

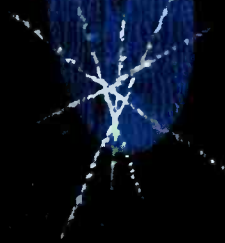
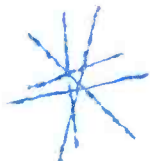
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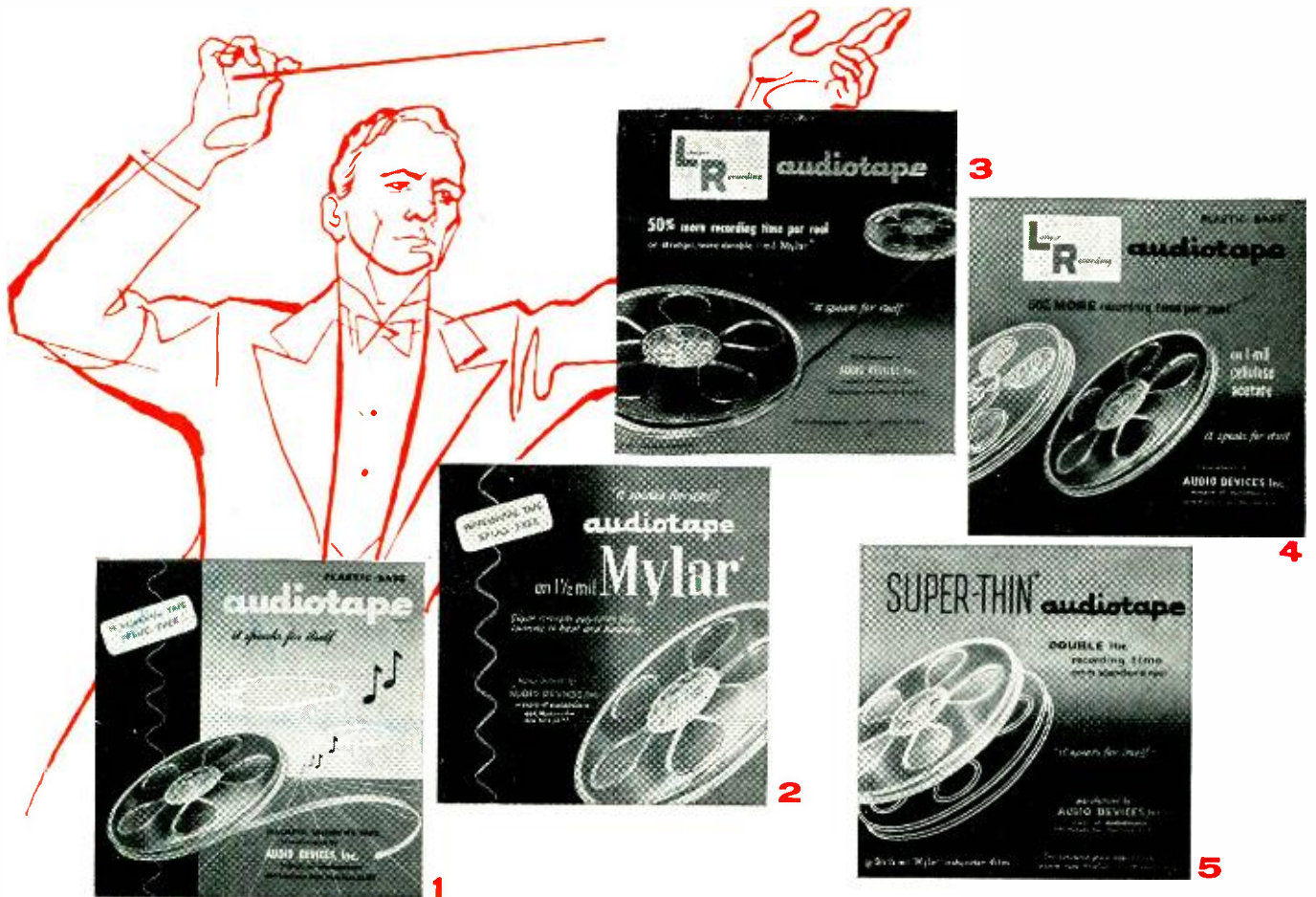
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December

High Fidelity

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High Fidelity

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

This Issue. This magazine is now five years old going on six (our birthday comes in midsummer, when no one notices institutional birthdays), and has grown rather fantastically, along with the public, the art, and the industry it serves. Change is not to be regretted (and it cannot be fought), but it poses editorial problems. Record reviewers nowadays, for instance, take note of a record's sound chiefly when it is *not* good. Sonic merit is almost uniform today; most of 1956's LPs would have seemed aural marvels in 1951. Audio equipment, too, has changed for the better, however gradually, and the criteria whereby it is judged—by customer as well as by professional tester—have altered also. When HIGH FIDELITY, Vol. 1, No. 1, came out, at least one major audio distributor still was offering "complete high fidelity" rigs, including tuners, for less than \$150. The dollar was worth more then than now, of course, but not *that* much more. The fact is, what was considered adequate "beginner's fi" then would not now be thought acceptable at all. The equipment consisted largely of modified public address components, and sounded like it. Adequacy, 1956, comes higher in price. But it comes also lower in distortion. And even the untutored now have become particular on this score. Hence a series we begin this issue, which could have been titled (but isn't) How to Take a New Look at High Fidelity. It starts on page 58.

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WARREN B. SYER, *Business Manager*

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Advertising

Main Office—Claire Eddings, The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. Telephone: Great Barrington 1300.

New York—Fred C. Michalove, Room 600, 6 East 39th St. Telephone: MUrray Hill 5-6332.

Chicago—John R. Rutherford & Associates, Inc., 230 East Ohio St. Telephone: Whitehall 4-6715.

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Briggs at Carnegie

As he did in 1955, G. A. Briggs of Wharfedale Loudspeakers gave a concert on October 3 of "live and recorded music" in Carnegie Hall. It was a well-worthwhile evening for the 2,500 enthusiasts who attended and though some may have been uncertain as to how well recorded sound fared in the tests, no one could help admiring Mr. Briggs for his courage in undertaking again so sizable a project. Mr. Briggs was assisted by sundry recordings and by live performances by E. Power Biggs, Morton Gould with a percussion ensemble which included the tap dancer Danny Daniels, and Teicher and Ferrante, duo-pianists.

It is perhaps unfortunate that a good many people in the audience came with the expectation that they would hear, for example, Haydn's Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra so reproduced that they could close their eyes and be unable to tell if it were reproduced or live. The possibility of such an achievement is, as a matter of fact, remotely conceivable—but to expect it of the equipment used by Mr. Briggs, and in Carnegie Hall, is little short of ridiculous. What is remarkable about the demonstration is that it came as close as it did to this ultimate achievement.

Mr. Briggs used three Wharfedale corner systems most of the time; on some occasions (guitar solo, for example) he switched to a pair of bookshelf-size speakers. We sat in a box in the first balcony—goodness knows how many feet from the stage. From this position, there was little doubt which was which in the live versus recorded comparisons. The reproduced sound, in general, did not have the bigness of the original. To describe precisely the difference is most difficult; "bigness" is perhaps as good a word as any because it can mean

Continued on page 8



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NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 4

several things, in several dimensions. The reproduced sound did not have the depth, the apparent dynamic range, nor the breadth of the original. On the other hand, the similarity was remarkable. We had the silly feeling that if the speakers would just take one good deep breath to expand their chests, everything would be wonderful. Remember: this is our impression from the balcony, from almost as far away as it was possible to get.

One of the people sharing the box with us said with considerable conviction that he could do better at home. Of course. That is exactly the point, and an important one.

Mr. Briggs used three "domestic" speaker systems. Each one is more or less capable of handling a large living room. Three of them should handle three living rooms. And that is about what they would have had to cope with *if* Mr. Briggs had turned them around, faced them into the back of the stage, and dropped the curtain. Instead, he aimed them into the cavernous maw of Carnegie Hall, populated with close to 3,000 highly sound-absorptive objects.

If these factors are kept in mind, then Mr. Briggs's efforts were a grand success simply as a demonstration of how close home systems can come to concert hall sound even in a concert hall.

To find out how important the factor of proximity might be, we went downstairs and sat much closer to the speakers. The difference between live and reproduced sound was still noticeable, but not as pronounced as in the balcony.

The smoothness with which the evening's entertainment proceeded was indeed remarkable. Mr. Briggs opened with a delightful short talk about the objectives of the evening and then proceeded to put on a series of nineteen short selections. Columbia had made tape recordings (last July, to be exact) of the duo-pianists Teicher and Ferrante, who reappeared on this evening to alternate with the tapes. The timing and synchronization was nothing short of remarkable!

An even more difficult live-to-recorded comparison was made by Morton Gould with a group of percussionists and the tap dancer. This is one selection in which the sound was so good and the switching done

so rapidly and so fluently that which was live and which reproduced became almost impossible to tell.

Many are due words of thanks and public acknowledgment for their efforts. In addition to Mr. Briggs, Harold Leak and E. Power Biggs gave short talks; behind the scenes were the staffs of British Industries (importers of Wharfedale, Leak, and Garrard products) and, last but definitely not least, the Columbia engineers who produced the remarkable tapes.

Klipsch at Bushnell

October, this year, was the month not only of high-fidelity exhibits but also of hi-fi demonstrations. G. A. Briggs, of Wharfedale, took over Carnegie Hall in New York City on October 3; six days later Paul Klipsch, in conjunction with Gray Research and Development Co. and the Audio Workshop of West Hartford, Conn., filled nearly every seat in Hartford's Bushnell Memorial Hall. Although one's first reaction to Bushnell is that it is considerably smaller than Carnegie, that is an illusion. It does not have the great height of Carnegie, but it seats 3,277 compared to 2,760 for the New York hall.

Mainstay of the evening's entertainment was Paul Klipsch, who rode through a number of "technical difficulties" with good humor and a quick wit which delighted the audience. But by no means in a secondary role was the Hartford Symphony Orchestra under Fritz Mahler; the evening was a fine demonstration of the orchestra's excellent ability... and most of the evening, it was live music.

After a fine *Egmont Overture*, by the orchestra, a disk recording of *Danse Macabre* seemed a trifle weak and out of balance by comparison. A planned FM broadcast relay did not materialize because of technical problems, much to the concern of Mr. Klipsch and the amusement of the audience.

The stereo-taped versus live performance of parts of Britten's *Young Person's Guide* was exciting if much too short for the tastes of most people. The orchestra went through it all, first; then it was AB'd—and A + B'd—by a pair of Klipschorns, and it appeared as if the reproduced sound might well have been a surprisingly close facsimile. But... there was too

Continued on page 12

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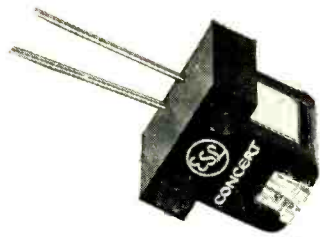


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NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 9

little of it, and while A + B can be dramatic, it makes a comparison difficult.

Once again, we were impressed by two things: the courage of Klipsch, Gray, and Audio Workshop in undertaking so large an experiment, and for that alone all deserve a most hearty commendation, with lots of urging to do it again on, if necessary, a smaller scale and with perhaps a bit more time given to the reproduction of sound.

Our second impression, which we have never had before, was of the small size of a Klipschorn! That two of them, pushed to the sides of the stage, should be expected to be the equal of the seventy-odd members of the orchestra, seemed ridiculous. How does one K-horn compare in size with one bass viol, for example? Or look at the size of one of Klipsch's mid-range squawkers, as he calls them. And compare the relative size of the instruments it is supposed to reproduce!

Whose Pictures?

We sent out a questionnaire to a small sample of our readers several months ago, asking for descriptions of equipment owned. One reader was kind enough to send us photographs to supplement his answers and asked that the pictures be returned. Unfortunately, there was no return address on the questionnaire nor on the pictures. We have been holding on to them for some time with the thought that we would get a strong letter suggesting that we were the essence of rudeness for not returning the photographs. That would have cleared up the problem quickly, and simply. But "Audiomaniac," as he signed himself, is a gentleman and no letter has been forthcoming.

So, on the chance that he may see this item, would he please step forward and identify himself. Pictures are 2¼ × 2¼ and show a fine array of equipment including a Klipschorn, television chassis with Garrard changer below, and a Scott 121 above. Also a neatly housed Concertone tape recorder—and a fine looking test bench around the corner and to the left of the television set.

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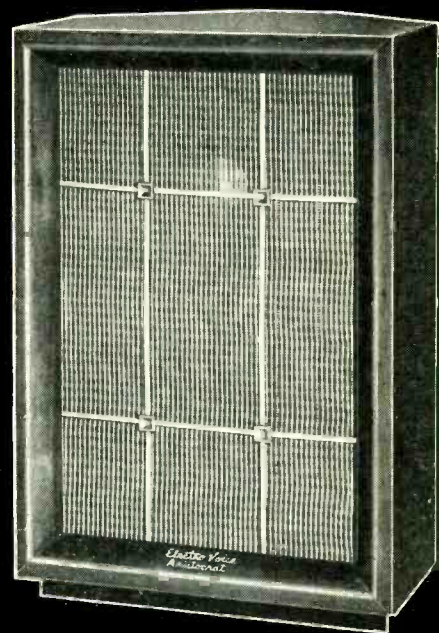


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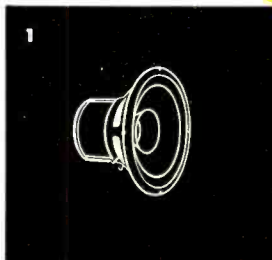
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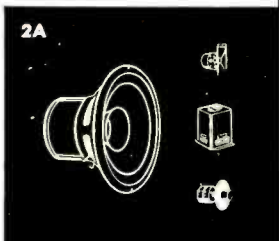
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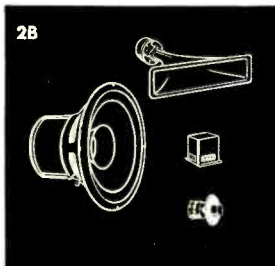
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STEP UP your enjoyment by adding driver, crossover and level control. Now you will hear silky highs, as you *step up* with Model T35B VHF driver, Model AT37 level control and Model X36 crossover. Prefer more mid-range response? Then *step up* with Model T10A HF driver with Model 8HD horn, Model AT37 level control and Model X825 crossover.

COMPLETE your integrated Electro-Voice reproducing system by adding all components listed to your basic coaxial speaker in the Aristocrat enclosure. Separate controls for the Brilliance and Presence ranges compensate for room acoustics and individual tastes.

Every step of the way, you'll be enjoying high fidelity with a difference—the *built-in* difference that has made Electro-Voice famous.

Model SP12B Coaxial Loudspeaker PLUS Additional Components in both Steps 2A and 2B.
All Components..... Net \$151.00
Components and Aristocrat Enclosure:
Mahogany..... Total Net \$220.00
Blonde..... Total Net 227.00
Walnut..... Total Net 230.80

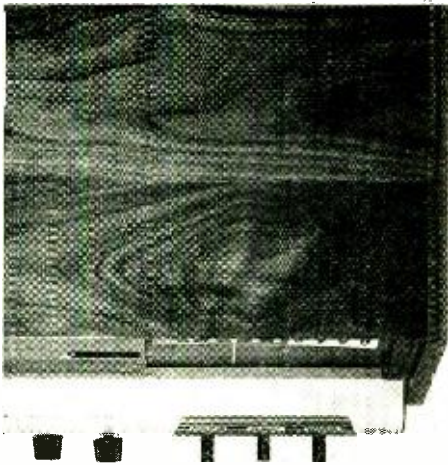
ELECTRO-VOICE, manufacturer of the most complete high-fidelity product range—speakers, speaker enclosures, systems, amplifiers, preamps, tuners, phono cartridges. Do-It-Yourself enclosure kits and microphones. Available everywhere.

Electro-Voice®

ELECTRO-VOICE, INC. • BUCHANAN, MICHIGAN

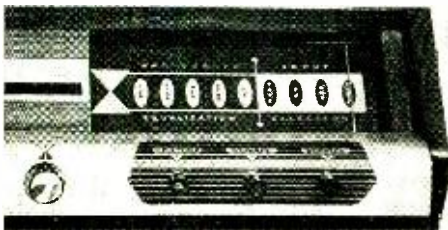
CANADA: E-V of Canada Ltd., 1908 Avenue Road, Toronto, Ontario
EXPORT: 13 East 40th Street, New York 16, U. S. A. Cables: ARLAB

SEE YOUR ELECTRO-VOICE DEALER TODAY.
LOOK FOR THE E-V SYSTEMS SELECTOR.



Even though our name is steeped in the tradition of the high fidelity field, we would now like to introduce ourselves as the newest and freshest face around. We still hold tenaciously to our tradition, but a few new ingredients have been added.

Progressive styling for one thing. Our styling department was given full rein on these new models and what has evolved is simply exhilarating. A form that is freshly alive, rich warm woods, fine finishing, extremely functional—an incredibly handsome line, indeed.



Engineering, too, was given the full treatment. Some old hands in high fidelity circuitry shut themselves in the lab for months looking for something new. One day they walked out of the lab with some prototypes brimming over with new circuit ideas. We didn't feel that we could keep them a secret for long, so we've used them in all of our new models.

You will want to see and hear our new models when they start gracing the shelves of our dealers. In the meantime, we've reserved a brochure for you giving full details on all of our new tuners and amplifiers. Just drop us a note with your name and address and the word "brochure" to



SARGENT-RAYMENT CO.

4926 East 12th Street, Oakland 1, California



NATIONAL has announced a new speaker system measuring only 8 by 14 by 9 in. Frequency response is said to be essentially flat from 90 to 12,000 cycles; available in several finishes; cost is \$29.95.

AMPEX has been creating quite a stir with its stereophonic system consisting of a two-speed tape recorder which reproduces two-track stereophonic and records half-track, as well as playing back standard half- and full-track tapes. The system also includes an AM-FM tuner, record changer, two 10-watt amplifiers and two speaker systems. Price is \$1,470.00. Also announced are several basic tape recorders. The model A112 records and plays back half-track at 3¾ and 7½ ips. Price is \$395.00. The A121 tape recorder is a stereophonic unit, the same as the one used in the big music system described first in this item. Price of this model is \$495.00.

ELECTRO-VOICE is offering a special on their model 857 equipment console. If you buy the preamplifier, amplifier, speaker enclosure, and loudspeaker (total cost \$269.50) you'll get the \$200-value equipment console for only \$82.50 extra. The console looks pretty snazzy, by the way.

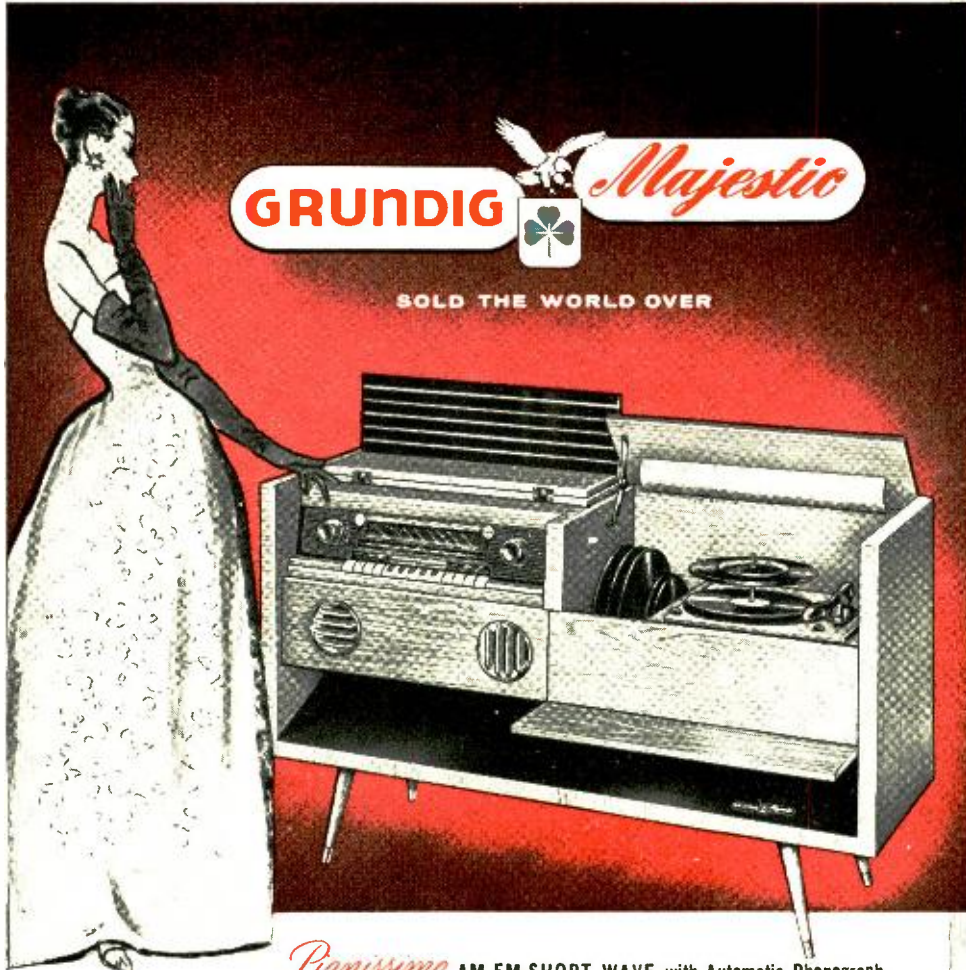
ROGERS of England has quite a series of amplifiers, all matching with a single preamplifier. The Oxford preamplifier can be used with the Cambridge (15 watts) amplifier, the Oxford (25 watts) amplifier or the Eton, which is rated at 35 watts. Not room here for detailed specifications, but they are all excellent.

METZNER has announced a Starlight transcription arm featuring "double wrist action" head. Looks like a very simple yet unusual arrangement, judging by the photograph. Price is under \$25.00.

BOGEN has announced a whole catalogue! There are eight tuners, four of which are basic units. Two tuners have built-in preamplifiers and two have both preamplifiers and amplifiers. There are also eight amplifiers ranging in power from 10 to 70 watts. Add to that a stereophonic tape playback unit and a series of transcription players and record players and you have a

Continued on page 16

For the Musical Thrill of Your Life!



GRUNDIG



Majestic

SOLD THE WORLD OVER

Pianissimo AM-FM-SHORT WAVE with Automatic Phonograph
A Symphony in elegant, modern design . . . 5 loudspeakers . . . natural Walnut finish.

AM-FM ULTRA HIGH FIDELITY Music Instruments For The Home

Music that Lives... Here, from Europe's largest manufacturer of radios, are the most true-to-life, self-contained high fidelity units available today. With the magnificent Grundig Majestic, every sound from every instrument or voice is at the command of your fingertips—the low moans of an alto saxophone, the rich, mellow tones of a violin, the soaring highs of the flute—all are reproduced with amazing brilliance and clarity.

Best of all, Grundig Majestic Hi-Fi is ready for concert hall performances immediately. No expensive, time-consuming installations, no complicated separate parts, but perfect life-like sound reception from a Continental-crafted furniture piece that will enhance your home with its timeless beauty.

*See, Hear the Incomparable Grundig-Majestic soon,
from \$59.95 to \$1,495, at Better Stores, Everywhere.*

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743 N. La Salle St., Chicago 10, Illinois • 79 Washington St., Brooklyn 1, New York
Subsidiary of WILCOX-GAY CORP., Mfrs. of RECORDIO Magnetic Tape Recorders



Starlet
AM-FM The ideal second set.
Choice of Mahogany,
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Paviera
AM-FM-SHORT WAVE
4 loudspeakers. In light
Walnut cabinet only.



La Petite
AM-FM-SHORT WAVE
with Automatic Phonograph
4 loudspeakers. Choice of light
or dark Walnut cabinet.



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AM-FM-SHORT WAVE
with Automatic Phonograph
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light Walnut cabinet.



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6 loudspeakers. Cabinet in
luxurious Pumice finish.



**"Mystic Maestro"
A Grundig Majestic
Exclusive!**
Converts any room
into a concert hall by transmitting
middle and high frequencies
throughout the room in equal
values. The tones completely en-
velop you, as perfectly true and
clear as if the orchestra and con-
ductor were right there with you.
Truly, the ultimate fulfillment in
3D Stereophonic Sound!

even with moderate-priced speakers...

KARLSON TRANSDUCERS*

attain higher performance ratings
than any other speaker system!

KARLSON TRANSDUCER	KARLSON 8	KARLSON 12	KARLSON 15	
SPEAKER	8" Utah G8J	12" Axiom 22	15" University 315	
PRESSURE FREQUENCY RESPONSE	40-12000 cps \pm 4db (high end limited by speaker performance only)	30-15000 cps \pm 2db	20-15000 cps \pm 2db	Covers complete range of sound on records today!
SPEAKER EFFICIENCY	20% above 40 cps	30% above 30 cps	33% above 20 cps	Provides maximum sock for given amplifier and speaker.
TRANSIENT RESPONSE (attenuation rate on interrupted steady state signal)	-35db from 40-1000 cps	-40db from 30-1000 cps after 10 milliseconds	-35db from 20-1000 cps	Clean sound with- out blurring or hangover. No other system meets these performance ratings!
	-45db from 40-1000 cps	-50db from 30-1000 cps after 20 milliseconds	-45db from 20-1000 cps	
Attenuation rates above 1000 cps are in excess of these values.				
DISPERSION	Minimum of 120° for all speakers regardless of tweeter design.			Sound is uniform in all parts of room. Rids strident effect.
HARMONIC DISTORTION	Less than 10% at 40 cps	Less than 5% at 30 cps	Less than 5% at 20 cps	Provides clean fundamental bass.

These Karlson Ratings are the result of research on comparative performance of speaker systems. They are not equalled by performances of any other enclosures tested — nor do they represent the fullest capabilities of Karlson enclosures with still finer speakers.

*new and basic enclosure invention for improved conversion of mechanical vibrations into sound.

**KARLSON
TRANSDUCERS**
\$18.60 to \$174 net
AT YOUR DEALER OR
WRITE



KARLSON ASSOCIATES INC.

Dept. HF, 1610 Neck Road, Brooklyn 29, N. Y.

ON THE COUNTER

Continued from page 14

full line to meet every requirement in all price ranges.

SHERWOOD has announced a pair of matching cabinets. One houses the Forester speaker system and the other serves as the equipment console. Each cabinet is 42 by 16 by 27 in. Finishes are either natural hand-rubbed walnut or dark mahogany; price of the speaker system in cabinet is \$239.00 and for the equipment cabinet, \$149.50.

BELL has announced the BT-76 tape recorder which features monaural recording and playback as well as stereophonic playback through staggered heads. The No. 1 head feeds into the recorder's self-contained power amplifier and speaker; a cable is furnished for connection between the No. 2 head to the phono input of a second power amplifier and speaker system. Also announced was the 3-DTG two-channel amplifier. By a simple switch control, it is possible to use the two speaker systems as a stereophonic system or to use both for monaural reproduction. And finally: a matching console cabinet is available for the tape recorder.

ACOUSTIC RESEARCH has announced the AR-2 which is an 8-ohm system having three times the efficiency of the AR-1. Frequency response is stated to be \pm 5 db from 42 to 14,000 cycles. Price is \$96.00.

GENERAL ELECTRIC has added to its line of high-fidelity equipment a high-frequency speaker (\$17.95), a 2-way crossover network (\$13.95), and a transistorized preamplifier (\$21.95). The crossover is for use with 8-ohm speakers and has a nominal crossover frequency of 1,500 cycles. The transistorized preamplifier operates from 8 millivolts and provides either flat amplification for use with microphones or RIAA equalization for magnetic cartridges. Three input jacks match different input sensitivities.

CABINART now has a series of pre-finished speaker kits, available in either Korina or mahogany hardwood veneers. Two modified corner horns match 12 or 15 in. speakers. Then there are a series of four Klipsch speaker systems: the KR4-12, the KR4-15, the KR3, and the Klipsch Rebel. Prices range from \$25.95 to \$72.00.



LETTERS



SIR:

Your editorial "How To Make Friends And Save Money" in the September issue of *HIGH FIDELITY* is one of the first acknowledgments by the industry press that there is much beyond warts output that determines the sales price of hi-fi components. You are to be congratulated. The realization that there *are* "hidden costs" which vary with the manufacturer, depending upon his manufacturing standards, and which can greatly affect a person's happiness with a product has been almost universally overlooked by writers in the [trade]. . . .

This has made it possible for several manufacturers to concentrate on the appearance of hi-fi and still offer very little if any more actual perfection than obtainable from conventional mass production radio and phonograph manufacturers. By cutting these "hidden costs," the lower priced product having all the superficial appearance of true hi-fi merchandise but selling at less money quickly earns a "best buy" rating. . . . This degradation of the price which permits the kind of production care that differentiates true hi-fi from mass produced merchandise, if continued, will result in the forfeiting of this business to conventional producers at a genuine loss to the public. . . .

The future of the hi-fi components business lies in the difference in superior craftsmanship. The deep in-built perfection of product which should characterize hi-fi components can only be assured by manufacturers willing to shoulder many "hidden expenses" for which, to date, few have ever received any bouquets from the press.

In the interests of the future of the hi-fi components business, your remarks are among the first to be voiced that give value to some of those expenses that go to build a manufacturer's reputation but which he must pay for and which are bound to show up in the price of his product. Busi-

Continued on page 28

Klipschorn® CORNER HORN LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM



DEDICATED to those discriminating listeners who demand REproduction of original music, the KLIPSCHORN system offers the ultimate in fidelity.



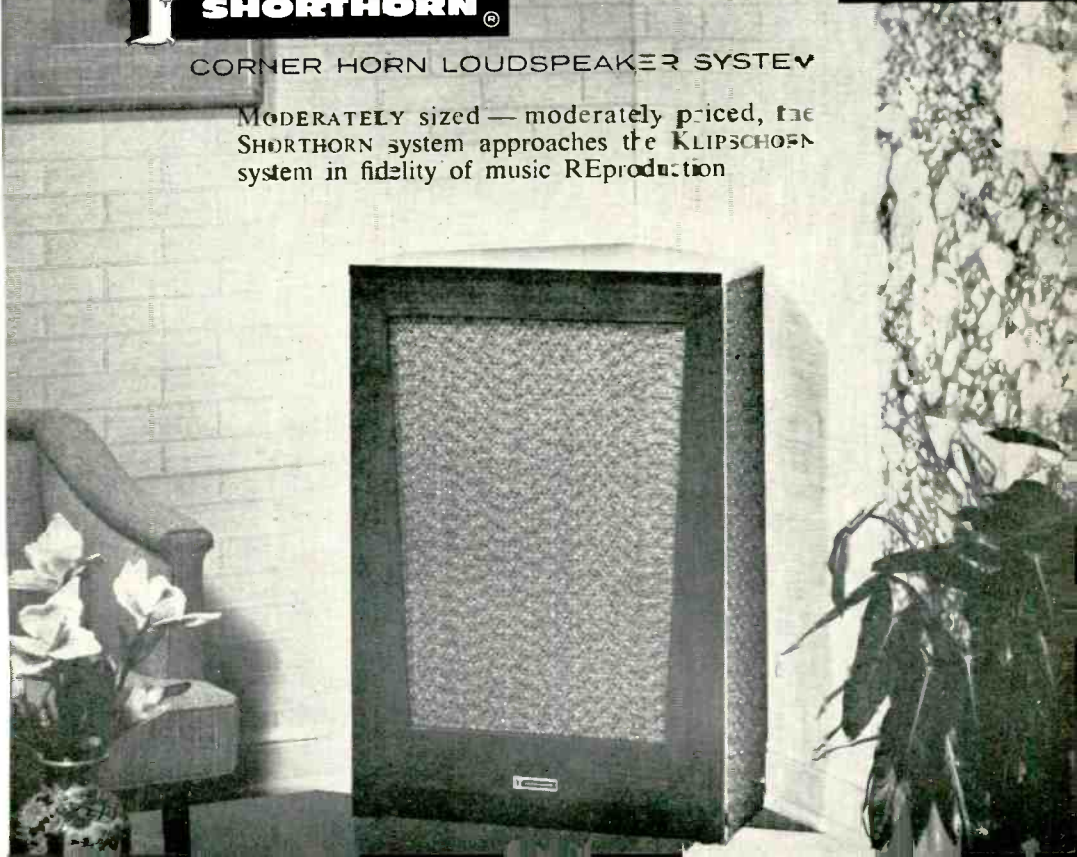
KLIPSCHORN and SHORTHORN loudspeaker systems are manufactured only by their designer, Paul W. Klipsch. Write for our latest literature.

KLIPSCH AND ASSOCIATES HOPE, ARKANSAS



CORNER HORN LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM

MODERATELY sized — moderately priced, the SHORTHORN system approaches the KLIPSCHORN system in fidelity of music REproduction



A frank statement of high fidelity facts

The variety of claims, concepts and products offered to today's audiophile is truly outstanding in both quantity and creditability. Many of the devices are actually new. Many are merely a re-presentation of developments long since discarded in commercial sound applications.

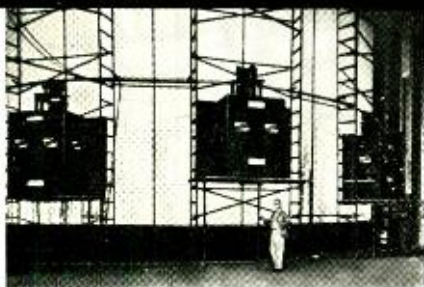
Perhaps the most misused words in high fidelity today are "Professional" and "Laboratory Standard." With few exceptions there are no professional amplifiers available or practical for use in the home. The words "Laboratory Standard" are meaningless without a definition of the laboratory and the standards which they represent. A professional amplifier must have many costly facilities not needed in a high fidelity home system. A typical professional amplifier is the Altec 128A 30 watt Amplifier.

128A
Professional
Amplifier



- Its facilities include an expensive stepped gain control, complete tube testing facilities, an accurate plate current meter, circuit checking arrangements and a wide variety of impedances to fit its many professional applications. Its cost is \$234; nearly twice that of a high fidelity amplifier of the same power.

Altec Lansing Corporation is the world's largest manufacturer of professional sound equipment. More than 60% of all motion picture theatres equipped for stereophonic sound use Altec equipment. One third of the nation's large stadiums and arenas are equipped with Altec Lansing public address systems. More than 90% of the recording, motion picture and broadcast studios use Altec microphones, consoles or loudspeakers.



Altec Backstage
at Cinerama

Altec Fidelity Is Highest Fidelity



9356 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif.
161 Sixth Avenue, New York 13, N. Y.

Altec Fidelity is available at the following stores:

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TANNER COMMUNICATIONS CO.
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Birmingham 3
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Division of Mercantile Paper Co.
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ELCO ELECTRICAL COMMUNICATIONS CO.
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D'ERRICO FIDELITY RADIO
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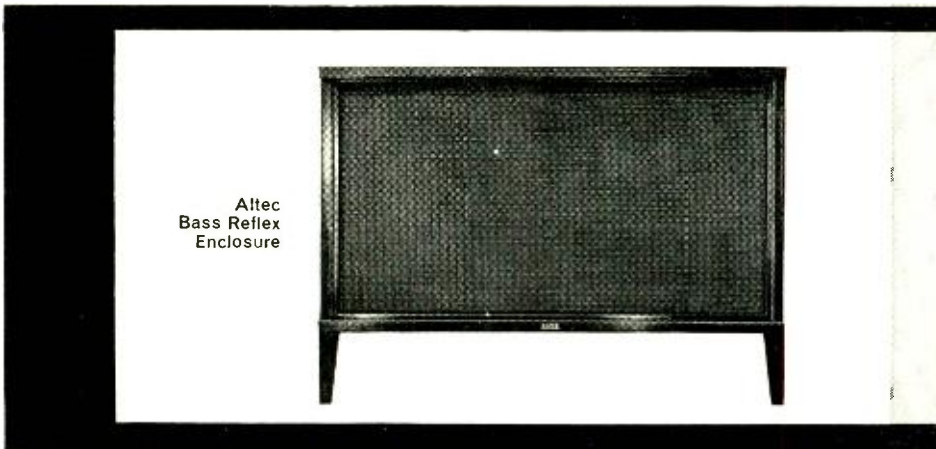
CONNECTICUT

WATT & DECIBEL
8 Church Street
Middletown
RADIO SHACK CORP. OF CONNECTICUT
230 Crown Street
New Haven
AUDIO WORKSHOP, INC.
1 South Main
West Hartford

The function of a loudspeaker enclosure is to load the loudspeaker cone in such a manner as to assist its low frequency response and to take advantage of the sound power generated by the back-side of the speaker cone. Many of the well engineered folded horn and tuned pipe enclosures achieve an excellent bass response, a bass response superior to that of a bass reflex enclosure. This excellent bass response, however, is achieved at the expense of the mid-range frequencies and often results in the introduction of a pipe or "tubby" sound to the bass which is not inherent in the material to be reproduced. The best of these folded horn and tuned pipe enclosures provide good reproduction up to 400 cycles, beyond that range the internal phasing of the horn or pipe creates serious interferences which result in extreme irregularities in frequency response within the range which contains the basic pitches of the human voice and the majority of solo instruments.

