art music and popular music to a serious purpose—though he suggests neither Gershwin, in this respect, nor Bernstein. Rather, he brings to mind Kurt Weill of *The Three Penny Opera*, which Blitzstein translated into English for its current revival.

Aaron Copland and Roy Harris, with their spare, laconic musical utterances, their similar interest in the American West, their frequent drawing on Western-style folk material, have tried conspicuously to

express the American character in music. Apparently they have succeeded, for their names, in the public mind, have become synonymous with American serious music. Their work, however, has few specific similarities. Harris has kept his music addressed primarily to concert-hall audiences (with excursions into radio), while Copland has written largely for the stage—both opera and ballet—and for films. Harris seems interested in musical structure and rich tonal values, while Copland's characteristic sound is rhythmic, declamatory, and austere.

Born in Brooklyn in 1900, Aaron Copland decided to become a composer when he was about fifteen. He thereupon initiated a career pattern that became a familiar one for two decades: study with Nadia Boulanger in France (Copland was her first American pupil), a Guggenheim Fellowship for continued study (he received the first one granted to a composer), final recognition and performance by Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. Copland lost no time attempting a composition which would "immediately be recognized as American in character." This was his orchestral suite *Music for the Theater* (M-G-M 3095). Most of it, despite his intent, sounds like Stravinsky, but there are touches of American dance rhythms (in strong polytonal texture). A jazz flavoring also provided the American touch to his next major work, the 1926 Piano Concerto (Concert Hall 1238). Copland has since turned away from jazz as too limited an idiom and has been correspondingly modest about these early works. He need not be. They are both still fresh and exciting.

Copland also veered away from "Americanisms" in his music from time to time, wishing to prove his abilities in "pure" music; and this "austere" music is, as Copland has himself remarked, difficult to play and for audiences to comprehend—though getting less so as time goes by. Copland's compositions in this style include the *Short Symphony*, *Statements for Orchestra*, Piano Variations, the piano sonata, trio *Vitebsk*, and the Third Symphony. Nevertheless it is the music for stage, ballet, and films, which contain the "Americanisms" Copland is so uncertainly fond of, that have largely spread his fame. *El Salón México*, *Appalachian Spring*, *Rodeo*, *Billy the Kid*, *A Lincoln Portrait*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Our Town*, *The Red Pony*, and *Quiet City* have rightly endeared him to a wide public. Except for *Of Mice and Men*, they are all on LP in good performances. Copland is one American composer whose career can be effectively studied on recordings. One warning: the Urania and Vanguard versions of *Appalachian Spring*, recorded abroad, cannot be recommended because of particularly unfortunate misreadings of the composer's intentions.

If accident of birth can give anyone a clear title to Americanism, it did to Roy Harris. He was born in a log cabin on Lincoln's birthday, in Lincoln County, Oklahoma. He did not realize his vocation until 1922, when he was twenty-four, and his first recognition as a composer came four years later, when Howard Hanson and the Rochester Orchestra played his Andante for Strings. Then followed study in Paris with the remarkable Mlle. Boulanger, a

Guggenheim Fellowship, and the eventual sponsorship of Koussevitzky and the Boston Orchestra. The "household word" kind of fame came to him in the 1930s, culminating in the astonishing success of his widely played Third Symphony. Since then, quixotically enough, his star seems to have waned. His name remains firmly identified in the public mind with American music, while his large output suffers comparative neglect.

Harris has so far written seven symphonies, three of which are on LP—the famous Third (three times for this one: Mercury MG 40004, RCA Victor LCT 1153, and ARS 115), the *Symphony 1933*, and the Seventh Symphony (the last two coupled on Columbia ML 5095). The Third receives its finest recorded performance on the RCA Victor LP, being the original 78-rpm version by Koussevitzky; the Mercury LP has a very respectable performance by Howard Hanson with modern clarity of sound. The new Columbia issue coupled Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony on the *Symphony 1933* and Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra on the Seventh Symphony, making it about as attractive a Harris item as could be imagined. Harris is further represented in the LP catalogue by a Sonata for Violin and Piano (Columbia ML 4842), which probably will not do much toward restoring him to favor among audiences, and with two major accomplishments on one record: a Fantasy for piano and orchestra and a dramatic "cantata of lamentation" entitled *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight* (M-G-M 3210), which should do a great deal.

William Schuman, a pupil of Roy Harris, is one of a new group of composers trained completely in the United States. A New Yorker, graduated from Columbia University in 1935, he is now president of the Juilliard School of Music. Mr. Schuman is a much honored composer and he writes the kind of music that compels respect. It is characterized by a dramatic intensity and sense of power, and by considerable dissonance and highly complex rhythmic texture. Schuman has dipped into the folklore of America, though not as much as his former teacher. He cultivates it raw in a piece called *American Festival Overture* (ARS 115), based on a head-rattling New York street yell, remembered from his youth, which he says was used to call the gang together. The exuberance of this piece is an astonishment, its working-out a dazzlement. Jazz effects get into some of his work, for instance the final movement of his Fourth Symphony (not recorded) and the last movement of his Symphony for Strings (Capital P 8212), but there is little else that can be called jazzy about it. His recent Sixth Symphony (Columbia ML 4992) pleads its cause, as one reviewer of it remarked, "from the very edge of the footlights." *Undertow* and *Judith* (both on Mercury MG 10088) are ballet scores in the same vein of rich sonority, extreme dissonance, and propulsive energy.

In Walter Piston we have the erudite academician continuing the classical tradition in modern music. Piston also studied in Paris with Nadia Boulanger and later became professor of music at Harvard, where for the last thirty years he has

taught theory and composition. He has mastered and used in his carefully fashioned music most of the available modern techniques, and has shown a deep interest in American popular idioms. His most celebrated work, the suite from the ballet *The Incredible Flutist*, happens also to be his least representative work, for Piston does not ordinarily write either programmatic or stage music. His symphonies represent him better. There are six to date, three of which have been recorded. The Second Symphony (ARS 112) is a skillful, polished, light-textured work in a rather happy vein; the Third (Mercury MG 40010), a big, complex, profound, genuinely exciting piece of music, modern in accent but shaped in the grand manner; the more recent Fourth (Columbia ML 4992), a lighter work, melodic, and full of smoothly flowing rhythms. Altogether, Piston is one of our finest contemporary musicians, perhaps undervalued in our search for startling novelties. His uses of American popular idioms should not be misapprehended: they are an organic part of a complex musical texture and are not ornamental.

Leonard Bernstein's fame as an American composer rests largely on his two Broadway musical scores, *On the Town*, and *Wonderful Town*, and also on the lively success of his ballet score *Fancy Free*. His few concert pieces, admirable as they are, have not touched the accomplishments of the older men with whom I have bracketed him here. Bernstein, however, is more than just a prosperous young music writer. He is a man of remarkable interpretative gifts, both as pianist and conductor, and is gaining new fame as an educator, via TV. Among his serious works the record collector can choose from the *Jeremiah* Symphony and *Facsimile*, both on RCA Camden CAL 196; *The Age of Anxiety* (Symphony No. 2) on Columbia ML 4325; and *Fancy Free* (Decca 6023, with Bernstein conducting; Capitol P 8196). There are also some worthwhile smaller works.

Bernstein is now often compared with George Gershwin because of the adroitness with which he combines serious and popular elements in some of his work. The comparison can be pushed too far, however, for Bernstein has gone from serious music into popular, instead of the other way around, as Gershwin did. As a result, his fusions of the two elements differ sharply from Gershwin's.

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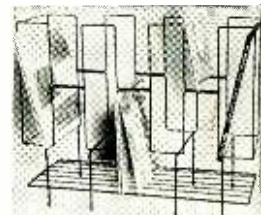
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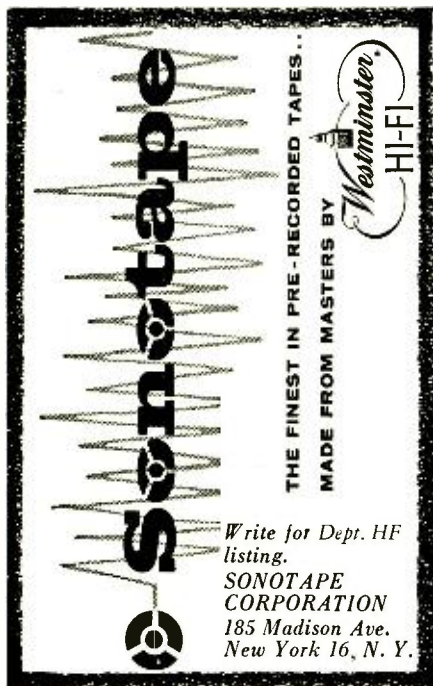
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"Promising young men" is a deadly designation which I cordially dislike and here repudiate. Some of the men who follow may not be especially young and a good many are more than promising. However, these are the ones who seem to have the best years of their careers still before them (rather than behind them) and as such can be said to be up and coming.

Norman Dello Joio, born in 1913 in New York City, is an apt case in point. This composer seems to be in the act of rising to his full height. Two recent operas, *The Ruby* and *The Trial at Rouen*, both presented on television with stunning success, have brought audiences to a real awareness of Dello Joio's presence in American music. Neither work is, alas, recorded yet. On record is Dello Joio's earlier preoccupation with *The Maid*, his *Triumph of St. Joan* Symphony (Columbia ML 4615) as well as the *Variations and Capriccio* for violin and piano (Columbia ML 4854) and an early, rather impressive vocal work, *A Psalm of David* (Concert Hall 1118). Dello Joio's harmony is modern, his rhythms brisk, his workmanship elegant; best of all, he has an extraordinary lyric gift.

In Peter Mennin we have a composer who has written (in addition to chamber, choral, and instrumental works) six symphonies at the age of thirty-two, all of which have been published and performed by major orchestras, and one of which, his Third Symphony, has been recorded by Mitropolous and the New York Philharmonic, in good sound, on Columbia ML 4902; it is basically diatonic but linear music, without melodic frills or tonal embellishments, marked by an enormous rhythmic vivacity.

David Diamond, born in 1915 in Rochester, N. Y., wrote a piece called *Rounds* for *String Orchestra* in 1944, thereby attracting considerable acclaim. None of Diamond's four symphonies or his choral and chamber works has been put on disks, but the *Rounds* has been recorded three times, on Capitol P 8245, M-G-M 3117, and ARS 116. It is a lively piece on a catchy theme. Characteristic of Diamond's appealing middle-of-the-road modernism in his *Music for Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet* (Columbia ML 4303).

Alan Hovhaness, born in 1911 in Arlington, Mass., is of Armenian descent and has turned to this ancient and somewhat exotic culture for his musical ideas. His tapestrylike music has primitive rhythms, bright colors. Some critics say it all sounds alike to them, but they aren't listening closely, as one must. His incidental music to the Clifford Odets drama *The Flowering Peach* (M-G-M 3164) is unusually beautiful and subtle. Something called *Khaldis* Concerto for piano, trumpets, and percussion is on M-G-M 3160, along with some imaginative piano music—all of it is bizarre, unusual, and likable.

Arthur Berger's reputation as a keen-minded music critic may overshadow slightly his accomplishments as a composer, but it is as a composer that he deserves to be known, though his works are not numerous as yet and have been mostly chamber compositions. He is on LP (Columbia ML 4846) with his perky, entertaining Quartet in C for Woodwinds

and his Duo for Cello and Piano, the latter the more substantial contribution. Berger admires Stravinsky and Aaron Copland, but speaks in his own accent.

Harold Shapero, born in 1920 in Lynn, Mass., is a relative newcomer to the American scene, one of several talents to emerge during the difficult decade of the 1940s. Shapero can be sampled through his boldly conceived, brilliantly executed *Symphony for Classical Orchestra* (Columbia ML 4889), wherein he demonstrates his belief that young composers can learn from the old masters, modeling Beethoven (the Seventh, apparently) in big, full-voiced scoring. The idiom, however, is modern, and the results quite memorable.

Any suggestion that the foregoing list exhausts the number of interesting and important young talents in America today is — needless to say — ridiculous. The American landscape is fairly teeming with superbly trained, industrious, alert men and women who are giving to serious music a degree of dedication quite astonishing in view of the meager material benefits most of them stand to reap from their efforts. Such people, for instance, as Leon Kirchner, Vincent Persichetti, William Bergsma, Robert Palmer, Alexis Haieff, Robert Ward — the list could go on and on. These men have been recorded too, with exciting, impressive contributions.