These deficiencies in the mid-range are not readily discernible on full orchestration due to the mass of instruments with their hundreds of pitches and harmonics. On voice and solo instruments, however, these mid-range problems are easily noted by the thinness and lack of realism in the reproduction.

If it were technically feasible to design a 400 cycle high frequency horn, small enough for use in the home, such a horn working in conjunction with a well designed folded horn enclosure would provide a truly outstanding system. However, at the present state of the art such a 400 cycle horn and driving element would be approximately three feet in length, a size that is hardly feasible for use in the home. The folded horn could also be effective if a mid-range speaker were used to cover the frequencies above 400 cycles and a high frequency tweeter for the upper end of the audible spectrum. But in such a system we again encounter the insurmountable problem of phasing multiple crossovers. With these reasons in mind it is easy to see how the use of a bass reflex, which is free from interferences, will provide the smoothest and most realistic reproduction.



Altec
Bass Reflex
Enclosure

In our effort to achieve faithful reproduction it is our firm belief, and a belief backed by years of measurement and listening tests on all types of systems and enclosures, that an efficient two-way loudspeaker system using a bass reflex enclosure provides the smoothest frequency response and most nearly duplicates the original sound.

Next time you visit your high fidelity dealer may we suggest that you closely compare the specifications of Altec tuners, preamplifiers and amplifiers with all others; that you look closely at the workmanship, at the size and quality of the components; that you ask the dealer about the theoretical ability of the power tubes in whatever amplifiers interest you; and that you listen closely to an Altec speaker system reproducing full orchestra, small groups, solo instruments and vocal music or the spoken voice. We believe you will see and hear the quality that has made Altec Lansing Corporation the leading manufacturer of both electronic and acoustic devices for the audio frequencies.

Altec Fidelity Is Highest Fidelity



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Hermitage Road
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Racine

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HIGH FIDELITY CENTER
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167 Kipling Avenue South
Toronto 18, Ontario

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Kanda Higashi-Fukudacho
Chiyoda-Ku
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EQUIPOS RADIO CINEMATOGRAFICOS, S.A.
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(Colonia Cuauhtemoc)
Mexico, D.F.

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Caracas

LETTERS

Continued from page 21

ness is too competitive today for any manufacturer to charge more than his product is worth. Neither can he charge less than it costs to maintain the standards he has set for himself. A much lower price in today's highly competitive picture more than likely means "hidden sacrifices" for the buyer seeking something distinctly superior to mass produced conventional phonographs and radios. . . .

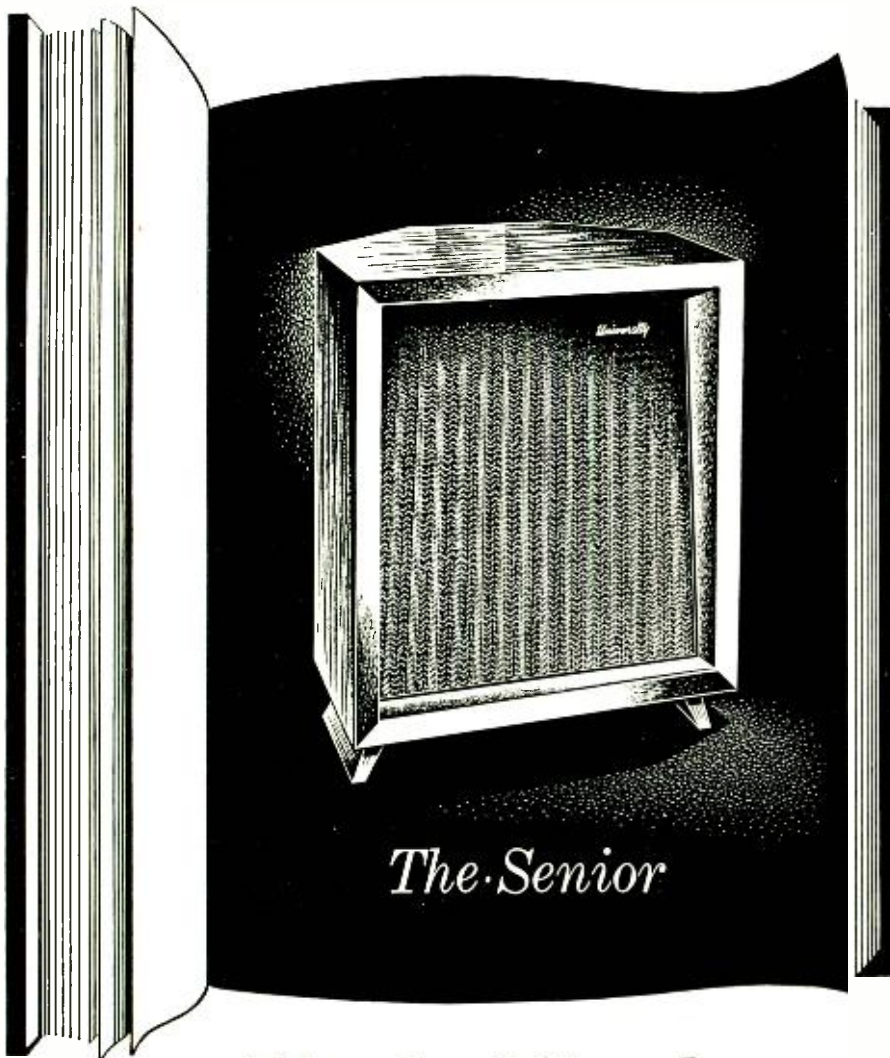
Robert Newcomb

Newcomb Audio Products Co.
Hollywood, Calif.

SIR:

If wishing could make it so, the electrostatic loudspeaker would have ceased to be a factor to be considered in high fidelity after Mr. Hartley disposed of it so neatly in his letter to the editor in the September 1956 (you'd better watch out or you may buy a pig in a poke) issue of HIGH FIDELITY. It seems almost a shame to bring up the subject again. I really have no quarrel with the prophets, for they operate in an area in which every man is his own expert, although I would like to inquire of Mr. Marsh what formula he used in arriving at his ecstatic judgment in his article entitled, "Walker's Little Wonder," in the June issue. Nor do I wish to take issue with any of the purely subjective judgments that have been expressed. There have been instances, however, in which statements and implications have been made concerning objective performance and engineering design. I would like to chide the authors gently about those instances in which these have been or seem to be at variance with demonstrable fact.

It seems to me that one of the chief reasons for the deviations from editorial factualness lies in the tendency to treat electrostatic loudspeakers as if all of them were alike. Differences between moving-coil types and electrostatics have been emphasized, but little has been said about the differences in the design and performance of various electrostatics. This seems quite natural, since the authors have been interested in pointing up the dissimilarities. But to say or imply that all electrostatic loudspeakers are more or less alike is like saying that giraffes and horned toads are more or less alike because they both have tails. In



... Head of its class

There's *one* in every group that stands out... that is literally at the head of its class. Among moderate priced 3-way systems, the SENIOR is *the* outstanding example of what superb audio engineering can achieve.

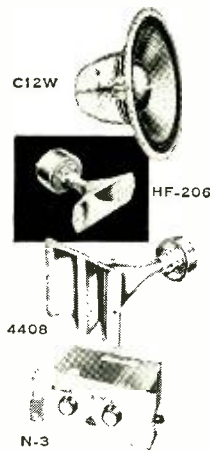
Each component of the SENIOR has passed the most rigid tests and has earned its right to be part of this outstanding system. The result is a thrilling sensation of sound which seems to surround you . . . *amazing* in a system of this size.

Treat yourself to the full-bodied lows of the powerful 12" woofer, the undistorted mid-range of the "reciprocating flare" horn speaker and the brilliant highs of the super-tweeter, all kept in perfect balance by the Acoustic Baton network with its "Presence" and "Brilliance" controls.

The SENIOR enclosure is a beautiful piece of furniture that will enhance any room. Rigid, completely braced construction and the finest acoustic principles of phase inversion, direct radiation and rear horn loading result in a smooth, natural reproduction of music and speech.

Don't wait . . . ask to see and hear the sensational SENIOR at your Hi-Fi center. A delightful experience is in store for you!

UNIVERSITY LOUDSPEAKERS, Inc., 80 So. Kensico Ave., White Plains, N. Y.



Power Capacity: 30 Watts
Integrated Program

Dimensions:
30"Hx21½"Wx15¾"D

Shipping Weight: 95 lbs.

Price: Mahogany \$185.00
Blond 188.50

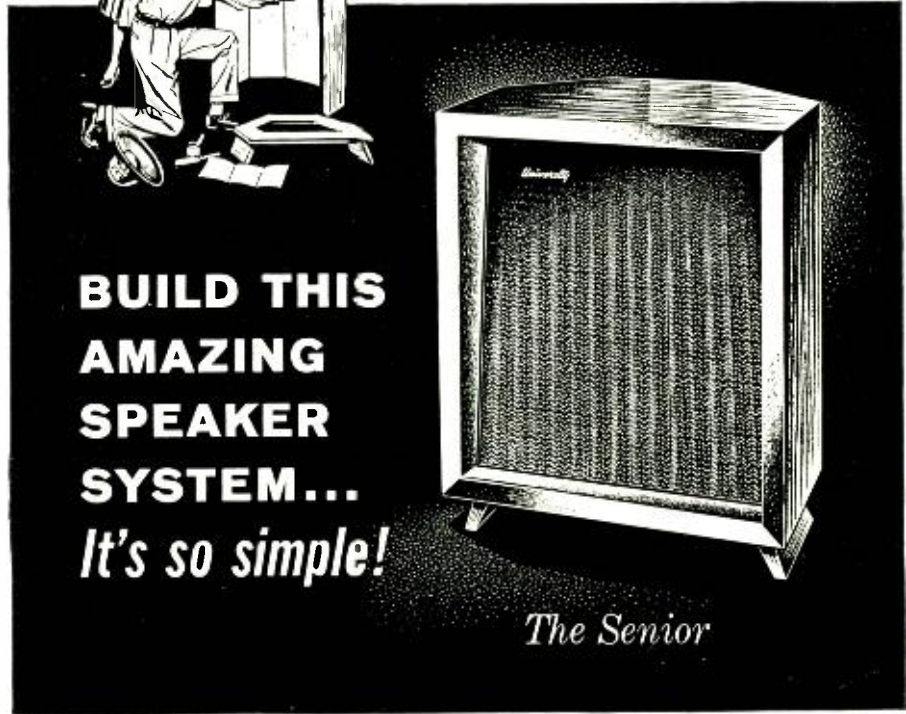
LISTEN

University sounds better



Or have fun...save money

The SENIOR speaker system is the outstanding example of what superb audio engineering can achieve... it stands out at the head of its class, producing a thrilling sensation of sound that's amazing in a system of this size. It uses the powerful C12W woofer for full-bodied lows, the 4108 "reciprocating flare" horn speaker for undistorted mid-range, the HP20 Super tweeter for brilliant highs and the N3 Acoustic Baffle 3-way network to keep them in perfect balance. Enclosure is a beautiful piece of furniture embracing the finest principles of phase inversion, direct radiation and rear horn loading. Mahogany \$185.00. Blond \$188.50.



**BUILD THIS
AMAZING
SPEAKER
SYSTEM...
It's so simple!**

The Senior

"DO-IT-YOURSELF" KWIKITS — All you need is a free evening, a "KwiKit," a screw-driver and you can assemble your own version of the famous SENIOR. The KEN-12 kit is the best of its kind on the market today... a truly fine piece of workmanship.

Except for a simplified front frame design, the KEN-12 is identical in acoustic design to the SENIOR speaker system. Finest grade 3/4" Birch used for all finishing surfaces, 3/4" cabinet plywood used throughout. Kit contains: all pre-machined and pre-shaped wood sections; glue; hardware; plastic wood; sandpaper; easy-to-follow instructions. *If you like to build your own and save money then the KwiKit is made to order for you.*

KEN-12 KwiKit \$39.95 net.

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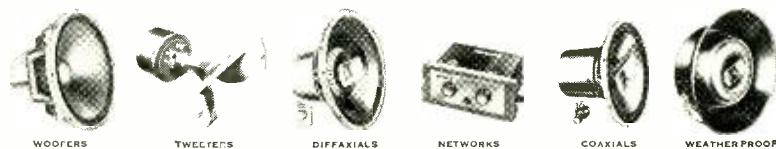
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between push-comparisons in any order and the angle-comparisons. Pro-Dep-hat-res-ob-ower-plates-ential break-down of the bias voltage supply, whether Mr. Fried has refrained from purchasing a modern television receiver, in some of which the DC voltages are ten times as high as the bias voltage in the JansZen or the Pickering.

point of fact, the difference between the push-pull JansZen and the pull Pickering is negligible. Pro-Dep-hat-res-ob-ower-plates-ential break-down of the bias voltage supply, whether Mr. Fried has refrained from purchasing a modern television receiver, in some of which the DC voltages are ten times as high as the bias voltage in the JansZen or the Pickering.

I invite Mr. Briggs to make a commercial speaker for me. It is that spectable least to form, based that I

Mr. Briggs in his letter to the editor in the same issue, as well as Mr. Fried, expresses concern about the durability of electrostatic loudspeakers. It seems appropriate to point out that at least one, the JansZen, carries a two year warranty on the electrostatic radiators. How many manufacturers of high-fidelity equipment display a similar confidence in the durability of their product? Mr. Briggs is apparently concerned in particular about what he terms the "obvious fragility" of the electrostatic diaphragms. It is of course true that in order to obtain the extremely smooth frequency response that is desirable for realistic music reproduction the moving element of a loudspeaker should be extremely light. But this does not necessarily mean that they cannot be durable. I think the inference to be drawn from Mr. Briggs's concern about

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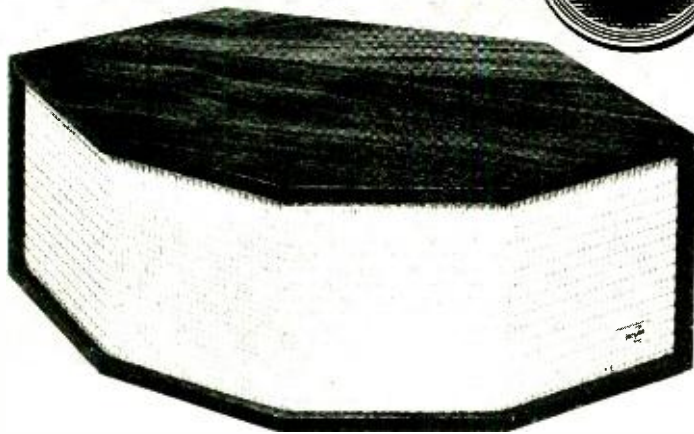
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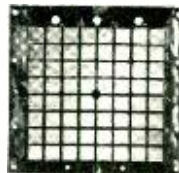
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Contin.

fragility is to or metal is me in loudspeakers, that current con have plastic dia moving-coil speake plastic diaphragms of paper or metal. B sarily so. To illustrat Briggs to bring any available moving-coil loud a test. The only require this loudspeaker have a frequency response up to at KC. I will bring one JansZen tor. This radiator in its finished of course, has its diaphragm en in a protective grid structure would prevent the sort of test that propose. So the radiator will ha had its protective grid removed, ex posing the diaphragm. A golf ball will be dropped first on one and then the other of the moving elements of the two loudspeakers from successively greater heights until one or the other fractures. If this test is made, the results will be reported to the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Of course, it probably will not be made, since it is ridiculous. Neither of the loudspeakers is made to function as a receptor for a hole-in-one. But I do hope that my point is clear, namely that whether a material will endure or disintegrate depends not only on the material but also on how it is used.

Mr. Fried is concerned about "arc-over" on severe pulses. Naturally, when a loudspeaker is driven hard enough, something's got to give. This is true of electrostatics as well as moving-coil types. What has to be added in fairness, however, is that electrostatics can be built so that the power level required to inflict permanent damage is very much higher than that required to cause permanent damage to most moving-coil speakers that cover the same frequency range.

Mr. Briggs states and Mr. Fried implies that electrostatics are more directional than moving-coil types. The statement and implication would be valid if they had been qualified to say that *some* electrostatics are more directional than some moving-coil types. In both types, the directional characteristics can be made to corre-

Continued on page 34

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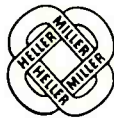
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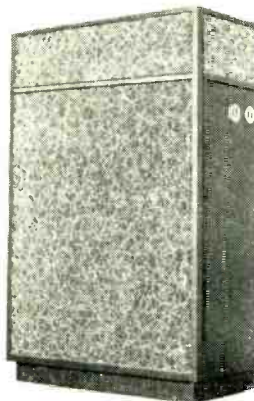
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LETTERS

Continued from page 30

spond to what seems to be optimum for the greatest percentage of rooms. Obviously, no manufacturer can provide enough different models to meet exactly the requirements of every listening room.

Of all of the material that has appeared on the subject of electrostatic loudspeakers, the statement that puzzled me most appeared in Mr. Fried's article, to the effect that "Some critics, indeed, seem to feel that electrostatic tweeters do not match electrostatic woofers, let alone low frequency radiators of conventional design." Now I assume that what was intended to be said was that some critics think that electrostatic tweeters and electrostatic woofers are even more difficult to match than electrostatic tweeters and moving-coil woofers. I assume also that commercially available electrostatic woofers are referred to, since it would seem futile to comment on the performance of equipment that is not available in the market. So my question is, "Who is secretly manufacturing electrostatic woofers and marketing them secretly, and under what conditions were the tests made that led some critics to feel that they do not match electrostatic tweeters? Also, who were the critics?"

Arthur A. Janszen

Neshaminy Electronic Corporation
Neshaminy, Pa.

To set up his devastating punch line properly, Mr. Janszen has had to assume that mentions of electrostatic woofers must refer to models commercially available. They needn't. Quite commonly, "critics" are given opportunity to listen to pilot models of forthcoming equipment. Thus sundry people in the industry have been privileged to hear the woofers secretly manufactured by Mr. Peter Walker, Mr. Harold Leak, Pickering and Company — which demonstrated its version at the New York High Fidelity Show — and, last but by no means least, Mr. Arthur Janszen.

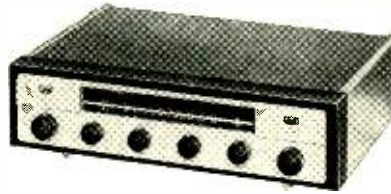
Mr. Fried's reference to the possibility of electrical breakdown in electrostatic speakers referred, no doubt, to the fact that electrostatics do require a DC power source, whereas the cone-type loudspeakers used in high-fidelity applications are self-energizing. Obviously, the former will have more tendency toward power breakdown than will the latter. — Ed.

SIR:

Many compliments on your Bartók

Continued on page 36

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LETTERS

Continued from page 34

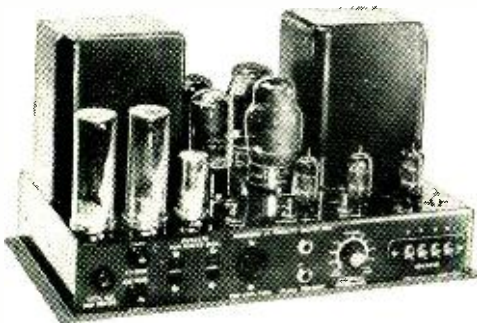
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cover [HIGH FIDELITY, Oct. 1956]. As for the artist, Robert Bereny: born in Hungary, 1887; a painter of the "Expressionism" school; lived in Berlin, where he was associated with a group known as "The Eight," until 1928, when he returned to Hungary. The theme of his paintings was mainly nature, but he was quite well known as a commercial and "poster" artist. He was still living in 1936. This information furnished by Dr. Sandor Tarics, whose source was the *Révai Kis Lexikona*, Révai Publishing Co., Budapest (1936). . . .

Verne E. Conder
San Francisco, Calif.

SIR:

Hans Vollmer's *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler des XX Jahrhunderts* (vol. 1, pp. 175-6) gives a few lines on Robert Bereny, plus a number of other references. He was born in Budapest on March 18, 1887 (no death date given), studied in Budapest and Paris, was influenced by Cézanne, and was a member of a group calling itself The Eight. . . .

Alan M. Cohn
Carbondale, Ill.

SIR:

I should like to say that I feel Mr. Frankenstein did a superior job on the fine Bartók discography [High Fidelity, Oct. 1956], not only in making such a thorough and discerning survey of the works, but also in calling attention to the too often neglected compositions such as *Bluebeard's Castle*, *The Wooden Prince*, and the *Cantata Profana*.

In view of Mr. Gelatt's comments about the paucity of actual Bartók performances available on disks and the importance of making available every possible one whether or not it might be classed as high fidelity, I was surprised that Mr. Frankenstein made no mention of the 10" disk (issued by Bartók Records) of Bartók playing a handful of his own works. Assuming that the record (Bartók 903) was still in the catalogue I checked with the company to learn the story. True, 903 had been cut out temporarily, but it is being prepared for release as a 12" record which will

contain the selections of the original 903 (*Bagatelle, No. 2, Burlesque No. 2, Rumanian Dance No. 1, Allegro Barbaro*, and the Suite, Op. 14) plus *Evening in the Country* and the *Bear Dance* as well as four Scarlatti Sonatas, Longo Nos. 50, 135, 293 and 286. As this set is designated Volume I, future volumes are to be expected containing the Hungarian folk songs with Bartók as piano accompanist.

It would seem to me that in releasing these records Peter Bartók is performing a service to the record collector as well as to his father. Possibly if we Bartókians really got behind these releases as well as others in the fine Bartók catalogue we might expect a definitive recording of—as pointed out by Mr. Frankenstein—the remaining unrecorded major work, the First Piano Concerto.

Incidentally, the cover painting is superb (but why was it overprinted, being so perfect for framing?).

Edward Jablonski
New York, N. Y.

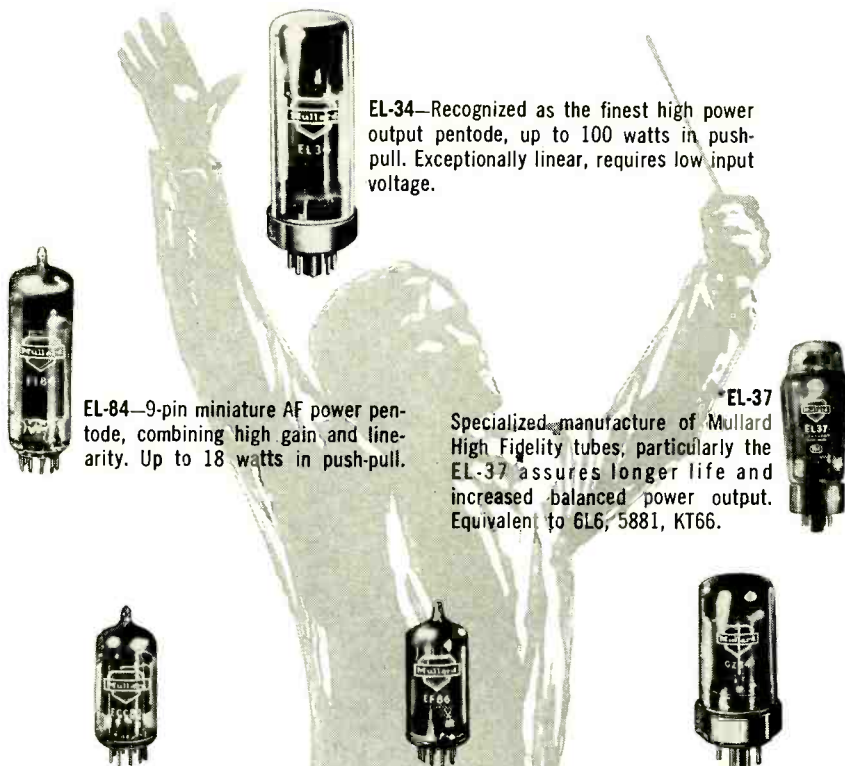
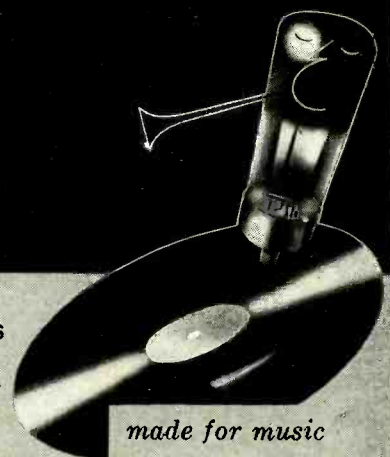
AUTHORitatively Speaking

Max de Schauensee, who reports this issue on "Opera Taped Where It Grew," himself grew (or at least began) in the same locale. He was born in Rome, where his father's father, Baron Leopold Meyer de Schauensee, was commander of the Papal Swiss Guards. Young Max studied singing at the Curtis Institute, Philadelphia, under Emilio de Gogorza, and made his operatic debut in the North American première of Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina* on April 18, 1928, in Philadelphia. He continued singing in opera for several years. His repertoire included *Aida* (Rafaelles), Rubinstein's *The Demon*, and *Madama Butterfly*, and he met some of the era's brightest stars—Eames, Martinelli, Bori. His reviewing activities he began as assistant music critic on the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*; now he is critic and music editor of the *Evening Bulletin*.

Murray Schumach, whose *Music Between* column appears this month for the third time, is a general assignment reporter on the staff of *The New York Times*, where since 1937 (with three years out for Navy duty) he has covered stories ranging from routine crime—his own term—to the Korean War. His feature articles, mostly for the *Times Magazine*, have dealt with such subjects as Gen. Matthew Ridgeway, Elia Kazan, the Mississippi River, and a Brooklyn juvenile gang. He wrote also the first survey of Broadway show-albums on LP. Brooklyn-born, Schumach lives in Manhattan, has been married since 1954 (he wanted to travel first), and is a Yankee rooter.

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Books in Review

WHEN some future historian evaluates the achievements of the microgroove era, there is a good chance he may minimize its technological "miracles" and its multiplication of versions of standard musical masterpieces, in favor of its gift of enduring life to countless compositions once known only through the reports of scholars and biographers—who themselves often lacked firsthand familiarity with the living, *sounded* music. Today even the casual listener can decide for himself, on the basis of direct experience, the actual validity of printed descriptions of ecstatically praised "neglected masterpieces" and contemptuously dismissed "minor efforts." Most serious music listeners are keenly aware of this metamorphosis in the means and scope of musical experience: the resurrection of baroque and ancient composers once known, if at all, by name only; the widespread circulation of modern works hitherto granted only an occasional hearing before comparatively small and specialized audiences; and the steady growth of complete disk editions of Haydn and Mozart. Yet there still remains the challenge of certain other repertoires, notably those of the romantic composers, whose significance has not yet been fully explored. To some extent, Berlioz's claim has been met, but how completely the challenge has been ignored where the works of Liszt, for instance, are concerned. The fact is brought home to us particularly by a couple of current biographies which sharply remind us of the fantastic extent and variety of the fabulous Abbé's creative output.

And these two books—Walter Beckett's *Liszt* (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, \$3.00) and a revised edition of Sacheverell Sitwell's *Liszt* (Philosophical Library, \$7.50)—themselves illustrate, by vivid contrast, the old and new (or pre- and post-microgroove) attitudes of biographers. For Dr. Beckett the revolution might never have occurred: he writes about Liszt's music as if he knew only segments of it and those apparently better

by visual examination of the scores than by aural study, completely ignoring (save for a catalogue listing) such a revelation of the last years as the *Weihnachtsbaum* suite. For Sitwell, on the other hand, the prime need for revising his original publication of 1934 is the recent gradual change in the climate of opinion about Liszt—a change which he realizes is likely to be markedly accelerated as recordings continue to expand listeners' horizons, not only in Lisztian domains *per se* but in the "borrowings" or developments from his work in that of his colleagues and successors.

Sitwell disclaims any authority as a musician and explicitly states that he has endeavored to write of Liszt "as one might write of Rubens or Byron . . . to treat of him as an artist and a man of action." Yet he is obviously an enthusiastic musical amateur, at least, and if his comments on the works are in no way technical, they do reveal an infectious relish for what he has heard and what he is avidly anxious to hear. Anyone who knows Sitwell's other writings will be quite prepared for a polished, yet luxuriant, style and a superb gift for depicting the flamboyant scenes and colorful "characters," among which Liszt soared rocketlike with the most dazzling and kaleidoscopic refulgence of them all.

No Sitwell admirer can be dissatisfied here, for he makes the most of his rich opportunities in organizing and dramatizing the huge panorama of titled personages, admiring and envious colleagues, and devout pupils clustered around the protean but always heroic protagonist. And any reader will be absorbed by Sitwell's obvious gusto, his eager explorations of both central and side issues, and above all by his ability to make issues as well as personalities magically real and vital. I am particularly grateful to him for the new light he throws on Liszt's religious convictions (which always had struck me before as anomalous if not spurious); for his revelation of the enormous gaps still to be filled in our knowledge of Liszt's life

(especially in Budapest during his last years) as well as of his music (especially the vast number of church works); and for the finest choice of illustrations in any musical biography I know.

LP-mining the Liszt lodes may be seriously handicapped these days by a lack of virtuoso pianists able or willing to cope with the keyboard works, but surely there is no such barrier to discographic adventuring among the less well-known orchestral scores and songs, or the almost entirely unknown choral compositions.

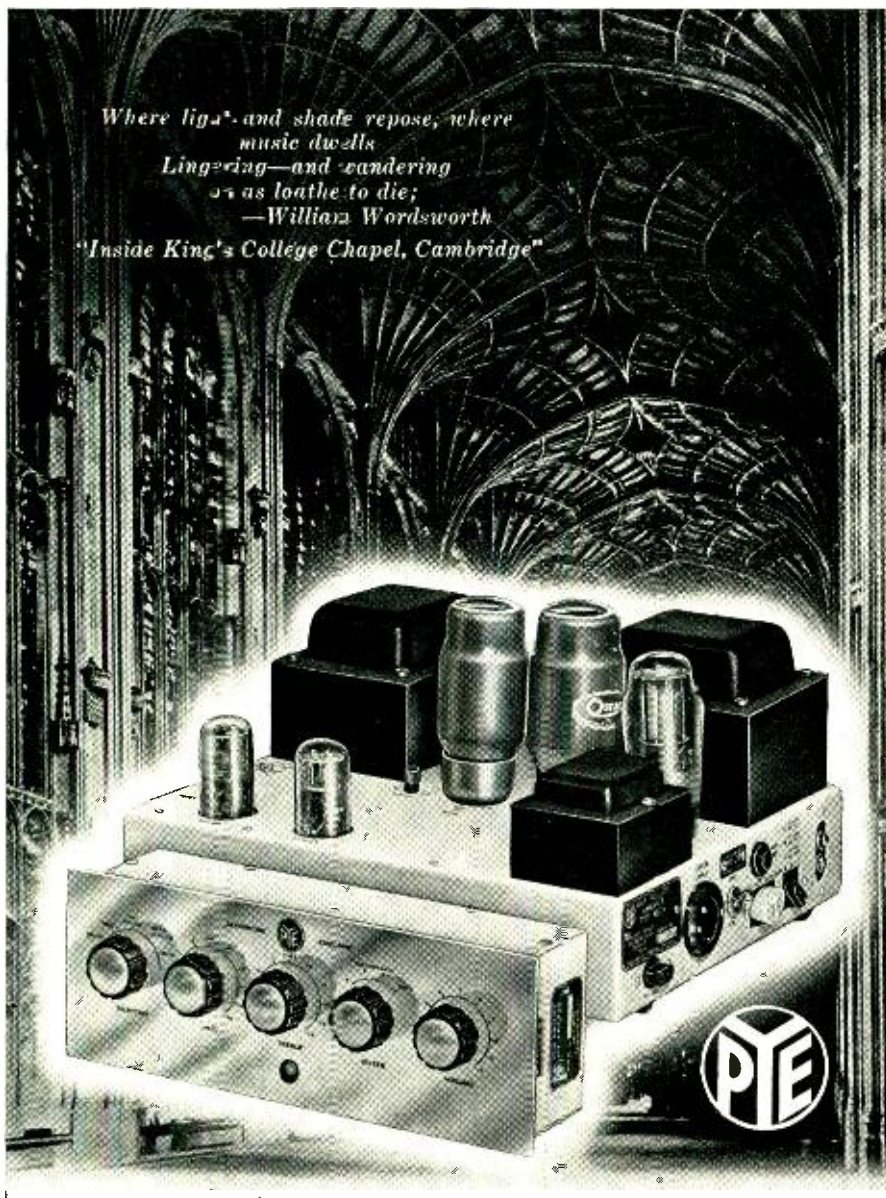
Study the full catalogue for yourself. It's an amazing document. It also can be found, in somewhat different form, in Beckett's work, but this awkwardly written and deadly dull book cannot be remotely compared with Sitwell's. Yet in a negative way I'm able to point up once again the high standards of the "Master Musicians" series merely by citing the quite exceptional deficiencies of its latest, thinnest, and most ineffectual volume.

Romanticism's Plushier Side

Sitwell's appetizing comments on many of Liszt's unfamiliar piano works of course offer no guarantee that we would actually enjoy all this music once we were given the opportunity of making its acquaintance and subjecting it to the scrutiny of repeated hearings. Yet the chances surely are good that we would find most of it at least interesting and some of it highly rewarding.

That is true of the *Weihnachtsbaum* suite certainly, and it is also true for another of the great *fantoches* of music—Louis Moreau Gottschalk, who appeared briefly on the outskirts of the Liszt circle in his early days and undoubtedly learned something from him in digital technique and much more in that of overwhelming predominantly feminine audiences. The badly needed new book about Gottschalk has not been written, but his

Continued on next page



Where light and shade repose, where
 music dwells
 Lingering—and wandering
 as loathe to die;
 —William Wordsworth
 "Inside King's College Chapel, Cambridge"

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Continued from preceding page

name is irresistibly brought to my mind, both by the resemblance of his career to Liszt's and by the precedent for ecstatically palpitating worship set by his biographer, one Mary Alice Ives Seymour, writing under the pseudonym of "Octavia Hensel" with a pen dipped in heliotrope and honey.

That swooning Victorian school-girl surely is spiritually embodied in Marcel Brion who, despite a change in sex and an entirely new aspiration toward intellectual pretensions, is probably the first to match, if not transcend, "Hensel" in utter preposterousness. For the best comment on Schumann and the Romantic Age (translated by Geoffrey Sainsbury; Macmillan, \$4.50), I must rob Jacques Barzun of one of his miraculously discovered epigraphs, drawn from a letter by Pushkin to Bestuzhev in 1825: "All I read about Romanticism is wrong."

Lest you think I am grossly unfair to M. Brion, let me quote a few sentences from his very first paragraph: "A great music, passionate and tender, was wafted through the romantic German forests at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Men were stirred by the unutterable joy of being and the intense ambition to justify that being by transforming it into prodigious rolling waves of becoming. Never before had the world been so young. . . . The song of the winds, the colours of the seasons, the heart-rendings of passion, and the boundless urge to create played on every fibre, plucked it, made it suffer the most intolerable ecstasy and pain."

Enough? If not, you must go to the book itself where you'll find some 370 pages, each with its equally worthy candidates for a Lush, Beautiful Prose Department. You won't, however, learn much that is meaningful about poor Schumann and his music—a special pity in that Schumann's own writings about music are out-of-print or difficult to obtain in English translations, and the best-known biography in English, Robert Haven Schaufli's *Florestan* (Holt, 1945) is also, if far more tolerably, romanticized. Joan Chissell's study in the "Master Musicians" series, I have not yet had an opportunity to read. It seems criminal that, so far at least,

Continued on page 42

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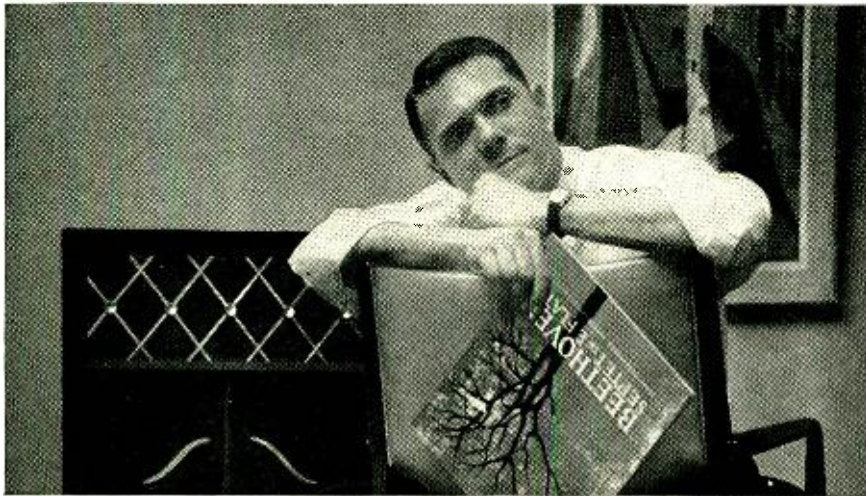
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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Continued from page 40

this centennial year has produced no worthy tribute to a composer whose recorded repertory continues to grow in both scope and excellence. But Schumann too has been slighted by record makers as well as publishers.

Last of the Romanticists?