There is no short cut to true musical understanding; one must, in the end, hear the music. Now, thanks to LP, one *can* hear much of it. The situation, so far as it concerns American music, is far from ideal. Many of the recordings mentioned in this account fall short of what one would like to have in performance and recording. Often very difficult, complex music which should have several interpretations, is available in but one. Often too, the music is in the hands of performers not quite equal to its demands. But all caviling pales before one great positive fact: the music is there in living sound and fair quantity, with more to come.

Listening to an intelligently programmed evening of American music is a rewarding experience. I sometimes think that our composers have (often with considerably less compensation) better voiced the conflicting essences of America than have our painters, poets, and novelists. You find little true bitterness, or the rasp of chronic complaint coming from our musicians. Instead, there is vitality and passion, variety and color, and a contagious pride in our land which they try to express honestly.

If the barrier to communication seems to lie in the tools of expression used, that is too bad. Most significant American music seems to be of the "modern" variety — certainly the preponderance of this music to be found on LP records is unfailingly contemporary — and far too many listeners still flinch when they are told that a piece of music is "modern." One can only point out that a large part of the barrier comes from the inflexible listener himself. It is folly to look for romantic lullabies in music that strives to capture the "barbaric yawp" of a busy nation in the age of anxiety. They are not there, and will not be there until America, in its turn, is old and senile enough to need, above all things, sleep.

the **Tape Deck**

by R. D. Darrell

WHAT with review tapes—both conventional and stereo—accumulating faster than I can listen and write, I don't dare expend much space this month on preliminaries. However, a note of recommendation is owing a newly launched catalogue, *The Tape Reel*, issued by Long Player Publications, which promises much the same sort of competition with *The Harrison Catalogue of Recorded Tapes* in magnetic domain as that between *The Long Player* and *Schwann* catalogues in the world of disks. The *Reel* is smaller in format than *Harrison*, but contains a few more pages. It is somewhat more attractive typographically, lacks the *Harrison* listings by company, but adds a performers' index.

I also want to recommend the first stereo "sampler-demonstrator" submitted to this department (others are available, but I haven't yet seen or heard them). It is STEREOTAPE ST 1, produced by Audio Arts, Inc., of Hollywood, and enticingly priced at \$2.00. The reel runs only about seven minutes and of course contains a (happily low-keyed) sales pitch both for stereo in general and the first Stereotape releases in particular; but all the selections are of really outstanding technical excellence, and one—of unaccompanied choral singing—is just about the most impressive demonstration of stereo's finest powers I have yet heard.

Note: As usual, all tapes reviewed are 7.5 ips and—unless specifically noted as stereo—are 2-track single-channel recordings. The symbol •• prefixed to a review indicates stereo tape. If a date in parenthesis is appended to the review, it refers to the issue of HIGH FIDELITY in which the corresponding disk review appeared

BACH

Concertos for Three Claviers and Orchestra: No. 1, in D minor, BWV 1063; No. 2, in C, BWV 1064
Concerto for Four Claviers and Orchestra, in A minor, BWV 1065

Helma Elsner, Renate Noll, Franzpeter Goebels, Willy Spilling, Rolf Reinhardt, harpsichords; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond.
PHONOTAPES-SONORE PM 123. 7-in. \$8.95.

This, like its LP version (Vox PL 8670), issued around the end of 1954, is the only combined grouping of all three multiple-clavier works in a single release. Two of these recorded performances received first—and the other second—ranking in Nathan Broder's discography of Bach's orchestral and chamber music. They make an equally satisfactory impression on tape, partly by the straightforwardness of the playing throughout, but even more impressively by their happy blending of rich string sonorities and piquant harpsichord incisiveness. As Broder suggests, it is a pity that the admirable clarity here

could not have been further enhanced by a stereo representation, though even then the fantastically complex textures of Bach's polyphony would remain a challenge to the resolving powers of listeners' ears and minds. (May 1956)

•• BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.

RCA VICTOR (Stereo) ECS 7. 7-in. \$14.95.

I welcome this release as striking proof of my up-to-now theoretical assumption that stereo, by itself, cannot make an unattractive performance more palatable, any more than it can long disguise the inadequacies of narrow-range reproduction. The recording here is wide range, all right, and when given fair chance reveals the acclaimed splendors of the Bostonians' playing, that of the string sections in particular. But most reviewers found the single-channel LP version (LM 1923, with Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*) unsatisfactory for reasons other than the inexcusable omission of the repeat of the first-movement exposition, and the tape exposes even more clearly the interpretative deficiencies of Dr. Munch in this particular reading. (Feb. 1956)

BEETHOVEN

Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello, No. 7, in B-flat ("Archduke"), Op. 97

Paul Badura-Skoda, piano; Jean Fournier, violin; Antonio Janigro, cello.

SONOTAPE SW 1008. 7-in. \$7.95.

Since by some unfortunate temperamental quirk I am personally anesthetic to the sorcery with which this music spellbinds most chamber-music connoisseurs, especially in the famous Rubinstein-Heifetz-Feuermann version (RCA Victor LCT 1020), I can't claim that I am disturbed by the lack of masculine grip and penetration which C. G. Burke—and some other critics as well—find in the LP version of the present reading (Westminster WL 5131). I am more keenly aware of the entrancing purity and sparkle of the recorded tone qualities, which were unanimously admired in the disk and which seem to me even more translucent and gleaming in the tape. The low-level passages, especially, are sheer enchantment. (Sept.-Oct. 1952)

•• DEBUSSY

Nocturnes

Boston Symphony Orchestra and Berkshire Festival Chorus, Pierre Monteux, cond.

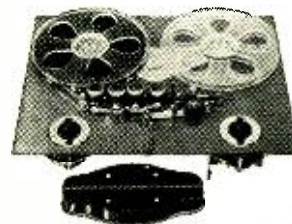
RCA VICTOR (Stereo) CCS 12. 7-in. \$10.95.

Most reviewers of the LP version (LM 1939), including Roland Gelatt in these

Continued on next page

HI-FI IMPORTS

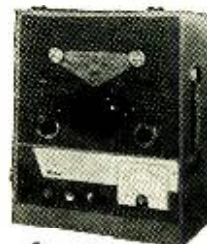
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TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

pages, devoted so much of their space to the merits of the other work on the disk, *La Mer*, that they had room for only somewhat perfunctory praise of the *Nocturnes*. So the release of the latter trilogy by itself gives me welcome opportunity not only to add further paeans to the Bostonians' superbly atmospheric playing and to the tonal beauty with which that playing has been recorded, but to underline more prominently the matched delicacy and force of Montaux's evocative reading. Stereo, curiously enough, does nothing to enhance further the magical effect of the *ppp* off-stage trumpets in the middle section of *Fêtes*, but it does contribute notably in *Nuages* to the illusion of clouds airily floating in illimitable space and even more marvelously to the haunting eeriness of the wordless female voices in *Sirènes*—modern technology's belated confirmation of Sir Thomas Browne's seventeenth-century belief that "What song the Syrens sang . . . though [a] puzzling question, [is] not beyond all conjecture." (March 1956)

DOHNANYI

Quintet for Piano and Strings, No. 1, in C minor, Op. 1
 †Dvorak: *Quartet, No. 6, in F ("American"), Op. 96*

Sondra Bianca, piano; Wuhrer Quartet.
 A-V TAPE LIBRARIES AV 1033. 7-in. \$10.95.

I can't trace an LP version but the search revealed that Paul Affelder's HIGH FIDELITY review of Dohnányi's Opus 26 Piano Quintet (Westminster WL 5301) asked: "Now, why doesn't someone record the beautiful Brahmslike Piano Quintet No. 1 in C minor, one of the most remarkable Opus 1's ever written?" Well, someone has, but as of now you will have to add a tape player to your home sound system to hear it. This is solidly substantial nineteenth-century fare, in what seems like a solidly satisfactory performance, notable mainly for the deep, ringing power and sharp-focus outlines of its recorded piano tone. Alone, the Wuhriers (did the tape manufacturers perhaps overlook an unlaut here?) play attractively in the always ingratiating *American* quartet by Dvorak, but apart from the tape's freedom from background-noise distractions this version is hardly comparable in distinction with the best of those on LP.

PROKOFIEV

Symphonies: No. 1, in D ("Classical"), Op. 25; No. 5, in B-flat, Op. 100

Orchestre des Concerts Colonne, Jascha Horenstein, cond.
 PHONOTAPES-SONORE PM 131. 7-in. \$8.95.

In Alfred Frankenstein's Prokofiev discography (March 1956), the LP version (Vox PL 9170, Aug. 1955) won top honors in the Fifth Symphony rankings, while the *Classical* Symphony was placed just behind the three leaders of the long list of disk contenders. The present tape must do the LP full justice, or more, for technically it is just about the best of

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the many fine Phonotapes I have heard so far, with no loss of crispness in the highs and exceptionally solid deep lows. Of course, Prokofiev himself helped mightily in providing such sonogenic materials (if I may coin, or borrow, a badly needed term), as does Horenstein by his vitally forceful performances. Yet the latter, to ears which never have forgotten the incomparable Koussevitzky readings of both these works, command less wholehearted admiration than the piquancy, brassy bite, and brawny sonority of the recording itself. (Mar. 1956; Aug. 1955)

STRAUSS, JOHANN II Waltzes

Vienna Pro Arte Orchestra, Anton Paulik, cond.

OMEGATAPE OT 3003. 7-in. \$9.95.

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.

SONOTAPE SW 1016. 7-in. \$7.95.

Paulik exemplifies the lighter, more casual, Wiener-Prater-Evening-Entertainment approach, using a comparatively small, sprightly, but hardly polished orchestra, and sometimes condensed scores. This collection apparently is not one of his popular Vanguard series (some of which have been taped by the A-V Libraries); indeed I can't trace any domestic LP version. Most notably it provides the first recording I've ever heard of the early *Carnival in Rome*; it also includes nicely swinging if somewhat "schmaltzy" versions of the *Blue Danube*, *Accelerations*, and *Emperor* waltzes plus, for good measure, the collaborative *Pizzicato* polka and Brother Josef's *Feuerfest* polka and great *Village Swallows* waltz—all brightly recorded, if with rather thin string tone.

Rodzinski, on the other hand, not only uses a large (and very polished) orchestra and complete scores, but gives the music full symphonic treatment—yet, unlike so many non-Austrian conductors, without any loss of traditional Viennese lilt and warmth. The LP version (Westminster W-LAB 7026) has been highly praised for its delectability as well as "fabulous" sound range and clarity, and I can only reapply these encomiums to the tape. (May 1956)

STRAUSS, RICHARD *Don Juan. Op. 20; Till Eulenspiegel. Op. 25*

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.

SONOTAPE SW 1017. 7-in. \$7.95.

The purity of recording was justly stressed in C. G. Burke's long review of the LP version (Westminster W-LAB 7016); certainly the Don's exultant horns and languishing oboe or the savage drummings of Till's death scene never emerged from a home loudspeaker with sharper definition, less distortion, or more dramatic aural appeal than via the present tape. Yet, once my mind sobers up from the intoxicating effects of sheer sound here, it remembers with regret the warmth, geniality, and infectious verve which Rodzinski brings so abundantly to Johann but apparently deems inappropriate for Richard Strauss. (May 1956)



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RECORD RATINGS The Music Library Association's Index of Record Reviews

Compiled by Kurtz Myers, Chief, Music and Drama Department, Detroit Public Library
 Edited by Richard S. Hill, Head, Reference Section, Music Division, Library of Congress

This new book is, without question, an essential reference for the serious buyer of records. Unique both in content and organization, it indexes practically all serious music ever recorded on LPs, listing the date and issue of the most important American and European periodicals in which reviews appeared. Symbols indicate what the reviewer thought of that particular release — i.e. excellent, adequate, or inadequate. The prospective buyer is thus provided with the considered opinion of several critics and thereby given a nearer approximation to objective judgment. Full bibliographical information is given for each record (manufacturer, serial and opus numbers, thematic catalogue listings) and a list of performers follows. The *Index of Performers* provides a complete key to musicians, conductors, artists, and orchestras. RECORD RATINGS is the most complete and informative discography available. 440 pages.

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MUSIC IN AMERICAN LIFE

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Books in Review

ANY statistical approach to art, even so peripheral and pragmatic an "art" as that of record reviewing, ordinarily arouses my worst suspicions—both about the statistician's motives and about the end value of his "proofs." And I'll never believe that the most reliable guidance to record selection can be found by averaging the reports of any arbitrary group of reviewers. I read a great many different reviewers myself and often am strongly influenced by what they have to say; but whether an individual reviewer pronounces a work "good" or "bad" is relatively immaterial except insofar as his scheme of values is translatable into my own. In any case, whatever validity his opinions have for me is quite independent of those expressed by others. A majority vote doesn't necessarily elect a masterpiece—although of course it doesn't, by itself, disqualify one either.

I am making quite clear my own point of view in order to forestall at the outset the natural antagonism I'm sure many experienced record collectors are apt to feel when they are confronted with a new discography called **Record Ratings**, compiled by Kurtz Myers and edited by Richard S. Hill (Crown, \$5.95). This work is unique in that it does not present the comparative judgments of a single author, or group of authors, but tabulates those of the best-known periodical reviewers. Each recorded performance entered here is accompanied by a listing of the reviews (if any) which have appeared in twenty-one American magazines (led of course by *HIGH FIDELITY*, *American Record Guide*, *Saturday Review*, etc.), five British publications (*Gramophone*, *EMG Monthly Letter*, etc.), one French magazine (*Disques*), and one American newspaper (*New York Times*, Sunday edition). The review citations include page and date of issue, and a symbol indicating the over-all ranking (excellent, adequate, inadequate, or noncommittal), sometimes plus an additional symbol showing that the review presented an unusual amount of background information.

The reason for this particular

approach is clearly explained (without any pretension of "justification") in the preface. Back in 1948 the quarterly journal of the Music Library Association, *Notes* (which is edited by Mr. Hill, Head of the Reference Section of the Music Division of the Library of Congress), decided that it should make a special effort to keep its readers informed on the floods of current recordings. And since the majority of these readers are librarians, it seemed reasonable to include references to other publications, available at most libraries, which dealt with individual releases often in much more detail than would be possible in *Notes* itself. At any rate, Kurtz Myers, Chief of the Detroit Public Library's Music and Drama Department, was chosen to compile the references and attempt the ticklish task of summing up individual reviewers' often obscurely expressed opinions. The combined "Ratings" and Index met with such a favorable response that they have been continued without interruption ever since; two paperback cumulations were published (1951 and 1952); and when a commercial publisher's interest became aroused, the outcome was the present complete, extensively revised and expanded, compilation.

Its very low price (by today's standards) is no index to its impressiveness. In sheer format alone it runs to 11 by 8 inches, nearly 3 pounds, and some 440 triple-columned pages. But the typography and arrangement of materials are so happily chosen that it is a pleasure rather than a chore to use, and even more notably its real substance far exceeds its measurable weight. For the former depends only in small part on the strictly statistical features, which to my mind are mainly useful in their incidental clues to the release dates of specific recordings, or of their different couplings or speed versions. (Only LPs are included, of course, but the listings of those which originally appeared in 78-rpm versions include condensed indexes of "prior reviews.")

But the outstandingly valuable feature is the painstaking and often scholarly detail with which the music itself is identified. If you've ever strug-

gled to track down—in catalogues, reviews, or elsewhere—the exact, complete contents of "recital" and program-miscellany disks, you'll begin to appreciate the labor that went into the meticulously detailed content entries here. Moreover, there are occasional notes calling special attention to some of the more egregious errors in mislabeling, or in composer and work identifications. And some of the lavish special indexes and cross-reference lists (see Tchaikovsky's ballets and Vivaldi's works in particular) are in themselves models of immensely practical as well as musicologically meritorious achievements.

In short, quite apart from statistics and "ratings," this is a superb discographic source book, comparable only to the Clough & Cuming *World Encyclopedia of Recorded Music* in scope and scholarship—yet much cheaper than that masterpiece, as well as of greater pragmatic usefulness to the average record collector. Aside from its great intrinsic worth, I have dealt with this volume at considerable length because I fear that most nonprofessional discophiles might otherwise fail to realize how immensely valuable the present work may be to them.

Ballet for Non-Balletomanes

To turn to a subject outside the range of my own particular knowledge and interests, I know that ballet books fill, or should fill, a useful function, but too often they strike me as either incomprehensibly esoteric or downright ridiculous. The latest two additions to the literature, however, do impress me much more favorably than anything else I have read in this field for some years: partly because they pay more attention to the music and musicians involved (and less to individual dancing stars); partly because they reflect neither an obsessively British (or European) point of view, nor that of fanatical balletomanes; but mostly because each represents so intelligent, adult, and catholic an author's mind.

Irving Deakin's *At the Ballet: A Guide to Enjoyment* (Nelson, \$3.75) is a perceptive and often absorbing

Continued on next page

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Continued from preceding page

series of discussions of various aspects of ballet repertoires, *mores*, and contemporary trends. I liked particularly Deakin's justified castigations of some deplorable ballet-audience manners, his surveys of progress both in the art itself and in its public appreciation, and best of all his provocative remarks about ballet criticism and program annotations.

But, to my regret, Deakin is much too polite to pin his general statements down to specific persons and organizations, and he fails to organize his admirable materials so that they make a really unified and dramatic impact. However, his book is still to be recommended, and not least for its illuminating 11-page glossary, 16 pages of photographs, and an excellent 86-page critical discography in which Deakin expresses his own personal opinions with much more point and verve than in his main text.

Rosalyn Krokover's *New Borzoi Book of Ballets* (Knopf, \$6.00) is likely to impress most ballet followers by its appearance and coverage alone, for it is an uncommonly handsome book, with 32 pages of excellently chosen and reproduced photographs, which provides extended information on some 57 of the ballets (from *Age of Anxiety* to *Western Symphony*) which are most frequently performed or best known today. Except for a 22-page introduction, "Looking at Ballet," the bulk of the work (255 pages) is devoted to these studies, but there also is a highly condensed 40-page listing of all productions by the four leading companies performing in the United States.

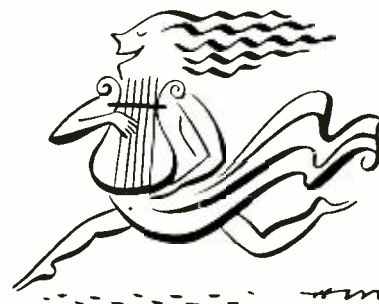
Yet what wins my respect is not so much that this volume ably replaces and brings up to date the original *Borzoi Book of Ballets* (by Grace Robert, 1946) as a valuable reference work, as that it finally convinces me that a series of work annotations such as this not only can be something more—and far better—than a retelling of ballet "stories," but a true enrichment of one's knowledge. Actually, the "stories" themselves are only a small part of Miss Krokover's annotations; she takes them no more seriously than they merit, while at the same time carefully linking up the plots with all the other more important elements (not excluding the varied musical factors) that go into the making of a success-

ful, or at least artistically significant, ballet.

GRACE NOTES

Music in American Life. In case you missed Roland Gelatt's "Music Makers" mention (in the June issue) of Jacques Barzun's brilliant if somewhat impetuous examination of the state of the art (and business) in the United States today, this brief notice may remind you that it is not to be overlooked, unless you are wholly allergic to new and controversial ideas. Barzun raises many more questions than he answers, but perhaps the prime merit of this short study lies in its convincing demonstration that many of the art's aesthetic, social, and economic problems are inherently insoluble—which doesn't make their discussion, especially by so lively a mind as Barzun's, any less fascinating (Doubleday, \$2.75).

Music Ho! My excuse for relegating one of the most important—and certainly the most stimulating—books ever written on contemporary music to Grace-Note mention only is twofold: the present paperback reprint is of a work originally published in 1934 and supposedly already well known; and if I ever started to discuss it in detail, I'd have no room in this "Bookshelf" column for anything else. So all I dare say here is that the late Constant Lambert, for all his fame as composer and conductor, left his most spectacular and lasting monument in this little book. I disagree emphatically with most of his basic arguments, yet seldom have found such delighted relish and provocative mind-sharpening in any author with whom I do agree. His acidulous chapter on "The Mechanical Stimulus" alone should be required reading for every audiophile; for if he was singularly blind to the best potentialities of recorded and reproduced music, his Cassandra warnings about their evil potentialities have even more vital pertinence today than they did over twenty years ago (Pelican, 65c).



TESTED IN THE HOME



These reports may not be quoted or reproduced, in part or in whole, in any form whatsoever, without written permission from the publisher. Because of space limitations we normally attempt to report only on products of wide general interest. Thus, omission does not, per se, signify condemnation, although reports are seldom made on equipment that is obviously not reasonably high in fidelity. Each report is sent to the manufacturer before publication; he is free to correct the specifications paragraph, to add a comment at the end, or to request that the report be deferred (pending changes in his product) or not published at all. He is not permitted, however, to amend or alter the report.

Gray Turntable and Arm

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): **TURN-TABLE** — a three-speed transcription turntable. **Speeds:** 33.3, 45, 78 rpm. **Turntable:** $\frac{5}{16}$ in. thick steel, 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter; weight 18 lb.; $\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick foam pad. **Wow and rumble:** exceeds NARTB disk reproducing standards. **Speed selection:** drop-on motor drive sleeves. **Mounting plate:** $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. thick steel with copper overlay. **Weight** (less arm and mounting base): 48.5 lb. **Dimensions:** 19 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. wide by 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. deep. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. required below mounting plate. **Clearance required above mounting plate** (including Gray arm): 3 in. **Prices:** with induction motor: \$89.50; hysteresis motor: \$114.00. Base \$20.00 extra. **ARM**—a viscous-damped pickup arm. **Cartridge mounting:** removable slides. Stylus force adjustment: calibrated weights fit into cartridge sides. Range from 20 to 1 gram. **Electrical contacts:** spring-loaded connectors accept connecting pins from most cartridges. **Cartridge offset angle:** fixed at optimum 20 degrees. **Damping material:** silicon compound; non-toxic; chemically inert; soluble in mild soap-and-water solution. **System resonance:** about 12 cycles with high-compliance cartridge but at very low amplitude due to damping arrangement. **Damping adjustment:** knurled knob on top of arm. **Arm material:** 108B — pressed aluminum, plastic top. 108C — cast aluminum. **Finish:** gray crackle-finish enamel. **Dimensions:** 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. long. 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. from stylus to base center. **Price:** 108B — \$49.95; 108C — \$39.95. **MANUFACTURER:** Gray Research and Development Co., Inc., 658 Hilliard St. Manchester, Conn.

About three years ago I talked with a high fidelity enthusiast in Chicago who insisted that the only way to keep turntables under control was to mount them on $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch steel base plates. He made good sense, but the whole project seemed a little awkward; I could visualize the perspiring hi-fi man trying to hacksaw and drill thick steel!

Well, my hi-fi friend must have talked to the Gray people, and they went ahead and did something about it . . . something mighty neat, slick, and excellent all the way through.

We start with a hunk of $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch steel roughly 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ by 19 inches. In this we mount, first, a beautifully balanced, heavy turntable, revolving on a hemispherical bearing. Next we mount a motor, duly suspended with rubber mounts to absorb vibration. Now let's be simple and straight forward. We want the motor to turn the turntable; so we put a rubber (neoprene) tire around the outside edge of the turntable, and let the motor shaft turn against it. A simple lever arrangement turns on the AC for the motor and simultaneously moves the motor and shaft over into contact with the turntable "tire." (The lever, by the way, serves not only to turn on the motor; it is also a pickup arm rest and a housing for the pilot light!) Instead of a linkage of idlers or what have you, to change speeds we'll just slip a bushing on the motor drive shaft. Thus the Gray turntable comes with two

bushings, one for 45 and one for 78 rpm. The 78-rpm bushing, for example, is $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. tall and almost exactly $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. in diameter. And so that these bushings won't get mislaid, there are a couple of pins on the turntable base, over which they can be slipped . . . plus a third pin for safe keeping of the 45-rpm doughnut adaptor. Everything in its place.