Whether we consider Debussy a forerunner of the modernists or (as I prefer) a belated romanticist, there can be no including him in any way among the forgotten or neglected composers. Practically all of his works in all forms have been recorded, and by sympathetic and skilled interpreters, aided—lately, anyway—by engineering techniques which can cope adequately or better with the special difficulties their characteristic sonic textures present. And, if I dare prophesy from a single example (the *Nocturnes* by Monteux), I should predict that Debussy above all others, save possibly Delius, stands to profit most by the new medium of stereo sound.

Yet how much do even his most ardent LP collectors actually know about the man himself? In the past, his own reticence and that of his friends after his death concealed or obscured many key facts, and while some of these are still far from clear (the circumstances of his birth, in particular), a surprising amount of fresh and highly illuminating documentary material has been unearthed by Victor Seroff in his *Debussy: Musician of France* (Putnam, \$6.50). Perhaps so much of this material seems new to me simply because of my ignorance of earlier biographies, but more likely Seroff's skill in organizing and pointing up established as well as novel data makes Debussy himself come alive for me for the first time outside the shimmering tonal fabric of his own music.

Certainly I had never realized before (as perhaps no one could realize from either the music itself or Debussy's ironic pen in *M. Croche, the Dilettante Hater*, Lear, 1948) what a wretchedly contrary and difficult life he led, and what tragic frustrations his last years held for him. Reading Seroff's magnificently objective, yet compassionate, book, I am for once

Continued on page 48

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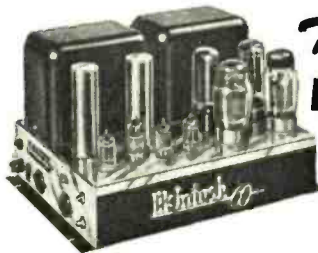
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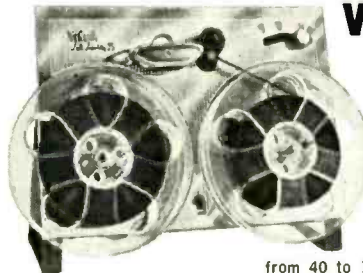
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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Continued from page 42

considerably shaken in my long-held belief that the best insights into musical genius always are to be found in a study of the works themselves rather than in the details of personal history. In this instance (as with Sitwell's *Liszt*), I must admit that my ears for the music have been acutely sensitized by a better knowledge of the man who created it.

Seroff attempts no technical analyses of either Debussy's work or tonal philosophy (for those one must turn to volumes like E. Robert Schmitz's *The Piano Works of Claude Debussy*, Duell Sloan, 1950 and Léon Vallas' *The Theories of Claude Debussy*, Oxford, 1929), and without previous familiarity with the music, some readers may find this just another "life," however fascinating, of a singularly eccentric artist. Yet surely no one, even only partially grounded in the music, can read Seroff's account without what he has heard and what he now learns combining with reciprocal power to transform his whole Debussyan experience. An almost agonizingly moving story in itself, it is most significant for the permanently sharpened insights it adds to our aural sensibilities.

Haydn Symphonies: Preview

H. C. Robbins Landon, co-editor of the *Mozart Companion*, also appears currently on his own as the author of the *Symphonies of Joseph Haydn* (Macmillan, \$20.00), about which I had intended to write this month—until I took a closer look and realized I would need at least a couple of months of assiduous homework before I even ventured a cursory review. For this is a *magnum opus* in every sense of the term: mammoth in bulk (some 879 pages, over 4 pounds in weight), fantastically detailed, lavishly illustrated and documented, with even the complete miniature score of a hitherto unpublished symphony tucked into the back cover. I shall report later on my explorations of so inexhaustible a gold mine, but meanwhile it should be drawn to the immediate attention of everyone willing to make a substantial investment which promises incalculably rich dividends.

R.D.D.



The Mozart Year on Disks and Otherwise

by C. G. Burke

THE SHELL of Mozart was thrown into a common trench and forgotten. One-hundred and sixty-five years later it was to be feared that the discovery of his dust might be effected by his turning in the grave, but that did not happen. 1956, devoted in homage to Mozart who was born two hundred years before, was musically well behaved and the preponderance of homage was genuine.

For in art the homage to a dead giant must be a homage to his work. It is decent and proper—and with Mozart and Schubert almost incumbent upon us—to shed tears if the work was silenced too early. Private tears, not the official tears that come too easily and are intended to serve the weeper before the wept. The Mozart Bicentennial was notable among such occasions for the profusion of Mozart played, in public and in private, and the economy of public lament and oratory. The politician and the "dignitary," capitalizing on the event, were no more than gnats on the tapestry of music. Even those in Austria, naturally more voluble than elsewhere, did little noticeable harm. Conductors, players, and singers were the true celebrants, and they let Mozart speak for himself.

No doubt more performances of music by Mozart were given in 1956 than in any other year, but however gratifying locally and temporarily these may have been, their cumulative vastness is a poor second in importance to the expansion of the Mozart repertory in use, a new diversity amounting in effect to rehabilitation, almost to disinterment. 1956 revealed the wonderful realm of the piano concertos and added seven or eight symphonies to the four in currency. It saw performances of at least eleven operas, and proved that the six quartets dedicated to Haydn were neither without precedents nor successors. It restored the best of the serenades and divertimentos, and a number of the sonatas, to an eminence unaccountably lost for a century and a half. It demonstrated that there are other quintets besides the G minor and the marvel for clarinet. It gave voice to an astonishing miscellany of smaller works silent for a hundred years.

Europe had a flowering of Mozart Festivals of great and little magnitude; and the spectacle of Germans, Bohemians, Italians, Hollanders, Swedes, Russians, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Belgians, Danes, and Englishmen all temporarily abjuring chauvinism to celebrate the universality of a composer who never truly had a homeland is not without potent implications unconnected with music. However, the music is more tangible than any implications, and in the tangible flood we find not only the public performances everywhere, but new editions of many scores, new editions of new and old books on Mozart, and most prominent of all a shining, endless affluence of long-playing

phonograph records, literally hundreds of them, permanent repositories of the Mozart creation.

Looking at these, and hearing their bold variety, we realize that they are the most significant result of the Bicentennial, and also that they and their predecessors shaped the Bicentennial's course. The records issued before 1956 were an example that the year had perforce to follow. They were brilliant gadflies stinging sober music associations into action, and—further—into action of greater probity than the more powerful associations always had found it convenient to practice in the past.

In a practical sense the Bicentennial began in 1948. The footings were sunk, the preparations made, when Columbia Records exploited electronics to give an unprecedented impetus to the course of music by means of the long-playing, narrow-groove, soft-skin disk. For right after the beginning Mozart became the bread and butter of the smaller members of the suddenly pullulating family of record companies, who, for the nonce wary of competition in repertory, sought musical obscurities to record, in the hope that no one else would discover and record them. In 1948 five-sixths of Mozart's music was in oblivion, but as fast as it could be given phonographic representation an avid public absorbed it. Many of those early LPs have been withdrawn, but they left their trace on history and influenced the future course of the larger producers.

It is hard to remember now that before Period issued its *Bastien und Bastienne* was no more than a silly title in a catalogue, that the voluptuous *Concertone* had to await exhumation by Westminster before most music lovers had ever heard of it, that the irresistible exuberance of the *Teutsche* and *Kontretänze* needed companies named Vanguard and Esoteric to sponsor a fair sampling of them, and that such masterpieces as *Idomeneo* and the *Posthorn* Serenade were shadowy in the public consciousness until the Haydn Society recorded them. Concert Hall made all the quintets, Vox and Westminster all the trios. Divertimentos, serenades, and above all piano concertos, gushed from all quarters.

It was not possible for the greater companies to remain aloof. They devoted their large resources in musicians to large pieces of the Mozart repertory, sometimes improving vastly, sometimes a little and sometimes not at all, on the work of their humbler predecessors. But almost uniformly they curbed vicious habits of their star performers, who in an age when comparisons were not available often had cut, altered, and expanded scores at the instigation of personal whims. That has become a rarity, along with the music lover who has never heard the *Serenata Notturna*.

It was the long-playing

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Opera Taped Where It Grew

by Max de Schauensee

Summer is when opera stars can forgather to make recordings, and in a good many cases, Italy is where they forgather. Here we have a look at two such sessions — one company making La Bohème, the other the Barber of Seville.

NOTHING in the music world requires more patience than the recording of a complete opera; nothing can produce more wear on fast-fraying nerves than an assembling at close quarters of the greatly differing temperaments such a venture inevitably involves. Further, the invariant goal introduces its own set of tensions, as I realized when I attended recording sessions of Angel's *La Bohème*, during August in Milan, and of London's *Barber of Seville* in Florence during September. For the goal is always perfection, and nothing less. The conductor and those involved in the actual technical undertaking are hoping that their production will be hailed as the definitive version in a dramatically competitive field. The setting of so high a goal for an extremely complex job naturally produces a do-or-die atmosphere on everyone's part.

I arrived in Milan from Lucerne in mid-August, armed with letters of introduction to EMI officials from Dario Soria, president of Angel records. He had told me that his company's answer to seven already existing complete versions of Puccini's opera would probably be initiated during the second week in August.

I arrived on schedule. I had completely forgotten that Italy's great midsummer holiday, Ferragosto, dating back to pagan times, was upon us, quite capable of disrupting all effort in any branch of activity for an entire week. In vain I tried to contact John Lee of the Italian *Voce*

del Padrone, and Walter Legge, artists' director of English Columbia, officials in the exceedingly complex EMI setup. At Milan's historic La Scala, where the recording was scheduled to take place, I was informed that the *incisione* would take place in five days. So, there was nothing left to do but fill in time with the very real delights of nearby Lake Como.

On the stated day, brimming with enthusiasm, I again presented myself at La Scala, to be told that both Mr. Legge and Mr. Lee were still enjoying Ferragosto, and that Maria Meneghini Callas, Giuseppe Di Stefano, and conductor Antonino Votto could not be assembled before 8:30 p.m., four days from the present date. Striving for variety of scene, I switched my allegiance from Como to Verona, but, in the meantime, I did manage to get in touch with John Lee, an agreeable man who promised to take me to the session on the scheduled night.

This time, events came off as planned. We reached La Scala to find singers, orchestra players, chorus, *comprimari*, and technicians, all gesticulating wildly and talking shop under the arcades of the venerable theater. A sense of expectancy was in the air.

John Lee introduced me to Di Stefano. I had met him on several occasions in New York, but his pleasant Sicilian face betrayed the fact that he didn't have the slightest idea who I was. After some polite exchanges about his recent appearances in Verona, he asked me with an enigmatic smile if I had met Maria Callas. Pulling the sleeve of a slender girl, who had her back to us, he introduced me to the most talked-of singer of our day.

I have to confess that I had searched this chattering crowd for a glimpse of the diva, whose face I knew well from stunning pictures on record covers and from newspaper snapshots. I must further confess that my search had proved fruitless, and that, as I now faced *la* Callas, I would never have known her. In fact, I had a distinct sense of shock. To one like myself, brought up on such imposing and monumental prima donnas as Emma Eames (a dear friend of mine), the great Callas might have been a salesgirl in a bookshop or a university student.

Slim almost to the point of spindliness, the celebrated soprano was dressed in a simple orange skirt surmounted by an equally simple black bodice. Her hair was drawn back; she wore horn-rimmed spectacles; and she sported flat shoes such as ballet aspirants affect.

She told me that she had never sung Mimi, except to record the two principal arias in an album of Puccini

An extroverted Rosina is London's pert Giulietta Simionato.



excerpts, and that she was looking forward to the new role. I allowed that I had never had the good fortune of hearing her in person, to which she quickly replied that much of Mimi's music must be whispered over the microphone, and that I might not thus get a full impression of her voice.

As I chatted with her, I became so conscious of her disturbingly intelligent eyes that I forgot the flat slippers, the slicked-back hair, and the costume earrings. Casual she might be in her appearance, in the indifference of her manner, but in what she had to say (she spoke in idiomatic American-English) there was nothing casual or slipshod. Here was a dominating mentality.

I also noticed that when she briefly addressed a friend, her rapid Italian was just as effortless and idiomatic as her English; you would never have suspected that she hadn't been born in the land of Verdi and *vino*. I complimented her on this, but she didn't seem to notice. When I asked her if she also spoke Greek, her eyes widened—"But of course," she replied.

Soon I found myself away from all this buzzing confusion, surrounded by a vacuumlike silence, seated in a second floor proscenium box that overlooked the vast stage of La Scala.

Against a backdrop that might have served for a Cherubini or Spontini opera, the orchestra of the famous theater—about eighty in number—was arranged in eight ascending tiers. The singers—Di Stefano, Rolando Panerai, and the basso Zaccaria—were placed practically in the footlights, facing one microphone. Mme. Callas was seated at one side, awaiting her entrance. I could see maestro Votto—austere, reserved, and precise—perched on a high chair that towered out of the gloom of the orchestra pit. Within easy range of his ever-active hands was a telephone. Stripped of all its orchestra seats for the summer, the dark void of the theater, vibrant with musical history, seemed to issue a challenge to those assembled on the stage.

Seated in the box with me was Anna Moffo, a young Philadelphia soprano, whom I remembered from a successful appearance at one of Eugene Ormandy's Concerts for Youth. This tall, good-looking girl had been enthusiastically engaged by Legge for the role of Musetta. She and I watched with fascinated attention the fateful moment when Votto tapped commandingly on his desk and the orchestra sounded the opera's thrice-familiar opening measures. The evening's action had begun.

Di Stefano and Panerai, warming to their task, properly cursed the winter cold of Paris' Latin Quarter of a forgotten era. All seemed well. Panerai, a big, dark man, sang with great vitality, projecting his resonant voice into the empty auditorium, gesturing forward with his hand. His enthusiasm for the text was unmistakable. Di Stefano, it seemed to me, was a little slower warming up.

Unexpectedly, maestro Votto's voice was heard—a long, drawn-out "Ah!"—as he looked with disapproval at the orchestra. A troublesome passage was played over three times, progress coming to a temporary halt. A rap on the wide open score: "We take it again—from the very beginning." And they did.



Intelligence is the salient distinction of Maria Callas' Mimi.

As the end of the section was reached, a bell sounded and a bright red light winked ominously at the conductor's desk. The phone shrilled, adding to the tension, and a short conversation ensued. Miss Moffo whispered to me that this was Legge, who was supervising things in a distant room. "His ear catches the slightest deviation, anything that is not right," she said.

"We will try an *incisione*," announced Votto. "Again now, *miei signori*—back to the beginning!" Callas, sitting well back in her chair, her chest high, her shoulders squared, raised her eyes to heaven.

They had proceeded no further than some sixty bars, before the phone cut through the music. "What is wrong?" asked Votto, annoyance in his voice. Di Stefano seized this opportunity to indulge in several stretching exercises of his jaw; when finished, he winked at the violas. After two more tries, patching this forward progress, bit by bit, the point of Schaunard's entrance was finally reached, and Legge apparently approved.

By this time, Callas, shrewdly surmising that Mimi would not enter Rodolfo's garret tonight, suddenly left the theater. "I knew she wouldn't stay," whispered Miss Moffo in my ear.

An *intervallo* was granted, and the bystanders, including me, drifted out to smoke on the warm streets. Votto and the singers were back with Legge, listening to the results of their labors.

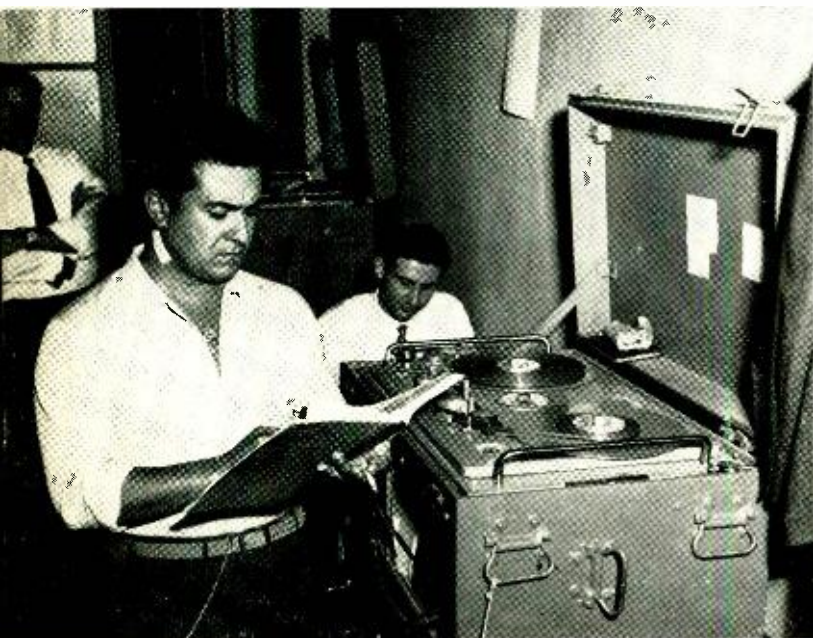
The balance of the evening was devoted to the exceedingly tricky, give-and-take scene among the four Bohemians. They acted their parts quite freely, though they were careful never to move far from the microphone. Only maestro Votto remained serious during this gay scene. The evening ended in a monotonous pattern of "takes" and playbacks.

On my way out, Di Stefano asked me if I would join him and his wife for a snack at the popular Biffi-Scala, under the theater's arcades. I was glad to do so, and we sat out in the warm night air.

Di Stefano told me in the most voluble and colorful Italian of his differences with the Metropolitan. "I was not happy there, last year. To sing well, I must be happy." Then he enthusiastically touched upon his differences with Maria Callas in Vienna, where he felt she had insisted on taking applause not rightfully hers. "We have made peace now, so as to make this record," he said, "but I doubt we will sing in the theater together." His sudden smile made this last sound a little unconvincing.

Di Stefano is apt to intrude such American expressions as "I am a happy guy" into an Italian sentence. He is immensely likable, and much pleased when his opinions meet with approval. Give him the little things he wants and he is yours. His pretty dark-haired wife is American-born.

At one point, when he spoke of a critic who had doubted the correctness of his breathing, he zipped down his scarlet sportshirt, revealing a sunburnt chest and a glitter of gold medals. Oblivious of the other customers, he proceeded to give me an extended technical demonstration. Later, he became unexpectedly pensive. "When



Giuseppe Di Stefano reads the score during a playback.

we are out on that big stage, facing the public in one of those arias, we are so alone—so entirely alone. Nobody can help us as we battle with that demanding monster—the public."

Di Stefano insisted on driving me to my hotel, though it was now two o'clock in the morning. "I live at night," he said, and I remembered that no one in Italy ever goes to bed. With immense pride he showed me his snow-white, chromium-plated Cadillac, which he felt was the envy of all Milan. Very probably it was.

Next day, I lunched with Walter Legge at the Biffi-Scala. I noticed that Legge, a man of much charm and wit, addressed our waiter as "Lohengrin."

I asked him about this. "That is quite a story," he replied. "Our man is one of three brothers, all of them waiters in this restaurant. Their father came from Parma, Verdi's city. This man had the courage to be the leader

of the select anti-Verdi faction in a Verdian stronghold. He advocated the music of Richard Wagner, and to support his position, he proceeded to name his three sons Tristano, Siegfriedo, and Lohengrin." Our waiter approached. "We will have more *ravioli*, Lohengrin," said Legge.

That evening, while a violent thunderstorm was beating down on Milan's dark streets, we gathered again under the shelter of the arcades outside the Scala. I greeted Callas, this evening very smart in a turquoise-blue sheath-dress. She still looked casual, but far chicquer than on the preceding evening.

"I hear reports from New York that there are great expectations over my opening the Metropolitan season in October," she said quietly. "What are they expecting of me? Just what is it they think I can do?"

"A good deal," I found myself murmuring.

"It creates a rather uneasy feeling." Her eyes had a quizzical look.

The session began at the point where Rodolfo finds himself alone—"Non son in vena." An assistant to Votto tapped the conductor's desk to suggest Mimi's knock at the attic door, and the scene we had all been waiting for commenced.

Di Stefano, in snappy white sport clothes, sang Rodolfo's narrative in the original key, during which we were all startled by a clap of thunder, a detonation that rolled right on the roof of La Scala. As the beautifully sung aria reached its conclusion, the orchestra, for the first time, broke into spontaneous applause. After a slight pause, the tenor repeated the aria, this time even more beautifully. Again applause; and everyone seemed in high spirits.

Callas now began her *Mi chiamano Mimi*, phrasing with infinite care and attention to detail. She sang lightly, leaning forward. I had the impression of a mind constantly working with a probing awareness of the possibilities of characterization—a preoccupation with perfection. A wavering high A brought things to a halt, as Callas uncompromisingly demanded that Votto go back a few bars and repeat the phrase. The scene then proceeded with various retakes, the artists disappearing to hear the playbacks and to confer with the invisible Legge.

At the beginning of the love duet, Panerai, Zaccaria, and Spataforo (Schaunard) were placed far from the stage, almost at the entrance of the auditorium, in order to achieve the proper perspective of distance as Rodolfo's friends call him from the courtyard below. Away from the orchestra, the singers had a few moments of difficulty with intonation, but this was quickly overcome. Some workmen in overalls watched these maneuvers with interest.

After last night's disclosures, I couldn't help smiling as I watched Di Stefano encircling Callas' slim waist during the opening measures of the love duet, "*O souve fanciulla!*" This amorous pose was completed as *la diva* reached up and held her Rodolfo's free hand. . . .

At the close of the duet, Di Stefano and Callas turned sideways and took a step or two away from the mike for purposes of distance. With no lowering of key, the tenor sailed up to the high C with the prima donna. Both

voices rang out with superb effect, but Callas apparently was not satisfied with her contribution. At her request, this demanding passage was repeated four times, until Di Stefano said frankly that he was "through for the evening."

He and his wife hastened to their table at the Biffi-Scala, but the indefatigable Callas, thriving on hard work, persuaded Votto to go over some passages of *Mi chiamano Mimi* which had failed to please her. I did not see her again before I left.

IN FLORENCE, where I arrived on the first of September in a spell of beautiful weather, I found London (Decca, as it is known in Europe) recording a complete version of Rossini's *Barber of Seville* at the Teatro Comunale. Letters from Roland Gelatt and Remy Farkas opened the way for my presence at these sessions.

The entire technical crew and musical supervision was British, so much so that you easily might have believed you were at a cricket match, complete with tea, rather than at a recording of Rossini's sparkler in this loveliest of Italian cities. As a matter of fact, tea did figure prominently in the backstage areas of the Comunale.

The Comunale is not so large a theater as La Scala, and thus creates a greater sense of intimacy. It is as though walls have been drawn in and people become more aware of each other.

James Walker, the musical supervisor, an Australian of terrierlike energy and tenacity, explained the musical and technical ground rules, so to speak, of a London operatic recording session.

"Despite what the general record-buying public chooses to believe about splicing, patching, joining, and other possible tricks of the trade," said Walker, "we try as nearly as we are able to record an aria or a passage in a continuous 'take.' I realize that this is not always feasible; nevertheless I am ever aware that many wonderful records were achieved in the old days, before these technical innovations were known. I am, therefore, not apt to coddle the artist and make him feel that things can always be fixed, no matter what. For instance, there is a general belief that arias can be recorded in a lower key and then raised to the original."

"That is not impossible," I said. "But what may not be generally realized is that by such a procedure the quality of the voice would be irreparably altered, and all tempos speeded up."

"Precisely," said Walker, and we walked toward the stage.

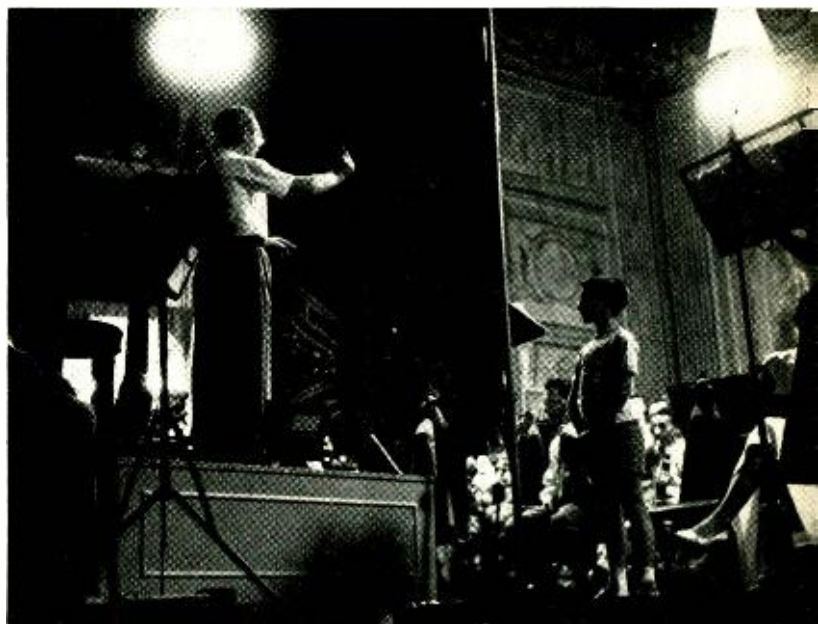
Recording procedures here differed somewhat from those at La Scala. The singers stood placed very high against the back wall of the theater, behind the orchestra (smaller here than in Milan). There was no strict adherence to the normal sequence of the score, such as the Angel-EMI forces favored. This policy was partly due to the immediate availability of the artists.

At one session, arias would be the order of the day; at another, only the recitatives would be gone through, until conductor Alberto Erede seemed satisfied.

In Milan nobody on the stage could hear what Votto and Legge were saying to each other over the phone. Here, Walker's voice, coming over the loudspeaker from a distant room, was audible to everybody. "Alberto. . . Alberto. . ." "Yes, Jimmy, what is wrong?" (In English). Erede's voice always sounds terribly, terribly tired. But there was no languor about his reading of the ebullient music, which kicked up its heels in sprightly capers through the acoustically excellent Comunale.

The first morning I went to the theater, I was amused to observe a swarm of parked motorcycles—Vespas and Lambrettas—and a scattering of bicycles surrounding the big Decca van outside the stage door. Apparently, chorus, orchestra, and stagehands had all arrived on these eruptive vehicles that are such a strenuous part of modern Italian life.

On the stage, Erede was already at work, rehearsing with chorus and principals the scene preceding Count Almaviva's opening serenade. Alvino Misciano, a tenor unfamiliar to recording studios, was putting the finishing touches on his dialogue with Fiorello (Arturo La Porta).



Conductor Votto warms up the orchestra for *Il barbiere*.

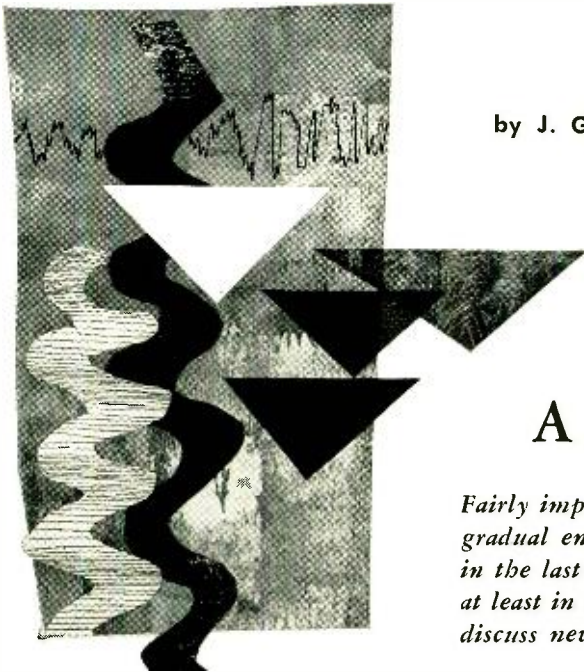
Erede, who speaks excellent English, was now confident that things had progressed to a point where a "take" might be attempted. As in Milan, there were bells, buzzers, and the inevitable red light to indicate that "zero hour" was at hand.

All too soon, Walker's polite voice interrupted proceedings. "I can hear pages being turned by the professors of the orchestra. Can they do it more quietly?"

I became aware of a certain formality between conductor and stage forces. When Erede spoke to the men, he addressed them as "Signori." There was none of the "Listen, you guys," "Take it from here, Hank" casualness so prevalent in our country.

"Mutual respect is very important," said Walker, when I commented on this. "We try to observe the amenities among ourselves, even

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by J. GORDON HOLT

This is where the Fi begins . . .

A Jewel in a Plastic Trough

Fairly important changes can go almost unnoticed if they are subtle and gradual enough—as have been the changes in high-fidelity equipment in the last few years. There is something in the nature of a New Look, at least in buyers' eyes. Hence this article, the first of a series which will discuss new standards by which home audio equipment can be judged.

IT WAS IN THE LATE 1940s that high fidelity enjoyed its first great surge of popularity. In this, certain technical developments played an important part. Wide range magnetic phonograph pickups became available to the public. So did FM tuners and FM broadcasts. Shortly afterward, microgroove came on the scene. Component installation houses sprang up; audio shows were held; newspaper and magazine articles were written. And, almost at the start, a few dedicated engineers and enthusiasts began agitating for the establishment of industry standards of fidelity in sound reproduction.

Had such standards formally been set, it might have established a useful precedent. But, in view of subsequent improvements in equipment, it is perhaps fortunate that they were not. Yesterday's standards could not possibly serve today.

A friend of mine recalls an experience with one of the earliest variable reluctance phono pickups, a sturdy device shaped rather like a sarcophagus. As he was detaching it from its tone arm, it shot between his fingers and hit the floor with a hearty clunk. Worse still, in his hasty attempt to catch it, he lost his balance and stepped on it. When he raised his foot, the cartridge came too, its diamond fang imbedded in his rubber heel. He detached it, replaced it in its Keystone clip and—apprehensively—started a record. The cartridge played as well as ever.

That cartridge is not made any more, though its makers are still very much in business. It has twice been superseded by later models. Neither of its successors could be stepped on without damage. But, by the same token—since in pickups there seems to be an inevitable inverse relationship between sturdiness and sonic accuracy—it could not compete with them today as an instrument of sound reproduction, although in its time it was accounted the best there was.

So—standards do exist, though they are not formally set forth. We know they exist because we see their effect:

old audio products vanish, new ones appear. The high-fidelity shopper still must shop by ear (literally), but his ear must be (figuratively) attuned now to new refinements.

Audio lexicons and high-fidelity glossaries define a phonograph pickup as a device which converts the groove undulations on a record into electrical impulses. As a neat definition, this probably covers the matter about as well as need be, but it gives no indication as to what may make one pickup a better converter of undulations than another, or a more lastingly reliable one.

The factors by which a phono pickup's quality may be judged are its frequency-range, smoothness, distortion, lateral compliance, vertical compliance, effective moving mass, vertical sensitivity, and stability. Other characteristics, which affect performance indirectly, are the combined mass of the pickup arm and cartridge, ease of vertical and lateral arm motion, absence of spurious arm resonances, and freedom from hum interference. The cartridge's output impedance, output level, recommended load resistance, ruggedness, and convenience also bear upon its desirability.

Frequency range and smoothness are so closely inter-related that neither has much significance without reference to the other. Both are often expressed together as "frequency response," but even a response rating, by itself, cannot give the whole story. The smoothness and range of a pickup cartridge will largely determine the "character" of the reproduced sound . . . whether it will be bright, or subdued, or neither. A broad peak or dip of as little as 1 decibel in a pickup's response can have an audible effect on its sound, particularly if this peak or dip occurs within the so-called presence range, from 1,000 to 4,000 cycles. A sharp 2-db peak between 3,000 and 10,000 cycles can add a definite "edge" to the sound, while a slow droop in the response starting at, say,

5,000 cycles and amounting to 3 db at 10,000, can make the entire high end emerge slightly subdued and distant. So it is easy to see why a frequency response rating of ± 5 db from 30 to 15,000 cycles can include a wide range of pickups, each of which may sound detectably different from the others. It is only when a pickup is rated within very small db limits that the rating begins to indicate how the cartridge will actually sound, but since very few manufacturers will dare to guarantee that a whole run of their pickups will be accurate to 1 db, the best test for a pickup's sound is a listening test, preferably involving direct comparison between a disk and a commercial recorded tape of the same recording, the latter played on a recorder whose equalization exactly matches the tape. A tape-and-disk pairing I have found useful for this is the RCA-Victor recording of Richard Strauss's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, the two versions being almost indistinguishable one from another when both are played on good equipment.

When making this comparison, use the recommended equalizer settings on the phono preamplifier, and if the demonstration seems inconclusive, persuade the demonstrator to try several different preamplifiers. Also, make certain that a pickup being sampled in this way is connected as recommended by the manufacturer, for misconnection can make any pickup misbehave, in ways that are no fault of the cartridge itself.

Distortion ratings are rarely published in pickup specifications, and even when they are, they should be subject to some interpretation. This is because some manufacturers rate distortion only at a certain frequency (where performance may be significantly different from that in other parts of the spectrum), others rate distortion as a weighted total harmonic content, and still others give unweighted distortion figures which include the noise components as well as spurious harmonics. As is the case with frequency response, then, ordinarily the best way to check distortion in a pickup is to listen to it. Still, if you are fortunate enough to have a dealer who is conscientious, patient, and well equipped, he may be willing to check your cartridge's performance on an oscilloscope as it reproduces the tone bands on a frequency test record. If the cartridge's output is seen to deviate widely from the ideal sine curve, or if it becomes lined with jagged spikes, this indicates that the cartridge is "breaking up," as they say. Ask for another.

In running a test like this, though, make sure the arm is properly adjusted for the cartridge, and is of a type that meets the cartridge manufacturer's approval. Cartridge breakup on loudly recorded passages may be a sign that its stylus assembly is defective or poorly designed, but it often indicates that the cartridge is being run at less than its proper tracking force. It is generally agreed among pickup design engineers that the lower the force at which a cartridge will track *cleanly*, the easier it is on records. This is *not*, however, to be construed as meaning that records can be preserved simply by reducing the stylus pressure of any cartridge by counterbalancing the arm, and so forth. On the contrary, a cartridge of average compliance will do almost as much damage to a disk work-

ing at less than its optimum force as it will tracking too heavily. This is because if the stylus is not held firmly in the groove, it will rattle back and forth and ride destructively across the shoulders of loudly recorded grooves. In general, the more compliant a cartridge is, the lighter may be its tracking pressure. There may be considerable variation between two cartridges of the same make, so experiment is always indicated.

The compliance rating of a stylus is the measure of its freedom of movement, either vertically or laterally. Lateral compliance is the one which usually appears in published specifications, and it is expressed as the distance (in millionths of a centimeter) the stylus will be displaced by the application of one dyne* of force. An average high-quality cartridge will have a lateral compliance rating of up to 5×10^{-6} cm/dyne, while a rating of 10×10^{-6} cm/dyne is considered extremely high. Generally speaking, higher compliance than this requires special provisions to prevent the stylus from swinging loosely to one side or the other and staying there. A light brush running from the arm into the record grooves, and the use of a very lightweight arm, are two methods that have been used to stabilize the motion of extremely compliant stylus assemblies.

Vertical compliance, rarely mentioned in pickups' specifications, is still not universally acknowledged to be important, although there is evidence suggesting that it affects the rate of record wear. The fact that a record groove is cut with a triangular stylus causes the groove to narrow slightly as its course changes from straight ahead (silence) to sharp right or sharp left, to produce loud high-frequency tones. The playback stylus, however, is ground to a hemispherical tip, so it has no choice but to ride up and down in the groove as this deepens or shallows. This so-called pinch effect (which is most pronounced in inner record grooves) requires that the playback stylus have some freedom of vertical motion, so it can move up and down without gouging the groove shoulders or leaving the groove momentarily.

In lieu of a vertical compliance rating, then, the next best thing is a practical test. Try pressing gently upward with the thumbnail on the stylus of a cartridge, to see how freely it moves, and how far. Its free travel should be great enough to be visible, and it should not be much more difficult to push upward than it is to push from side to side.

While its compliance will determine how easily a stylus can move, a pickup's ability to track loudly recorded grooves is also related to the moving mass of its stylus. Tracking ease at low frequencies is almost entirely dependent upon lateral compliance alone, but at high frequencies where the stylus is required to change direction extremely rapidly, its inertia becomes important. A light stylus will be able to follow high-frequency undulations more easily than will a more massive one, and it has the added advantage of moving the natural resonance of the stylus toward or above the top limit of the audible range. With an ultrasonic

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*A dyne, if you're curious, is the force required to give, within one second, a gram of matter a velocity of one centimeter per second.



Lawrence J. Scully

Adventurers in Sound

He Who Lathes Best

by FRITZ A. KUTTNER

NO ONE can be in the record business very long without hearing the name Scully. I forget exactly when I first heard it, but I do remember that I was impressed. Not that it meant anything to me at the time. The man who mentioned it, an audio engineer, did so in such a way that I could not tell whether a Scully was a man or a machine, but there was reverence in his voice. Reverence is rare among audio engineers. My curiosity was aroused.

The name cropped up again, from another quarter, in a week or so (it is odd how often this happens, is it not?). This time I learned that *a* Scully is a machine, whereas *the* Scully is the man who makes them. My informant was a man who coveted a Scully. "I wish," he said, "I could afford one."

I was a little taken aback, for the speaker was someone I rather envied. When he wanted a piece of recording equipment, he picked up the telephone and ordered it. Apparently a Scully was a recording lathe. I asked him, perhaps naively, why he didn't have one already.