That's just about it. The total assembly weighs 48 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.! The turntable alone weighs 18 lbs.; it's covered with an attractive $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. foam rubber pad. The unit is shipped with a mounting base, by the way. The base consists essentially of four corner posts. Foam rubber blocks (1-in. thick) are supplied and are to be mounted on the posts; the base then rests on the foam rubber, which minimizes any tendency for acoustic feedback. There is also a dress-up base available, which is the mounting base plus an exterior shell finished in a grey, pebbly plastic material.

The Gray turntable is available with either a four-pole induction or a hysteresis motor; we received the latter, and it certainly was smooth-running. Speeds checked out on the nose; there was no vibration that we could feel (except on the body of the motor, naturally, and even there it was very slight). I could not hear any rumble even at high volume and some bass boost. In other words: for all intents and purposes inaudible.

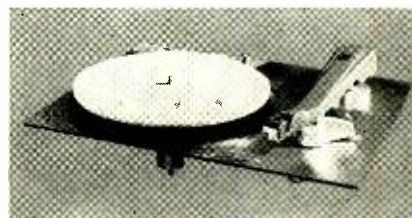
Now, the main base comes pre-drilled for a Gray arm . . . and the unit we received had one already installed. I think probably everyone knows how the Gray arm works, but we have never had a TITH report on one (the arm predated the TITH section) and so a few words here might not be amiss.

Essentially, the arm floats in a viscous damping goo. The bearing contains a ball surface which sits in a cup that holds the damping material. There is a center post, coming up from the base of the arm, which comes to a cone-shaped point. Over this is another cone, which is attached to the main part of the arm. Thus the arm really hangs on the center post, and swings in all directions from this cone-pivot arrangement. The weight of the arm is carried by the pivot, and the goo lies between the surfaces of the ball and cup. I think the diagram will help make this clear.

By adjusting the pivot screw, you can control the thickness of the layer of damping fluid, and hence the sluggishness or ease of arm motion. For optimum results,

damping adjustment is critical. Given proper adjustment, the arm drifts down onto the record, taking about 1 second to fall 1 inch.

The advantages of the viscous damping principle are several. First, it helps to reduce the effect of the low-frequency arm resonance. Groove undulations on a record are constantly subjecting a pickup to side-to-side pressures, and over most of the audible range, the mass of the pickup and arm is sufficient to prevent the cartridge from wiggling from side to side with the groove. Instead, the compliance of the pickup stylus allows this to follow the



The HF turntable and Model 108 arm.

groove, while the cartridge remains stationary with respect to the average groove path.

There is, however, always a point at the low-frequency end where diminishing recorded frequencies exceed the arm's ability to hold the cartridge stationary, so the twisting of the stylus tends to make the arm follow it from side to side. The result is a sharp response peak at the point where the arm starts to vibrate at its natural frequency, and collapsing bass response below that point. The resonant frequency can be reduced by either increasing the cartridge compliance or the arm mass, but in practice there are limits to both of these. So the peak persists, even though it may be removed from the audible range by careful arm and cartridge design. And, theoretically at least, it may continue to produce groove-skipping and intermodulation effects through the upper range.

The viscous damping system in the Gray arm effectively increases the mass of the arm by tending to "weld" it to its base (and the motor board) through the damping goo, lowering the resonant frequency of the arm and cartridge. And the fact that the goo's effectiveness diminishes gradually

Continued on next page

TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from preceding page

as the frequency goes down means that the slight resonant peaking will be broad and smooth rather than sharply peaked.

This is a significant point in theory, but the degree to which it is reflected in cleaner sound from the pickup cartridge is likely to depend largely on the quality of the rest of the system. Most users will probably detect no difference between the Gray and any other top-quality arm. Whatever audible improvement there is will be evident only on a system which has very low distortion in all the other components, including the loudspeaker.

The Gray arm has been with us for a long time; that this is so is an indication of excellence and acceptance. Nevertheless, it has been the subject of a major criticism: that its motion is so stiff that it will cause undue wear on records. This simply is not true. The Gray is stiff to *rapid* motion; but when properly adjusted it has almost no resistance to *slow* movement. Even a record with a badly off-center spindle hole won't make an arm swing very far or very fast. It is true that if a record has a very bad warp in it, the Gray may — particularly at 78 rpm — have more trouble tracking than some other types. The trouble is it will be unable to drift downward fast enough to stay in the groove. But — if someone has a lot of vertically warped records which they must play, then the trick is simply to reduce the damping on the Gray. While the instructions say 1 second for 1 inch, you *can* make it 0.1 second for 1 inch — or whatever you want. Under these conditions, it will track badly-warped records as well as any arm can.

And incidentally, the Gray will track at 1.0 gram. The rear overhang contains a lead weight; this is counterbalanced by the weight of the cartridge, plus such help as may be needed by small weights which fit into the Gray cartridge slides. And it is so precisely counterbalanced, laterally, that it will not tilt to one side or the other.

Well, that ought to cover it. The equipment sent to us — hysteresis motor plus Gray viscous-damped arm — was just plain luscious! — C. F.

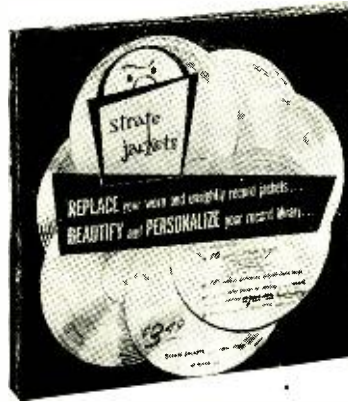
StrateJackets

StrateJackets, Inc.* has been astute enough to recognize the need for replacement record jackets, and has issued them in hues ranging from gay decorator's colors (ivory, cherry red, polo blue, christmas green, and tan) to subdued dark shades (black, maroon, steel blue, spruce green, and chocolate brown).

The envelopes are substantially made of heavy cardboard, and the leather-surfaced colors are waterproof and washable. Each batch of ten StrateJackets (cost, \$3.49 per pack) comes complete with ten polyethylene bags and a small sheet of gold transfer paper, the latter allowing you to write or print titles and information directly onto the envelopes. The transfer paper works very well, but it takes a fair amount of pressure to get a good imprint. A blunt pencil or a ball-point pen seems to work best.

*107-11 Continental Ave., Forest Hills, N. Y.

There isn't much more to report about StrateJackets, except that they are rugged waterproof, and washable. They fill a



StrateJackets are sold in packs of ten.

definite need for most record collectors, and their price is quite reasonable, particularly in view of the cost of the records they can help to preserve. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The variety of colors available in StrateJackets packages is not so much decorative as it is functional. It was our intent, when packaging in ten colors, to allow the collector to color-classify his disk library. For example, symphonies might be dark blue, operas dark green, jazz bright red. This, we feel, will assist in speedy record identification.

Pentron Pacemaker and Clipper Recorders

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): **PACEMAKER** — a two-speed tape recorder with magic-eye record indicator and 7-inch reel capacity. **Speeds:** 7.5 and 3.75 ips, selected by panel knob. **Frequency response:** 50 to 10,500 cycles at 7.5 ips; 50 to 5,000 cycles at 3.75 ips. **Signal-to-noise ratio:** 50 db. **Flutter:** below 0.3% at 7.5 ips. **Inputs:** two, from high-impedance microphone and radio. **Controls:** "Unimagic" tape travel lever; record safety button; speed change knob; AC power and volume; motor power and tone control. **Outputs:** high impedance to amplifier, and 3.2 ohms to external speaker. **Built-in speakers:** 6-in. woofer and 4-in. tweeter. **Shuttle speeds:** 20 to 1 ratio; 70 seconds for 1,200-ft. reel. **Power output:** 5 watts. **Tubes:** 5879, 6SL7, 6E5, 6X5, 6V6. **Dimensions:** 13 in. deep by 15 wide by 10 high, over-all. **Price:** \$119.95. **CLIPPER** — a two-speed tape recorder with neon record indicator and 7-inch reel capacity. **Speeds:** 7.5 and 3.75 ips, selected by control lever. **Frequency response:** 50 to 9,000 cycles at 7.5 ips; 50 to 5,000 cycles at 3.75 ips. **Signal-to-noise ratio:** 42 db. **Flutter:** below 0.5% at 7.5 ips. **Inputs:** two, from high-impedance microphone and radio. **Controls:** "monomatic" slide control for tape travel, speed selection, and record or playback selection; volume; AC power and tone control. **Outputs:** high impedance to amplifier and 3.2 ohms to external speaker. **Built-in speaker:** 4 by 6 in. **Power output:** 4 watts. **Shuttle speeds:** 40 to 1 ratio; 35 seconds for 1,200-ft. reel. **Tubes:** 5879, 12AX7, 6AQ5, 6X4. **Dimensions:** 15¼ in. deep by 13¾ wide by 8½ high, over-all. **Price:** \$139.95. **MANUFACTURER:** The Pentron Corporation, 777 South Tripp Ave., Chicago 24, Ill.

Home tape recorders have become increasingly simple to operate during the past few years, and these units seem to represent almost the end of the road as far as simplicity is concerned. Both are extremely easy to handle, and give surprisingly good performance despite their modest prices.

The Pacemaker unit is the more ambitious of the two models tested, and incorporates such convenience features as a magic-eye tuning indicator and a revolution counter to use for spotting any place on a tape. A single lever controls tape motion, and an adjacent red button must be depressed before recording, to prevent accidental erasure of recordings.

Both these units handle tape like no other recorders in their price range that I've yet

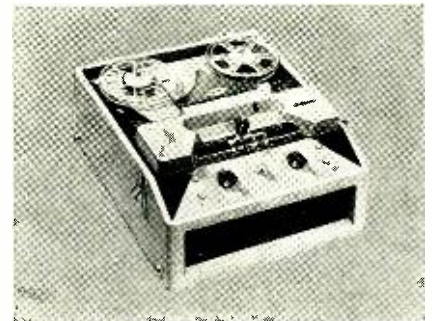
encountered. High-speed forward and reverse functions are smooth and quiet; torque is more than adequate, and the braking system brings the tape to a smooth and rapid stop without the violence exhibited by some recorders. There is no tape spillage when changing functions; the tape remains under light tension at all times. The fast speeds are slower than in most recorders, which is *not* to be construed as a disadvantage. Current trends in professional recording equipment are definitely away from the extremely high rewind speeds which tend to introduce serious stresses into the wound tape.

Flutter in the Pacemaker I tested was very low; for all intents and purposes inaudible, but wow was quite detectable on sustained program material, and was rather painfully evident on recorded piano. However, really good speed regulation generally costs a lot more money than this recorder does.

Running briefly through some other characteristics of the Pacemaker, the tape maintains contact with the heads at all times, so the volume control must be turned down while shuttling a recorded tape. Sound from the unit is surprisingly wide-range and balanced when using the recorder's built-in speakers, but be careful to keep the interconnecting cable short when using an external amplifier; the Amplifier output is at very high impedance. Sensitivity is quite high through both inputs, and the record indicator is very accurate, indicating overload precisely at the actual tape overload point. Hum and hiss are quite low; comparable to the best competing recorders.

The Clipper, which is one notch lower in the price scale, has some unexpected and very attractive features. First, it is one of the very few home recorders that lifts the heads away from the tape when rewinding or running in fast forward. This is excellent design; it eliminates the raucous screech of the rewinding tape, and it will do much to extend head life.

This is also one of the first recorders I've seen with true single-knob control. A sliding knob on the Clipper controls tape speed and all tape travel modes, and selects either record or playback functions. A button on



The Clipper has single-knob control.

top of the control knob acts as a safety catch for the record position, and must be depressed before a tape can be recorded (or erased).

Flutter on the Clipper that I tested was extremely low; unbelievably so in view of this unit's modest price tag. Flutter was not detectable on even a sustained 3,000-cycle tone, which is a wicked test for any recorder. Wow was, however, quite high on all types

Continued on page 78



Bogen owner visits famous lake

Despite appearances, this is a very realistic photograph. Consider not only how real the performance of Swan Lake sounds through the gentleman's Bogen equipment, but how realistic a price he paid for it. The tuner is our R620 for AM and FM—with Bogen's exclusive Automatic Frequency Control. You drift serenely across Swan Lake with never a fear that Swan Lake itself will ever drift away from your dial-

setting. (Only \$84.50, plus a well-spent \$7 for the blonde-finished metal enclosure.)

The amplifier is the Bogen DB115, with more features than any other in its class. We won't belabor you with specifications if you, in turn, will take a moment to listen to a DB115 next time you're near one. If you need a fine high fidelity amplifier, and your price is \$75, this is the instrument to ask for.