"You don't know what you're talking about," he replied a little testily. "This thing costs \$8,500." I knew enough to know that other lathes could be had for between \$1,000 and \$2,000. I didn't know whether he would ever bring himself to lay out an additional \$6,500 for a Scully, but I did know I had to go and meet Scully, the man who could charge 425% of the going price for recording lathes and still make people buy them. He sounded as if he, and his machines, might be something rather special.

They are.

What I saw when I got to the Scully establishment in Bridgeport, Connecticut, was a dream of high-precision engineering, the Steinway or Rolls-Royce, so to speak, among disk-cutting lathes, and a man representing a standard of perfectionist craftsmanship which has all but vanished from modern manufacturing.

Larry — or, by his full name, Lawrence Jeremiah Scully — took his B.A. at Fordham with the class of '29, so he now must be in his upper forties. But he looks at least

ten years younger, and when he begins to explain his beloved machine, his face becomes positively boyish. Of medium height, blond, Scully looks in no way like the stereotype of the inventor or the bookish indoor experimenter. His complexion suggests lots of fresh air, not midnight oil burned in the basement workshop, and the panel on "What's My Line?" wouldn't have a chance with their customary first guess.

The first few minutes of conversation with Scully, however, bring to light the quality of quiet efficiency which distinguishes the man just as it does his product. There is nothing of the egotism, jumpiness, and erratic temper we are inclined to associate with the idea of a successful modern "inventor." In fact, Lawrence Scully would probably object to being labeled an inventor; he likes to think of himself rather as a good artisan and craftsman.

This fits a family tradition of the Scullys, most of whom in the last few generations have been artisans, mechanics, makers of things. One of Scully's brothers, to be sure, is a surgeon, but the other Scullys forgive him his medical degree, on the grounds that he does his work with his hands and precision tools.

The Scullys, hailing originally from Ireland, now are settled in Connecticut. John J. Scully, the father of Lawrence Jeremiah, established the family's background in the recording field when he joined the industry in its infancy. From 1904 to 1918 he worked for the Columbia Phonograph Company in Bridgeport, where he contributed to the development of the early dictaphone machine. These were the old days, when record manufacturers had to build their recording equipment in their own workshops. Later, Scully Senior worked for General Industries, making phonograph motors which were delivered to the "furniture people," i.e. the makers of acoustical phonograph cabinets. In 1920 he went into business by himself to make a real recording machine, the first designed by a specialist for use by record manufacturers. It took a full year to complete; it was driven by weights, just like old grandfather clocks.

Its height was almost six feet, and the operator had to stand on a platform to run it. This first acoustical cutting lathe was sold to Cameo Records.

The next four years produced no more than one piece a year. High-precision mechanics and mass production don't go together, from the Scully point of view. In 1924 Western Electric bought a Scully weight-driven lathe for the demonstration of their first electronic cutting system. The cutting head assembly, Scully recalls now, was a closely guarded top-secret, which no outsider could ever set eyes upon; all recording companies, at that time, locked their cutting heads away overnight in the safe, together with the cash and the trade acceptances.

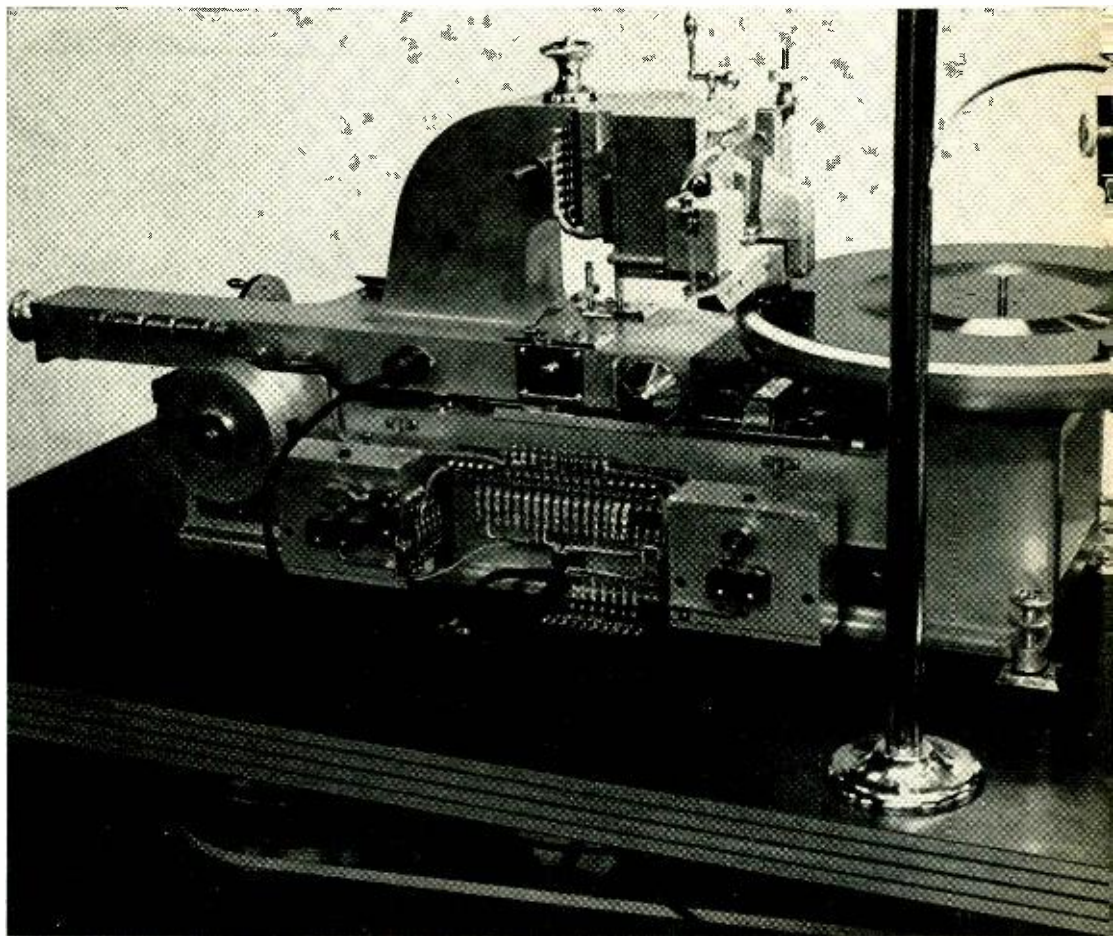
In 1925 things really began to get lively at John J. Scully's. The movie industry switched to sound and all the motion picture outfits began to order recording lathes. This boom lasted four years, but ended abruptly when some miscalculations in Wall Street plunged the nation into the Great Depression. In the same year Larry Scully graduated from college and joined his father in business, or rather in idleness, for there was a complete dearth of orders. A \$28,000 bank balance saved up from the era of prosperity carried them somehow over the distance, but things were pretty difficult for both the family and the company. At one time, in 1933, they pondered for weeks whether or not to sell five beautiful completely machined aluminum castings at scrap value—\$5 or \$6 apiece. Lawrence's memory of these years is still painful, but he believes that working or creating under such duress matures the character. "It sharpens the senses and makes the brain inventive." When it is pointed out that his point of view has been shared by many of the great poets and philosophers, Scully looks pleased but not surprised. The self-sufficient artisan finds it quite natural that wise men should have held similar ideas on the nature of endurance and on the salutary effects of hardship on the creative mind.

Finally, in 1934, came the break that ended the years of struggle; an order was placed by RCA Victor. The Scullys rushed to the bank and applied for a \$700 loan, happily waving the order form. They were turned down; they had never built up a credit background. How they finally managed to finance and fill this vitally important order, Larry doesn't remember, but they did. One thing

he does recall: there was not a penny left in the house the day the lathe was installed at Victor.

For a year or so previously, Lawrence had tried to break into the public address system field, and in fact had built a complete installation—one only, and no more—for a hospital. It is still in operation. But between 1934 and 1937 Victor bought a total of twenty lathes, and Larry turned his back on public and private sound systems alike.

The Victor bonanza ended suddenly in 1938. Scully then tried his hand at making and selling beer coolers. As he doesn't care to elaborate on this episode, one may assume it was not exactly a brilliant success. Soon after this venture, George Stewart and C. A. Rackey, engineers for NBC, came shopping for recording machinery for their broadcasting studios. Thirty-six lathes went to the NBC



PHOTOS BY PAUL RADER

Art in metal: a Scully variable-pitch recording lathe.

radio stations during the next nine years, interrupted only by the war, which stopped all recording lathe production and put father and son to work on aircraft subcontracts. The one exception was a recording lathe they built in 1943 for the Navy's Underwater Research Laboratories in New London.

With the coming of peace also came more prosperity. From 1945 on, orders for lathes poured in: twenty-two new machines were built in 1945; the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and all the Westinghouse radio stations took two pieces each; General Motors bought one, too. Then followed Columbia, Decca, Capitol Records—and

Western Electric sent a most welcome communication to the effect that they would like to buy twenty-five machines. Foreign companies began to join the throng, and now Scully lathes are running in England, France, Germany, Japan; record makers in Italy, Mexico, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and even in Soviet Russia are happy with their Bridgeport-made machines.

This highlights a peculiar problem. Scully gets few replacement orders, because Scullys simply don't wear out. Rarely is there heard of a Scully built twelve or sixteen years ago which the owner is willing to sell for \$2,500 or \$3,000. When he bought it in the early Forties he had paid somewhere around \$2,500. This is why I call the machine the Steinway or Rolls-Royce of recording lathes, and for the same reason I would rather buy a Scully for an investment than Mutual Funds. You can't lose on these lathes, and they are considerably more fun to play with than stocks and bonds.

Particularly is this true when you recall that the \$2,500 price tag of the past has become the \$8,500 of the present. This phenomenon began to develop in 1948, soon after the advent of the microgroove record, when father and son sat down to develop a most exciting innovation which probably has helped as much as any other single factor to make long-playing records the high-fidelity bargain they are. "Variable pitch" is the magic term. If you will bear with me, I will explain it.

ENCORES

ROSSINI'S *Otello* had awakened the germs of my musical instinct; but the effect *Don Giovanni* had on me was very different in its nature and results. I think the two impressions might be said to differ in the same way as those produced on the mind of a painter called from the study of the Venetian masters to the contemplation of the works of Raphael, of Leonardo da Vinci, or of Michelangelo.

Rossini taught me the purely sensuous rapture music gives; he charmed and enchanted my ear. Mozart, however, did more; to this enjoyment, already so utterly perfect from a musical and sensuous point of view, he added the deep and penetrating influence of the most absolute purity united to the most consummate beauty of expression. I sat in one long rapture from the beginning of the opera to its close.

The pathetic accents of the trio at the death of the Commendatore, and of Donna Anna's lamentation over her father's corpse, Zerlina's fascinating numbers, and the consummate elegance of the trio of the Masks and of that which opens the second act, under Zerlina's window—the whole opera, in fact (for in such an immortal work every page deserves mention), gave me a sense of blissful delight such as can only be conferred by those supremely beautiful works which command the admiration of all time, and serve to mark the highest possible level of aesthetic culture.

— Charles Gounod: *Autobiographical Reminiscences* (London, 1896).

Until quite recently, recording lathes cut a fixed number of lines (grooves) per inch of diameter on every disk: 96 lines was most frequent for 78s, and for LPs it varied between 200 and 280 lines. Once the number of lines for a given recording had been selected, it had to be maintained consistently from beginning to end. A certain "feed screw" was mounted into the lathe assembly, which moved the recording head steadily forward at the pitch selected. ("Pitch" is the distance the screw would advance in one revolution.) For soft music and little bass on the tape, the grooves were more widely spaced than desirable, with the result that the cut was uneconomical. With high volume and strong low frequencies, the fixed pitch was too narrow to accommodate the passage in full, and the engineer had to reduce volume and bass in order to prevent the stylus from overcutting the grooves. This meant serious loss of quality and fidelity which could be compensated *in part only* by expensive playback equalization controls. For years the Scullys toiled on the problem, and by 1950 they had solved it: pitch variation at any given moment from 70 to 400 lines, or from 105 to 600, or even from 140 to 800 lines per inch. Instead of several interchangeable feed screws with fixed pitches, a highly complex and smooth-working mechanism was devised and introduced into the machine, and today the engineer may set the advancing speed of the cutting head differently from moment to moment. He can cut a violin solo played in softest pianissimo at 600 or even 800 lines per inch, three times narrower than one could a few years ago; ten seconds later, when the whole orchestra's tremendous outburst with blaring trombones and tubas would have destroyed any master disk made by the earlier method, the engineer turns a knob and widens the groove distance to 70 or 100 lines per inch—and a smooth cut will engrave all the vigor and grandeur which had to be throttled away until recently. Inclusion of this device raised the price of the Scully lathe to \$7,300. To record makers, it was worth it.

All through 1950 the family team worked on the new variable pitch lathe to have it ready for the Audio Fair in the Fall. While work was progressing on the final assembly, Scully Senior died, without an opportunity to see his achievement in actual operation.

Since then Lawrence Scully has been on his own as a businessman and constructor of miracle machines. The last five years have shown clearly his aptitude in both fields. Pondering on the consequences of the introduction of variable pitch, he realized the existence of a problem almost impossible of solution by even the most musically erudite of recording engineers. If the variable pitch feature was to work at full efficiency, the operator of the machine had to develop a fantastic timing accuracy: every low bass note, every slight increase in volume had to be anticipated by about two seconds—the time it takes the turntable to complete one revolution. If the pitch were not widened by the lathe operator sufficiently ahead of time, the stylus might still overcut the *previous* groove and destroy an otherwise perfect master disk. The knowledge of the musical score and of the performance essential for efficient operation of the

Continued on page 147



For the Fi-Man's Christmas Stocking

DECEMBER is traditionally the season of good cheer — the time when jolly frost-bitten shoppers jam Main Street or Fifth Avenue, running up charge accounts, plodding through the slush of the first snowfall, clinking coins into the collection boxes of numerous bright red street-corner Santas, and exchanging good-natured elbow jabs with their fellow men.

For the indecisive shopper, though, December can be a time of turmoil and stress, heralding the nemesis of a giftless Christmas unless The Idea strikes in time to catch The Store still open. Many an indecisive spouse has voiced the opinion that there is nothing quite so maddening as trying to choose gifts for the Man Who Has Everything. But what she often means by the appellation MWHE is that the Man is not impressed with her choice of neckties, he buys his own shirts and socks, he expects more for Christmas than a couple of handkerchiefs, and the only things he really seems to want would cost three weeks of his salary and he'd have to pick them out himself anyway. She would perhaps love to buy him something for the family hi-fi system, but it seems so complete that this, too, appears to be the System That Has Everything.

But is it? Even the most invulnerable-looking fortress may have a chink somewhere in its ramparts, and the average carefully chosen set of hi-fi components is no exception to this. It may have all the necessities but that doesn't mean it has all the possible accessories.

For instance, the typical careful record collector is fully aware of the dangers of groove pollution to record and stylus life, and the lady of his house undoubtedly wages unceasing war with broom and mop against the ancient enemy of dust and grime. But for really effective protection of records, the attack should be three-directional: eliminating static from the disk, removing the dust that is thus released, and then protecting the record from further contamination while it rests on the shelves.

A highly effective anti-static fluid called *Stati-Clean*

is made by Walco and sold in 88¢ spray-top cans for easy application. Walco also makes a chemically treated *Electro-Wipe* cloth which removes dust as well as static. This sells for about one dollar and comes in a small storage bag which prevents it from drying out between applications.

Another type of static eliminator, the atomically activated polonium strip, is used in the *Dis-Charger* and *Staticmaster* devices. The \$4.50 Mercury *Dis-Charger* is a tiny (1½ grams weight) capsule which clips to the end of a pickup and kills a disk's static charge as it scans the passing grooves. The Nuclear Products' *Staticmaster* record brush, priced at \$14.95, contains a large strip of polonium foil at the base of a soft brush which scoops the dust from the grooves as the shower of alpha particles loosens it. The *Ortbo-Sonic* record brush (\$4.95) lacks the polonium strip of the *Staticmaster*, but it has the compensating advantage of being a perpetual cleaner. It is a wide (4-in.) soft brush on a mounting stand and extender arm which swings over the turntable. When the disk is playing, the brush spans the playing area with its bristles directed against the groove direction, scooping dust out of the grooves with each revolution.

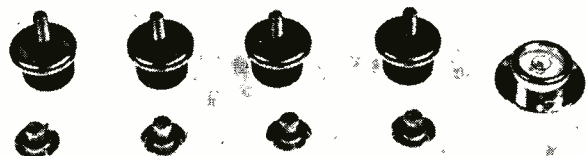
A very handy little dust remover for use on record changers is the *Kleeneedle* brush (98¢). This is a small firm-bristled brush mounted atop a vertical spring and attached to the changer base between the pickup arm rest and the turntable. Each time the changer goes through a cycle, the stylus is automatically moved across the brush, any accumulation of dust from the last record play thereby being completely removed.

Experts agree that the best protection a disk can get while in storage is afforded by a plastic sleeve between it and its envelope. These are made in varying thicknesses (and hence effectiveness) by Walco, Westminster Records, and several other companies. Prices vary from 88¢ to \$2.00 per dozen for the 12-inch size.

Do what we will, however, to keep our disks dust-free,



Gibson Girl Tape splicer; Staticmaster record brush.



Turntable leveling kit, with indicator, by Cabinart.



For the recordist: head demagnetizer by Audio Devices; bulk tape eraser by Amplifier Corporation of America.

there always comes the time when even the most permanent of permanent styli wear out. Knowing just when this day has arrived can be difficult, though, unless there is a microscope handy. Pocket-sized medium-powered hand microscopes are available at from \$2.00 to \$10, and most of these are quite adequate for spotting wear on a standard-groove stylus. For microgroove styli, higher-powered (and higher-priced) microscopes are available from General Science Service Company. Their \$25 model MS-1 offers 125-times magnification, and has a threaded barrel that will accept standard higher-powered lenses. — And for that matter, who would resent finding a nice new diamond under his Christmas tree?

Also important to record and stylus life is correct stylus force. A pickup which is riding too heavily or too lightly will damage both the disk and the stylus (to say nothing of the sound), and the only way to set the force accurately is by means of a stylus gauge. Accurate gauges are made by Weathers Industries (\$2.00), Garrard Industries (\$2.45), Pickering and Company (15¢), and the Audax Company (\$4.70). A more costly but highly precise dial-reading gauge is made by the Scherr Company, and sells for \$9.85.

The gadget-lover would certainly enjoy receiving a neat little kit of phono checking instruments, packaged by Walco under the name of the *Balanced Sound Kit*. At a budget-priced 88¢, it includes a spring scale and a small spirit level for testing turntable leveling. Cabinart also sells a turntable leveling kit (\$2.10), which includes a tiny circular spirit level that can be screwed to the motor board, and a set of adjustable rubber feet for leveling the entire player assembly.

The Hi-Fi *Slumber Switch* (\$7.95) could hardly be considered a necessity for the Compleat Hi-Fi System, but it would certainly be a boon to the adolescent oversoothed by the dulcet strains of mood music or to the tired businessman lulled by Purcell into forgetting his tax problems. Slumber Switch connects to the shutoff switch on any changer which turns itself off after the completion of the last record in a stack, and provides AC outlet sockets for the power amplifier and one other accessory. The idea is, of course, that you can load a stack of records, go to bed, and let the whole system shut itself off after you're asleep. The age of hedonistic-fi has arrived.

If there is a tape recordist in the family, there are numerous things that he may not have but should certainly be provided with. A few new reels of recording tape (of the kind he regularly uses) will always come in handy, as will a couple of boxed empty 7-in. reels. Tape can be

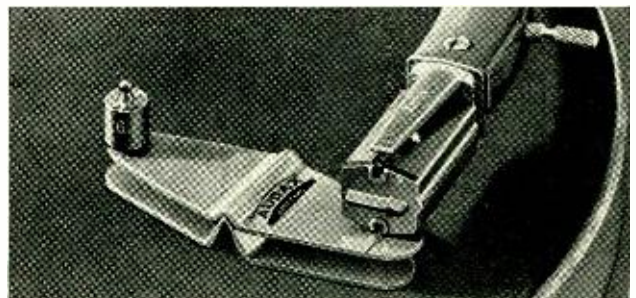
spliced free-hand, but it is much more easily spliced on a jig designed for that purpose. Very effective splicers are manufactured by Robins Industries in several models, ranging from the \$3.50 *Gibson Girl Semi-Pro* (for the splice with the Gibson Girl shape) to the professional model *Gibson Girls* with automatic cutting and trimming facilities, for \$4.78 and \$6.25. The more expensive of these includes a splicing tape dispenser for added convenience. For equally precise but less automatic splices, Tech Labs produces the *Edit-Tall* splicer (named after CBS editor-in-chief Joel Tall) for \$6.50. Also, along with any splicing equipment, it is a thoughtful gesture to include a roll or two of splicing tape, a special variety of plastic adhesive tape specially prepared to give non-sticky splices. Reels of splicing tape cost from 29¢ to one dollar, depending on length and width. Half-inch width is standard for use on most tape splicers.

Another device which is almost essential to the owner of a high-quality tape recorder is a head demagnetizer. A magnetized recording or playback head can increase hiss level and spoil valued recordings by erasing their high frequencies, so for this reason it is advisable to demagnetize heads periodically. Audio Devices sells an excellent head demagnetizer for \$7.20, and Ampex makes one specifically for use on Ampex recorders or others having similarly exposed heads. Also extremely useful to the quality-conscious recordist is a bulk eraser, which can remove all traces of signal from a recorded tape in a jiffy. Amplifier Corporation of America markets for \$14.40 a hand-held bulk eraser which can also be used for demagnetizing heads on many recorders.

In the Convenience-and-Flexibility department, there are several other gadgets which most home recordists will appreciate. Among these are the Flahan tape threader (79¢), spare microphone plugs (to match those already in use with the recorder), and flexible goose-neck extension microphone rods for the hobbyist who dabbles with live recording ventures. Goose-neck extenders cost between one and three dollars, and greatly increase the versatility of a microphone by allowing it to be set at practically any angle.

Apart from the phono or tape specialties, there are certain small items that every hi-fi hobbyist tends to run out of before he knows it, and Christmas is the ideal time for loving friends and family to replenish his stock. Such objects include RETMA (RCA) phono plugs, plastic-covered shielded phono cable (a 25-ft. length should last for a while), spare tips for the soldering iron, and solder. Many hobbyists are

Continued on page 141



Audax Stylus-Balance checks your pickup's tracking force.

by  Roland Gelatt

music makers

GERALDINE FARRAR, who began singing at the Metropolitan Opera while Sembrich and Nordica and Melba still reigned, well summed up the case for Maria Callas when she wrote a friend of mine: "I feel AT LONG LAST, we have a stellar and real prima donna: it were high time!" This goes to the heart of the matter. However you may rate Mme. Callas as a singer, there can be no disputing that as prima donnas go she is as *assoluta* as anyone could ask.

At the Metropolitan she did not immediately bulldoze her way to success. *Norma*, in which she made her debut, was impressive but not volcanic in impact. During the first two acts, indeed, Callas cut a decidedly pale figure, both as a singer and as an actress. Toward the end, her voice strengthened and focused, and she came imperiously to grips with the role. The last act, where Norma confronts Pollione with a full charge of fury, was magnificent. The beginning of this scene, as Norma slowly advances toward Pollione while declaiming in menacing chest tones "*In mia mano alfin tu sei*," vibrates in the memory. At such moments Callas showed us how electrifying the lyric theater can be.

In *Norma* there were only moments; in *Tosca* this singer's dramatic communication was charged with high voltage from her first suspicious entrance to her final distracted leap from the Castel Sant' Angelo. I never expect to see a more comely Tosca than this, nor one with more intensity and conviction. For once, Sardou's stagy melodrama had genuine pathos. Callas touchingly projected the frightened bewilderment of Floria Tosca when, in the second act, her whole secure life comes tumbling down like a house of cards; and the end of this act, as she gropes tentatively for the knife and then stabs Scarpia in a seizure of vindictive hatred, carried a note of great urgency. She sang variably in the first two acts, divinely in the third. The Callas voice seemingly warms up slowly, but when it reaches peak condition it speaks with rare distinction.

LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI made it known a few weeks ago that he would like to talk with me on the subject of hall acoustics. I had never before been favored by a summons to the Stokowski presence and set out in anticipation of a relaxed and fruitful tête-à-tête. This was not to be. I found the conductor's Fifth Avenue apartment in a state of busy disarray, apparently in preparation for his departure for Houston, where Stokowski is now permanent conductor of that city's orchestra. Every room in his spacious flat seemed to be a center of important activity. Mr. Stokowski escorted me to the living room and tried his best to focus on our colloquy, but the noises to the right and left of him proved too fascinating to resist. Every few minutes he would spring from his seat, mumble apologies, and disappear through various sets of doors to investigate the bustle around us.

During uninterrupted oases in our conversation I learned that Stokowski was about to install in Houston's Music Hall a sound reflector with which he had been experimenting for some time. The job of a sound reflector, he explained, is to gather sound waves from a hundred or more different sources and to diffuse them throughout the auditorium so that each listener will hear the orchestra in proper bal-



Stokowski rehearsing the Houstonians.

ance. Designing sound reflectors has been for Stokowski fairly much a matter of trial and error; the Houston reflector is the fourteenth he has built. Among other things, he learned during the course of its construction that lead paint reflects too many highs; he

much prefers a paint "with milk in it" or a plain water paint. Audiophiles might bear this in mind when repainting time comes around, and let the interior decorator be damned.

As for future recording plans (Stokowski recently joined the Capitol roster) he would vouchsafe nothing, except to say that his new sound reflector would be of great help at recording sessions. The people at Capitol are likewise mum about the impending Stokowski program, though they promise it will be "fairly spectacular."

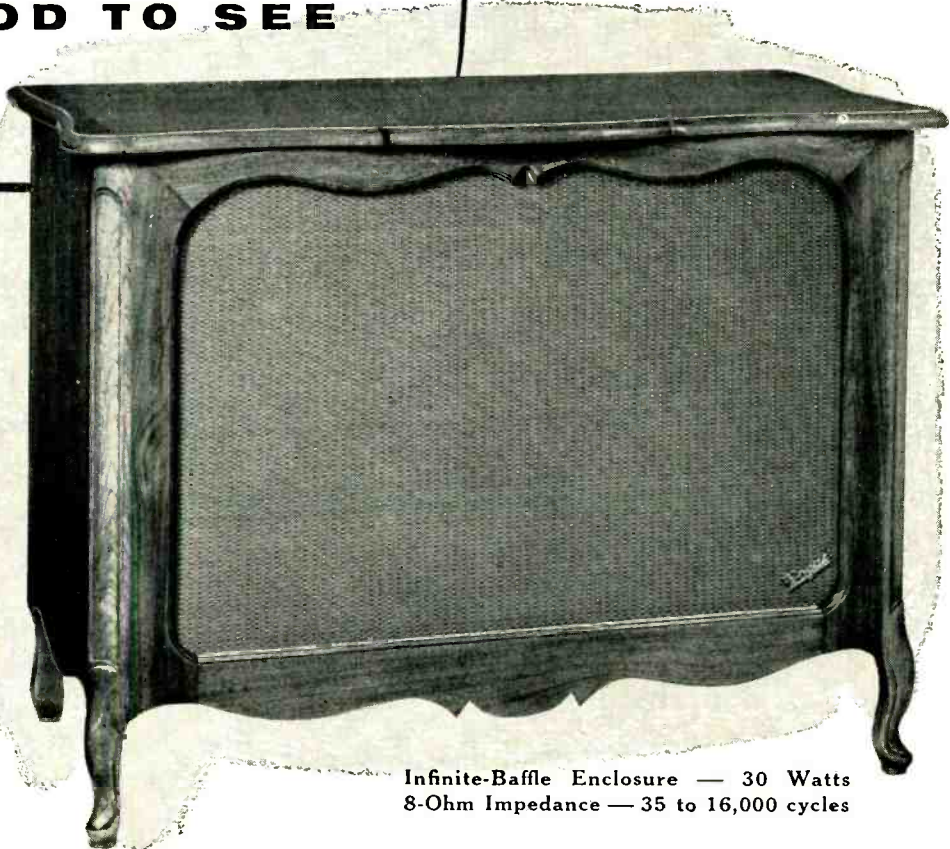
WALTER GIESEKING was in the midst of a busy recording program when he fell ill in London in the latter part of October. Here is how Walter Legge, EMI's recording director, described it in a letter written to the Dario Sorias at that time: "Giesecking arrived two days after me and started a wonderful batch of recordings; he seemed to be physically better than I have ever known him and certainly playing better than he has done for twenty-five years. In six and a half days we have completed three double-sided records of Beethoven sonatas, brought the Schubert recording up to two double-sided records, and broken the back of his Encore record. Suddenly yesterday afternoon he was taken ill and was operated on last night. It appears that the gall bladder overflowed into the pancreas and he will be on the danger list for at least five days. . ." Two days later Giesecking died, aged sixty.

The Beethoven sonatas to which Legge referred were to be part of a complete edition of the thirty-two. At earlier sessions Giesecking had taped Nos. 1 to 7, 17, 18, 30, and 31. The final sessions yielded several more to make a total of twelve sides. All of these will be issued in due course on the Angel label. Other unreleased Giesecking material includes thirty-two *Lyric Pieces* by Grieg, seventeen Mendelssohn *Songs Without Words*, and the Mozart C minor Piano Concerto, K. 491, with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Von Karajan.

Continued on page 71

GOOD TO HEAR
 ... **G**OOD TO SEE

Visitors to
 this year's Audio Fairs
 were glad to find that
 an ear for fine sound and
 an eye for fine furniture
 will still derive
 lasting satisfaction from



Infinite-Baffle Enclosure — 30 Watts
 8-Ohm Impedance — 35 to 16,000 cycles

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The charming new PROVINCIAL B-305
 typifies the restrained elegance
 of cabinetry that complements the
 subtle perfections of Bozak Sound.

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 EXPORT COMPANY, PLAINVIEW, NEW YORK

Six years ago I spent an afternoon with Giesecking in his Wiesbaden home in quest of material for a book on which I was then working. At the end of our meeting I knew exactly how Sam Goldwyn felt when, after a long interview with Bernard Shaw, he complained that "I wanted to talk about art and he only wanted to talk about money." The pianist at that point in his career seemed concerned primarily with restoring his fortune, which he said the Russians had confiscated when they occupied Berlin. There was a certain businesslike cynicism in his attitude, and it occasionally manifested itself in his postwar playing, which could be slapdash and superficial. But when he set his heart to it, Giesecking played with unique delicacy and refinement. We may never hear the like of his Debussy and Ravel again.

FOR BRUCKNER'S music I have never, despite diligent effort, been able to generate real enthusiasm. Respect, yes. The nobility and splendor of his themes affect me just as the Brucknerites say they should, and I am not insensible to the massive beauties of his orchestration, but I cannot derive much reward from following prolonged Brucknerian discourse. Once, when I confessed as much to a Central European acquaintance, I was advised to withhold final judgment until I had heard a Bruckner symphony played in Austria by an Austrian orchestra. Under these circumstances, I was assured, the ineffable compulsion of Bruckner's music would suddenly be revealed to me.

I have yet to hear Bruckner in Austria, but I have now heard an Austrian orchestra — the Vienna Philharmonic, no less — play Bruckner in Carnegie Hall, and I must report that it's still no go. This listener's responses to the Seventh Symphony simmered far below boiling point. The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra itself, however, lived up gloriously to all the good things that have been said about it. The mellow solidity of its cellos and glowing brilliance of its violins sounded especially radiant, and the entire orchestra played with fine precision and warm *innigkeit*. Seventy-six-year-old Carl Schuricht, who conducted, exemplified the Kapellmeister tradition at its best; his beat was firm, the instrumental choirs were held in sensitive balance, and the interpretations were sober and logical. As an

encore the VPO performed *An der schönen, blauen Donau* in as caressing and vivacious a style as I ever expect to hear. The orchestra will be touring North America until mid-December. It is well worth the price of admission (and even a baby sitter).

At the conclusion of their first New York concert, the Vienna players made their way to the Rainbow Room, sixty-five floors high in the RCA Building, for a welcoming party given by members of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony. This was partly by way of return for a similar affair in Grinzing, a suburb of Vienna celebrated for its wine taverns, to which the New York men had been invited during their European tour last year. The members of the two Philharmonics managed to keep the small talk going despite linguistic difficulties, and there was much exchange of views on the joys and fatigues of a long orchestral safari. The Vienna instrumentalists seemed properly impressed by the sight of New York's lights twinkling far below but less enchanted with the *schwach* American beer which was being served at that dizzy altitude.

PAUL FROMM is a well-to-do emigré from Germany who for several years has been investing the profits of his Chicago wine-import business in the careers of young American composers.



IMPACT PHOTO, INC.

VPO trumpeter-manager *Wobisch* towers over *Schuricht* and *Mitropoulos*.

The Fromm Foundation spends in the neighborhood of \$50,000 a year helping to push composers over the hump of public indifference. Most of the money goes in the form of recurring cash grants. The Fromm Foundation does not believe in commissioning a

piece of music and then letting the composer fend for himself. Instead, its policy is to do everything possible to establish a composer's reputation so that he can make his own way in the market place of music. The latest move in this direction is an arrangement with Epic Records, which will publish a series of LPs devoted to music by Fromm-sponsored composers. The foundation will help to foot the bill. A first release of two records, due in January, will put works by Leon Kirchner, Wilhelm Killmayer, and Lou Harrison into circulation.

AMONG THE REVIEWS received for this issue was one by Alfred Frankenstein of two suites by Roussel, *Le Festin de l'araignée* and *Le Marchand de sable qui passe*, in performances by the Radiodiffusion Française Orchestra under René Leibowitz, issued on the London International label. This same music played by the same performers had been published previously by Esoteric Records, a small New York firm. The Esoteric LP has been one of my particular favorites, and I was surprised to learn that so good a record had been remade. Or had it? I phoned Esoteric's Jerry Newman to find out. He drew a blank but called back a few hours later, having meanwhile acquired a copy of the London LP. The "new" recording, he discovered, was identical to Esoteric's even unto the matrix number.

The circumstances of this mix-up are illustrative of today's complex international relations in the record industry. Esoteric had leased its masters to Vogue Productions for manufacture and distribution in France. Vogue had subsequently leased part of its catalogue to London International for distribution outside of France. The Roussel-Leibowitz disk was included in the latter transaction by error, and London unwittingly exported it to this country for sale in competition with Esoteric's original.

Incidentally, A.F. highly recommends both music and performance. So do I. So does Jerry Newman — but he hopes people will buy the recording on the Esoteric label.

CORRECTION please

In the Christmas shopping story on page 65, we tied Walco to *Electro-Wipe*. *Electro-Wipe* is a product of the Duotone Co., who also manufacture a number of other worthwhile record accessories.