Before you forget, send 25c for the new Third Edition of "Understanding High Fidelity." Write David Bogen Company, Inc., Department WH, 29 Ninth Avenue, New York City 14, New York.

Bogen

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TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 76

of program material, but the fact that it seemed to diminish after about an hour's use suggested that it may work out when the unit has had time to break in.

The Clipper produces nicely-balanced wide-range sound from its own speaker. Its hum level, however, presents a problem when using it with all but the most modest external high-fidelity systems.

Both recorders use an input-output interlock which kills the speaker while recording from the microphone, to eliminate acoustic feed-



The Pacemaker: a more ambitious model.

back. A good idea. When using the radio input, the Pacemaker's speaker is connected so the program may be monitored while recording, but the volume control setting that produces adequate recording level also produces a fairly high volume from the speaker. A speaker level control would have come in handy on this, but would probably have put it into the next price bracket, too. In the Pacemaker, the speaker is inoperative when recording from either input, and comes on only when playing tapes. Headphones may be plugged into the Amplifier output connection if it is desired to monitor while recording. Also, both recorders have their radio inputs permanently connected into their circuits, so the input cable must be disconnected from the tuner or control unit when playing tapes.

Both of these, then, for their modest pretensions and price tags, are excellent performers. They will not begin to compete with professional units, and no one could possibly expect them to do so, but in their own class they are definitely on a par with the best. — J.G.H.

Miracord XA-100 Changer

This changer from Audiogersh Corporation* was discussed in detail in the January, 1955 issue of HIGH FIDELITY; therefore we will review it only briefly, pointing out primarily the one new feature which has been added: a *STOP* button.

Essential features, discussed in the January, '55 report are: very low (if audible at all) rumble; ditto for wow; small base plate; easy mounting; flexibility of control; 10 and 12-in. records may be intermixed.

Let's look at the flexibility angle. Two spindles are standard equipment: manual-play and changer. (A 45-rpm automatic spindle is also available as an accessory.) Functions are the same for both manual and changer

spindles; the former does not, of course, have the stack-and-drop feature. Here's what happens if various buttons are pushed.

Push the *START* button, with a stack of records in place: this initiates standard changer operation, which continues automatically until last record has been played. Arm then returns to rest and motor shuts off.

If, while playing such a stack of records, you push the new *STOP* button, the turntable will stop and the arm go back to rest position. If you subsequently push the *START* button, a new record will drop and the change cycle will start again.

The *PAUSE* button "inserts" a pause between dropping of records, ranging from 5 to 140 seconds at 78 rpm and from 12 to 328 seconds at 33 rpm.

The *REPET* button: push this during play of a record, and the same record will be replayed at completion of first run-through. There must be records on the spindle for the repeat mechanism to operate; the unit was so designed since if there are no records on the spindle any portion of the record can be repeated by merely lifting up the tone arm and setting it at any point desired. The tone arm on the Miracord is free at all times.

When the Miracord is used manually, it can be used as "an automatic manual" and can be started by pushing the *START* button; the tone arm will lift up and set down at the start of the record.

By the same token, it can be started merely by lifting up the tone arm. This sets the turn-



Push-buttons control the XA-100 unit.

table in operation. When the record is completed the tone arm lifts up and returns to rest position.

If you want to play the same 10" record continuously, you invert the manual play spindle and start the unit by pushing the *START* button. The same 10" record will keep on playing until the tone arm is picked up and put to rest position.

It is interesting to note that the Pause mechanism can be used when the spindle is in this position. This is ideal for advertising purposes or where continuous music is desired with a pause up to 5½ minutes between playing at 33 1/3 rpm.

Is there anything else you'd like to have a player-changer do? Hard to think of anything. It might be safer if the idler on this were interconnected with the arm rest post . . . the arm rest includes a plunger which actuates a mercury switch, and thus the motor is turned on or off. The idler is controlled by the speed selector switch (marked 33 — 0 — 45 — 0 — 78). The idler is retracted *only* when the switch is in the zero position.

The rubber drive is so constructed that, should a flat ever develop, the rubber can be replaced in a matter of seconds, since it fits in a special groove like a rubber tire.

The earlier XA-100 which we tested was a fine changer; the addition of the *STOP* control makes it even more flexible. Price, by the way, remains at \$67.50. — C.F.

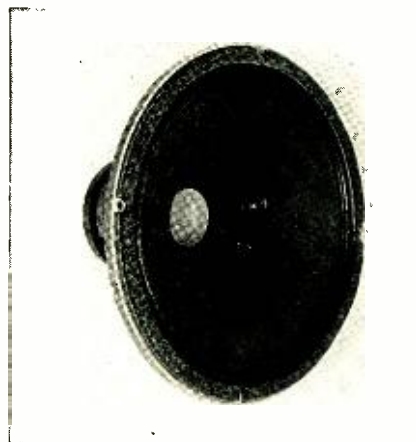
Tannoy Speakers

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer):
TWEETER—a hom-loaded compression-type driver. Frequency response: 1,000 to 20,000 cycles. Impedance: 15 ohms. Flux density: 15,000 Gauss. Rated power: 20 watts integrated program. Efficiency: 40%. Dimensions: 7 in. deep by 9 1/8 in. diameter. Price: \$86.00. **15-in. WOOFER**—Impedance: 15 ohms. Voice coil diameter: 2 in. Flux density: 12,000 Gauss. Rated power: 25 watts. Free-air resonance: 40 cycles. Recommended crossover: 1,000 cycles. Dimensions: 15 1/4 in. diameter by 9 in. deep. Price: \$123.75. **12-in. WOOFER**—Impedance: 15 ohms. Voice coil diameter: 2 in. Flux density: 10,000 Gauss. Rated power: 15 watts. Free-air resonance: 35 cycles. Recommended crossover: 1,000 cycles. Dimensions: 12 3/8 in. diameter by 7 1/2 in. deep. Price: \$78.75. **MANUFACTURER:** Tannoy Products, Ltd., London, England. **U. S. DISTRIBUTOR:** Tannoy Ltd., 38 Pearl Street, New York 4, N. Y.

It is a recognized fact today that three distinct types of low-frequency loudspeakers are being produced, each designed for a specific type of enclosure installation. There are the true woofer "systems," where the woofer and enclosure are integral with one another, there are high-efficiency woofers that require horn or reflex-enclosure baffling to preserve their low-frequency response, and there are low-efficiency speakers designed to operate in non-resonant infinite baffles, and which provide full bass response without additional enclosure augmentation.

These Tannoy woofers fit into the latter category. They are quite low in efficiency and they have a rising low end designed into them to offset the effect of low radiation resistance at the bass end when they are infinitely baffled. When so used, both woofers produce extremely clean, tightly-controlled bass down to their rated cone resonance points.

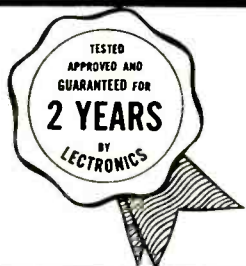
The 15-inch model by itself is understandably fuller at the low end, and radiates very well (in my listening room) down to a little below 40 cycles. Below that it starts to double slightly and response cuts off sharply. The 12-inch unit's low end starts to slip at about 50 cycles, and rolls off fairly slowly down to a little above 30 cycles before it cuts off. However, I was not able to detect any doubling from the 12-inch unit when it was pushed hard below its cutoff frequency, and its over-all low end performance seemed somewhat better defined than that of the 15-inch



The Tannoy 12-in. low-resonance woofer.

woofer. I suspect that the 12-inch speaker was designed for multiple-woofer use, and it shows considerable promise of being an ideal speaker for such a system. I had only one unit to test, but I got the distinct impression

Continued on page 82



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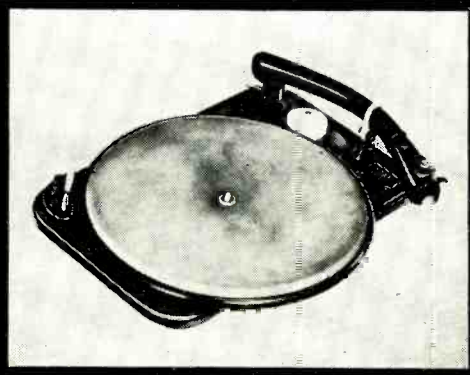
pre-tests each and every manufacturer's unit before approving and guarantying* it for two full years. No short cuts—our tests are exhaustive, on the bench—and in home-settings of every type. Here are a few examples:

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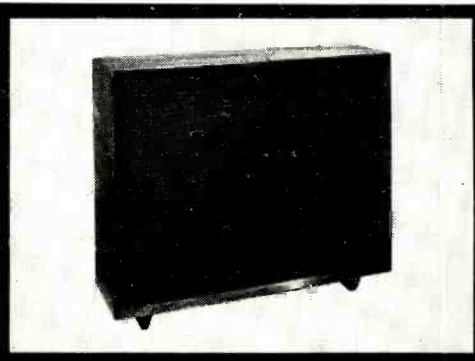
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More than "just a speaker," this is a highly developed, integrated acoustical system capable of astounding performance. You get a 12" woofer and 3" tweeter mounted in a mahogany cabinet which effectively eliminates "back wave" radiations at all frequencies. Distortion-free reproduction over a range of 32 cycles to 20,000 cycles is accomplished by its unique multi-cellular construction; its instrumental definition is unequalled by any other system at anywhere near its price. *Strongly recommended by us as tops in its class.*

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TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 78

that two or four of them would give superlative bass performance.

Both the 12- and 15-inch woofers are almost unbelievably lacking in coloration, so they can take full advantage of non-resonant infinite baffling. Used by themselves (sans tweeter or crossover network), these woofers were found to have a dull, muffled sound that



The horn tweeter has high efficiency.

suggested they might be very well suited for use with high-quality electrostatic tweeters. This proved to be true. Their smoothness above their rated range must be heard to be appreciated; they simply roll off beyond about 1,500 cycles, so there is no need to use a low-pass filter network when operating them with electrostatic tweeters.

For those who prefer the projection and "bite" of a horn-loaded tweeter, the Tannoy unit is a first-class complement to either of these woofers. It is much smoother than the majority of compression tweeters, and seems to produce very low distortion even at high volume levels. It is, however, considerably higher in efficiency than the woofers, and most users will probably want to insert a T-pad in series with it to balance it with a Tannoy woofer.

With the tweeter slightly attenuated, the over-all performance with either of these woofers was truly outstanding in all respects; not the least of which was cleanliness. One result of slightly dropping the tweeter level was to produce a sumptuous, velvety high end; evidence of the smoothness and range of both the woofer and tweeter units.

These are not budget-priced components, but they are outstanding examples of the improvement that can be effected by paying "just a little more." — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The 15-in. low-frequency unit is eminently suitable for horn loading by virtue of its high magnetic coupling. This unit forms the bass section of the 15-in. Dual Concentric system which works so successfully in the G.R.F. enclosure.