CHRISTMAS SUGGESTIONS

Beethoven: Ninth Symphony (and Eighth)

Conductor, Karajan. Soloists, Schwarzkopf, Höffgen, Häfner, Edelmann . . . "The finest Ninth to appear on records since the advent of LP and modern recording," *Canby, Audio, June '56*. Golden cover. Album 3544 B

Klemperer conducts Beethoven "Eroica"

Philharmonia. "Magnificent new version . . . one listens with renewed wonderment," *London Sunday Times*. "People are beginning to talk of Klemperer as the leading Beethoven conductor of our time," *Desmond Shawe-Taylor, London New Statesman and Nation*. Angel 35328

Vivaldi: The Four Seasons

The most enchanting musical weather report. Conductor, Giulini. Philharmonia. Angel 35216

"they have the feel and sound of silk"

Handel's Messiah

In the great British Christmas tradition. Magnificently performed under Sir Malcolm Sargent. Huddersfield Choral Society. Album 3510 C

Handel's Solomon

In this 1st recording Sir Thomas Beecham restores "Solomon" to all its glory. Royal Philharmonic. Towering choruses. Melting, romantic airs. Album 3546 B

"the record that is already gift-wrapped"

Callas Sings Lucia

Great Scenes from 'Lucia di Lammermoor'. You have never heard the Mad Scene until you have heard *La Divina* sing it. Also starring Di Stefano, Gobbi. Angel 35382

Callas Sings Norma

Highlights from the great La Scala recording. *La Superba* in one of her greatest roles. "She sings the *Casta Diva* like a goddess of the moon descended." Angel 35379

Callas Portrays Puccini Heroines

The fabulous Callas in 11 arias from 6 operas including 'Butterfly', 'Bohème', 'Turandot'. Conductor, Serafin. Philharmonia. Angel 35195

ANGEL RECORDS

"the aristocrats of sound"

"more than a gift . . . a compliment"

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf in Songs You Love

16 songs including 'Drink to me only with thine eyes', 'Plaisir d'amour', 'Songs my mother taught me', 'Ich liebe dich', 'O du liebs Angeli'. Pianist, Gerald Moore. Angel 35383

Schwarzkopf-Gieseking: 16 Mozart Songs

Two incomparable artists in a rare and lovely souvenir of the Mozart Year. Angel 35270

Gieseking Plays Schumann

Schumann Piano Concerto (with Karajan and Philharmonia) and Kinderscenen. Music for Träumerei! Angel 35321

Iturbi in 'Moonlight' and Mozart

Beethoven's 'Moonlight' and two favorite Mozart Sonatas: A major, K.331 (with the *Rondo alla Turca*) and F major, K.332. "He retains the great touch," *Billboard, Oct. '56*. Angel 35378

Dennis Brain in 4 Mozart Horn Concerti

The only young man with the right to blow his own horn. Everybody loves the record. Everybody buys it . . . Philharmonia and Karajan. Angel 35092

Gieseking Plays Ravel

Complete piano solo works. "The ivory keys acquire a thousand colors," *N. Y. Herald Tribune*. Handsome, Paris-printed booklet, with essay by Gieseking "on playing Ravel". Album 3541 (5 sides)

"hearing it on Angel is twice the pleasure"

The Scots Guards on Parade

The Hielan' Laddies are here again . . . rousing music and skirling pipes on Angel's 2nd (by request) Scots Guards record. Angel 35337

Soviet Army Chorus and Band

The famous singing soldiers travelled from Moscow to London where they made this thrilling recording. 13 sensational numbers, from 'The Volga Boat Song' to (yes, in *English*) 'It's a long way to Tipperary'. Angel 35411

The Carabinieri Band of Rome

Historic, colorful Band in thrilling music. Marches of Parade Ground and Opera House, including 'Aida'. Opens with Italian National Anthem, closes with 'Stars and Stripes'. 35371

"perfect gifts, with covers from Paris"

Lehar: The Merry Widow

Champagne Operetta. Starring Schwarzkopf, Loose, Gedda, Kunz. Philharmonia. Album 3501 B/L

Johann Strauss: Die Fledermaus

Another dazzler. Schwarzkopf, Streich, Krebs, Gedda, Kupz, Christ. Conductor, Karajan. Philharmonia. "The Viennese operetta never had it so good." Album 3539 B/L

Khatchaturian Conducts His Own Music

'Gayne' and 'Masquerade' Ballet Suites. Brilliant hi-fi recordings of two popular works including (of course) the 'Sabre Dance'. Philharmonia, London. Angel 35277

Champagne for Orchestra

Conductor, Karajan. Philharmonia. For parties all year round. Music of Johann and Josef Strauss including 'Delirium Waltz' and 'Blue Danube'. Angel 35342

Practical Cats

Cat-and-music-lovers delight. Poems from T. S. Eliot's 'Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats' recited by Robert Donat. Music by Rawsthorne. Angel 30002

"For mood and merriment"

Obernkirchen Children's Choir:

Christmas Songs Angel Blue Label 65021

St. Paul's Cathedral Choir Angel 35381

With Love from Paris

Edith Piaf, Charles Trenet, Gilbert Bécaud, Annie Cordy, Les Compagnons de la Chanson. 12 songs. Angel Blue Label 65028

Souvenir of Italy

The Voice and Guitar of Ugo Calise. Angel Blue Label 65027

Stanley Holloway:

His Famous Adventures with Old Sam and The Ramsbottoms. Comedian star of 'My Fair Lady' in a hilarious revival. Angel Blue Label 65019



Records in Review

Reviewed by PAUL AFFELDER NATHAN BRODER C. G. BURKE JOHN M. CONLY
 RAY ERICSON ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN ROLAND GELATT JOAN GRIFFITHS
 JAMES HINTON, JR. JOHN F. INDCOX HOWARD LAFAY ROBERT C. MARSH
 MURRAY SCHUMACH JOHN S. WILSON



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CLASSICAL

BABADJANIAN: *Trio in F-sharp minor*—See Mendelssohn: *Trio No. 2*.

BACH: *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, BWV 903; Italian Concerto, BWV 971; Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro, BWV 998; Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 894*

Agi Jambor, piano.
 CAPITOL P 8348. 12-in. \$3.98.

Miss Jambor's performance of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* has considerably more color and musicianship than were displayed in her recent disk of Bach works under the same label. While the present work does not have the passion and power under her fingers that it does under Landowska's, and while Miss Jambor indulges in some effects that can be obtained only on a piano and consequently are likely to have had no part in Bach's thinking, her playing is beautifully controlled and at the same time conveys something of the imaginative sweep of the Fantasy. This is as good a performance on the piano as is available on records. The other pieces on the disk are played neatly and fleetly and objectively. Fine recording.

N. B.

BACH: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in D minor, BWV 1052; Brandenburg Concerto No. 5, in D*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; National Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond. (in the D minor). Emil Gilels, piano;

Elizaveta Gilels, violin; Nicolai Kharkovsky, flute; same orchestra, Kiril Kondrashin, cond. (in the *Brandenburg*).
 COLOSSEUM CRLP 250. 12-in. \$3.98.

Richter plays the D minor Concerto spiritedly and cleanly, and he conveys some of the depth of feeling in the slow movement. It is on the whole a commendable performance, even though the conductor sticks grimly to one dynamic level throughout each movement and even though Richter's treatment of the appoggiaturas is, to put it gently, naive. He simply plays them at their printed value. How much easier life would be for musicologists and editors and performers if baroque ornamentation were really so uncomplicated! But the good qualities of the performance are negated by the recording, which is distorted and tinny, here as well as in the *Brandenburg*. N. B.

BACH: *Concerto for Two Pianos and String Orchestra, in C, BWV 1061*
 †Mozart: *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra, in E-flat, K. 365*

Clara Haskil, Geza Anda, pianos; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond.
 ANGEL 35380. 12-in. \$4.98.

Both the pianists and the orchestra sound tense and mechanical in the first movement of the Bach. They are less so in the other two movements, but inhibitions remain. In some portions of the opening Allegro, Miss Haskil's right hand is almost inaudible when it should be uppermost. This is no match for the Elsner-Reinhardt performance (employing harpsichords) on Vox. In the Mozart all hands relax. They seem more at home here and turn in a pleasing job, though I think there is more grace and charm in the version by Badura-Skoda and Gianoli on a Westminster disk.

Whether the unusually pinched sound of the oboes here is due to the recording, otherwise excellent, I cannot tell. N.B.

BACH: *Sonata for Two Violins and Piano, in C, BWV 1037*
 †Mozart: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, K. 218*.

David Oistrakh, Igor Oistrakh, violins; Vladimir Yampolsky, piano; National Philharmonic Orchestra, Kiril Kondrashin, cond.

COLOSSEUM CRLP 246. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is a first recording of the Bach, an attractive work that may not be by him (in some sources it is attributed to Goldberg—he of the celebrated variations). It is nicely played by the three performers. Oistrakh senior is the soloist in the concerto. There is no question that he is a first-class fiddler. Whether he is a first-class musician too is not so certain. In the cantabile portions of the Mozart—throughout the slow movement in fact—he indulges in a kind of overexpressiveness that seems quite out of place. In some phrases every tone, regardless of its importance, gets its own tiny crescendo and diminuendo. Now this sort of thing may be very effective in Wieniawski, but it suits Mozart about as well as a shiny black silk topper would have suited his powdered hair. The orchestra is a bit muddy in spots. As for the recording, there is a slight wavering on one or two long-held tones in the Bach and a faint background hum, but the sound of the solo strings is very well reproduced. N. B.

BEETHOVEN: *Fantasia for Piano, Chorus, and Orchestra in C minor, Op. 80*—See Bruckner: *Symphony No. 9*.

third movement is "Blue—the Color of Sapphires, Deep Water, Skies, Loyalty, and Melancholy," while the triumphant, fugal finale is "Green—the Color of Emeralds, Hope, Youth, Joy, Spring, and Victory." Pieces of music whose literary commentaries are as good as this are often not very good music, but Bliss's symphony is even better than its titles. The *Introduction and Allegro* is a short, brilliant work by which Sir Arthur's reputation will neither stand nor fall. A.F.

BLOMDAHL: *Chamber Concerto*
 †Donovan: *Soundings*
 †Verrall: *Prelude and Allegro*

M-G-M Chamber Ensemble, Carlos Surinach, cond.
 M-G-M E3371. 12-in. \$3.98.

Of the three works on this disk, the one with the most individual profile is the Donovan, which is scored for solo trumpet and bassoon and a very large battery including practically every percussion instrument used in the symphony orchestra. The title, *Soundings*, and the unusual instrumentation, would lead one to expect "a study in sonorities," as the catchphrase has it, and, to be sure, the composition does explore effects of timbre in very subtle and fascinating ways; over and above that, however, it builds up to a monumentality of expression considerably transcending mere considerations of color.

Karl-Birger Blomdahl's *Chamber Concerto* is a powerful, somewhat Hindemithian affair for wind instruments, piano, and percussion. John Verrall's *Prelude and Allegro* is a pleasant, tangy, neobaroque piece for string orchestra. Recordings of all three works are excellent. A. F.

BOCCHERINI: *Trio in G minor, Op. 9, No. 5; Trio in G, Op. 38, No. 2; Quartet in A, Op. 39, No. 8; La Tiranna, Op. 44, No. 4*

Carmirelli Quartet.
 LONDON LL 1454. 12-in \$3.98.

The predominance of Haydn and Mozart in the chamber music of the last quarter of the eighteenth century is so absolute that it has resulted in the neglect of works by lesser masters of the time that are nevertheless capable of giving much pleasure. The present disk is therefore especially welcome. Boccherini was by no means the nonentity he is sometimes accused of being. He was a skillful craftsman, often had trenchant ideas, and did not lack depth of feeling. Of the four works on the present disk, only the G major Trio seems more or less routine. I was particularly struck by the emotional profundity of the elaborate introduction of the G minor Trio, the playful handling of the wiggly little theme of the first movement of *La Tiranna* (a two-movement string quartet), and the expressive chromaticism of the slow movement of the A major Quartet. All four works are played smoothly and with precision. N. B.

BRAHMS: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in B-flat, Op. 83*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
 COLUMBIA ML 5117. 12-in. \$3.98.

Reproduced at low or moderate volume, this gives sweet and smooth voice to the orchestra, and a piano continuously clean and real. Played loud, it gives startling thunder to the piano, which remains clean and real, and a rolling power of mellow envelopment to the orchestra. In its loud phase it is sonically the most satisfying record of this concerto. The performance is not greatly different from another by the same musicians recorded years ago, but the power and clarity of the new one produce naturally a mightier effect, parti-



EILEEN DARBY

Rudolf Serkin: "contagious gusto."

cularly since Mr. Serkin, always brilliant, hits out with contagious gusto. He is able to sustain interest during passages of pure pianistic rhetoric by implying something grand just around the corner; and by adding enough emphasis when the corner is turned, he not only fulfills his promise but imparts an impression that no one else has found so much in the concerto.

The orchestra displays its uniquely warm homogeneity and is almost awesomely impressive in several *pianos*, but the leadership has failed to convince at least one hearer that an ultimate eloquence was sought. While the beautiful proficiency is being admired, the feeling insinuates itself that for this performance an orderly production was more esteemed than a significant. There is no contention here that it is bad; it is not; but it is a pity to hear mastery approached and then shied from for lack of a little added effort, as in the short breath given to the second theme of the scherzo. It seems that all conductors except A. Toscanini have a groveling respect for this music that prevents their scrutinizing it closely. C.G.B.

BRAHMS: *Quartets (3) for Piano and Strings, Opp. 25, 26, and 60*

Victor Aller, piano; Felix Slatkin, violin; Alvin Dinkin, viola; Eleanor Aller, cello.
 CAPITOL PCR 8346. Three 12-in. \$11.94.

Blending piano with strings is not an easy job, but Brahms managed to accomplish wonders in his three quartets for piano, violin, viola, and cello, here presented complete in one album. The first and third represent the composer in an essentially serious vein; the middle quartet is more serene in mood. Musically and structurally, the Third in C minor, Op. 60, is the best. But all three make for wonderful listening.

Up till now, only the Second Quartet, Op. 26, has had a satisfactory disk interpretation—that by the Albeneri Trio with

Raphael Hillyer, violist, on Mercury—and that has been deleted from the catalogue. Therefore, this new complete edition of the three quartets is especially welcome. Not only does it offer these works in their first really modern recording—bright, natural, and admirably balanced—but Victor Aller and the three members of the Hollywood String Quartet prove once again their excellence as interpretative artists. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 108*
 †Schumann: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 1, in A minor, Op. 105*

Szymon Goldberg, violin; Artur Balsam, piano.
 DECCA DL 9721. 12-in. \$3.98.

Undoubtedly the most frequently recorded of all violin sonatas, the Brahms here receives a performance that is smooth as silk, beautifully proportioned, and always in good taste. These same characteristics carry over to the less familiar, but highly melodic, romantic Schumann, which finds Goldberg's approach more impassioned. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 4, in E minor, Op. 98*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
 ANGEL 35298. 12-in. \$4.98.

Standard symphonies coming late are out of luck unless some kind of revelation or new light comes with them. This is one of the finer versions of the Brahms Fourth, solidly masculine in style, orchestrally rich and sonically of high order, particularly when the full band is playing. But it offers no revelation not anticipated by another edition. If this is one of the best, it is nevertheless not so compelling as the Walter version for Columbia is to those who like heat, and it has neither the sonic finesse of the Boult for Westminster nor the remarkable eloquence of the De Sabata for Decca. It is here because the most versatile of the really gifted conductors must have the Brahms symphonies in Angel's catalogue; and although conductor and company have behaved well to each other, they are late. C.G.B.

BRAHMS: *Trio for Piano, Violin, and Horn, in E-flat, Op. 40*
 †Haydn: *Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello, No. 30, in D*

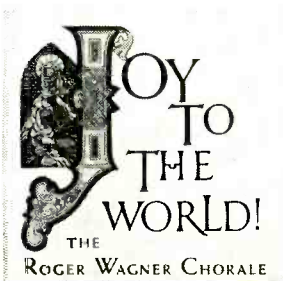
Emil Gilels, piano; Leonid Kogan, violin; Yakov Shapiro, horn; Mstislav Rostropovich, cello.
 WESTMINSTER 18181. 12-in. \$3.98.

The purpose is to flourish Russian virtuosos *à la mode d'aujourd'hui*, and *la mode* emerges with great credit. Still, Westminster has a better record of the Haydn, and Westminster and a couple of others have better versions of the Brahms—better in the essential deep, dark oils that strengthen and smooth the bass in recordings. The bass substance of this disk, clean on high, is spare enough to inflict a vague unease after a time of it, and neither the curt friskiness of the Haydn nor the long yearning of the Brahms, in consummate expertise of

Continued on page 80



The living sound of Christmas



Album 8353

Since that first star-filled Christmas night, man has celebrated this great event with music created by the oldest instrument of all, his own voice.

And now the famed Roger Wagner Chorale—the finest choral group of our time—sings of Christmas in what may well be one of the most remarkable albums of this or any other holiday season. It's called "Joy to the World!"

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For Roger Wagner has a unique understanding of how choral voices record. By precisely balancing his voices—as a conductor does instruments—he has again created the intense, *dramatic* sound that distinguishes his albums from all others. Equally important, these performances have been captured by Capitol engineers who know every variable of the human voice.

The result is "Full Dimensional Sound," a startling realism reproduced with the highest fidelity known to the recorder's art.

You'll find "Joy to the World!" a joy to own or give—and pretty as Christmas under your tree.

Incomparable High Fidelity in Full Dimensional Sound





building your record library

number thirty-four

PAUL AFFELDER SELECTS A SHELF OF
RECORDINGS BY PABLO CASALS



IN THIS ERA of modern miracles, we can be particularly grateful to the mysterious force which has granted longevity to several of the world's most distinguished men of music. Sibelius is ninety-one, Toscanini will be ninety in March, Vaughan Williams is eighty-four, Monteux is eighty-one, and Bruno Walter is eighty. "Coming of age" on December 29 is one of the greatest all-round musicians and humanitarians of our time—Pablo Casals.

But ours has been not only an age of miracles; it also has been an era of vast injustice, of tyranny, of loss of freedom for both nations and individuals. Some artists have collaborated with the oppressors. Still others have remained—or have tried to remain—aloof from situations in which they felt they had no need to intervene.

Not so Casals. The leading irreconcilable among musicians, he has taken a bold, absolutely inflexible stand against those who would suppress liberty. Others among his colleagues joined forces with the opposition to Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco. As time wore on, however, especially after the last war, many of these men either returned to the scenes of their former triumphs within the affected countries to perform once again, or associated themselves with artists whose political history was tainted.

Again, not Casals. After risking not only his reputation but life and limb as well, he left his native Catalonia and Spain with the determination never to return until his country should again become free. So consistent has he been in his personal revolt against what he regards as the injustice of the present Spanish regime that he has refused to play or even to appear in other countries which he feels are not doing enough to help his people regain their freedom. Because of this adamant attitude, the world of music has lost much. At the same time, however, in working untiringly to aid the oppressed and the underprivileged everywhere, Casals has become the living, dynamic symbol of the struggle for a free world.

In a magazine of this sort we are concerned chiefly with Pablo Casals the musician. And what a musician he is! We usually consider an artist remarkably versatile if he is able to master two different phases of music. But Casals has won well-deserved laurels in no less than five different musical fields.

First and foremost, of course, is his world pre-eminence as a cellist—surely one of the greatest in the entire history of music. Never the flashy virtuoso, he has always been much more deeply interested in revealing the brain and soul of the compositions he interprets. Since his own

brain and soul also go into the music making, there is in everything he plays a certain unmistakable individuality of expression. But self is never put before the intentions of the composer. What comes from Casals' bow and fingers is pure tone and pure musicianship. Perhaps at eighty he may not be quite as note-perfect in technical execution; yet, in listening to the recordings he made during recent years, one has difficulty in believing that these sounds are made by a man in his late seventies. The secret, of course, is constant practice—practice when he was a struggling young musician, practice in the midst of international concert tours, practice during the hardships and dangers of war, and practice still today.

Casals is almost as well known as a conductor, especially to those who attended the concerts he gave with his own orchestra in Barcelona and to those who have journeyed to the recent summer festivals at Prades and Perpignan. The same towering standards that govern his cello playing control his interpretations as a conductor. He organized and built his own orchestra in Barcelona where others had failed to establish a permanent organization. And once he had what he wanted in the way of performing quality and financial support (he paid the musicians out of his own pocket in the early days), he showed again his feeling and respect for his fellow citizens by instituting low-priced concerts for the working men who could not ordinarily afford the luxury of symphony concerts.

A fact not generally known, however, is that Casals is also a pianist of no mean ability. In the earlier days of the century he toured as accompanist to his wife, the American lieder singer Susan Mercalf.

And composition itself, the creation of new music has been of prime interest and importance to Casals since his student days. For a time he envisioned himself not as a cellist but as a composer. Re-creating other people's music has occupied him most of his life, yet he has found time to write several works of his own. These include an oratorio, *La Crèche* (his favorite); *La Visión de Fray Martín*, for chorus, solo organ, and orchestra; a *Miserere*; several motets and songs, and works for string quartet, violin and piano, and, quite naturally, for cello solo and for cello and piano.

Finally, we come to the fifth facet of Casals' remarkable career, his accomplishments as a teacher. Casals has ever been ready and willing to teach, either directly or by implication. Throughout his life he has had many pupils who, imbued with the spirit of the master, have spread

the gospel of his refined technique and style to countless other pupils, either through direct instruction or by means of books and methods.

Every summer, thousands of eager music lovers and musicians from all over the world flock to the Casals festivals in Southern France. And this spring, Casals is presenting a two week festival in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where his mother was born.

The recording companies have been moderately kind to Casals and his art over the years. In the pre-electrical days he was under contract to Columbia. Then, for the greatest part of his recording career, he made disks for His Master's Voice and, through it, for RCA Victor. Those years brought forth some exquisite and unforgettable recorded performances, most notably the six unaccompanied suites of Bach, the interpretation of which is among Casals' most deeply moving artistic achievements. There were also the magnificent trio records with Alfred Cortot and Jacques Thibaud, plus several fine concerto disks. What has happened to all of these? A few, such as the Second and Third Bach Suites, were transferred to microgroove. But RCA Victor, in its commercial blindness, is looking at the present only and has eliminated all but two of the disks—the Dvorak Concerto and a record of cello encores. Shameful treatment, indeed, for work of such artistic significance, and deplorable the prospect of a musical future deprived of Casals' unique insights and illuminations. Could not a few albums of lesser music be sacrificed so that some of the best Casals recordings might be restored to the active catalogue? RCA will hasten to answer, no doubt, that new "hi-fi" albums sell better than Casals. Very true. But a company of Victor's age and stature has a certain artistic responsibility to the public. While obviously it would be quite impossible to retain in the catalogue every record by every artist, surely there are a few, among whom Casals is a conspicuous example, who deserve more consideration than they have received.

For the last half dozen years, Casals has been back with Columbia, which for several seasons has recorded his performances at the Prades and Perpignan festivals. Because of the acoustical conditions of the buildings in which he has played, some of these records have a sound quality that is not ideal. Shining through them all, however, is the inimitable artistry of Casals.

Customarily, "Building Your Record Library" is a "ten best" series, but in this instance it seems advisable simply to point out those recordings which best illustrate the different phases of Casals' art.

As soloist with orchestra, Casals may be heard to best advantage in the aging but still beautiful recording of the Dvorak Concerto in B minor, Op. 104, with George Szell conducting the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (RCA Victor LCT 1026). There is also the Schumann Concerto in A minor, Op. 129, with the Prades Festival Orchestra, coupled with a fine selection of encore pieces (Columbia ML 4926), and the same composer's *Fünf Stücke in Volkston*, Op. 102 (Columbia ML 4718), which has a performance of the Schumann Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 63, Casals participating, on the other side.

Casals has conducted recordings of the six *Brandenburg*

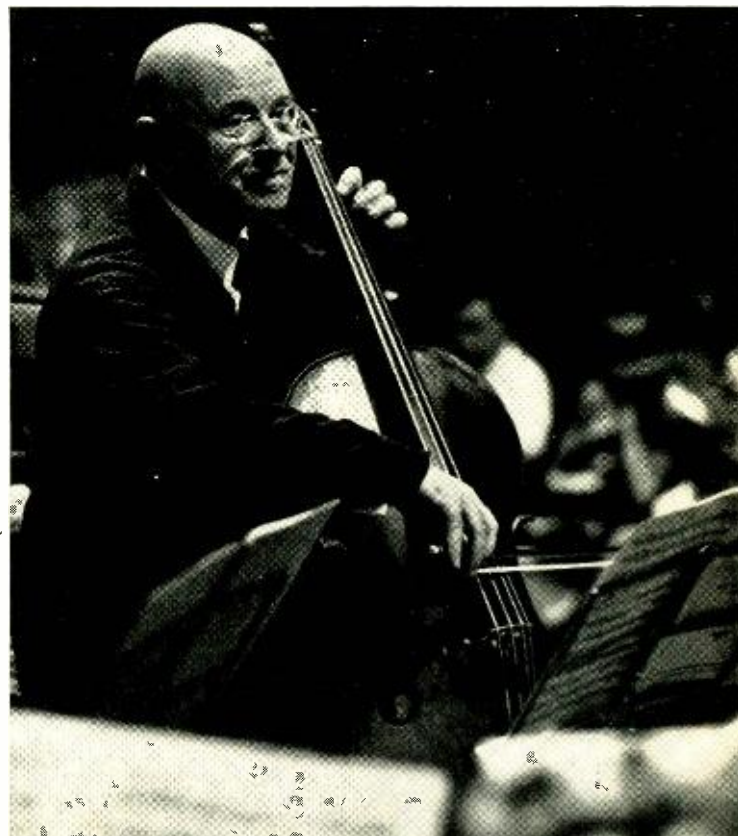
Concertos and the *Orchestral Suites Nos. 1 and 2* by Bach, but, so far as recordings go, he is at his best in the role of accompanying conductor for Dame Myra Hess in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 9 in E-flat, K.271 (Columbia ML 4568), and for Mieczyslaw Horszowski in the same composer's Piano Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K.595 (Columbia ML 4570), both with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra.

He is most generously and felicitously represented on disks today as a participant in chamber music performances. The cream of these, and one of the most glorious of all Casals recordings, is the album containing the five Beethoven Sonatas for Cello and Piano and the two sets of variations on themes from *The Magic Flute*, all with the impeccable Rudolf Serkin at the piano (Columbia SL 201, three 12-in.). Other noteworthy recorded chamber music interpretations in which Casals collaborates include the three Bach Sonatas for Cello and Piano (Columbia ML 4349/50); the Beethoven Trio No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 11 (Columbia ML 4571), and Trio No. 7 in B-flat ("Archduke"), Op. 97 (Columbia ML 4574), both with Alexander Schneider and Eugene Istomin; the Brahms Trio No. 1 in B, Op. 8, with Isaac Stern and Myra Hess (Columbia ML 4719), and Sextet No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 18, with Stern, Schneider, Milton Katims, Milton Thomas, and Madeline Foley (Columbia ML 4713), and the Schubert Trio No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 99, with Schneider and Istomin (Columbia ML 4715), and Trio No. 2 in E-flat, Op. 100, with Schneider and Horszowski (Columbia ML 4716).

On his birthday, our congratulations—and our deep respect—to Pablo Casals.

Octogenarian of the month—many-faceted Pablo Casals.

PAUL MOOR



playing, ought to give any discomfort when other records do not. C. G. B.

BRUCKNER: *Symphony No. 9, in D minor*

Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Eugen Jochum, cond.

†Beethoven: *Fantasia for Piano, Chorus, and Orchestra in C minor, Op. 80*

Andor Foldes, piano; RIAS Chamber Choir, Berlin Motet Choir, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Fritz Lehmann, cond. DECCA DX 139. Two 12-in. \$7.96.

The Ninth is Anton Bruckner's last and unfinished symphony, yet, like Schubert's two-movement *Unfinished*, its three movements have a certain completeness about them. As with the other Bruckner symphonies, this one was subjected to a considerable amount of editing, cutting, and reorchestration by others than the composer; but it has been restored in recent years to its original form, and it is in that form that it is recorded here.

Jochum directs a warm, broad, lyrical, often moving interpretation of the first and third movements, yet manages to put plenty of spirit into the Scherzo, which is never allowed to become heavy. The recording runs to three sides, whereas, without rushing—and, I think, without cutting, though a score was not at hand—Jascha Horenstein managed to get the symphony, also the original version, onto two sides of a thoroughly up-to-date Vox disk. Individual comparisons are in order; I like both, but if pressed would lean just slightly toward the more expansive sound that Deutsche Grammophon has provided for Decca.

Unfortunately, the sound in the accompanying Beethoven *Choral Fantasia* is just as poor as the Bruckner is good. The overall volume level is low; in addition, the piano has been recorded fairly close-to, while the orchestra and chorus have been relegated to the background.

As to the music, it comprises an introduction for piano alone, followed by a set of variations for piano and orchestra, with a short but impressive choral finale. In some respects, it can be considered as a preliminary study for the finale of the Ninth Symphony. Altogether, a most interesting work, one all too seldom heard. Since it also receives a clear, discerning interpretation, it is a pity that it could not have been better reproduced. P.A.

CHAILLEY: *Missa Solemnis*

La Psalette Notre-Dame, Jacques Chailley, cond.

†Franck: *Prélude, Chorale, and Fugue*

C. Chailley-Richez, piano. LONDON TW 91145. 12-in. \$4.98.

Jacques Chailley's *a cappella* setting of the Mass, composed in 1947 and first performed at the Besançon Festival in 1955, is a devout and serious work, one which combines old ecclesiastical modes with modern harmonies. It follows the text admirably, but without rising to any great emotional or inspirational heights.

The wonderful Franck work receives a hard-toned, matter-of-fact, rigid perform-



Szell conducts Dvorak's Slavonic Dances.

ance from Mme. (?) Chailley-Richez. A strange disk fellow to the Mass. P.A.

COPLAND: *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*

Martha Lipton, mezzo-soprano; Aaron Copland, piano.

†Weisgall: *The Stronger*

Adelaide Bishop, soprano; Columbia Chamber Orchestra, Alfredo Antonini, cond. COLUMBIA ML 5106. 12-in. \$3.98.

Copland's Dickinson songs are expertly made, highly singable, urbane, and easy to listen to; but, for me at least, they lack the one thing important songs should have: the sense that the composer has illumined his text, found new meanings in it, and thrown it into dimensions not visible on the poet's page.

Hugo Weisgall's *The Stronger*, on the other side, is a chamber opera for one voice and orchestra. The jacket notes give us the Dickinson texts set by Copland but not a word about Richard Hart's libretto for Weisgall—not even a paragraph summarizing the story. One word in a thousand is intelligible to the ear, but the total goings-on make no sense whatsoever. The style suggests Gian-Carlo Menotti trying to write in the manner of Alban Berg. A.F.

CORELLI: *Concerti Grossi, Op. 6: No. 4, in D; No. 7, in D; No. 8, in G minor; No. 9, in F; No. 10, in C*

I Musici. EPIC LC 3264. 12-in. \$3.98.

From the standpoint of performance, this is one of the best representations of these lovely works on records. The Musici play with all the necessary qualities—sensitivity and precision, power and tenderness, intensity and tranquillity. The "revision" of the scores, by B. Bettinelli, seems reverent and in good taste, although the "reviser" could not resist the temptation of adding imitative figures in the Allemande of No. 10. The only element that prevents this disk from being completely satisfactory is one aspect of the recording: the true sound of the violins is partly concealed by the thin, shimmering veil of slightly exaggerated highs. N.B.

COUPERIN: *Messe des Paroisses*

Stig Rasjö, organ. LONDON TWV 91110. 12-in. \$4.98.

This Mass "for use in parish churches during solemn festivals" consists of a series of short organ pieces that were interspersed

with the vocal portions of the service. Some of the sections are fragmentary. Some have a dancelike or even martial character, which lends credence to the annotator's suggestion that people like Mme. de Sévigné attended the services less out of a sense of piety than of pleasure in the music. The most elaborate movement is the imposing Offertory, but even in the shorter sections the twenty-one-year-old composer demonstrates his mastery of counterpoint and his command of a rich harmonic vocabulary. The registration indicated by Couperin calls for the use of some rather wheezy stops on the otherwise excellent Swedish organ employed here. Some listeners may prefer the sound of the Parisian organ on which Gaston Litaize recorded the same work for the same company (DRL 93039). The notes on the sleeve of the present disk are in French. N.B.

DONOVAN: *Soundings—See Blomkahl: Chamber Concerto.*

DVORAK: *Slavonic Dances, Opp. 46 and 72*

†Smetana: *Quartet No. 1, in E minor ("From My Life")* (trans. Szell)

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. EPIC SC 6015. Two 12-in. \$7.96.

Once again we are given a fine new recording of the complete *Slavonic Dances*, one that matches admirably its three competitors—conducted by Talich (Urania), Rodzinski (Westminster), and Kubelik (London). Szell starts out as if he is in a hurry and can't be bothered by little details; but this soon changes, and we find him adding some delightful refinements of style and phrasing. Somehow, nothing will make me give up my favorite—the Talich—but it and the Rodzinski take a full four sides, and Kubelik has a very mediocre *Romeo and Juliet* (Tchaikovsky's) on the last side of his set. This Epic album, then, may turn out to be the best buy, because its fourth side contains a new recording of Szell's imaginative and eminently just orchestral realization of Smetana's *From My Life* Quartet. P. A.

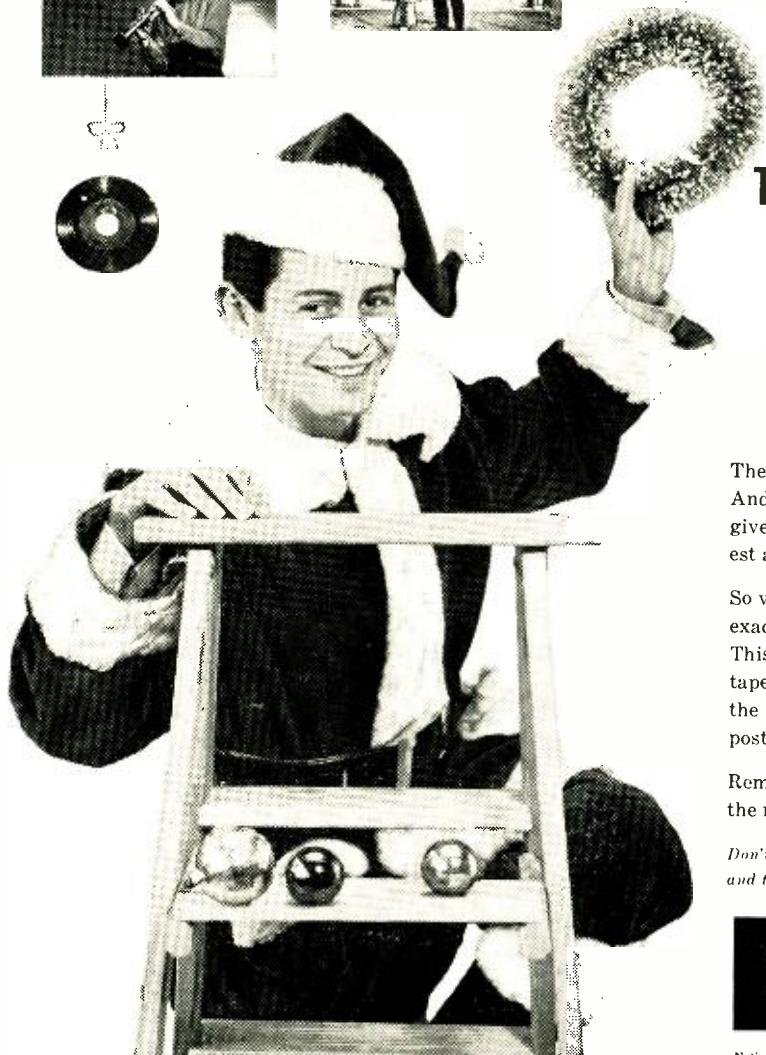
FALLA: *El amor brujo*
†*Orchestral Favorites*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.; Marina de Gabarain, mezzo soprano (in *El amor brujo*). LONDON LL 1404. 12-in. \$3.98.

To the commonplace that the best Spanish music is written by Frenchmen, Manuel de Falla is an unchallenged exception. Much of *El amor brujo* is based on forms and devices of folk music, just as the story derives from Spanish gypsies. The manner in which Falla builds upon these sources a rich and varied symphonic work of extended dimensions (which has been successful both in the concert hall and as a ballet), demonstrates the high level of skills that lies behind so much deceptive simplicity.

Ansermet's flair for the composer was shown a few years ago in his splendid version of *The Three Cornered Hat*. He can, without loss of force or vitality, create

Continued on page 84



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the most subtle and delicately spun orchestral textures within a wide range of tonal colors. The lightness and refinement are thus exceptional, particularly when the impression remains that the music is being conveyed in full blood. His soloist, De Gabarain, knows the Spanish style and has the timbre and the impassioned gypsy quality needed to capture the smoldering heat of the music.

The orchestral collection is equally well done and offers the Spanish Dance from Falla's La Vida Breve, Chabrier's Habañera, Mussorgsky's Gopak, and two pieces of Debussy, Clair de lune and Marche écossaise. Ansermet's skill is such that Clair de lune is transformed from a shopworn marshmallow to an interesting musical experience—and that is skill indeed! The recording is fairly resonant and soft in focus but without loss of detail. Recommended. R.C.M.

FAURE: Songs

Spleen, Op. 51, No. 3 (Il pleure dans mon coeur). Mélodies de Verlaine, Op. 58: Mandoline, No. 1; Green, No. 3; C'est l'extase, No. 5. Prison, Op. 83, No. 1.

†Ravel: Histoires naturelles

Gérard Souzay, baritone; Jacqueline Bonneau, piano. LONDON LD 9203. 10-in. \$2.98.

The matter of fresh interest here is all on the Fauré side of the disk, for the little Ravel cycle, done with a casual assurance, has been about for some time, coupled with mistreated Falla songs on LS 536. At any rate, Gérard Souzay's readings of Fauré's exquisitely shaped settings of Verlaine are more notable for their high polish than for depth of penetration. Mr. Souzay's delivery is easy and always cultivated, and sometimes this is all that is needed, or almost all. His C'est l'extase, if no ultimate, flows purely, and so does the languid second section of his Green; his Mandoline is rippling with surface charm. But in Prison, which can and ought to be a bitterly dismaying song, he is still content to be suave, or else simply lacks strength of purpose to slip the point home. All told, this is skilled singing, as distinct from sing-

ing backed by philosophical commitment. Accompaniments: good. Sound: intimate and clear. Good notes, but no texts—buy your own Verlaine. J. H., JR.

FLOTOW: Martha: excerpts—See Weber: Der Freischütz: excerpts.

FRANK: Prélude, Chorale, and Fugue—See Chailley: Missa Solemnis.

GERSHWIN: Rhapsody in Blue: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in F Jesus Maria Sanroma, piano; Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. RCA CAMDEN CAL 304. 12-in. \$1.98.

Sanroma's uncut recording of the Rhapsody dates from 1938. For some time it was considered the definitive performance, and even now it offers pretty stiff competition to a number of recordings, of later vintage, currently available. It has tremendous drive, a fine rhythmic pulse, and is impeccably played; add to this excellent support by Fiedler, who was more considerate than of a soloist's problems. The Concerto in F, originally recorded, I believe, in 1941, is almost as successful. The record is a good buy at its low price, even though RCA's engineers have not managed to make the old sound very agreeable; the orchestral tone is often unpleasantly explosive, and the piano sounds brittle and thin. J. F. I.

GOUNOD: Petite Symphonie, in B-flat—See Schubert: Eine kleine Trauermusik.

HAYDN: Symphony No. 94, in G ("Surprise")

†Mozart: Serenade No. 13, in G ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). K. 525

Northwest German Radio Orchestra (Hamburg), Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. CAPITOL P 18022. 12-in. \$3.98.

This Surprise has the most substantial sound in twenty recorded editions, an advantage which places it near the top of the pile in total desirability, since the performance—barring a slow Minuet whose chafing under restraint we can feel—is lively, accomplished, and engaging. The fine discriminations of the Beecham exposition (Columbia ML 4453) are not here, but then this solid clarity of sound cannot be heard on that older record although the older sonics are pretty good. Good reproduction prevails also in a competent Eine k N unmarked by any particular distinction and unmarred by any severe fault. In sum an excellent record, in spite of the absence of any novelty. C.G.B.

HAYDN: Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello, No. 30, in D—See Brahms: Trio for Piano, Violin, and Horn, in E-flat, Op. 40.

LAMBERT: Concerto for Solo Piano and Nine Players; Eight Poems by Li-Po

Gordon Watson, piano; Alexander Young, tenor. Argo Chamber Ensemble, Charles Groves, cond.

WESTMINSTER XWN 18254. 12-in. \$3.98.

The concerto is in the chamber-jazz style of the 1920s, with wah-wah mutes on the trumpets and other dated devices, but it is none the less a charming entertainment piece. The Eight Poems by Li-Po, dedicated to Anna May Wong (remember?), successfully elude the trap which that subtle author almost invariably springs on Western composers. There is nothing easier than to take a Chinese poem, cause it to be intoned in a declamatory style with long breaks between the vocal phrases wherein the flute and harp make with pentatonic effects, and give one's self the illusion of having composed a song. Lambert, however, really composes songs to these texts. The vocal line is music, not disguised recitation, and the whole is exquisitely sensitive. So are the performance and the recording. A.F.

MENDELSSOHN: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in G minor, Op. 25; No. 2, in D minor, Op. 40

Peter Katin, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Anthony Collins, cond. LONDON LL 1453. 12-in. \$3.98.

I found this a very pleasant record. The music is not world shaking in its import, but it is enjoyable and satisfying to hear, and the artists appear to be overjoyed to be bringing it to you. The LSO plays so well as to make one forget that it is generally the weakest of the London orchestras. I attribute the improvement in large part to Mr. Collins, whose customary verve is obviously infectious. The pianist is similarly delighted with the proceedings and does very well with an instrument that has a somewhat dull tone and might, in less congenial circumstances, prove a disappointment. Finally, the recording engineers make a resonant hall behave, so that the sound is good and well placed in space. R.C.M.

MENDELSSOHN: Trio No. 2, in C minor, Op. 66

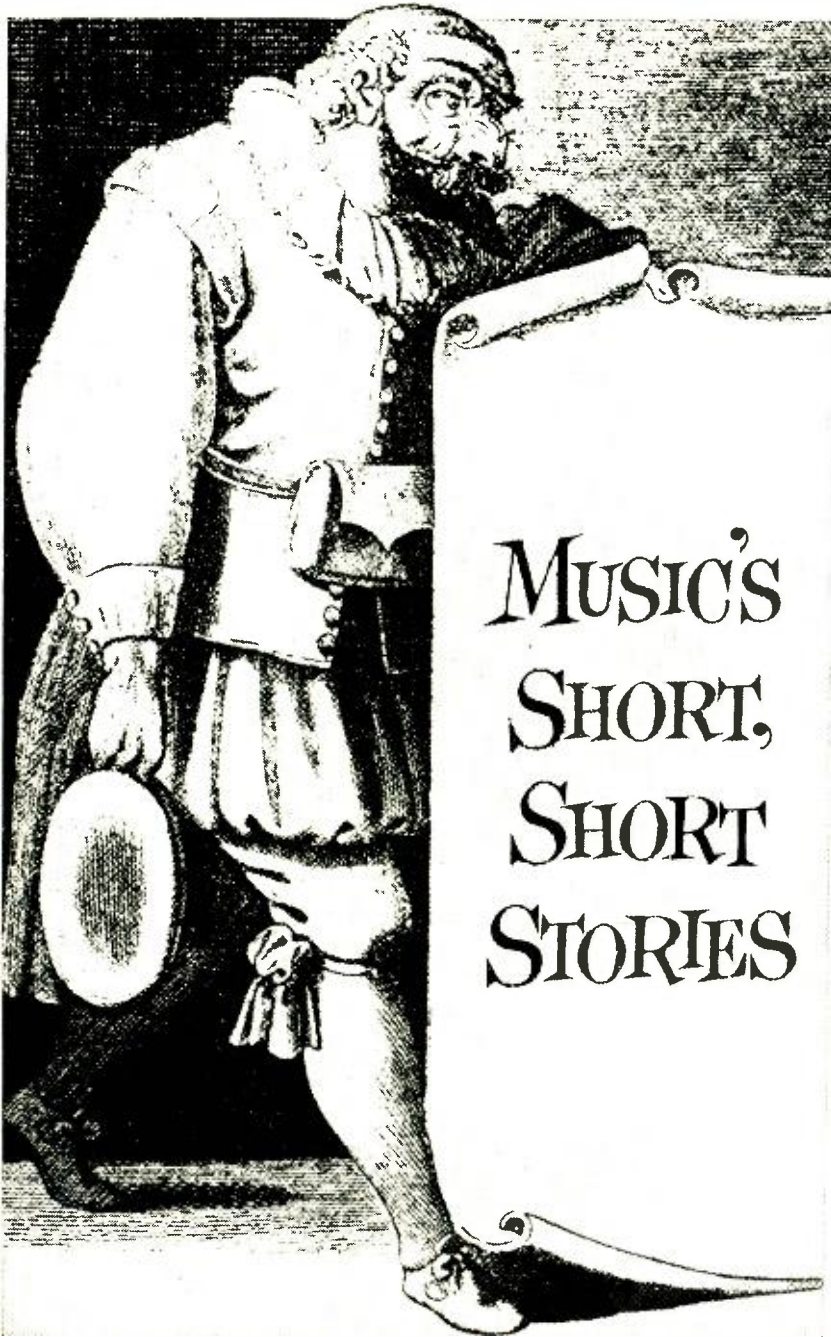
†Babadjanian: Trio in F-sharp minor

David Oistrakh, violin; Sviatoslav Knushevitsky, cello; Lev Oborin, piano (in the Mendelssohn); Arno Babadjanian, piano (in his own work).

COLOSSEUM CRLP 247. 12-in. \$3.98.

For "Authentic Hi-Fi" this is somewhat lacking, since the quality is not appreciably better than 78s of eight or nine years ago, and even the Oistrakh violin is unappealing when it is reproduced with a rough and, unfortunately, filterproof cast-iron top. 'Tis a pity, too, for the Mendelssohn is a fine example of chamber music in the early romantic vein, and the performance is warm and sympathetic—good enough, indeed, to compensate for many faults in the recording. The Babadjanian reminds one of Brahms crossed with Borodin until one reaches the final movement, when a Khachaturian saber dance takes over. The performance seems pretty good, with some very spectacular fiddling from Oistrakh; the recording here, apart from some wobbly piano tone, is better than in the Mendelssohn. R.C.M.

Continued on page 86



"Niccolò Barbieri and his book," from ITALIAN ACTORS OF THE RENAISSANCE, copyright 1930, Coward-McCann, Inc.

Some of the world's greatest music takes no longer in the telling than a popular song. Unlike a catchy new tune, however, *this* music ages like fine wine and is as caressing to the ear today as it was long, long ago.

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Among the newest additions to the Capitol library are a remarkably varied group of albums featuring such short selections. These are listed here to help you choose a Christmas "gift of music" for yourself, or for a valued friend.

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MUSIC'S SHORT, SHORT STORIES

L'ITALIA (works by Mascagni, Paganini, Tchaikovsky, Toselli & others) Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, cond. 8351

JOY TO THE WORLD! (traditional Christmas carols) Roger Wagner Chorale 8353

MILSTEIN MINIATURES (works by Vivaldi, Brahms, Stravinsky, Rimsky-Korsakov & others) Nathan Milstein, violin 8339

CONCERT PIANO ENCORES (works by Chopin, Strauss, Debussy, Schubert, Liszt, Rachmaninoff & others) Leonard Pennario, piano 8338

FROM THE ROMANTIC ERA (transcriptions of works by Mozart, Schumann, Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Grieg) Laurindo Almeida, guitar 8341

ON WINGS OF SONG (works by Schubert, Brahms, Bach-Gounod, Malotte & others) Dorothy Warenskjold, soprano 8333

GYPSY! (works by Brahms, Dvorak, Sarasate & others) Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, cond. 8342

CELLO COLOURS (works by Fauré, Ravel, Saint-Saëns, Mendelssohn, Dvorak & others) André Navarra, cello 18023

FOLK SONGS OF THE OLD WORLD Roger Wagner Chorale 8345

A SPANISH GUITAR RECITAL (works by Albeniz, Torroba, Tarrega, Granados & others) Maria Luisa Anido, guitar 18014

FIESTA! (works by Bizet, Delibes, Granados, Massenet & others) Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, cond. 8335

MODERN VIOLIN ENCORES (works by Bartok, Falla, Prokofiev & others) Pedro d'Andurain, violin 18010

GUITAR MUSIC OF LATIN AMERICA (works by Villa-Lobos, Barroso, Almeida & others) Laurindo Almeida, guitar 8321

FOLK SONGS OF THE FRONTIER Roger Wagner Chorale 8332



oped a new energy and assertiveness, and to have acquired an understanding that even the best is poor when not in its proper place. In this Schubert, and more in this Mozart, the new forcefulness has been used not to suppress or to overwhelm their hushed ecstasies, but to complement and redistribute them, without any corruptive effect on the refinement of their communion.

The new strength and decision may of course derive a good measure of their prominence from a more telling sound than any bestowed on the Quartetto Italiano before—in the Mozart equal to the very best reproduction hitherto obtainable of a string quartet. It seems true and it brings no discomfort. Definite in articulation, it is free of the dryness that so often accompanies a clean bite, and yet there is no intrusive reverberation.

By improbable chance, three records taken in succession from the Angel batch represented three categories of recording—orchestra, piano, quartet—on a level of

tranquil realism just about as high as we have found in records. They are Schumann's *Spring* Symphony, a trio of sonatas played by José Iturbi, and the Mozart Quartet No. 17. If this continues, comments on sonics will become superfluous. C.G.B.

MOZART: Serenade No. 13, in G ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"), K. 525
— See Haydn: *Symphony No. 94*.

MOZART: Sonatas for Piano: No. 4, in E-flat, K. 282; No. 11, in A ("Alla Turca"), K. 331
Variations on "Unser dummer Pöbel," K. 455

Kathryn Déguire, on the "Siena Piano-forte."

ESOTERIC ESP 3004. 12-in. \$5.95.

Usually a pianist if he can help it will not play second fiddle to anything, but here Miss Déguire, enthralled by the seductive voice of the remarkable instrument

she is playing, obviously restrains her own virtuosity to permit breath to the mellow old box resounding to her fingers. She will not curtail the development of the emergent bass, like a buttered harp, because no doubt she fears *lèse-majesté*; and urgency when it is required is supplied for the right hand by a treble like a feathered harpsichord. The style certainly fits the instrument—which may enforce it on anyone—nicely. C. G. B.

MOZART: Sonatas for Piano: No. 5, in G, K. 283; No. 6, in D, K. 284; No. 7, in C, K. 309

Reine Gianoli, piano.

WESTMINSTER 18220. 12-in. \$3.98.

There are other good versions of all three, but not on one record. Miss Gianoli is recording all the Mozart sonatas, and her second disk confirms the promise of the first. The beautifully poised piano sound and the arrangement of the sonatas in con-

Continued on page 90

RCA Victor's Mozart Memorial—Distinctions and Disappointments

THE bicentennial year has certainly seen no dearth of genuflections to Mozart, particularly in the recording field. The latest of these is a three-record album entitled *Homage to Mozart*, for which Mr. Kolodin has chosen from the Victor catalogue a group of "notable" performances recorded in pre-LP days. The earliest dates from 1907, the most recent from 1948. They range in scope from a song to a complete concerto. The first disk is devoted to arias and other vocal pieces, the second to instrumental and orchestral works, and the third to complete performances of the G minor Piano Quartet and the D minor Piano Concerto. The records are encased in a handsome album with annotations and beautifully printed pictorial illustrations.

The list of performers is a dazzling one, indeed, and some of the performances are equally dazzling. Here is the incredible "*Il mio tesoro*" of John McCormack, surely one of the greatest vocal recordings ever made. Here, too, are treasurable renditions by Selma Kurz ("*Deh vieni, non tardar*," sung here in German), by Destinn ("*Ach, ich fühl's*"), Vanni-Marcoux (the Serenade from *Don Giovanni*), Bori ("*In uomini*" from *Così fan tutte*), Pinza ("*O Isis und Osiris*," sung in Italian), Lotte Lehmann (*An Chloë*), and Ursula van Diemen (the *Laudate Dominum* from the *Vespers in C*, K. 339; the instrumental introduction is not included). Less impressive, indeed hardly in a class with these, it seems to me, are the other vocal selections: the Battistini-Corsi "*Là ci darem la mano*," in the 6/8 section of which Corsi can barely be heard; the Frieda Hempel Queen of the Night aria, sung in Italian and shorn of the accompanied recitative; the Schipa "*Dalla sua pace*," in which the tenor avoids the low notes; Erna Berger's incomplete *Et incarnatus est*, from the C minor Mass; and Dorothy Maynor's Alleluia, lacking in brilliance and assurance.

The descent along an inclined plane of quality continues in the second disk. This reviewer has no quarrel with most of the



John McCormack contributes a treasure.

performances on these two sides, but it seems a poor tribute to Mozart to break up sonatas and concertos and present only individual movements from them. Even if such a procedure were to be condoned, surely something more suitable could have been found than Thibaud's erratic performance of the first movement of the E-flat Violin Concerto—a work that may be only partly by Mozart. And the quality of Edwin Fischer's performance of the *Contradance in D*, K. 534, Clemens Krauss's Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Aubrey Brain's Horn Concerto No. 3 (first movement only) is not such as to transcend the distorted sounds of the old recordings. Also on this disk are the D minor Fantasia for piano, K. 397, played by Landowska; the second movement of the Violin Sonata in B-flat, K. 378, by Yehudi Menuhin; and the first and last movements of the A major Piano Sonata, K. 331, by Backhaus.

A sharp upturn takes place on the third disk. Here are two masterpieces performed complete and in a manner worthy of them. The piano quartet is played by Artur Schnabel and members of the Pro Arte Quartet, and the piano concerto by Bruno Walter doubling as soloist and as conductor

of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

Much careful thought evidently went into the choice of the pictures. There are about a dozen full-page illustrations, mostly of portions of Austrian cathedrals and palaces that were well known to Mozart. These are unhackneyed and beautifully reproduced. There are also many smaller illustrations, better known but varied and interesting.

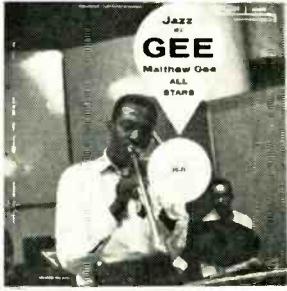
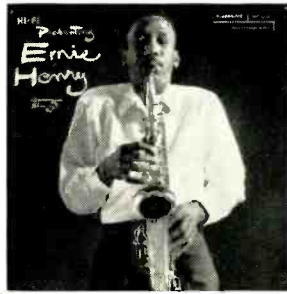
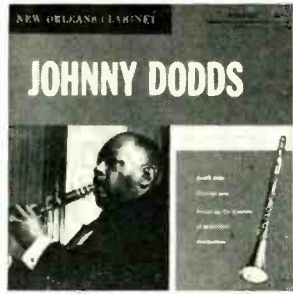
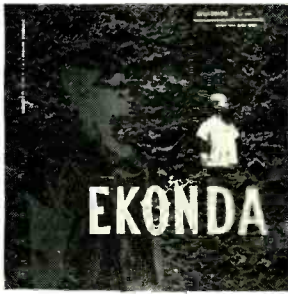
In view of the effort and expense that went into the production of this album, there are some surprising lapses. The one portrait of Mozart that was chosen, a full-page affair, is a fake, as is the smaller family-group silhouette on page 21. While the notes indicate that the horn concerto is performed complete and the label lists all three movements, only the first is played. In the two-column general introduction there are several curious statements. In a context designed to show how widely traveled Mozart was, we learn that "Handel made one great remove from Germany to England," which neatly ignores a little matter of a three-year stay in Italy. It is misleading to leave unqualified the statement: "it was a recognition of extraordinary abilities for a reputation to precede a twenty-one-year-old composer—as his did to Mannheim or to Paris." Mozart was remembered in these places, by those who did remember him, chiefly as a one-time child prodigy. And that he left behind, in Paris or Milan, "some seeds of influence" would be difficult to substantiate. Finally, this reader was startled to learn that "to a cultured Briton, Mozart is 'Mohzar'; . . . to a German, 'Mohzart'."

What does all this add up to? In the reviewer's opinion, an excellent idea imperfectly executed and grossly overpriced.

NATHAN BRODER

MOZART: "Homage to Mozart"

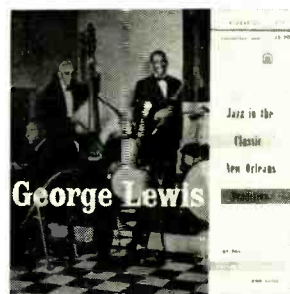
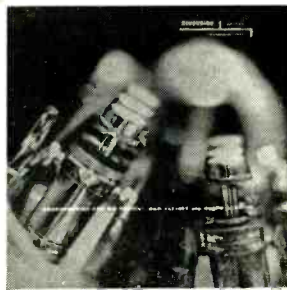
Records selected and commentary written by Irving Kolodin; album designed by Alfred Frankfurter and Eleanor C. Munro. RCA VICTOR LM 6130. Three 12-in. \$50.



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†Torroba: *Preludio in E; Sonatina in A; Nocturno in A minor; Burgalesa in F-sharp*

Julian Bream, guitar.

WESTMINSTER XWN 18137. 12-in. \$3.98.

Julian Bream's second guitar record is even more enchanting than his first, since all the material is wholly congenial to his deliberately paced, fastidiously colored style of performance. The Villa-Lobos preludes are extremely simple in content, saved from banality by the composer's sure handling of exotic colors and textures. Played in Mr. Bream's poetic, dreamily slow manner, they become both compelling and haunting.

The sixty-five-year-old Spanish composer Federico Moreno Torroba extended the range of the guitar, in a way, by composing for it works that had more line and form than the usual repertoire pieces. This can

be clearly seen in the beguiling sonatina, which has a classical cast while remaining with the modern Spanish guitar idiom. The romantic aura is not lost, yet the ideas are fresh. Like its predecessor, the disk is faultlessly engineered to the last squeak and twang. R. E.

VIVALDI: *Concertos: for Oboe and Strings, in D minor, Op. 8, No. 9; for Two Violins and Strings, in B-flat, P. 391; for Two Violins, Two Cellos, and Strings, in D, P. 188; for Bassoon and Strings, in E minor, P. 137*

Pierre Pierlot, oboe; Philippe Lamacque, Francis Oguse, violins; Claude Brion, Pierre Degenne, cellos; Paul Hongne, bassoon; Ensemble Instrumental Sinfonia, Jean Witold, cond.

LONDON TWV 91052. 12-in. \$4.98.

In some late baroque (as well as other)

music the composers' procedures, to anyone familiar with the style, are stereotyped. Every move is as predictable as in the fist fight between the marshal and the varmint in a television Western. It is interesting to observe how seldom this happens in Vivaldi, despite the profuseness of his output. Certainly it does not happen in any of these four works. If the composer sets off on a chain of sequences, something is bound to occur—melodically, rhythmically, or harmonically—before monotony has a chance to set in. Even in the bassoon concerto, which has its share of noodling, an expressive cantilena will break in before the noodles grow too long. The B-flat Concerto is unusually capricious; the D major Concerto healthy and vigorous. The fine oboe concerto is the only one of the four, as far as I know, that is available elsewhere on LP. Warm and full-bodied performances, with sound to match. N.B.

The Fat Knight and His Fellows Flourish in Angel's *Falstaff*

AS WAS to be expected, Herbert von Karajan's account of Giuseppe Verdi's *Falstaff* is one of surpassing refinement. This opera, fondly called a "connoisseur's opera," above all others needs a conductor who is keenly perceptive, touched to the quick by every possibility of nuance. In Angel's new release we have just that.

The present recording brings the number of available complete *Falstaffs* to four. A choice actually boils down to two, for this latest entry encounters only one serious rival—the historic Toscanini album, issued by RCA Victor.

There exists little doubt that Angel's new recording of Verdi's last opera is much the best from a technical standpoint. Its extremely sensitive clarity serves Von Karajan well, for this conductor thrives under conditions where delicacy and meticulous care for detail are brought into finely etched relief. As a case in point, effects in distance are the most successful thus far achieved.

Employing eight more minutes than does Toscanini in his traversal of this mercurial and miraculous score, Von Karajan emerges as a formidable rival to the Maestro by reason of his careful shaping of phrases and his awareness of balance and flickering details of orchestration, though he does not quite convey all the bluster and earthiness evoked by the baton of the Italian octogenarian.

Von Karajan also takes the brief episodes of the lovers and their arias, "*Dal labbro il canto estasiato vola . . .*" and "*Sul fil d'un soffio etesio*," more lyrically, more flexibly than does Toscanini. It is fortunate that he has in Anna Moffo and Luigi Alva two young singers whose breath supply seems apparently unending. The tenor aria is taken more slowly than I can ever remember having heard it, so that I actually became apprehensive for the set's Fenton. Needless fears! Young Signor Alva is the best Fenton within recent memory, and his beautifully fashioned aria becomes a really cherishable experience.

In Tito Gobbi, Von Karajan possesses a singing actor in the Maurel, Scotti,

Vanni-Marcoux tradition. At times, the voice sounds pretty wooden, especially in the higher, sustained passages, but Gobbi never fails to conjure up the vision of the fat knight; he is ever before you. The baritone has padded his voice and diction here, just as he would his costume in a stage performance. In passing, it should be stated that he cannot altogether make you forget Taddei's *Falstaff*, which was equally effective and vocally far more beautiful, but both these men-of-the-theater surpass Giuseppe Valdengo's (RCA Victor) pedestrian performance by a wide margin. As it is, Gobbi gives us a few deft touches that none of the others has vouchsafed thus far. Notice the somber



Tito Gobbi: a *Falstaff* "ever before you."

clouds he evokes—"Mondo ladro. Mondo rubaldo. Reo mondo!"—during his gloomy ruminations after his dunking in the Thames, or his biting *staccati* during the famous Honor Monologue. The celebrated and tiny arietta, "*Quando ero paggio del Duca di Norfolk*," becomes a little gem as performed by Gobbi and the conductor;

the tempo is right to a hair-splitting degree.

It seems a pity that Rolando Panerai's fine voice resembles Gobbi's so closely both in weight and color. Vocal contrast would have served to point up the long and amusing scene between Ford and Falstaff. Panerai sings well, especially the demanding "*E sogno? O realta?*," but I still cast my vote for Frank Guarrera (Toscanini's choice) in this particular role.

Now for the ladies. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, despite her occasionally German-sounding consonants, is a gay, extremely musicianly Alice Ford. She is not so Italian as either Herva Nelli (RCA) or Rosanna Carteri (Certa), but her singing carries a high polish that sets her apart. Anna Moffo brings us an obviously young Nannetta, very lovely in the episode of Windsor Park with its Watteau-like atmosphere, but sometimes guilty of excessive coyness that leads to a tendency to slur. Fedora Barbieri provides a big-voiced Dame Quickly in the Cloe Elmo manner, just as effective as her admirable predecessor's, which is saying a great deal; while Nan Merriman, who was the Mistress Meg of the Toscanini set, seems more assured and more relaxed here in the same role.

It is difficult to imagine a finer *Falstaff* than this one. From the opening bombastic measures, descriptive of its mountainous hero, to the wonderful final fugue, the performance radiates a sense of beauty and form. After considering all possible angles, I find it undoubtedly the best of those available—though I am glad I own the Toscanini, too. MAX DE SCHAUNSEE

VERDI: *Falstaff*

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s), Alice Ford; Anna Moffo (s), Nannetta; Nan Merriman (ms), Meg Page; Fedora Barbieri (c), Dame Quickly; Tito Gobbi (b), Falstaff; Rolando Panerai (b), Ford; Luigi Alva (t), Fenton; Tomaso Spataro (t), Dr. Caius; Renato Ercolani (t), Bardolph; Nicola Zaccaria (bs), Pistola. Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

ANGEL 3552 C/L. Three 12-in. \$15.98.

WEBER: *Der Freischütz*: excerpts

Victoria. Victoria. Victoria! (chorus); *Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal* (Kaspar); *Nein, länger trag ich. . . . Durch die Wälder* (Max); *Wie nahe mir die Schlummer. . . . Leise, leise* (Agathe); *Wir wunden dir den Jungfrau'kranz* (Bridesmaid, chorus); *Was gleich wohl auf Erden* (chorus).

Traute Richter (s), Agathe; Sonja Schöner (s), Bridesmaid; Sebastian Hauser (t), Max; Gerhard Frei (bs), Kasper. Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin Städtische Oper, Walter Lutze, cond.

†Flotow: *Martha*: excerpts

Mädchen, brav und treu, herbei (chorus); *Letzte Rose, wie magst du* (Martha; Lionel); *Schla'e wohl!* (quartet); *Ach, so fromm!* (Lionel); *Lasst mich euch fragen* (Plunkett); *Ma' der Himmel euch vergeben* (Act III finale).

Traute Richter (s), Martha; Annelies Westen (ms), Nancy; Herold Kraus (t), Lionel; Gerhard Frei (bs), Plunkett. Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin Städtische Oper, Hugo Diez, cond.

TELEFUNKEN TM 68028. 10-in. \$2.98.

Should anyone wonder how the Telefunken engineers have managed such a formidable "selection" from both *Der Freischütz* and *Martha* on a ten-inch single, the answer is: They haven't, really. For, with one side to an opera, the numbers tabulated are in most cases chopped to one-strophe titbits with orchestral joinings. As far as they go, the performances are solidly competent, and—for examples, in Traute Richter's Agathe and in the chorus work—sometimes more than that. The recording is clean and sharp; no texts, fairish notes. For the prospective Weberite, there are more worthwhile *Freischütz* singles; but so far there is no *Martha*-in-small except this. J. H. JR.

WEISGALL: *The Stronger*—See Copland: *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*.

More Briefly Noted

THE King of Instruments currently seems to be more than holding its own in the Bach repertoire on records. Among the better offerings is Epic's second volume (LC 3261) of organ works, which presents *Variations on "Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig,"* BWV 768; the Prelude and Fugue in C, BWV 531; and the Passacaglia in C minor, BWV 582. Anton Heiller's playing, while not very imaginative, is steady and skillful, and the recording is excellent. Angel's release (35368) of the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565, together with a number of the Fantasias and Preludes, is interesting mainly as a souvenir of the playing of Edouard Commette; the instrument on which he plays does justice neither to Bach nor to the organist. The young Phillip Steinhaus also is at a disadvantage, in this case by a serious blurring by echoes, in his performance of the Prelude and Fugue in D,

BWV 532, and Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C, BWV 564, on Boston B 700. This is particularly unhappy, since the recording not only marks the player's debut but also presents the first recording of Max Reger's extraordinarily interesting *Variations and Fugue on an Original Theme*, Op. 73. Even more unfortunate is M-G-M's offering (E 3365) of the Bach Concerto for Organ and Orchestra in D minor, BWV 1052, and in D major, BWV 1054, with Richard Ellsasser at the organ and the Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg under Hans-Jürgen Walthert. There seems no reason why Bach's harpsichord concertos should be played on an organ in the first place, and here the organ either drowns out the strings or drags behind them.

Not that "arrangements" do not have their own occasional validity. A case in point is the Beethoven Quintet for Oboe, Three Horns, and Bassoon, a reconstructed fragment, which, with the Trio for Piano,

Flute, and Bassoon and Oliver Shaw's merry *Little Suite*, appears on Unicorn 1024. The playing (by the Berkshire Woodwind Ensemble and assistant soloists) is routine on the Beethoven, pleasant on the Shaw, but the record has a genuine historical interest. Other transcriptions, offering tuneful music well played by the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra led by Giovanni di Bella, are the Corelli Suite for Strings (arr. Arbós) and a Rossini arrangement entitled *Sonata for Strings* (Telefunken LGM 65031). Telefunken does less well in its TM 68027 with a pair of transcriptions (by one Waldenmaier) of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies*: No. 1 (No. 14 for piano) and No. 4 (No. 2 for piano). Neither the pianist, Marie-Jeanne Kreitz, nor the Orchestre Symphonique de la Radiodiffusion Belge under Franz André, makes very much of these.

More painful is the sonic sabotage wreaked by Russian engineers on Colos-



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"**. . . recording and performances, excellent.**"—Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

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seum CRLP 231, which couples the Dvorak Cello Concerto with Mstislav Rostropovich, and Tchaikovsky's *Variations on a Rococo Theme*, for Cello and Orchestra, with Sviatoslav Knushevitsky—exquisite playing; wretched recording. The same trouble disqualifies CRLP 225: David Oistrakh in striking performances of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto and Bruch's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor.

Fine music and fine performances do, however, come to their reward on occasion. London has retrieved for us, (on DTL 93004/5), the withdrawn Westminster version of Honegger's *Le Roi David*, presented under the composer's own direction, with soloists (Janine Micheau, Janine Collard, and Pierre Mollet), chorus, and the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion

Française in a beautiful performance excellently recorded. This fresh and vigorous composition emerges as a work of real majesty.

A minor masterpiece still lacking better than acceptable representation is Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*. Vox PL 9960 offers an adequate version of his lovely work with Friederike Sailer and Hanne Münch and the Mainz Chamber Orchestra, but on the whole an earlier Vanguard release is to be preferred and the field is still open for a truly fitting re-creation. Pergolesi (if the composer was Pergolesi, and not Ricciotti, or someone else) also is represented on Telefunken TM 68048 with the brilliant Concertino for Strings, in G. This disk offers, too, Mozart's Symphony No. 32, in G, K. 318, formerly

heard on a Capital record, pleasantly played by Hans von Benda with the Berlin Chamber Orchestra, but less well recorded than the Leinsdorf version for Westminster or Karl Böhm's for Epic.

On the other hand, there are excellent recordings of unimportant music: Prokofiev's dull cantata *The Ugly Duckling*, Op. 18, the mildly pleasant children's piece *Summer Day*, Suite, Op. 65a, and the *Overture on Hebrew Themes*—a fine musical irony in its original version, but heavy-footed in an orchestral arrangement. François Ogčas and the Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées under André Jouve combine their talents in this, London DTL 93084. Prokofiev's dramatic and richly conceived *Romeo and Juliet* music, from the sound track of the film is, however, poorly recorded on Colosseum CRLP 10209/10.

Another not-entirely-satisfying recording is Anton Reicha's Quintets for Wind Instruments: No. 2, in E-flat, Op. 88; No. 2 and No. 9, in D, Op. 91, No. 3. This is the first LP (Oiseau-Lyre OL 50019) devoted to Beethoven's contemporary; and while nothing is memorable, everything is competent—including the players (flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal and his usual colleagues). A medley of Schubert (*Rosamunde*: Ballets No. 1 and 2; Entr'actes No. 1 and 3, D. 707; Symphony No. 5, in B-flat, D. 485) also falls in this class. Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt leading the Northwest German Radio Orchestra (Hamburg) presents a satisfactory interpretation; but the deep bass removes timbre and character from the higher instruments, and Capitol P 18021 must bow to other versions of this music.

Capitol has, however, issued another disk (P 8347), beautifully played and stunningly recorded, but again of totally uninteresting music—this time Ferdinand Grofé's *Mississippi Suite* and *Grand Canyon Suite*, trivial material developed along highly conventional lines, expertly conveyed by Felix Slatkin and the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra. Tedium music is also given an excellent recording on London International TW 91120 of Jean Absil's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra and *Homage à Leken*. The over-side offers Joseph Jongen's *Troisième Suite d'orchestre*—a piece "dans le style ancien," which seems to mean a collection of derivative exercises. A younger brother, Léon Jongen, also is represented on a London disk (TW 91121) in *Malaisie*, exceedingly commonplace musical impressions of the East Indies. This record presents on its other side Paul Gilson's *La Mer*, composed earlier than Debussy's opus and demonstrating the difference between talent and genius. Again, the recording and performance (Orchestre National de Belgique, Léon Jongen, cond.) are very good. Far otherwise is the recording in Colosseum's release (CRLP 10223) of Emil Gilels' playing of the Kabalevsky Third Piano Concerto and Lev Oborin's rendition of Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 2. Sonically this record could be vintage 1925; Mr. Gilels' playing deserves better, as probably does the Kabalevsky concerto, new to records. The same complaint, of inferior recording, can be made about one of the new disks in the Louisville subscription series (LOU-56-5). At least one would

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like to hear a better version of the *Serenata Concertante*, by the Chilean composer Juan Orrego-Salas—a brilliant and exhilarating work, though conservative in its harmonic idiom. The Concerto for Piano and Orchestra by Robert Muczynski has little importance, but the work which completes this disk, Harold Shapero's *Credo*, serene and luminous, leaves one doubly regretting the deficiencies of the engineering.

And—to note briefly but buoyantly—Westminster has issued—or re-issued—a number of single disks for followers of Sir Adrian Boult, who conducts the Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra in Brahms's Symphony No. 1 and Symphony No. 3, both available earlier only in the album of complete orchestral music; Liszt's *Totentanz*, with Edith Farnadi; and William Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, with Dennis Noble, baritone (XWN 18104, XWN 18194, XWN 18242, XWN 18253, respectively).

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

IRMA KOLASSI: *Song Recital*

Ravel: *Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques*; *Chansons madécasses*. A. Scarlatti: *Toglietemi la vita ancor*, from *Il Pompeo*; *Se Florindo è fedele*, from *La donna ancora è fedele*. Falconieri: *Vezzosity e care pupillette*. Pergolesi: *Stizzoso, mio stizzoso*, from *La Serva Padrona*; *Se tu m'ami*. Handel: *Ab, mio cor*, from *Alcina*. Paisiello: *Chi vuol la Zingarella*, from *I Zingari in Fiera*. Caccini: *Amarilli, mia bella*.

Irma Kolassi, mezzo-soprano; Jacqueline Bonneau, piano; Geoffrey Gilbert, flute; William Pleeth, cello; André Collard, piano (in the *Chansons madécasses*).

LONDON LL 1425. 12-in. \$3.98.

This seems to be a mixture of old and new recordings. Ravel's Greek songs formerly shared a ten-inch disk with some other Greek and French songs, and five of the Italian songs (*Vezzosity e care pupillette*; *Se Florindo è fedele*; *Ab, mio cor*; *Chi vuol la Zingarella*; *Amarilli, mia bella*) were formerly in a program of lieder and old Italian airs. The Greek mezzo-soprano's luscious voice and superior musical intelligence give distinction to anything she sings, but she does not seem to have the temperament to project deep involvement in music. I find her most successful in Ravel's fine settings of Greek songs, which she sings in Greek and for which she has been deservedly praised already. The *Chansons madécasses* lack the kind of earthiness they should and did get from Madeleine Grey, but in other respects Miss Kolassi's performances of these are as good as any on microgroove. The ever-lovely Italian songs and arias, on the other hand, demand a volatility in the vocal line that they do not get here. Miss Bonneau remains one of the best accompanists to be heard on records. R.E.

LITTLE GAELIC SINGERS OF COUNTY DERRY: *Irish Folk Songs and Ballads*

The Dawning of the Day: The Spanish Lady; Sweet Babe, a Golden Cradle Holds Thee; The Next Market Day: My Singing Bird; Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms: Eileen Og; Let Mr. Maguire Sit Down; The Bard of Armagh: Eileen Aroon; Kitty of Coleraine; The Palatine's Daughter: Oh, Come to the Hedgerows: Hail, Glorious Saint Patrick. Brahms: *Lullaby*.

Little Gaelic Singers of County Derry, James McCafferty, cond. Michael McWilliams, baritone.

DECCA DL 9876. 12-in. \$3.98.

Nazareth House, an orphanage for girls in Derry, Ireland, is the source of this latest European children's choir to come to the attention of Americans—through this record and through the group's current tour of this country. (Orphanages and children's choirs often seem inseparable—the Obernkirchen group and the Little Singers of Paris each support one.) The Little Gaelic Singers include twenty-six girls and two boys who make very attractive sounds under the relaxed but discriminating direction of Mr. McCafferty. The array of delightful Irish folk songs and ballads on this disk—it includes some beauties like *The Bard of Armagh*—is well within the technical grasp of the youngsters so that the performances are comfortable and expert. A good deal of

credit for the disk's attractiveness and avoidance of aural monotony goes to Mr. McWilliams, whose sturdy voice and genial style are heard in half the choral numbers and in two solos. Only a couple of songs are sung in Gaelic, including Brahms's *Lullaby*. R.E.