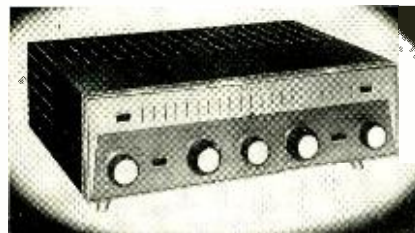
Bogen DB-130 Amplifier and R-660 and FM-50 Tuners

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): **DB-130 AMPLIFIER** — a complete single-chassis preamplifier-control-unit and power amplifier. **Inputs:** total of six; two for high or low-output magnetic cartridge, four for crystal pickup, tuner, tape, and auxiliary. **Controls:** loudness contour (0, -5, -10, -20, -30 db); input selector (Phono, Radio, Tape, Aux); equalizer (Eu78, US78, AES, RIAA, Col LP, NAB, Pop); damping factor (+0.1 through infinity to -1.5); low-frequency filter (Flat, 50 cycles, 100 cycles cutoff); high-frequency filter (Flat, 8 kc, 4 kc cutoff); speaker output selector (A, A-B, B); speaker impedance selector (8, 16 ohms); auxiliary channel level-set; hum balance. **Outputs:** three, to one or two speakers and to tape recorder. **Output impedances:** 4, 8, 16 ohms. **Power output:**

35 watts continuous; 70 watts peak. **Tone burst peak power:** up to 100 watts on transients. **Frequency response:** ± 0.5 db, 15 to 30,000 cycles. **Harmonic distortion:** 0.3% at 35 watts. **IM distortion:** below 1.5% at 35 watts. **Gain:** 113 db into Lo Mag input; 105 db into Hi Mag input; 85 db into high-level inputs. **Hum and noise:** -60 db from low-level inputs; -80 db from high-level inputs. **Tubes:** 2—12AX7, 2—6CG7, 12AU7, 2—6AV5-GT, 5U4-GB. **Dimensions:** 15 in. wide by 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ deep by 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ high, over-all. **Price:** \$115.00. **R-660 TUNER** — an AM-FM tuner. **Inputs:** 300 or 75-ohm FM antenna; AM antenna. **Controls:** selector (AC Off, AM, FM, AFC Out); tuning. **Multiplex output.** **Frequency coverage:** FM 88 to 108 mc; AM 530 to 1,650 kc. **Sensitivity:** 5 microvolts on 300-ohm FM antenna for 30 db quieting; 5 microvolts on AM antenna for 20 db signal-to-noise ratio. **AFC.** **Selectivity:** 180 kc bandwidth, 3 db down on FM; 10 kc, 3 db down on AM. **Frequency response:** FM 15 to 15,000 cycles, ± 0.5 db; AM 50 to 5,000 cycles, -3 db. **Distortion:** AM and FM 0.8% at 1 volt out. **AM antenna:** ferrite loopstick. **Tubes:** 2—6AB4, 6U8, 6BA6, 3—6AU6, 6B7, 6BE6, 12AU7, 6X4. **Dimensions:** 12 in. wide by 11 deep by 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ high, over-all. **Price:** \$119.50. **FM-50 TUNER** — an FM-only tuner. **Inputs:** 300 or 75-ohm FM antenna; AM antenna. **Controls:** selector (AC Off, FM, AFC Out); tuning. **Multiplex output.** **Frequency coverage:** FM 88 to 108 mc. **Sensitivity:** 5 microvolts on 300-ohm antenna for 30 db quieting. **Selectivity:** 180 kc, 3db down. **Frequency response:** 15 to 15,000 cycles, ± 0.5 db. **Stability:** AFC plus temperature-compensated oscillator. **Tubes:** 2—6AB4, 6AL5, 6U8, 3—6AU6, 6X4. **Dimensions:** 12 in. wide by 11 deep by 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ high, over-all. **Price:** \$79.50. **MANUFACTURER:** David Bogen Company, Inc., 29 Ninth Ave., New York 14, N. Y.

After all the detail of the manufacturer's specifications, there isn't a great deal left to be said — except that the units we worked with met the specs as far as we could tell.

These three pieces of equipment represent the Bogen line of thinking, and it is a "line" — that is, a series of units in various price classes but all carefully homogenized. All are visually styled and electrically designed to



The Bogen DB-130 control-amplifier.

work one with the other. They will look nice together, and you won't have a multiplicity of duplicating controls.

Let's look at the tuners first. Both incorporate highly effective AFC. The R-660 has one of the most stable AFC circuits I've seen; and drift is notably lacking on both tuners. Both use fly-wheel tuning — a mechanical arrangement which I like very much; you flip the knob and the indicator coasts two inches across the dial. The indicator, by the way, is cute: a small neon lamp traveling along behind a narrow slit on the front panel. Thus it serves as a combined tuning indicator and pilot light.

The AFC control on the selector switch of both tuners normally operates in-circuit; the AFC-Out position is to the extreme right, and it is a "spring-return" position. That is, you turn the knob clockwise to the AFC-Out position, tune in the station, and then release the knob. It springs back by itself to the normal AFC-in position.

FM sound from both units is clean, and the standard FM de-emphasis network built into them puts a nice, smooth high end into the sound. Sensitivity is quite high; quieting exceptionally good.

In operation, the FM section of the R-660 which we had for test seemed somewhat better than the FM-50. Maybe I was influenced by the higher price tag on the R-660,

and also by the inclusion of a tuning meter — a feature which I like. Also, stations seemed to come in on the R-660 with a little more precision. The tuning meter operates as a sensitivity meter on AM and as a center-of-channel indicator on FM.

The AM side of the R-660 is equally good. Sensitivity is more than adequate for city or

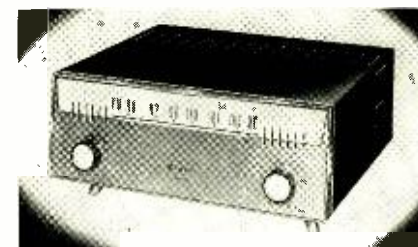


The R-660 combination AM-FM tuner.

suburban reception, and the 5,000-cycle high-frequency limit neatly removes the distortion and noise that many AM stations let slip through with their broadcasts. Also, it aids selectivity.

The DB-130 amplifier has enough features to write a book about . . . so please reread the specs section of this report. Note a few items, such as the fact that the phono channel for constant amplitude cartridges (crystal, ceramic, etc.) operates through the preamp and equalizer circuits. The standard Bogen loudness contour control appears, naturally; we did like this. Baxandall feedback-type tone controls are used. High filters, low filters, continuously variable damping factor (watch this one; it can cause oscillation if wrongly adjusted) . . . and at least one feature that is probably unique.

On the front panel is a slide switch labelled SPEAKER and also A AB B. On the back of the chassis are connections for two speakers, and also a switch to match 8- or 16-ohm output impedances. The switch is set to the impedance of the speakers being used; then with the front panel switch in the A position, the A speaker becomes operative. Switch to B, and you have the second speaker hitched up; change to AB, and both speakers work at once, with the output impedance automatically adjusted for correct matching. Think about



The matching FM-50 tuner for FM only.

this for a while, and you'll see how often it would be a useful feature.

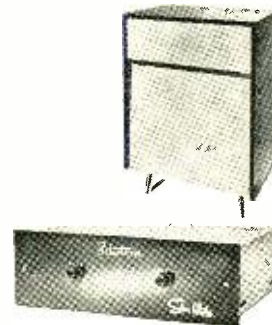
So — for \$115 you get a really long list of good features, as much flexibility of control as most people would ever want, and 35 watts at a pleasingly low IM specification. How does it sound? Nice! Distortion is quite low; high and low-frequency stability are good, as is definition and transparency on complex program material. The over-all impression is of very sweet, highly listenable sound. — C.F.

HARVEY Reports on HI-FI

July-August, 1956

That's right! This is something new — a hi-fi newsletter by HARVEY's . . . the store where 'high fidelity came of age'. . . the store best qualified to talk hi-fi to all seekers of authoritative information on the subject. From now on we shall regularly report to you — in our own words, just as though we were facing you in our new AUDIOTORIUM — the latest developments in the world of hi-fi, with a few remarks thrown in now and then on older, tried-and-true equipment. This month all of the equipment under discussion is more or less in the de luxe category — but every item shares the distinction of unexpectedly low price for the quality offered.

Perhaps the most exciting news is the Stan White 'Summer Special' — a HARVEY package offering the famous Stan White 'Hi-Fi' speaker system (\$339.50) plus the revolutionary new Stan White 'Beta-Tron' motion-feedback tweeter/amplifier system (\$139.00) for the unheard-of package price of \$299.50! You save \$179.00 — if you act fast! The 'Beta-Tron' system consists of a ten-watt, 1,000- to 200,000-cps amplifier driving a specially designed 5-inch cone tweeter, with feedback going from a motion-sensing coil, located in the tweeter itself, back to an early stage of the amplifier. Thus, for the first time, a speaker unit is *inside* the feedback loop, the distortion-correcting signal being actuated by the voice-coil motion itself. The amplifier incorporates a 2,000-cps, 18 db/octave electronic crossover network, so that the system is ready for use with a conventional amplifier driving any speaker having good response up to 3,000 cps. In the 'Summer Special,' the older tweeter of the Stan White 'Hi-Fi' is removed and the 'Beta-Tron' tweeter installed in its place. Nothing like it . . .



You may have noticed that David Hasler's new DYNAKIT Mark II 50-watt power amplifier kit is drawing extravagant praise from all quarters — from the severest, eyes-glued-to-the-scope electronic perfectionists as well as from the "ear-is-the-final-judge" boys. Small wonder, because for the ridiculous sum of \$69.75 plus an entertaining three- or four-hour bout with the soldering iron you can have for yourself the power amplifier of your dreams — ready to take on all comers as far as frequency response, distortion characteristics, power handling capacity at any audio frequency up to rated power, phase shift, square wave response or anything else is concerned. Not a trace of bounce, flutter or oscillation after the severest transient pulses, either . . .

Speaking of amplifiers, the Acoustical QUAD II with the Q.C. II control unit, now in its third year on the market, still keeps cropping up in the news with reassuring regularity. After G. A. Briggs' fantastic results with it in his American concert hall demonstrations, we hear of it again as the amplifier P. J. Walker uses in England to demonstrate his epoch-making new all-electrostatic speaker. For the new reduced price of \$199.95 the combination gives you the stables, most silky-smooth 30 watts you can ask for . . . spectacularly versatile pre-amplification, controls, filters, and other front-end niceties . . . extra-low background noise . . . battleship-like construction . . . gorgeous, British-type wiring . . . plus styling of quiet elegance. For the fussiest audio connoisseurs . . .



Another consistent headline-maker is the Ampex 612-SS dual-channel stereophonic tape system. All who have heard it, including hard-bitten professional audio writers, seem to agree that the feeling of open space it puts around the music when it plays the new stereo tapes cannot be duplicated on single-channel systems in any price range. Just \$699.00 will buy the complete outfit, with 7½ ips tape phonograph (playback only) plus two independent amplifier/speaker systems — ready to play, nothing else to buy. Will play conventional half-track and full-track tapes, too . . .

A new arrival just before press time: the Tandberg Model 3 three-speed, half-track tape recorder and playback unit — and we are finding it a little difficult to believe our eyes and ears. Let the specs speak: Frequency response ± 2 db from 30 to 15,000 cps at 7½ ips; ± 2 db from 40 to 7,500 cps at 3¾ ips; ± 2 db from 50 to 4,000 cps at 1⅞ ips. Flutter and wow below 0.1% at 7½ ips and low enough at 1⅞ ips to be inaudible on piano recordings. Signal-to-noise ratio 60 db at high recording levels. Has been done before? Sure — but has it ever been done for \$349.50, complete with built-in amplifier, Goodmans speaker, transport case, microphone, input-output cord, instruction manual and a reel of tape?



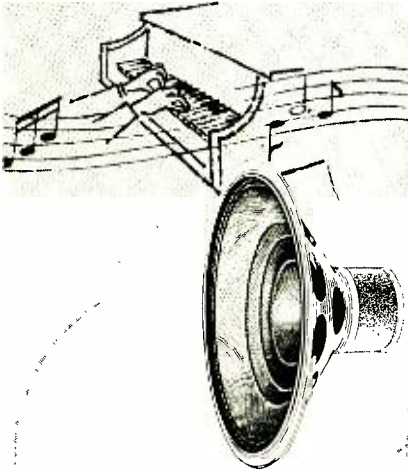
In conclusion, just a reminder that ordering by mail from HARVEY's is one of the most pleasant and convenient ways to do your hi-fi shopping. No downtown traffic to buck, no hunting for hard-to-get items (HARVEY's has 'em in stock), plus HARVEY's 29 years reputation, pre-testing service and money-back guarantee to back every sale. Your order filled the same day we receive it, too . . . Just add a generous allowance for postage (you'll get the excess back with the package) and wait for the postman with the armful of listening pleasure.

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CONDUCTORS

Continued from page 27

cases, to give him what he asks, and deserves.

A professional orchestra is fantastically expensive to employ, and there is justification in holding that only tried and experienced leaders should appear before such a group. On the other hand, if opportunities to conduct are limited to those whose reputation is known, worthy candidates are forever held back through the lack of experience. This is a distinct element of the present situation, in which conducting is dominated by a group of men whose experience was secured in Europe and whose prestige has earned them the most desirable positions. Thus the possibility of American conductors obtaining the training they need is, to a degree, curtailed. In actual fact, what appears to happen is that if one has the musical background, usually as a pianist or orchestral player, and is sufficiently persevering, one may finally get the break necessary to show what one can do as a conductor. If the first few appearances are successful, one *may* then get a chance to work with an expensive symphony orchestra and win the needed experience; if they are not, one is finished—or at least retarded. It is a situation in which the assumption is that the fast learner is the best student, and I am not sure that this is a sound assumption in any field.

The biggest hurdle the aspirant conductor must overcome is therefore that of *getting a chance to conduct* under conditions in which he can really learn something. There are a great many school, amateur, and semiprofessional orchestras in the United States, but it is questionable whether for a conductor they are of importance as a training ground for the major orchestral appointments. There is, unfortunately, a gap between the professional "big time" (dominated by the New York concert managements) and the community orchestra, and a resultant lack of precedent for the Musical Director of the Suburbia Philharmonic needing ever to advance outside the semiprofessional field.* In the second place it is an open question whether a future Toscanini or Munch would even be

* In Germany, for example, the suggestion would be that he could go onward and upward without difficulty as his merits increased, but even the smaller German cities maintain their *musica* life on a professional level.

able to function on a semiprofessional basis, where some degree of artistic compromise is a necessary part of every activity.

Regularly some conductor or another in the "big time" will allow an aspirant (or a group of aspirants) to study with him. Though potentially useful, most such projects fail through the denial to the student of the chance to face the orchestra himself.

Rodzinski has told me with all sincerity that he learned his art as associate conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski. Now one does not think of an ensemble such as the Philadelphia as a training orchestra nor of an associate conductor as an apprentice (although Alexander Hilsberg and Saul Caston have both gone from the Philadelphia to careers of their own). Rodzinski was at the time head of the orchestral and operatic departments of the Curtis Institute and therefore, although he speaks of his relation with Stokowski as that of a student to a teacher, he was, in fact, himself a conservatory professor with students of his own.

The existence of such a situation emphasizes the paradox in the training of conductors. To learn to conduct a professional orchestra one must have a professional orchestra to conduct, but a professional orchestra is such an expensive proposition to maintain that no one can afford to operate one for training purposes. The young conductor must therefore break into his profession on the basis of limited experience, luck, and guts, and learn it while performing a professional function. This is almost impossible to do in the United States, with the result that the young American musician who wishes to conduct has, almost literally, no place to go in his own country. He is forced into being an orchestral player, the conductor of a school or semiprofessional orchestra, a conservatory teacher, or even (God help him) a music critic. In Europe there are a few places for him to go, a recognized professional "small time" and "medium time" in contrast with the universal "big" and "bigger time" in the United States.

In spite of this there are, of course, American conductors, but they are the rare and fortunate individuals who have been able to start right off, surviving in the "big time." Several of them would be much better artists, I feel, if they had been able to work their way up gradually, outside of the

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spotlight of the New York scene. There are other young American musicians who deserve a chance to show what they can do, but who have never been in a position to seize an opportunity to do so. Mr. Leonard Bernstein is not only a talented young man, but also a very lucky one, and it is not inconceivable that there are others with equal talent but inferior luck.

My conclusion is that the shortage of conductors is artificial, due to the barriers that stand in the way of entry into the profession. The situation must remedy itself, since the demand for concerts will go on — or increase — after the present dominant group of conductors are no more. The question is how their successors are to obtain the experience they require to assume responsible professional roles. When the gravity of that question is felt, it is to be hoped that intelligence will supply the means to answer it.

PITCH MACHINE

Continued from page 34

the same the performers use in the recording session. This will permit the music lover to adjust the speed of his turntable with a small tuning fork. In the future when most better-class turntables again have speed adjustment, manufacturers no doubt will be glad to deliver such tuning forks as courtesy gifts, as some now give you stroboscopic cards.

And finally a few kind but urgent words to the sound engineers. I know, of course, how annoying it is to them when we musicians, or worse, we musicologists, begin to meddle in what they consider their own preserve. (As one engineer said to me: "We just ignore the musicians and musicologists.") I sympathize with the engineers, but they forget something: as soon as sound engineering ventures away from oscillator tones and jingling keys, and enters the field of music, it becomes *our* business, too, and we are going to meddle until we get what we want, our beloved music undistorted in every respect. Engineering has its own terms and methods, and we admire them duly. But as engineering becomes involved with music, the terms and methods of music will have to be adopted as well, the same way the modern sound-conscious musician has learned to respect all technological requirements. Here are

Continued on next page

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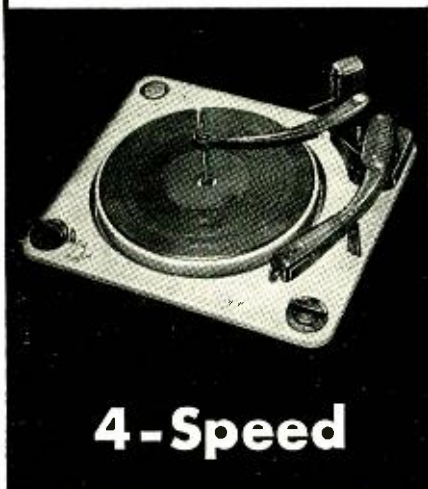
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PITCH MACHINE

Continued from preceding page

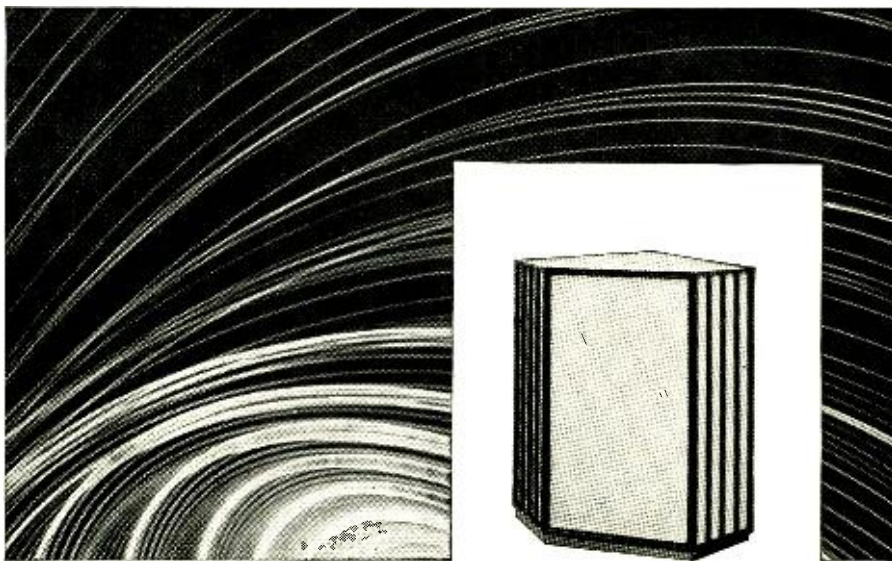
some things engineers should think about:

(1) You are not dealing any more with "signals" only, but with the living and meaningful musical tone. If you wish to test for musical reproduction, forget about your favorite 1,000-cycle tone — which hardly ever occurs in music, anyway, and is no more than an abstraction. Take instead A-440 (or any multiple of it) which is just as "scientific" and technically sound, and has the advantage of being musically relevant.

(2) Learn to determine speed fluctuations, such as flutter and wow, *in terms of cents*. Your usual percentage figures are again abstractions with small practical value, even for the engineer. How do you know whether a deviation of 1%, or .5%, or .1% is still acceptable *musically*? You don't, and we don't, and after all you are constructing and working for the reproduction of music. The cent is a much nicer unit, even more "scientific," since it is logarithmic and tells you right away whether or not your toler-

ances are within acceptable *musical* limits. You figure that your new turntable shows only $\pm .4\%$ flutter, and that sounds awfully good to you, to the salesman and, maybe, to the customer. But if you knew that this $\pm .4\%$ gives you ± 7 cents pitch distortion while the maximum tolerable to musical ears may be only ± 1.5 cents, the whole matter looks different. I maintain that the flutter-and-wow situation is still so far from a satisfactory solution in some part because the whole industry keeps kidding itself and the public with nice-sounding percentage figures.

(3) Please get used to working with the stroboscope. One contributing editor of this magazine told me recently that one of my previous articles, in 1954, smacked altogether of too much stroboscope and too little oscilloscope. This may be quite true, but only with respect to the previous occasion. Here and now, we are dealing with phenomena which no other instrument but the stroboscope can measure with adequate precision. Some studios have had the instrument for many years, but it is tucked away in the basement store rooms because in



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previous years recording engineers did not take to it: the instrument smelled of classical music, of art, of mysticism and "esoteric" or psychological involvements not befitting a good engineer; the stroboscope was not really "professional" from the engineer's point of view: it measured in a musical unit, in cents, instead of ohms, millivolts, microfarads. Who needs cents, anyway? I am telling you this: you will need cents if you want to make dollars in the future.

Originally we had planned to extend this investigation to include the pitch situation on pre-recorded tapes. This idea had to be abandoned as premature for several reasons. The pre-recorded repertory is still very small. Available tapes are certain to reflect at least all the pitch flaws inherent in the original master tapes, plus — possibly — a number of further flaws created in the copying process or in the final home playback. As long as the amateur has no reliable devices to measure and continuously adjust the tape speeds of his home equipment, there is little point in telling him what is wrong with the pitch in his tapes; he couldn't do anything about it anyway. At present most of the best professional tape equipment is still subject to various pitch and speed afflictions: these will have to be cured before the cures can be copied in amateur and home recorders.

Trying to sum up the findings of these investigations and the final report given here, I am forced to conclude that tape and tape-recording machines have marked time during the last three to four years, while disk recording and processing have made substantial progress. These improvements involve the cutting-head, the pickup, the turntable, the tone-arm, master-cutting with variable pitch, new and improved electro-plating and disk-pressing processes. All this adds up to the conclusion that the factor now limiting quality in records is the tape recorder. Tape makers realize this. Talking to me recently, one shrugged his shoulders and said: "What would be the use of making better and ever better high-precision tape, so long as the recording machines remain what they are? It would be the same as hooking up a 100-watt super-amplifier to a five-inch portable radio loud-speaker."



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ERICH KLEIBER

Continued from page 24

of their profits; he refuses to countenance listeners who do not share his musical enthusiasms or religious doctrines; and if he is truly upright, he will not sing for people who drink and smoke, some of whom, he suspects, also commit adultery.

At the other end of the scale, of course, an artist who knowingly lives off crime or depravity is bound to be contaminated by it. Art and life mix unevenly, but they do mix. And for

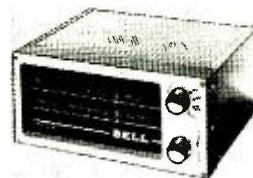
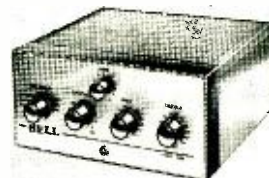


that very reason, the public's judgment of artists' moral and political careers should be tempered by the sobering thought, "What could I do in such perplexities?" A mind like Kleiber's, tracing out consequences in imagination, is strong in the belief that by reasserting the independence of art, its independence both from political dictation and from public clamor, he contributes most to the ultimate virtues of civilization.

It was in London, before his return to his well-loved Berlin and his break with the rulers of the Eastern zone, that I last saw Kleiber. The date was 1951, the season Christmas, and the mood still that of privation. The previous year had seen the first signs of national resurgence in the great exhibition on the South Side, which included the new crystalline concert hall where Kleiber was conducting. He pronounced it acoustically admirable when filled, but difficult to rehearse in — and brutally, Britishly cold.

We three — for Ruth Kleiber was there — were away from home and spent Christmas Day together in the gaunt, old Waldorf Hotel, drinking its superannuated champagne and speaking of those absent, particularly of Kleiber's son Carl, who seemed disposed to follow his father's career and has since taken the first steps, in Germany, with encouraging success. I kept urging Erich ("Pepito" to his family) to give the United

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States another try. I told him of the increasing, the alarming passion for music which he could help at once to satisfy and to moderate with the strokes of his wand. To which, having seen and talked about America with E. M. Forster the day before, I felt I ought to add a word of assurance that one could lead in this country a reasonably comfortable existence. Ruth Kleiber's heroic endurance of innumerable hotels deserved surcease, even if only in anticipation, and I expressed my conviction that life over here need not be noisy, hectic, frazzling unless one preferred it so. The United States, I could guarantee, had vastly changed since their earlier long stay in 1930-32.