WITOLD MALCUZYNSKI: *Encores*

Debussy: *La cathédrale engloutie*. Rachmaninoff: *Prelude in G-sharp minor*, Op. 32, No. 12; *Prelude in G*, Op. 32, No. 5. Chopin: *Mazurka in A minor*, Op. 68, No. 2; *Valse in E minor*, Op. post.; *Valse in C-sharp minor*, Op. 64, No. 2. Prokofiev: *March from The Love for Three Oranges*. Szymanowski: *Etude in B-flat minor*, Op. 4, No. 3. Paderewski: *Cracovienne fantastique*, from *Humoresques de Concert*, Op. 14, No. 6. Scriabin: *Etude in C-sharp minor*, Op. 42, No. 5; *Etude in D-sharp minor*, Op. 8, No. 12.

Witold Malcuzyński, piano.

ANGEL 35348. 12-in. \$4.98.

In view of his recordings of major works, it may be unkind to call this the best of Mr. Malcuzyński's releases, but that it is. This Polish pianist tends to overpersonalize his interpretations, and in larger forms this tendency has been decidedly unfortunate. In the small-format works—they are not necessarily small in content—one can better enjoy Mr. Malcuzyński's splendid

Music for Marching Musketeers



Louis XIV

A DELIGHTFUL collection of instrumental music, most of it written for various occasions at which Louis XIV was present, has found its way into the little-publicized London International list. It is not all dinner music, despite the general title given it here: some of it is military music, some of it dances, and the Couperin is a trio sonata. Two of the pieces—the Philidor and the Lully *March of the King's Musketeers*—are for timpani alone. The rest (including *La Steinkerque*, which is orchestrated by the conductor) are for a typical orchestra of the time.

All of this is elegant stuff; and the marches, particularly, are recommended to that university director whose band paraded around between halves of a football game

the other day playing a wooden arrangement of . . . the *Nutcracker Suite*! The greatest purely musical interest resides in the works by Couperin and LaLande, but the other pieces, with their rousing fanfares, make a brave show. If Louis actually danced the *passepied* and the final air of the LaLande excerpts, as is indicated in their titles, he must have been a sprightly old boy. And one wonders whether the noble pieces by LaLande had the same relation to the quality of the King's food as the treacle poured out by Muzak has to the food it accompanies in our restaurants. The *Lully March of the Turenne Regiment*, by the way, is based on a tune that Bizet employed two centuries later in his *L'Arlesienne* music.

The performances are lively and polished—a special word of commendation is due the excellent trumpeter, Roger Delmotte—and the recorded sound is sumptuous. NATHAN BRODER

COLLEGIUM MUSICUM DE PARIS:

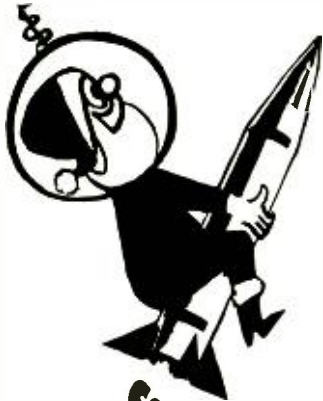
Symphonies et fanfares pour les Soupers du Roy

Mouret: *Suite de Symphonies*, No. 1; Couperin: *La Steinkerque*; Lully: *Marche des Mousquetaires du Roy*; *Marche des Mousquetaires gris*; *Fanfares pour le Carrousel de Monseigneur de 1686*; *Marche du Régiment de Turenne*; LaLande: *Symphonies pour les Soupers du Roy*; Philidor: *Marche à quatre timbales pour le Carrousel de Monseigneur de 1685*.

Collegium Musicum de Paris, Roland Douatte, dir.

LONDON TWV 91092. 12-in. \$4.98.

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tone and technique and even his fondness for much rubato, which gets out of hand in longer works. The Szymanowski, Paderewski, and Scriabin items are novelties of a sort—all worthy works deserving of more than "encore" status. Mr. Malczynski infuses them with personal warmth as well as power. Oddly enough, he views the Debussy prelude with an impersonal eye, which results in a first-rate version, beautifully tinted and deep-toned. R.E.

GEORGE MARAN: *Song recital*

Vaughan Williams: *On Wenlock Edge*. Schubert: *Ständchen*. Beethoven: *Ich liebe Dich*. Brahms: *Minnelied*. Tchaikovsky: *None but the Lonely Heart*. Grieg: *I Love Thee*. Massenet: *Elégie*. Schumann: *Widmung*.

George Maran, tenor; London String Quartet; Ivor Newton, piano.
LONDON LL 1406. 12-in. \$3.98.

George Maran's recording of Vaughan Williams' early but extraordinary song cycle, *On Wenlock Edge*, appears on the heels of Alexander Young's for Westminster. Mr. Maran's sweet voice is slightly thinner, drier, and breathier than Mr. Young's, but it moves more smoothly; his style is more personal, less forthright. The ensembles supporting the singers are equally accomplished, with Westminster furnishing better balance all around. The buyer cannot go wrong with either performance. However, on the other side of the London disk are thrice-familiar lieder, sensitively sung to be sure, but not so well as to add to our knowledge of them. Westminster wisely filled its disk with more Vaughan Williams songs. R.E.

BOSTON POPS: *Waltzes by the Strauss Family*

Johann Strauss II: *Where the Citrons Bloom*; *One Thousand and One Nights*; *Roses from the South*. Josef Strauss: *Secret*

And Now We Know What Ike Likes

IT IS NOW, technically, too late to make a recorded historical document of a United States President performing the *Missouri Waltz*. But RCA Victor has managed to make a bit of parallel, if not precisely equivalent, history.

The Eisenhower interest in music was not publicly appreciated until, last year, the President had his heart attack. Confined to Denver's Fitzsimmons Army Hospital, he needed diversion. On a plea relayed from Mrs. Eisenhower, WGMS, Washington's FM good music station, to which he had been a regular listener, came to the rescue with magnetic tapes of some of its recordings. This year, when the President was sent to Washington's Walter Reed Hospital by ileitis, WGMS again proffered its aid. A direct line carried music, specially compiled, soothing and commercial-free, to the Eisenhower bedroom.

At this juncture M. Robert Rogers, onetime O. S. S. agent, WGMS president, and currently executive director of an organization known as the Committee of the Arts and Sciences for Eisenhower, conceived an idea. He consulted with Litman Danziger, proprietor of a Washington record store, and with a key White House personality, one Sherman Adams, regular National Symphony-goer. Mr. Danziger, on long distance, broached the matter to his friend George R. Marek, of RCA Victor. And in three record-setting weeks Arthur Fiedler of Boston was journeying southward to complete the sequence with proper ceremony.

Mr. Rogers' brainstorm? It was to put some of Mr. Eisenhower's favorite music on a record, and this was what Mr. Marek did and what Mr. Fiedler handed to the President, and what the President's fellow citizens can now acquire in the record shops.

Mr. Eisenhower's "favorites" were picked by the President indirectly. Mr. Rogers deduced most of them from requests emanating from the two hospitals. In Denver the President wanted specifically Bach's *Sheep May Safely Graze*, less spe-

cifically music of Brahms and Beethoven. From Walter Reed there were requests for music by Johann Strauss, Gershwin, a Mendelssohn symphony, and the whole of *La Traviata*. The theme song from *High Noon*, celebrated Western movie, was chosen because, as related in the recent (authorized) volume by newsman Robert J. Donovan, the Chief Executive went around whistling it for months. (Eventually, according to Mr. Rogers, subordinates lodged a respectful protest and won a reprieve.)

So much for historical developments. This isn't an "authorized" record, for the President did not give its contents his advance approval. It isn't even an original one, since Victor pulled all the contents from its files. But the quality of both selections and performance represents a respectable, even impressive, level of taste; the project may have been politically useful (Mr. Rogers, in advance, did not rule out this pre-election possibility); and it certainly cannot have harmed the causes of international relations, private enterprise, or good music.

JAMES G. DEANE

THE PRESIDENT'S FAVORITE MUSIC

Bach-Stokowski: *Sheep May Safely Graze* (Stokowski & orch.). Beethoven: *Coriolan Overture* (BSO, Munich). Verdi: *La Traviata*, Act II; *Di Provenza il Mar* (Warren, Montoux, Rome orch.). J. Strauss, Jr.: *The Bat*: Overture (Reiner & orch.). Gershwin: *Porgy and Bess* (symphonic synthesis) (Fiedler, Boston Pops). Spiritual: *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands* (Marian Anderson, Rupp). Tiomkin-Washington: *High Noon* (*Do Not Forsake Me*) (Al Goodman & orch.). Mendelssohn: *Fingal's Cave Overture* (Chicago Sym., Reiner). Bach-Stokowski: *We All Believe in One God* (Stokowski & orch.).

RCA VICTOR LM 2071. 12-in. \$3.98.

Attractions; Music of the Spheres. Eduard Strauss: *Doctrines.*

Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 2028. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is not the *echt Strauss* one hears in Vienna. The innumerable expressive changes of pace of that style are replaced by a firm and regular beat, and the orchestral sound is solid and boldly colored. Personally, I find these readings enjoyable in their own terms. The broad melodic lines are admirably stated, and the Boston orchestra's virtuosity makes for undeniable elegance, only slightly dimmed, now and again, by excessive reverberation. R.C.M.

ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF: *Songs You Love*

Traditional: *Drink To Me Only with Thine Eyes.* Martini: *Plaisir d'amour.* Mendelssohn: *On Wings of Song.* Dvorak: *Songs My Mother Taught Me.* Hahn: *Si mes vers avaient des ailes.* Tchaikovsky: *None but the Lonely Heart.* Jensen: *Marmelundes Lütchen.* Grieg: *Ich liebe Dich; Farmyard Song.* Sibelius: *Schiff, Schiff, säusle; Schwarze Rosen.* Strauss: *Wiegenlied.* Wolf: *In dem Schatten meiner Locken; Elfenlied.* Swiss folk songs: *O du liebs Ängeli; Gsätzli.*

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Gerald Moore, piano.
ANGEL 35383. 12-in. \$4.98.

The "you" in the title of this record must refer to Miss Schwarzkopf's most ardent admirers. They are the only people whose "love" might encompass Sibelius' *Black Roses* and Grieg's *I Love Thee* at the same time, merely because she is singing them. Carping aside, Miss Schwarzkopf's exquisite voice and personality give a special radiance to any song she touches, and only overfamiliarity has deprived some of these songs of their original interest. Mr. Moore is his incomparable self at the piano. R.E.

IZLER SOLOMON

Bloch: *Concerto Grosso No. 2.* Richter: *Lament.* Anheil: *Serenade.*

M-G-M String Orchestra, Guilet Quartet, Izler Solomon, cond.
M-G-M E 3422. 12-in. \$3.98.

A collection of unusual interest, and one not harmed in the slightest by its gorgeous recording. Bloch's first *Concerto Grosso*, composed in 1925, is one of his most celebrated works. The second *Concerto Grosso*, which dates from 1952, is relatively little known, however, even though it is quite as powerful as the first concerto and is somewhat similar to it in general texture. It uses a solo string quartet, here played by the Guilets, in place of the piano solo of its famous forerunner. The *Lament* by the young American composer Marga Richter is a short piece of great eloquence, expressiveness, and harmonic subtlety. The Anheil *Serenade* manages to be witty without being insubstantial. A.F.

Britten: *Sinfonietta.* Berger: *Serenade Concertante.* Bloch: *Four Episodes.* Pinkham: *Concertant.*

Various ensembles, Izler Solomon, cond.
M-G-M E 3245. 12-in. \$3.98.

A varied anthology of modern works for chamber orchestra, superbly recorded and beautifully played. The Britten is that composer's Opus 1, written when he was eighteen years old. I think it is the best piece by Benjamin Britten I have heard. It is a three-movement fabric of motifs manipulated with an almost Schoenbergian complexity, but the involvements of its tissue do not damp the composer's spirits; they serve, however, to give the music an exceptional degree of integrity and character. In his notes, Edward Cole observes that "Britten passed quickly from such constructivist tendencies." Too bad.

The Britten is performed by the M-G-M Chamber Ensemble. The string players of this group are joined by Robert Brink,

violinist, Claude Jean Chiasson, harpsichordist, and an unnamed celesta player for the delightful *Concertant* of Daniel Pinkham, a "study in sonorities" of the lightest and wittiest kind. This Boston composer does not seem previously to have entered the LP lists.

Ernest Bloch's *Four Episodes* (Knickerbocker Chamber Players; William Masselos, piano) is an undistinguished miscellany of character pieces entitled *Humoresque Macabre, Obsession, Calm, and Chinese.* Arthur Berger's *Serenade Concertante* (Brandeis Festival Orchestra) is a short work, very exacting, disciplined, and vital in its effect. A.F.

TENNESSEE ERNIE FORD: *Hymns*

Who at My Door is Standing; Rock of Ages; Softly and Tenderly; Sweet Hour

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of Prayer; My Task; Let the Lower Lights Be Burning; The Ninety and Nine; The Old Rugged Cross; When They Ring the Golden Bells; In the Garden; Ivory Palaces.

Tennessee Ernie Ford, baritone with guitar; Orchestra and Chorus, Jack Fascinato, cond. CAPITOL T 756. 12-in. \$3.98.

A regular feature of Tennessee Ernie Ford's daily television show is what he calls the singing of a song of faith. The "songs of faith," for the most part, are genuine old Gospel hymns, and of such is this collection composed. The hymns themselves, to some of us, bring back nostalgic memories—of singing around the pump organ in the front parlor, of preaching and eating and singing on the grounds of the old country church. They are real Americana, worth cherishing.

Tennessee Ernie has grown, along with

his popularity, in the years since he was a member of the "Grand Old Opry" in Nashville. The raw bumpiousness has yielded to an easy natural graciousness, and it is obvious that he takes himself seriously, especially at work like this.

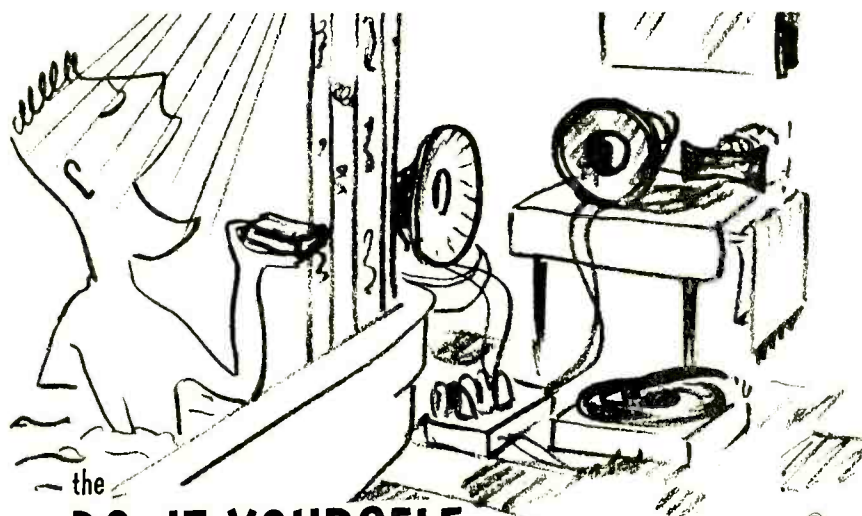
Although some of the arrangements are rather elaborate, the chorus sings with sincerity and enjoyment, and the soloist's naturally musical voice is so persuasive that one wonders if Ernie is trying to convert us all over again with *Golden Bells* and *Ivory Palaces*. Worse, I dare say, could befall us. H. S. WALLACE

ROGER VOISIN: *The Modern Age of Brass*

Roger Voisin and his brass ensemble. UNICORN UNLP 1031. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is one of the series of recordings

issued under the rubric "Music at M. I. T." The sound is magnificent, and the playing, by members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, is even better. Since the works involved are all very good, what results is a singularly engaging disk. Voisin and his colleagues present four pieces. The first is Ingolf Dahl's *Music for Brass*, a serious and wonderfully sonorous composition written in the days when Dahl was strongly under Stravinsky's influence. The second is Hindemith's *Morgenmusik*, an affectionate and noble tribute to the German "tower sonata" of the seventeenth century. Third is a lively, generally satirical *Brass Suite* by the late Nicolai Berzowski. Fourth and last is the vigorous, expertly organized Quintet in B-flat by Robert Sanders, professor of music at Brooklyn College, who seems to make his debut on records with this release. A.F.



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Concord 3001—Long Play 12" Recording... \$3.98

BEETHOVEN: Sonata No. 30 in E Major, Op. 109.
Sonata No. 31 in A Flat Major, Op. 110.
Egon Petri, one of the world's great pianists, performs two of Beethoven's later sonatas, written the same time as the Ninth Symphony and "Missa Solemnis." These works occupy the same position among piano sonatas that the last quartets do in quartet literature. Mr. Petri's performances of these sonatas have been acclaimed on his world-wide tours.
Concord 3002—Long Play 12" Recording—\$3.98

EMILE MARTIN: "Sacred Mass For the Kings of France"
ANTONIO LOTTI: "Crucifixus a cinq"
Tenor solo, three trumpets, two organs and full chorus.
R.P. Emile Martin perpetrated the cleverest French musical hoax since Berlioz attributed "L'Enfance du Christ" to another composer. Martin wrote "The Sacred Mass For The Kings of France" and performed it as a long lost work of Etienne Moulinié, a 17th century composer. After it was hailed as the work of a genius, and a musical "find" of our times, Martin confessed that he was the composer and had written it in his spare time.
Jean Giraudeau, tenor; Marie-Claire Alain, Marie-Louise Girod, organists; Messrs. Haneux, Bastardy, Pirot, trumpets; Les Chanteurs de Saint-Eustache, chorus; R.P. Emile Martin, conductor.
Concord 4001—Long Play 12" Recording—\$4.98

"GALA PERFORMANCE"

Fourteen favorite opera arias and duets performed with members of the Metropolitan Opera Association. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Jurgen-Walther.

MOZART: Don Giovanni: Brindisi
VERDI: Il Trovatore: Miserere
ROSSINI: Barber of Seville: Largo al factotum
PUCCINI: Madama Butterfly: Un bel di vedremo
LEONCAVALLO: I Pagliacci: Vesti la Giubba
PUCCINI: La Boheme: Musetta's Waltz Song
VERDI: Il Trovatore: Ai nostri monti
VERDI: Aida: Celeste Aida
BIZET: Carmen: Seguidilla
GOUNOD: Faust: Le Veau d'Or
ST. SAENS: Samson et Dalila: Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix
VERDI: Rigoletto: La donna e mobile
MOZART: Don Giovanni: La ci darem la mano
BIZET: Carmen: Toreador Song

Performed by Albert DaCosta, Sandra Warfield, James McCracken, Louis Sgarro, Frank Valentino, Brenda Lewis, James Pease, Barbara Troxell, Rudolph Schock, Mary Henderson, Lois Hunt, Valeria Ruggeri.

Concord 3003—Long Play 12" Recording—\$3.98

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More Briefly Noted

IF not everyone loves a parade, apparently a goodly proportion of record buyers do; and for them a rousing collection of band music is on the market. Of particular interest is Angel's release (35371) of the Carabinieri Band of Rome, presenting a selection of pieces from Verdi and Rossini, as well as several national anthems and marches. In the music of their native country the Carabinieri probably will not be surpassed (understandably, they do less well with the *Stelle e Stresse* of Giovanni Filippo Sousa); in general a colorful and expert group of musicians, splendidly recorded. More indigenous band music can be found on *Marches for Twirling*, played by the Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble, under Frederick Fennell—again a first-rate band, well recorded. And for those who want something different, and uniquely British, there is *Men of Brass* on London LL 1456, which presents the Massed Brass Bands of Foden's Motor Works, Fairey Aviation, and the Morris Motor Works—conducted by Harry Mortimer—in a potpourri ranging from *The Whistler and his Dog* to Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.

Others, interested in music new or infrequently recorded, will be glad to know of *Modernists*—four compositions by Walter Piston, Randall Thompson, Vittorio Rieti, and Joseph Jongen, played by the Berkshire Woodwind Ensemble and assisting artists (Unicorn UNLP 1029). The music is not really "modern" in any significant sense, but it is stimulating and enjoyable and the recording is good. Contemporary composers (Bozza, Hindemith, and Ibert), along with Beethoven, as represented by the Sextet in E-flat, Op. 71, and Haydn's *Field-Partita* in B-flat, also appear on Columbia's presentation (ML 5093) of the Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet. The living come off much better than the deceased, in a recording beautifully played but marred by some echoic seepage.

Miscellanies continue to offer their delights, of which melodious frivolity is the distinguishing mark of *La Vie en Paris*, wherein Marcel Cariven conducts the Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Lamoureux in familiar excerpts from

Offenbach and in unfamiliar and most welcome selections from the operettas of Hervé. Stylish direction and finished performances on this Grand Award disk, G.A. 33-401. Another collection of predominantly French pieces, this time Franck, Poulenc, Saint-Saëns, and Chaminade, is on **Two-Piano Recital** (Tiffany T 2000) by Rudolf Ganz and Parthenia Vogelback, in forthright, clean playing. Another of the best of these "collections" is the **Montilla Sampler** (Montilla FM 79), on which the Orquesta de Camara de Madrid under Daniel Montorio plays examples of every type of Spanish music, in authentic interpretations of real artistic merit.

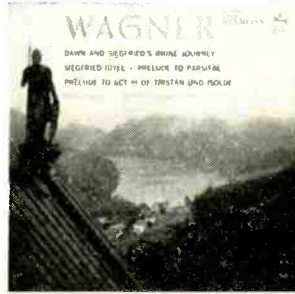
In current miscellanies featuring virtuoso performers, results vary. Laurindo Almeida's **From the Romantic Era** is, by and large, disappointing. These guitar transcriptions of nineteenth-century music (with the notable exceptions of Schumann's *Traumerei* and Grieg's *Waltz, Op. 12, No. 2*) are not convincing, and Almeida's performance on the one nontranscribed piece, the *Sor Variations on a Theme from Mozart's "The Magic Flute,"* is cautious and colorless. Much more successful is Capitol's presentation (P 18025) of the cellist Andre Navarra, excellently accompanied by Jacqueline Dussol on the piano, in an unhackneyed program of encore pieces called **Cello Colours**. The highlight is the Paganini *Theme and Variations*, here set forth brilliantly on the A string of the cello. Beautiful playing can also be heard on a collection of potboilers sensitively performed by the violinist Alfredo Campoli with Eric Gritton on the piano—**Encores**, London LL 1461. And that virtuoso of violin virtuosi, David Oistrakh, is currently represented on two labels featuring his talents, **Encores** (Angel 35354) and **The Genius of David Oistrakh** (Colosseum CRLP 249), in both records accompanied by Vladimir Yampolsky. Both disks offer Kodály's *Three Hungarian Folk Dances* and Suk's *Love Song, Op. 7, No. 1*, a circumstance which makes particularly conspicuous the sonic superiority of the Angel. Oistrakh is at his suave and sensitive best.

Adherents of vocal music are offered a bargain in London's rerecording on LL 1329 of two ten-inch diskfuls of songs by Debussy, Brahms, and Wolf, sung by Suzanne Danco, whose highly polished artistry is a pleasure to listen to. The tenor Claude Rhea is also an attractive singer with good musical sense, but the devotional music he sings on **Sacred Masterpieces**—with the Choir of Calvary Baptist Church, New York and Clifford Tucker at the organ—does not always reach its full impressiveness in church performances (Word 4009); Handel and Haydn particularly suffer. Religious music of a different kind receives an unpretentious, musically and emotionally satisfying, performance on **Grailville Sings**—a collection of Advent and Christmas music sung *a cappella* by the Grailville Community College Singers (Audio-Fidelity AFLP 1820). This group of young women singers (who, incidentally, themselves prepared many of the arrangements, translations, and texts) offer a range from Gregorian chants to traditional carols to Brahms—and their efforts are wholly admirable.

MERCURY



LIVING PRESENCE



WAGNER Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey; Siegfried Idyll; Prelude to Parsifal; Prelude to Act III of Tristan and Isolde. Detroit Symphony, Paray conducting. MG50107



PINOCCHIO Fantasy Variations; **ROGERS** Leaves from "The Tale of Pinocchio"; **TRIGGS** The Bright Land. Eastman-Rochester Orchestra, Hanson conducting. MG50114



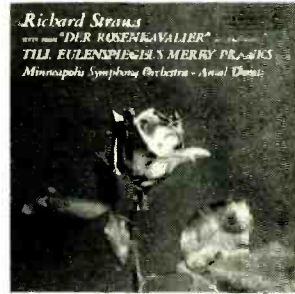
CHRISTMAS CAROLS in HI-FI. Carlos Salzedo, harp. MG50116



MOZART Eine Kleine Nachtmusik; Symphony in C Major ("Linz"). London Symphony Orchestra, Dorati conducting. MG50121



TCHAIKOVSKY 1812 Overture (original scoring with cannon and bells); Capriccio Italien. Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati conducting. MG50054



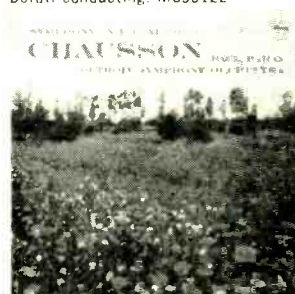
Richard Strauss Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks; Suite from "Der Rosenkavalier." Minneapolis Orchestra, Dorati conducting. MG50099



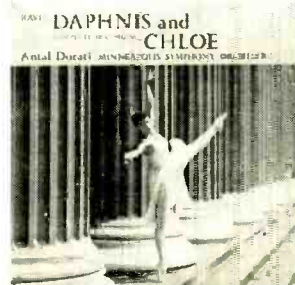
ELGAR Enigma Variations; **PURCELL-BARBIROLI** Suite for Strings. Halle Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli conducting. MG50125



BORODIN Polovetsian Dances (with Chorus); **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV** Le Coq d'Or Suite. London Symphony Orchestra, Dorati conducting. MG50122



CHAUSSON Symphony in B-flat. Detroit Symphony, Paray conducting. MG50108



RAVEL Daphnis and Chloé (complete recording). Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati conducting. MG50040

THE SPOKEN WORD

JACQUES BARZUN: *The Care and Feeding of the Mind*

A lecture, delivered by Jacques Barzun. SPOKEN ARTS 713. 12-in. \$4.98.

In a series entitled "Distinguished Teachers," Spoken Arts is presenting "today's most vital educational leaders" offering "stimulating thought-provoking discussions" in a number of fields. On this record Mr. Jacques Barzun, Professor of History and Dean of the Graduate Faculties of Columbia University, delivers a discourse on the exercise of the mind, with a view to the intellectual pleasure which can be derived from the "Mind at Play." Taking his point of departure from the apparent conflict between the current genuine concern with the problems of education and the contemporary suspicion of the "egghead," Mr. Barzun suggests as essential means of training the mind the cultivation of "attention," of "resilience," and of "fertility" (by which he means the qualities of awareness and imagination). For anyone who enjoys being lectured at, here is a pleasant and urbane speech from the rostrum. J. G.

SAMUEL BECKETT: *Waiting for Godot*

Bert Lahr, Gogo; E. G. Marshall, Didi; Kurt Kaszner, Pozzo, *et al.* COLUMBIA O2L-328. Two 12-in. \$9.98.

Waiting for Godot, the work of Samuel Beckett, James Joyce's former secretary, was originally written in French and produced in Paris in 1953. For its New York production in 1956, Michael Myerberg sought to solicit the support of the intellectual playgoer. How far short he fell of reaching this audience was made clear by the play's limited run. Now Goddard Lieberman's recorded production will give many an opportunity to hear a drama which has been damned, jeered at, and extravagantly praised by critics both in Europe and the United States, in a presentation which enlists the talents of the New York cast and of that unorthodox American playwright, William Saroyan, in the writing of a commentary on Beckett's dramaturgy. Mr. Saroyan states that he has read it, and that he likes it. Although I did not have the privilege of seeing Mr. Myerberg's audacious and courageous production, I echo Mr. Saroyan's sentiments here, by stating that I have heard it, and I too like it.

The play concerns two tramps who are waiting, seemingly suspended in time and space, in a town dump for the arrival of Godot, a symbolic figure who never appears. Life is symbolized as a disenchanting circus, a mean spectacle of futility; yet to Beckett, humanity's spirit is unconquerable, unquenchable. The two tramps stand and wait; they endure the harrowing nightmare of human suffering and disillusionment. It is not difficult to read further meanings in the play's allegory, for the characters are not real people, but

rather, representations of humanity's attitudes toward life. In fact a major weakness of the play's appeal to an American theater audience is that its structure is, if anything, too simple. It appears profound, but is in reality deceptively simple in its style and meaning.

Without the visual aids of the theater

—without a setting of a city dump or a T. S. Eliot concept of a wasteland—the haunting mood of the play is dramatized by the actors' voices. Bert Lahr's croaky utterance catches the anguished quality of an ignorant but suffering humanity, in a performance memorable in contemporary theater. Kurt Kaszner, as the tyrannical

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, ORTHOcoustic. 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; Clet; 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
Audio Fidelity	500R	13.7	No. 901-905: 500, 16
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: 400, 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
Lyrichord	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	400	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.

master of man, gives a vocal performance that counterpoints Lahr's melancholia, and E. G. Marshall's intellectual projection balances the complex vocal pattern. The hysterical and neurotic quality of Alvin Epstein's articulation, in his long soliloquy on the process of modern man's thought, is an extraordinary display of the actor's art in terms of pure speech. The purity of Luchino De Solis' childish voice completes the vocal orchestration of the symphonic arrangement. And the dominant mood is supported further by a fabric of sound effects of a more or less abstract nature.

Waiting for Godot now stands as an exciting record of Michael Myerberg's production, and will reach, one hopes, the discriminating theater audience for whom he originally presented the play and for whom Beckett wrote. G. B. DOWELL

JOHN DONNE

Selections from Donne's Sermons and from *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, read by Herbert Marshall. CAEDMON TC 1051. 12-in. \$5.95.

Donne's *Devotions* are a series of meditations upon mortality, written during the course of a serious illness and in effect forming a diary of the course of his disease. Three of the selections offered here take as their basis the symbol of the Tolling Bell, which to the sick man becomes the knell of his own death. Donne in fact recovered and lived on for some eight years, but the *Devotions* represent in little the characteristic themes and attitudes of the sermons delivered by the great preacher of St. Paul's.

Actually Donne had but a single central motif—"the variable and therefore miserable condition of man," his body "a poor wretched thing which dissolves to putrefaction," his life "but a going out to execution." This mortal state is described in terms of brutal realism and with a concreteness of sensuous detail which will appall the squeamish. And what intensifies the horror of the dying life and living death of the body is not the usual catalogue of sins, but that "melancholy in the soul," like melancholy of the body the hardest humor to cure, which distrusts the possibility of salvation for the "worms of this dunghill." Donne's reiterations of faith, of "everlasting joy and rest and glory" even for the most desperate sinner cannot outweigh the conviction that his God "is a terrible God," that the torment of eternal seclusion from the sight of God may equally well await.

What saves these sermons from morbid neuroticism is Donne's solicitude not for his own destiny alone, but for that of all men. The dust of "patrician and plebeian" is the same; "No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine." It is this insistence on universal involvement in the human dilemma which commands at least an emotional responsiveness on the part of reader and listener.

It should be said too that Herbert Marshall's reading does much for Donne. The baroque brilliance of Donne's imagery and the soaring eloquence of his rhetoric are conveyed with an appropriate sense of the author's passionate fervor. But on the

whole, passion is subdued to a plain lucidity, and one is reminded anew that Donne was a master of ratiocination. By lovers of the actor's art, of language *per se*, of thought densely packed and deeply felt, this recording will be much cherished.

J.G.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE: *The Tragicall History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus*

Frank Silvera, Doctor Faustus; Frederick Rolf, Mephistophilis; Chester Stratton, Lucifer; John Pavelko, Wagner; *et al.* CAEDMON TC 1033. 12-in. \$5.95.

Doctor Faustus is the example *par excellence* of the intellectual temper of the English Renaissance, mingling, as it does, the medieval preoccupation with death and deity with the new emphasis on the

potentialities of life and humanity. The seven deadly sins still stalk across the stage in all their grisly accouterments; in some sense Faustus himself is simply the legendary magician muttering meaningless incantations; and in the final scene the devils literally drag the protagonist off to a very physical hell replete with "adders and serpents." Yet at the same time, in a very characteristic Elizabethan hodgepodge, Marlowe has made his Faustus an exemplar of the modern man, one who has mastered all knowledge and whose rebellion is a fierce protest against the apparent limitations of the human state. It is the painful recognition that he is "... still but Faustus and a man" which leads this professor of logic, medicine, and law to make his pact with the infernal forces. Faustus seeks power, but not only in the tangible and temporal sense. His act is the daring asser-

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Points to note on this recording:

- 1) The present edition contains such generally omitted passages as the Leonora-Manrico duet in Act 3; both verses of Di quella pira (with High C's) from the same act and the soprano aria Tu vedrai che amore in terra of Act 4.
- 2) The entire famed chorus of the Florence May Festival was brought to Geneva to join the superb symphonic ensemble of L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Recorded in Victoria Hall (where the fine Ansermet discs are made) there is startling realism achieved. At no time can the listener feel the presence of the microphone; a sense of living atmosphere in a large theatre is created.
- 3) The top voices of present day Italy were engaged for leading roles for this is without question one of the most difficult operas in the repertory. It takes "all" a singer can give up to the very last note of the score (from Azucena). The celebrated executants performing here have not failed their responsibilities.

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tion of man's supremacy over his own soul.

The life and death of Faustus is set forth in blank verse of extraordinary power, in language of a vigor and flamboyance eminently fitting the tremendous voyage of discovery on which not Faustus and Marlowe alone but the whole Renaissance world were embarked. Marlowe here is, in fact, much more poet than playwright, and one suspects Caedmon might have done better to present those excerpts demonstrating the "mighty line" rather than to offer the play more or less complete. The pageant of the seven deadlies surely is dependent on visual spectacle for its effectiveness; the horseplay at the papal court is farcical comedy on the most elementary level; the childish revenge on the skeptical knight is hardly amusing unless one sees, whether on stage or in the mind's eye, the cuckold's horns appear on the doubting Thomas' head. The presentation of *Doctor Faustus* as a whole may be intended to make the student aware of the structural deficiencies of Marlowe's play and of the customary Elizabethan catering to the tastes of the groundlings; and perhaps it may illumine the character of Faustus as an-

other example of the frivolous misuse of power. The ordinary living-room listener, however, probably will most enjoy the sheer magnificence of sound in those passages in which an arrogant Faustus debates with himself on the possibilities of damnation and salvation, and will be most stirred by the final soliloquy in which the now abject hero grovels in an agonizing plea that time stand still.

In Mr. Silvera's reading the sound is magnificent. The play is, of course, very much Faustus', but he is ably abetted by a competent cast of readers, of whom Frederick Rolfe in a gentlemanly interpretation of Mephistophilis is especially distinguished. The incidental music (from Palestrina to Bartók) neither adds to nor detracts from the production's effectiveness, but the omission of the text is a sad deficiency. J.G.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Scenes from *Macheth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *First Part of King Henry IV*, *Second Part of King Henry IV*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *King Richard II*,

Romeo and Juliet; read by Paul Rogers. SPOKEN ARTS 723. 12-in. \$4.98.

This disk is an actor's *tour de force*, providing the listener with an opportunity to hear the Old Vic's Paul Rogers portray a wide variety of roles ranging from Falstaff through Macbeth to the parts of all six of the "hempen home-spuns" who usually bore the reader in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mr. Rogers' Falstaff is a bumbling fat fool, pure and simple; but at that, may be closer to the author's intention than the tragic hero *manqué* whom latter-day sentimentalists have created from the devotee of old sack. His Mercutio addresses the Queen Mab speech to a lovesick Romeo with proper bravura splendor. John of Gaunt's paean ("This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England") is read, as it should be but often is not, as part of the dying man's prophecy that Richard the Second's "... fierce blaze of riot cannot last." And the excerpts from *Macheth* provide an extremely sensitive interpretation of a highly complex role, culminating

Continued on page 110

London Goes to Italy for a Songbag of Sunshine

THE POPULAR music of Italy has never been as plentiful in American record marts as the *chansons* of neighboring France. This discrepancy seems the more remarkable inasmuch as post-World War II Rome has supplanted Paris—at least in the accounts of bedazzled tourists—as Europe's "gayest capital." Now, in one fell swoop, the balance begins to be redressed. Ten releases on London's Durium label, all ten inch and all priced at \$2.98, manage to cover just about every highlight of the contemporary Italian "pop" picture. The sound throughout is never worse than good, and in most of the records it is the peer of anything currently available.

From the mecca of all Italian *vocalise* come two albums. One (*Songs From Napoli*, DLU 96011) features the voice

and guitar of Roberto Murolo, who, thanks to Angel, is no stranger to United States discophiles. Murolo here ranges with effortless vocal grace through a selection of florid Neapolitan melodies generally less well known—but no less beautiful—than the usual staples like *Core 'Ngrato* and *Santa Lucia*.