Ruth was readily persuaded, and I turned to Erich for his doubt or assent. But the question did not really interest him: it was the country's conversion to music that absorbed his thoughts — Was this musical renaissance genuine? What was the meaning of the chamber-music craze? Did the leading orchestras still recruit the choicest players? What kind of audiences did the dozens of new city symphonies attract? What did it all mean? Being no prophet, either at home or abroad, I could not answer this all-inclusive question. But I could report on the changing repertory — and deplore his absence from the Metropolitan, where he would infallibly have given us "the three F's." And with the inconsequence of free association, I added: "Do you know that the only satisfying Performance of *Freischütz* I've ever heard was yours, in April '34?"

"Was it now?" For a brief moment his face was pensive.

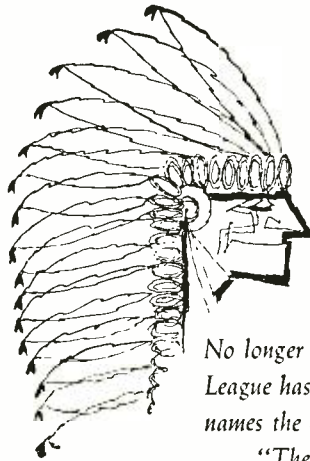
"Yes — wonderful in every detail!"

"No wonder, really: Weber put them there."

FOR BURNING

Continued from page 31

of horse operas being filmed, such works as the *William Tell* and *Poet and Peasant* overtures are beginning to receive a well-earned rest. But the requirements of television may eventually inflict triteness on other unoffending works. Progress is progress, I suppose, but I hate to think of the day when the opening strains of the *Ride of the Valkyries* will provoke only the reaction — "It must be way downtown. I can't hear the sirens at all."



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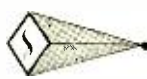
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- Rek-O-Kut LP-78 turntable, in need of overhaul..... \$10
- Clarkstan 204D RV cartridge, .001 diam. stylus..... \$12
- Pickering 190 arm..... \$20
- UTC LS-55 output transformer..... \$10
- Cook Ultimate amplifier..... \$100
- Crestwood 404 tape recorder..... \$125
- University 4401 tweeter and crossover... \$10
- Fisher 50C preamplifier-control unit... \$50
- Rek-O-Kut Rondine turntable..... \$40
- Audak 12-in. arm and Chromatic diam./sapph. cartridge..... \$35
- Electro-Voice Georgian system, mahogany..... \$350
- Electro-Voice Centurian, unfinished, w/ model 117 multi-speaker package... \$200

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ALBUM ANTICS

Continued from page 29

a metallic shawl, which suggests that she may be of Levantine origin. She makes her appearance on another Columbia album called ANITRA'S DANCE, which contains the first *Peer Gynt* Suite and a couple of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies* thrown in for good measure. The ethnic link escapes me.

Another photographic motif which turns up quite often is that of the "Depressed Child." Such representations are generally found on albums of contemporary music; and, since they are usually in black and white, they are evidently intended to carry a message indicating that the music on the record is somewhat stark. The "Depressed Child" always looks either hungry, depraved, or mildly catatonic. Examples may be found on two Columbia albums; a Bernstein-directed program of American compositions by Burlingame and Lopatnikoff, and a recent recording of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10.

"Atrocities" depicting full-length figures, posed alone or in group arrangements, are also on the upswing. Since issuing Scriabin's *Poem of Ecstasy* in a jacket featuring a portrait of a reclining female, swathed in gauze and mist, RCA Victor has had considerable success in promoting seminudity and nightwear. A recent Boston Pops recording of Chopin's *Les Sylphides*, coupled with the Strauss-Dorati *Graduation Ball*, gives us what appears to be a stark naked ballerina (the strategic areas of her anatomy being concealed behind a clump of foliage), coyly tying a slipper on her bare leg. Prominently displayed on Fiedler's collection titled MUSIC FOR A SUMMER NIGHT is a tulle negligee, the wearer of which is seen wandering among classic pillars. On the jacket of the Pops *Gaité Parisienne* there is a splendid four-color reproduction of a view which consists almost entirely of thigh. Another negligee, which achieves a new low in necklines, adorns the model who posed for an album of Stokowski offerings called RESTFUL GOOD MUSIC.

The height—or depth—of "Atrocity" production is realized in Victor's cover for the Munch performance of Ravel's complete *Daphnis et Chloé*. Here we see a young couple, who would be considerably more at home in an underwear advertisement, glis-

tening with pancake make-up and swathed in household rags. The vacancy of Chloé's expression suggests that she is dreaming she went to Greece in her Maiden Form floursack. Issued at about the same time was a recording of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, Acts 2 and 3, for which a winsome young model was decked out in tutu, satin toe slippers, tights, coronet, and the traditional swan-feather ear muffs generally associated with the Queen of the Swans. The resemblance ended when the photographers decided to show the model standing on her head. One might suspect that this particular young woman has a long-term contract with the photography unit connected with Victor, for she turns up again, same costume (upper anatomy only), on a Monteux album of suites from Delibes' *Sylvia* and *Coppelia*. Or perhaps she had the costume on a twenty-four-hour rental basis and posed for both productions during one shift.

Since the "Atrocity" appears with a frequency which indicates that it is here to stay, and since it offers broad vistas for infinite exploration of various motifs in sundry combinations, one might just as well jump on the bandwagon. Thus, in conclusion, the following modest suggestions are offered to the recording industry for future productions in the photographic genre:

An album of Debussy piano music, played by Rubinstein . . . could call it MY REVERIE . . . full face of young woman, eyes closed, lips moist, slightly parted . . . filmy nightgown straps slipping off shoulders . . . over her head a nimbus, in which are superimposed the heads of Claude Debussy, Artur Rubinstein, and Sigmund Freud.

Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (in unpretentious type) . . . an eye-catching banner, stating "FEATURING A HUMAN SACRIFICE" . . . girl in leopard-skin bikini, standing on her hands . . . rapacious male in tiger pelts, approaching with a blunt weapon.

Kodály's *Háry János* Suite, "FEATURING AN ORCHESTRAL SNEEZE" . . . wild, wintery landscape . . . full face of model (blonde) hair awry, clutching a hanky to her nose.

Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 . . . call it FULL MOON AND EMPTY ARMS . . . enormous moon, frowning face of Rachmaninoff superimposed . . . "Depressed Child" being comforted by the Queen of the Swans (if she hasn't turned in that costume yet).

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AUDIO FORUM



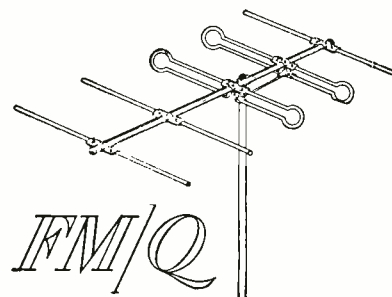
SIR:

I read with great interest your reply to the question posed by Mr. John R. Steven in a letter which appeared in the March issue of your magazine. Unless I completely misunderstand Mr. Steven's purpose in writing the letter, his question is this: do long-playing records wear out quickly, or don't they? If this is what Mr. Steven would like to know, then your answer to his letter is both inadequate and misleading.

Your reply studiously avoids any suggestion that long-playing records are subject to relatively rapid deterioration even under optimum conditions. You dwell at great length on the possible existence of defects in Mr. Steven's cartridge, his amplifier, his pickup arm, and his speaker. The fallacy of your reply lies in the fact that if the cartridge, amplifier, pickup arm, and speaker were to exhibit any or all of the defects you describe, the reproduction of a brand new record would presumably be marred by the same kind of "high frequency fuzziness" which Mr. Steven detects in a record played ten times. In thus describing certain defects which will affect the reproduction of any record, old or new, at any given moment of its life, you evade the question of *progressive deterioration* over a considerable period of time. And that, I believe, is what Mr. Steven is worried about.

Let us not beg the question a second time. The essential point is that the extreme delicacy of long-playing records makes them susceptible to rapid wear even when played on the finest equipment and handled with the utmost care. Mr. Steven's letter indicates clearly that his equipment and mode of handling are well above the average.

Rather than to have given him a fruitless ride on the technological merry-go-round, would it not have been preferable to state in candor that



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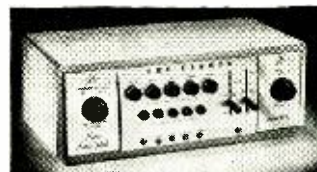
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long-playing records simply do not last very long?

James D. Farrell
New York, N. Y.

Mr. Steven stated in his letter that, despite all his efforts to keep his records and playing equipment in peak condition, LP disks still seem to wear out after ten plays. LP records are fragile . . . they are easily scratched and quick to become noisy if not kept dust-free. But their useful life is judged by a listener on the basis of how fuzzy or ragged they sound after a certain number of plays, and this depends as much upon all the associated playing equipment as it does on the record itself.

A new record is, obviously, going to be cleaner-sounding than a worn one, and a non-compliant cartridge will cause fairly rapid abrasion of the groove walls. But whether the noise produced by groove deterioration is heard as a raucous tearing sound or as a smooth, evenly-distributed fuzz is the measure of the reproducing system's smoothness, distortion, and high-frequency stability. Extremely smooth, wide-range, low-distortion systems can play records whose loudly-recorded grooves have turned slate gray from wear, and make them sound not only very listenable but also apparently quite clean.

Contrary to expectation, a top-quality system reduces the annoyance value of record wear to the point where it is no longer significant, rather than emphasizing blemishes in the sound. It should be pointed out, though, that equipment "well above average" is not good enough to completely eliminate audible fuzziness from disks. Many premium-priced speakers are very poor performers at the high-frequency end of their range, and it is interesting to note that nearly all the complaints about fuzziness and rapid wear of disks come from people who own speakers which are very poor high-frequency performers, or amplifiers which ring or produce far too much distortion.

Most "top-quality" pickup cartridges are far too lacking in compliance to avoid a certain amount of groove wear with each play, and many of them become even less compliant with a few months' use. And while there are one or two pickups available that are notably easy on records, even these can

Continued on next page

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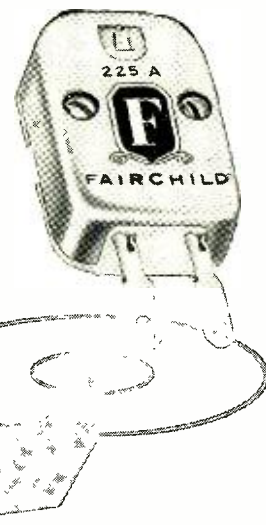
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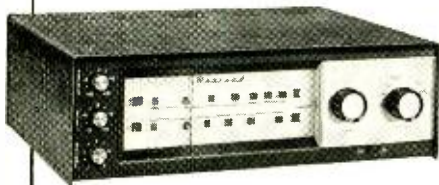
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

produce ragged sound on the tenth playing of a disk if the associated equipment is not of top caliber and in first-class condition.

SIR:

I have a Concertone BRX-1 tape recorder. I have tried to record programs from my TV set, but I cannot seem to eliminate the hum or buzz from the sound. I have had the TV set checked several times and I know it is working properly, but I still get the buzz from some place. I connect the tape recorder to the speaker terminals of the TV set. Is there any other way I can connect this up to eliminate this buzz?

I also have a 1950 model TV set with a tap on it so I can feed it directly into my hi-fi rig, by-passing the audio stage in the TV set, but I still get the hum or buzz from that set.

One final question. Might I buy a used TV set and have the audio stage put in first-class shape, and use it without the picture tube?

Russ Bothie
Chicago, Ill.

Apparently the buzzing noise you are getting from your TV receiver is intercarrier noise, which is present to some extent in the audio channel of nearly all commercial TV sets.

Much of the cost of quality TV tuners goes into extensive measures to eliminate this noise, and it would be quite a job to eliminate it from a standard TV set.

Your idea of using the audio section of an old TV set, with its picture section disabled, sounds like a good one, but make sure you disable all the picture section. This means that the connections to the high-voltage supply should be broken at their source, and the horizontal and vertical oscillator tubes should be pulled from their sockets. Also, a bleeder resistor should be installed across the B+ supply to maintain the total current drain from it at its original level before the tubes were removed.

As another alternative, you might consider purchasing one of the TV-audio tuners that are advertised in HIGH FIDELITY. We have never had the opportunity to test one of these, but have heard some favorable reports about them from readers.



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