However, precisely such basic fare is contained in *Aurelio Fierro Sings Italian Popular Favourites* (DLU 96010). Fierro, a versatile, full-throated tenor in the best Italian tradition, is a splendid interpreter of these overblown but marvelously tuneful ballads of lost and thwarted love. The accompaniments by Mino Campanino and the Neapolitan Song Orchestra sometimes smack of Phil Sitalny, but they never become really distracting—mostly because Fierro in full cry can eclipse all accompanists.

Fierro's other album, *Canzoni d'Altri Tempi* (DLU 96007), is a genuine gem. These are vintage Italian pops of thirty years back—and a nostalgic, bubbling draught they are. Fierro adapts his voice nicely to these relaxed, "happy ending" love songs of a less complex, less neurotic age than our present decade.

The Songs of Rino Salviatti (DLU 96015) are another matter. While Salviatti gives us a whirl through the current Roman hit parade, neither his voice—which seems to drip sugary grief no matter what the mood of the song—nor the material is arresting. In fact, one item, *Buongiorno Trisizza*, causes one to regret that Françoise Sagan ever took pen in hand.

On another tack, Sergio Centi has assembled a group of peculiarly Roman songs which he delivers in the quick-tongued Roman dialect (*Canzoni Romane*, DLU 96009). Centi is an ideal interpreter of this genre, and his repertoire includes perhaps the most unexceptionably titled song in the series: *Comé e Bello Far*

l'Amore Quando e Sera, or *How Good it is to Make Love in the Evening*.

The only distaff voice on Durium's list is Flo Sandon's (DLU 96008). Signorina Sandon's (she spells her name with the apostrophe) has a robust delivery and a voice that is reasonably pleasant and flexible. She is, according to the notes, "one of Italy's most popular girl vocalists." In addition to a group of Italian torch songs, she essays a few Spanish and Portuguese ballads with a good deal of success.

Judging from the rather fatuous annotation of *An Italian In Paris* (DLU 96013), pianist Luciano Sangiorgi is (God forbid) Italy's answer to Liberace. Actually, his keyboard transcriptions of such Parisian stand-bys as *La Mer*, *Ciel de Paris*, etc., are well played save for some unduly heavy fingering in the fortissimos. Interpretatively, they are straight out of a carriage-trade cocktail lounge.

Like a breath of bracing air comes *The Mountains of Italy* (DLU 96018), wherein the Chorus of the Club Alpinistico Italiano of lowland Padua present folk songs from the snow-topped, granitic Dolomites. These songs deserve to be better known. In addition to surpassingly lovely melodies, they possess a kind of charming artlessness. Regrettably, conductor Livio Bolzonella drags his tempos and occasionally allows the chorus to over-harmonize—which is no reason not to buy the record. It is unlikely to find competition for some time to come.

Danze Folcloristiche (DLU 96019) is a bit of mislabeled fluff, containing workmanlike renditions of assorted tangos, mazurkas, and waltzes—but not a single tarentella. And *The Fifth San Remo Song Festival* (DLU 96006) is a potpourri of 1955 favorites sung by Aurelio Fierro, Flo Sandon's, and Bruno Rosettani. Neither the songs nor the performances generate more than perfunctory interest.

HOWARD LaFAY



Roberto Murolo, of Naples.

The Music Between by Murray Schumach

THIS month critical rules will be relaxed in recognition of the Yuletide gift custom that has made the LP record a serious rival of the necktie. In this annual period of good fellowship, I think it permissible to write not only of those records I like, but also of disks that might, despite my lack of enthusiasm, add a bit of joy to someone else's Christmas.

Offhand, I would say that this season Esoteric, Westminster, and Angel merit top honors in the Christmas music category. These companies have turned out a cheery collection of seasonal fare that should delight anyone who has ever choked up at the beauty and purity of carols. I would not want to predict that their records will outsell some freak jukebox tune. But they will, I think, give more lasting pleasure.

For me, the most enjoyable of this year's Christmas records—and a fine example of high fidelity—is *English Medieval Carols and Christmas Music*, released by Esoteric (ES 521). Sung exquisitely by the Primavera Singers of The New York Pro Musica Antiqua, directed by Noah Greenberg, this disk captures with sweet serenity the faith in which religion, as well as the miracle of Christmas, is rooted. The excellent text and record liner material makes it easy to follow the touching lyrics of these rarely heard carols, some of them so old that the English is mixed with Latin. To listen to this group sing *Make We Joy Now in This Fest*, *Nowell Sing We*, *Lullay Lullow*, and other carols, as well as strictly religious music, is to experience beauty that comes close to the sublime. Christmas of a more familiar nature is offered by Esoteric on another record, *Christmas on the Siena Pianoforte* (ES 3005). On this extraordinary instrument Grace Castagnetta plays, and tastefully improvises on, such carols as *Joy to the World*, *Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly*, *Good King Wenceslas*, and sixteen other songs.

To Christmas music Angel adds lovely Easter music and madrigals in its record entitled simply *St. Paul's Cathedral Choir* (35381). This famous choir knows the secret of building up enormous emotional power with a careful pattern of peacefulness and sincerity. The great calm of these pieces, as exemplified in *Gabriel's Message*, is retained even when the ancient choral group is zestful in *Hodie Christus Natus Est*, tender in *Shepherd's Cradle Song*, poignant in the *Five Mystical Songs* of Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Quantitatively, the most ambitious Christmas music offering comes from Westminster, with an even dozen records at last count. Of those I heard the one that most delighted me was *A Festival of Lessons and Carols* (WP 6036), featuring the choir of King's College, Cambridge, directed by Boris Ord. This was recorded by Westminster's English affiliate during Christmas Eve services in King's College Chapel, and it retains a spacious church-like quality. *Carillon for Christmas* (WP 6020), with Robert Owen at the organ

and Robert Locksmith at the carillon, reproduces with extraordinary fidelity the soaring swell of the organ and the resonant pealing of the bells. Before I wind up this discussion of Christmas music, may I suggest that the recording made by RCA Victor of Gian-Carlo Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with the original cast of the NBC telecast (LM 1701) is as lovely as ever.

Christmas shoppers not concerned with carols and kindred music will, unless they are strict classicists, derive and give pleasure with two records by popular singers. One, by Judy Garland, is called *Judy* and is issued by Capitol (T 734); the other is a two-record Decca album by Ethel Merman, called *A Musical Biography* (DX 153).

Columbia has a couple of interesting entries for the shopping derby in the pop field. First, there is *The Elgart Touch*, (CL 875) with Les Elgart and his orchestra. These dance arrangements, with their clean beat and orchestrations that are interesting yet respect the melody of the composer, should be helpful at Christmas parties. The other Columbia disk that seems to have something for everyone is called *Top 12* (CL 937) and contains selections by such well-known pop artists as Doris Day, Vic Damone, Rosemary Clooney, and also by musical groups headed by Percy Faith and Mitch Miller.

Another recorded potpourri that should look good at the base of many Christmas trees is *With Love from Paris* (Angel 65028). Here we have, in that curious mixture of tenderness, hope, and sadness for which French singers are famous, some songs by Edith Piaf, Charles Trenet, Gilbert Becaud, Annie Cordy, and Les Compagnons de la Chanson.

This brings me to pop records that I don't particularly like, but which might make good Christmas gifts. First, there are three records of college songs from RCA Victor called *Tony Cabot Swings on the Campus* (LPM 1308, 9, 10). This prom-style dance rhythm seems to me far less interesting than the more raucous march beat of football bands.

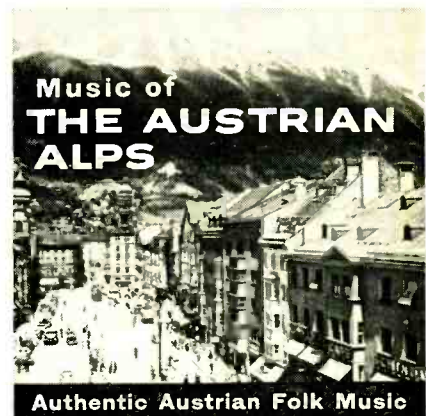
Still in the spirit of Christmas charity I call attention to records by Mantovani and Andre Kostelanetz. The Mantovani disk is *Music from the Films* (London LL 1513). The Kostelanetz contribution, courtesy of Columbia, is *Tender is the Night* (CL 886). As usual, the tone is of high quality, the musicians good. If you're short on music to telephone by, these will do as well as any.

Finally, we come to a record that I dislike intensely, but which may make an ideal gift for thousands of teen-aged girls: *The James Dean Story* (Coral CRL 57099). Written by Steve Allen, who narrates it with Bill Randle, it tells a most heroic saga of the late young actor, backed up by a couple of orchestras and choruses that work in music from his movies as well as *His Name was Dean* and *The Ballad of James Dean*. My own feeling is that it is in bad taste.

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a harsh granularity of voice and a style of delivery that, while it develops a certain tension, does so at the price of the sustained incandescence that informs the best flamenco singing. Andrés Heredia contributes first-rate guitar work and Rafael Heredia some taut, sharply delineated dancing. The otherwise smooth sound is subject to breakup when the singer strikes a particularly robust note.

Somewhat more exciting is *Flamenco*. (TWV 91051, \$4.98), primarily because of the gypsylike, *Sevillano* vocal effects of Manolo Leiva. His accompanist, Pepe de Almeria, strikes somber fire from his guitar. The engineers, however, have slurred the transients in his quick-fingered solos.

Both Leiva and Romero are competent, often thrilling, performers. But hearing them—and so many others on so many other releases—makes one wonder why no English or American record company has bothered to commit to vinylite the art of the greatest of all contemporary flamenco singers, Pepe de la Matrona, now well over seventy. His remains the attainment by which all others must be measured—this despite his advanced age, or perhaps partially because of it. For, oddly enough, flamenco is one musical form in which youth is no asset. The power to stir profoundly comes only with years, and it is only with maturity that the voice and emotions darken sufficiently true to communicate tragedy.

The fourth and best of the London crop is *Gypsy Music recorded at the Festival of Les Saintes Maries de la Mer, 1955* (TWB 91127, \$4.98). Here, as recorded at an annual gypsy festival in the South of France, is flamenco in its savage, hard-handed habitat. Wandering groups from Spain, France, Italy, and points east converge every year to sing, dance, drink, and revel in the time-honored way of their kind. Flamenco is their *musique propre*, and here is all the wild excitement of spontaneous performance: one man sings himself into hoarseness; another pauses periodically for pulls at a bottle of raw alcohol; an obvious intoxication—of more kinds than one—pervades both performers and audience. Despite occasional fuzziness and a shifting sound source, the engineers have acquitted themselves admirably in this field recording. There are no nuances in this music, no subtlety; but you will seldom hear flamenco of greater vitality.

THE BEST OF JAZZ

by John S. Wilson

JERRY COKER: *Modern Music from Indiana University*

Limehouse Blues: Old Crinkletoes: Opus No. 1; Red Kelly's Blues: Nancy: Kigeria: You Gotta Show Me: It's You or No One: Jack's Acts: This Is Always; Lost April: Clare-ity.

Jerry Coker, Lou Ciotti, Bob Cowart, tenor saxophones; Fred Fox, Roger Pemberton, baritone saxophones; Al Kiger, trumpet; Jim Hewitt, trombone; Jack Coker, piano; Bill Montgomery, bass; Charles Mastro-paolo, drums.

FANTASY 3-214. 12-in. 32 min. \$3.98.

Coker, a onetime Woody Herman tenor man, has put together a group that is essentially a saxophone ensemble. A lone trumpet and an equally lone trombone each appears here twice. Coker's saxophones are smooth, swinging, and unpretentious, his rhythm section pushes steadily, and Coker's brother, Jack, plays several fleet, linear piano solos. It is all pleasant, cleanly played jazz, a bit on the polite side.

BOB DAVIS QUARTET: *Jazz from the North Coast*

Goose: The Way You Look Tonight: Nancy: It's All Right with Me: The Song Is You: Night in Tunisia: Willow Weep for Me: China Boy: The Lady is A Tramp.

Bob Davis, piano; Bob Crea, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones; Stu Anderson, bass; Bill Blakkestad, drums.

ZEPHYR 12001. 12-in. 34 min. \$3.98.

The North Coast in the title refers to Minnesota where both this new record company and this hitherto unrecorded quartet are located. The disk is a fine beginning for each. The Davis Quartet is an unpretentious and strongly swinging group with a style that is up-to-date without being aggressively modern. Davis is a dexterous pianist who plays in a handful-of-keys manner reminiscent of Earl Hines. Crea, working on three saxophones, has a driving up-tempo style much like that of Phil Woods. The quartet is given a strong yet sensitive beat by drummer Blakkestad and bassist Anderson. Aside from these individual merits, the group has a cohesive quality which many more renowned jazz groups might envy. The recording is extremely good.

ELLA FITZGERALD, LOUIS ARMSTRONG: *Ella and Louis*

Can't We Be Friends: Isn't This a Lovely Day: Moonlight in Vermont: They Can't Take That Away from Me; Under a Blanket of Blue: Tenderly: A Foggy Day: Stars Fell on Alabama: Cheek to Cheek: The Nearness of You: April in Paris.

Ella Fitzgerald, vocals; Louis Armstrong, vocals and trumpet; Oscar Peterson, piano; Herb Ellis, guitar; Ray Brown, bass; Buddy Rich, drums.

VERVE 4003. 12-in. 55 min. \$3.98.

Ella Fitzgerald has never, to my knowledge, sung so well on records as she does on this disk. The impersonal quality characteristic of so much of her recording is completely absent here. Instead, we get the warm purity of tone and the easy rightness of phrasing that are her own personal hallmarks. The material is ideally suited to her lyric talents; the accompaniment by Oscar Peterson's trio and the occasional trumpet obbligatos by Louis Armstrong are perfect complements to her singing. The recording is exceptionally good too.

Armstrong as singer shows up rather badly on some of the numbers: slow-ballad tempo gives him trouble. But when the beat picks up (*Can't We Be Friends, They Can't Take That Away from Me, Cheek to Cheek*), he is in his element. An atmosphere of geniality hovers about these

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ERROLL GARNER: *Concert by the Sea*
I'll Remember April; Teach Me Tonight; Mambo Carmel; Autumn Leaves; It's All Right with Me; Red Top; April in Paris; They Can't Take That Away from Me; How Could You Do a Thing Like That to Me?; Where or When; Erroll's Theme.

Erroll Garner, piano; Eddie Calhoun, bass; Denzil Best, drums.
COLUMBIA CL 883. 12-in. 43 min. \$3.95.

Erroll Garner has developed such a positive and individual musical personality that it is sufficient to say of his records that they are good Garner, bad Garner, or so-so Garner. This disk is good Garner. He is at the top of his form—gay, romantic, rhythmic, and completely winning. The program is varied, the recording is excellent, and even though there are intrusions of applause and audience laughter, this is one of the most successful disks that Garner has made.

JOHN GRAAS: *Jazz-Lab-1*

John Graas, French horn; Bob Enevoldsen, trombone; Dave Pell, tenor saxophone, "Bert Herbert," alto saxophone; Claude Williamson, piano; Howard Roberts, guitar; Curtis Counce, bass; Larry Bunker, drums; and others.
DECCA DL 8343. 12-in. 33 min. \$3.98.

The special points of interest on this disk are the two jazz sections—Andante and Allegretto—from Graas's Symphony No. 1. They are both completely in the jazz idiom, but there is more meat in the written development of these two sections than is usually found in jazz pieces played by similar small groups (and this includes several of the other selections on this disk). The Andante is based on a romantic theme, richly voiced in the ensemble passages and highlighted by an excellent alto saxophone solo by "Bert Herbert." The Allegretto has a stronger pulse, and is marked by some of Graas's best work on French horn.

The other selections lean toward the glib type of swing often heard from West Coast groups, but Graas imbues them with more than usual vigor. The disk shows him as an intelligent, creative, and talented musician, effectively bringing his musical personality to bear on the varied groups represented here.

**GRAND ENCOUNTER: *2 Degrees East*
— *3 Degrees West***

Love Me or Leave Me; I Can't Get Started; Easy Living; 2 Degrees East—3 Degrees West; Skylark; Almost Like Being in Love.

Bill Perkins, tenor saxophone; John Lewis, piano; Jim Hall, guitar; Percy Heath, bass; Chico Hamilton, drums.
PACIFIC JAZZ 1217. 12-in. 35 min. \$3.98.

If this meeting between elements of two of the best small jazz groups working today—Lewis and Heath of the Modern Jazz Quartet and Hall and Hamilton of Chico Hamilton's Quintet—had produced nothing else but *Love Me or Leave Me*, the so-called "grand encounter" would be re-

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FALLA: El Amor Brujo; Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Corinne Voza, contralto; Eduardo del Pueyo, piano; L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Jean Martinon, cond.

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with occasional opportunities for discreet solo work by Lowe and Joe Wilder. This is, in a sense, mood music, but it is totally unlike the things usually labeled mood music. This is music for people who are alert, alive, and susceptible to a stimulating variety of moods.

RAY MCKINLEY: *The Swinging '30s*

Scrub Me, Mama; Hard Hearted Hannah; Royal Garden Blues; Cow Cow Boogie; Jeepers Creepers; Sugar Foot Stomp: Ray McKinley, drums, vocals; Lee Castle, trumpet; Peanuts Hucko, clarinet; Dean Kincaide, baritone saxophone; Mickey Crane, piano; Trigger Alpert, bass.

I Found a New Baby; Seven Come Eleven; On the Alamo; Soft Winds; Poor Butterfly; Avalon: Peanuts Hucko, clarinet; Billy Butterfield, trumpet; Boomie Richman, tenor saxophone; Hank Jones, piano; Mundell Lowe, guitar; Jack Lesberg, bass; Morey Feld, drums.

GRAND AWARD 33-333. 12-in. 37 min. \$3.98.

Before Ray McKinley undertook the leadership of the current version of the Glenn Miller band, he recorded these selections—several of them McKinley specialties dating back to the McKinley-Bradley band of the early Forties—with a group of delightfully empathic musicians. They play with great spirit and vigor, and these qualities are heightened by the exceptionally good recording. The warmth and ebullience of McKinley's singing has never come across on records as well as it does on these numbers, and Lee Castle's precise, punching trumpet is a constant delight. The Peanuts Hucko Septet also benefits from a trumpet player in top form—Billy Butterfield, who growls and bites with great exuberance. Hucko's clarinet playing is less deliberately Goodmanish than it has been recently, and some of his work is done in an attractive modern manner.

PHIL WOODS QUARTET: *Woodlore*

Slow Boat to China; Get Happy; Strollin' with Pam; Woodlore; Falling in Love All Over Again; Be My Love.

Phil Woods, alto saxophone; John Williams, piano; Teddy Kotick, bass; Nick Stabulas, drums.

PRESTIGE 7018. 12-in. 32 min. \$4.98.

Phil Woods may stand as the example of the ultimate dead end of the cool school of jazz. Woods is an alto saxophonist who has almost everything on his side—polished technical skill, a strong swinging attack, and a great carousing drive. Yet, because he has no suggestion of warmth or shading, the final impression is of a shrill and tiresome series of exercises. For a chorus or two, any of these selections engages the attention; but then, as aural attrition sets in, one sits back to await the entrance of John Williams, a pianist who is both modern and human.

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Know Your Jazz, Vol. 1 (ABC Paramount 115. 12-in. 39 min. \$3.98), which is made up of examples of the use in contemporary jazz of twelve instruments. The illustrative solos, ranging from good to excellent, are played by such notable jazzmen as Tony Scott, Billy Taylor, Jimmy Cleveland, Mundell Lowe, Oscar Pettiford, and others. The explanatory notes are admirably rational and down-to-earth.

Jimmy Giuffre's breathy, low register clarinet is heard in a number of different contexts on *The Jimmy Giuffre Clarinet* (Atlantic 1238. 12-in. 36 min. \$3.98), from a solo accompanied only by foot-tapping to a nine-piece group, from non-jazz and atonality to light, Basie-like swing. This is stretching Giuffre's rather limited clarinet talent a bit thin, but many of the disk's twists and turns are interesting.

Despite its ominous title, *Primitive Modern* (Prestige 7040. 12-in. 32 min. \$4.98) by the Gil Melle Quartet is very listenable, rhythmic jazz featuring the leader's baritone saxophone and a buoyant guitarist named Joe Cinderella. *The Midgets* (Vik LX 1060. 12-in. 35 min. \$3.98) by the Joe Newman Septet is built around duets between Newman's trumpet and Frank Wess's flute, some of them brightly engaging but, over a whole twelve-inch disk, just a little too much of one thing.

Keyboards: Although neither is, strictly speaking, a pianist's record, both *The Flying Fingers of Art Tatum and Buddy De Franco* (American Recording Society G 412. 12-in. 43 min. By subscription) and *The Rhythm Section* (Epic LN 3271. 12-in. 40 min. \$3.98) are made memorable by the work of the pianists involved. On the first, Tatum (who died prematurely last month) is at the top of his rhythmic form, pulling together and giving definite form to performances that are generally diffuse when he is out of the spotlight. Incidentally, the eleventh disk in *The Genius of Art Tatum* series (Clef MG C-712. 12-in. 37 min. \$3.98) has also been released, more unaccompanied solos on the same high level as those in the ten disks that have already appeared, although this latest one hardly seems necessary for any collection that has a few of the earlier ones. The pianist who makes *The Rhythm Section* worth hearing is Hank Jones, whose warmly precise playing is featured on three of the twelve selections.

Two improvements happily noted: Lou Levy, whose first disk for Victor was mysteriously out of character, returns to his proper, virile, propulsive form on *Jazz in Four Colors* (RCA Victor LPM 1319. 12-in. 40 min. \$3.98) with a quartet in which Larry Bunker's vibes offer Levy a steady challenge; and Villegas makes something of a recovery from his clumsy introductory disk with *Very, Very Villegas* (Columbia CL 877. 12-in. 39 min. \$3.98), which suggests that he is beginning to learn something about jazz though he is still far from being a distinctive pianist.

Barbara Carroll, usually rather glib, turns brooding in most of the selections on *We Just Couldn't Say Goodbye* (RCA Victor LPM 1296. 12-in. 40 min. \$3.98), thereby largely draining them of any potential jazz qualities. Likewise glib, André Previn takes apart eight of the tunes

from *My Fair Lady* on Shelly Manne and *His Friends, Vol. 2* (Contemporary 3527. 12-in. 38 min. \$4.98) and puts them back together again in modern jazz terms. It's a deft performance but one that may grate on the sensibilities of anyone who cherishes the Loewe-Lerner score.

For the traditional-minded, Riverside has transferred thirteen more bouncing ragtime piano rolls to a disk, *The Golden Age of Ragtime* (Riverside 12-110. 12-in. 37 min. \$4.98), while neoragtimer Ralph Sutton happily rollicks and hums his way through some rags and stomps on *Backroom Piano* (Down Home MG D-4. 12-in. 41 min. \$3.98).

Trumpets: Two of the groups with which Chet Baker made his long tour of Europe last winter are heard on *Chet Baker in Europe* (Pacific Jazz 1218. 12-in. 47 min. \$3.98), a disk on which Baker proves that it is possible to play a subdued trumpet with authority. Seven trumpet players, accompanied by a rhythm section led by Elliot Lawrence, are given a chance to show their wares on *Cool Gabriels* (Groove LG 1003. 12-in. 35 min. \$3.98). Despite the multiplicity of horns (Conte Candoli, Nick Travis, Bernie Glow, Don Stratton, Dick Sherman, Phil Sunkel, and Al De Risi), the disk is pleasantly varied, and Travis gives further evidence that he is one of the most accomplished of present-day trumpeters. *Trumpet with a Soul* (Epic LN 3268. 12-in. 32 min. \$3.98) serves as a disk introduction for Mel Davis, who has a big, ripe tone in the Harry James manner and a leaning toward a legitimate rather than a jazz style.



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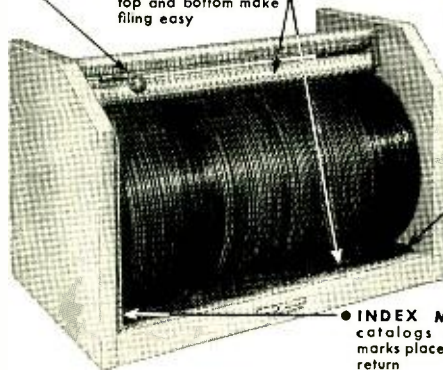
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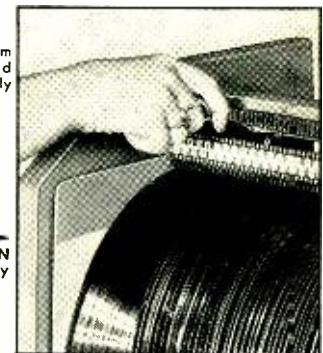
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BACH: *Cantata No. 140, Wachet auf*

Magda Laszlo (s), Waldemar Kmentt (t), Alfred Poell (bs); Akademie Kammerchor; Vienna Staatsoper Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.

SONOTAPE SW 1037. 7-in. \$7.95.

My welcome mat is always out for the return of so dear an old friend as this, especially since my copy of the LP version (Westminster WL 5122) has long since lost much of its pristine groove cleanliness. Except for somewhat more distant microphoning than we are accustomed to nowadays, this discloses no hint of arterial hardening in the lovely duos by Laszlo and Poell, the oboe obbligato for the second of these, or the admirably balanced ensembles throughout—features which have maintained the pre-eminence of the Scherchen performance ever since it first appeared. (Summer 1952)

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 9, in D minor ("Choral"), Op. 125*

Teresa Stich-Randall (s), Lore Fischer (c), Ferdinand Koch (t), Rudolf Watzke (b); Orchestra and Chorus of Gurzenich (Cologne), Gunter Wand, cond.

OMEGATAPE OT 8005. 7-in. \$10.95.

The soloists' names are familiar, but those of the conductor and orchestra are brand new to me. Gunter Wand, whatever his background may be, is obviously no gauche youngster or weary *routinier*. He brings a strong, deliberate, sure hand to his task, as well as notable reserves of somber energy. He is at his best, I think, in his rather slow but broadly sustained and serenely expressive reading of the Adagio. Despite the usual intonation troubles (and perhaps overincisive attacks) among the otherwise assured soloists and chorus, the finale is worked up with more exciting dramatic force than one normally expects from any non-Toscanini.

Since I have a personal "blind spot" vis-à-vis the Ninth and thus lack any adequate representation of this symphony in my permanent library, I can't attempt to place Wand's version among the better-known ones, but I should guess that it should rank well up in the list; and I'm sure that for recording clarity, brilliance, and expanded dynamic range it should be placed very close to the top. The performance is not yet available on LP, at least not in this country.

• • CHAUSSON: *Poème, Op. 25* †Saint-Saëns: *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28*

David Oistrakh, violin; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.

RCA VICTOR CCS 16. 7-in. \$10.95.

Paul Affelder's review of the LP versions (LM 1988, in which they were incongruously coupled with orchestral excerpts from Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*) tempered praise with the pertinent comment that "though pure technique and silken tone contribute enormously, they aren't everything." In the stereo medium the silken tonal qualities of the fine-spun orchestral fabric itself as well as of the gleaming solo violin embroideries still aren't everything, but they *are* sheer tonal enchantment. It is a shame that Oistrakh's too cool and impersonal perfection fails to add the warmth and intensity of poetic feeling to the Chausson which would enchant one's mind as well as one's ears. Yet I keep returning to the *Poème*, as though to a drug which once tasted becomes an obsession, for this score has never been more ethereally and bewitchingly reproduced. The sparkling Saint-Saëns showpiece makes no comparable expressive demands and so is more uniformly successful over-all. (Feb. 1956)

FALLA: *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*

Guiomar Novaes, piano; Pro Musica Symphony Orchestra (Vienna), Hans Swarowsky, cond.

PHONOTAPES-SONORE PM 5006. 5-in. \$6.95.

In the early stages of intoxication with the high-proof stimulus of a new sonic medium, it's only too easy to delude oneself (if not others) that stereo and aural magic are synonymous. Here is strong evidence that poetic atmosphere is by no means beyond the powers of single-channel recording. The highly praised LP version (Vox PL 8520) was perhaps not as widely circulated as it should have been, since it was there coupled with a Grieg Concerto that had to meet severe competition; alone here, and against a flawless tape background, the Falla piece comes triumphantly into its own. I have heard the orchestral part played with more polish and stylistic distinction (and I still maintain that only in stereo can its impressionistic scoring become completely non-earthbound), yet no orchestral or medium advantages could ever compensate in themselves for any enactment of the solo role that failed to match the improvisatory freedom, artistic subtlety, and declamatory eloquence of a Novaes. (June 1954)

FRANCK: *Variations symphoniques* †Rimsky-Korsakov: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in C-sharp minor, Op.*

30

Paul Badura-Skoda, piano; Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.

SONOTAPE SW 1035. 7-in. \$7.95.

Immaculate transparency of recorded sonic detail and painstaking executant precision never can substitute adequately for the indefinable *élan vital* of poetic interpretation—which is the object lesson of the present version of the *Symphonic Variations*. Here, as on LP (Westminster W-LAB 7030), the recording will serve orchestration and piano students as a superbly lucid textbook analysis of the score, but a lover of Franck's finest creation will search in vain for its endearing glow and lilt. Badura-Skoda seems much less impersonal and Rodzinski less self-effacing in the darkly romantic soliloquies of the early and far-from-characteristic Rimsky concerto, a work no less lusciously and cleanly recorded, but in itself far less rewarding music. (June 1956)

• • GROFÉ: *Grand Canyon Suite*

Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond.

RCA VICTOR ECS 17. 7-in. \$14.95.

The Pops ensemble probably never has sounded more like the Boston Symphony than here; Fiedler seldom has prepared and voiced a score with more loving care and exactitude; and surely it is only in stereo that every ingenious detail of Grofé's instrumentation could emerge with such crystalline purity. Yet, by the same token, never have Grofé's pretensions been more mercilessly exposed as those of a poor man's—or Radio City Music Hall—Richard Strauss. I have been bored often enough by the *Grand Canyon* suite, but never particularly annoyed by it. It is only now in the aural equivalent of super-Cinemascope that its gaudily painted local-color backdrops, its laboriously contrived sunrise, sunset, and cloudburst, and its puppet trail riders are exposed as completely *ersatz*. This stereo is proving to be a dangerously double-edged weapon! I might sourly suggest that here, at least, audio technology may be so overstimulated by its new powers as to have entirely forgotten Lewis Carroll's pertinent variant of an old adage: "Take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves."

MOZART: *Serenade No. 13, in G ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"), K. 525;* *Ein musikalischer Spass, K. 522*

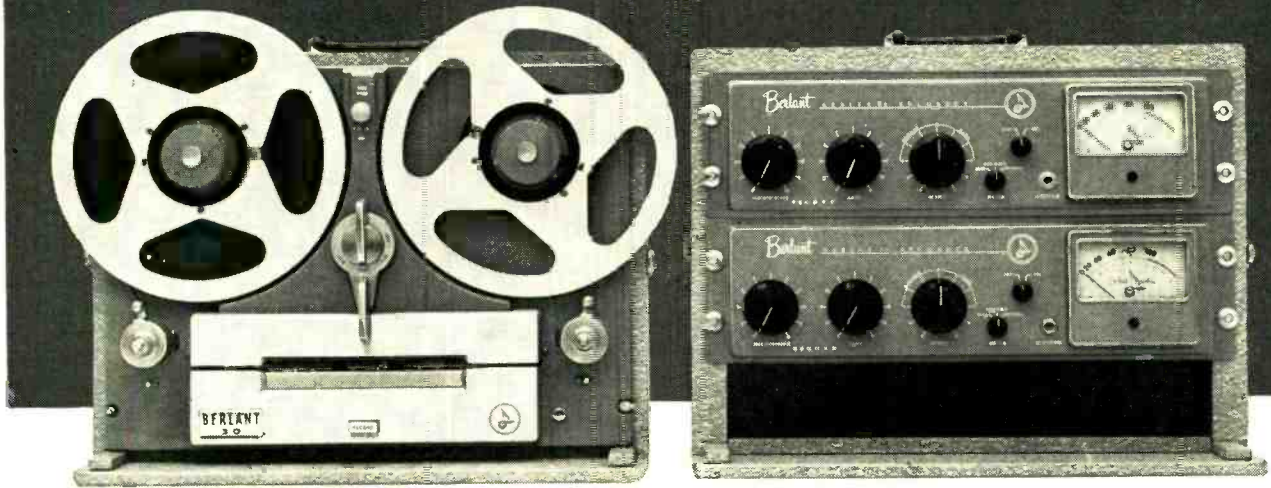
†Leopold Mozart: *Toy Symphony*

Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond.

PHONOTAPES-SONORE PM 148. 7-in. \$8.95.

Continued on page 124

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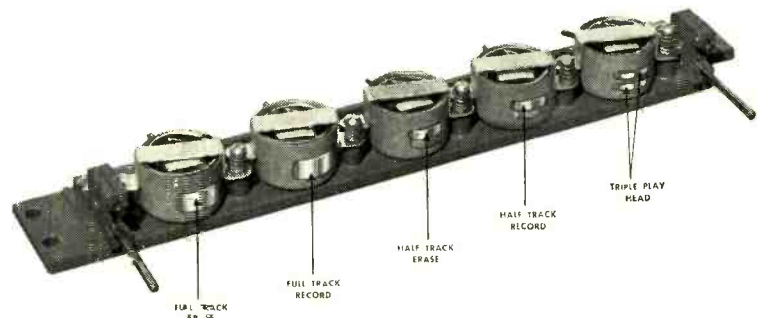
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TAPE DECK

Continued from page 121

C. G. Burke's review of the LP version (Vox PL 9780) had prepared me for the persuasive straightforwardness and complete freedom from smirking coyness with which these little pieces are played by Reinhardt, but even his praise of the recording scarcely led me to expect so exquisite a sense of tonal balance or such wholly "natural" small-scaled sonorities as are revealed by the Stuttgart group and its close yet vibrantly "live" reproduction on the present tape. Few disks and even fewer tapes have ever solved more conclusively the problems of recording a small, mainly string, ensemble. And if the familiar *Nightmusic* never quite attains my apparently unrealizable ideal, I have never heard the satirical (prophetically poly-tonal) *Musical Joke* played more satisfactorily, nor the jaunty *Toy Symphony* (long attributed to Haydn) done with more delicious relish and grace. (Oct. 1956)

● ● OFFENBACH: *Gaité Parisienne*

Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond.

RCA VICTOR ECS 15. 7-in. \$14.95.

Delighted as I was with Fiedler's original 78-rpm *Gaité* of 1947 (transferred some four years later to LM 1001) and the even wider-range recording of its successor (LM 1817 of 1954), they both "wore" badly with me. Eventually I came to tire, not of the eternally exuberant music itself, but of what came to seem like excessively top-heavy sonic balance. The high end of the spectrum was so extremely bright that for all its clarity it became overfatiguing and unpleasantly penetrating, if not actually shrill, simply for lack of a more solid low-frequency foundation. And it is in this respect, even more than in the airy opening-up of the top register, that the stereo version impresses me as marking a notable advance. For here there is no suggestion whatever of oversharp tonal edginess and no eventual aural fatigue—although, as usual in stereo, the over-all experience is akin to that of a live performance in leaving its participant-listeners emotionally exhausted. What I had assumed was Rosenthal's failure to provide a firm enough instrumental substructure is revealed here as only the result of some aural myopia in single-channel microphoning. Even the enhanced glitter of the percussionists (given almost concertolike starring roles) now never seems hectic, so matchlessly is it integrated into the weightier yet wondrously air-woven fabric of full-spectrum sonorities.

In short, while the Debussy *Nocturnes* by Monteux must rank as stereo's most enlightening contribution to date to aesthetic sensibilities, and while a few big display-work and jazz tapes may have achieved more sensational raw dramatic impact, this *Gaité Parisienne* is the first indisputable, all-round, stereo-hit release. And if ever a single work justified the investment in a two-channel home playback system, quite regardless of the in-

AMPEX

dividual listener's personal taste predilections (provided only that he craves the best that present-day technology can achieve in orchestral sound reproduction), this is it. (Dec. 1954, for LM 1817, as noted above.)

• • SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8, in B minor ("Unfinished")*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.
RCA VICTOR CCS 13. 7-in. \$10.95.

Among those to whom the *Unfinished* primarily connotes dark pathos and fervid songfulness, Munch's reading has won top honors in its LP version (LM 1923, where it was coupled with a less convincing Beethoven Fifth). Stereo adds a new dimension of haunting, echoing aural atmosphere to this interpretation, but is even more distinctive in its enhancement of the tonal beauties of the Boston players, freed here from the bondage of interpretative mannerisms which for me made the stereo version of the Beethoven Fifth quite intolerable. Despite all such seductive enchantments, however, I still cling obstinately to what may be a private illusion that the *Unfinished* is properly less of a luxuriant sonic tapestry and more of a water-color miniature, demanding spontaneous *galanterie* rather than "romantic" lyrical exposition. So far, however, Beecham is the only conductor who has even given a hint of sharing that ideal—and who knows whether his mercurial disposition will still have the same bent when and if he too is afforded stereo-recording opportunities? (Feb. 1956)

WAGNER: *Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod; Tannhäuser: Overture*

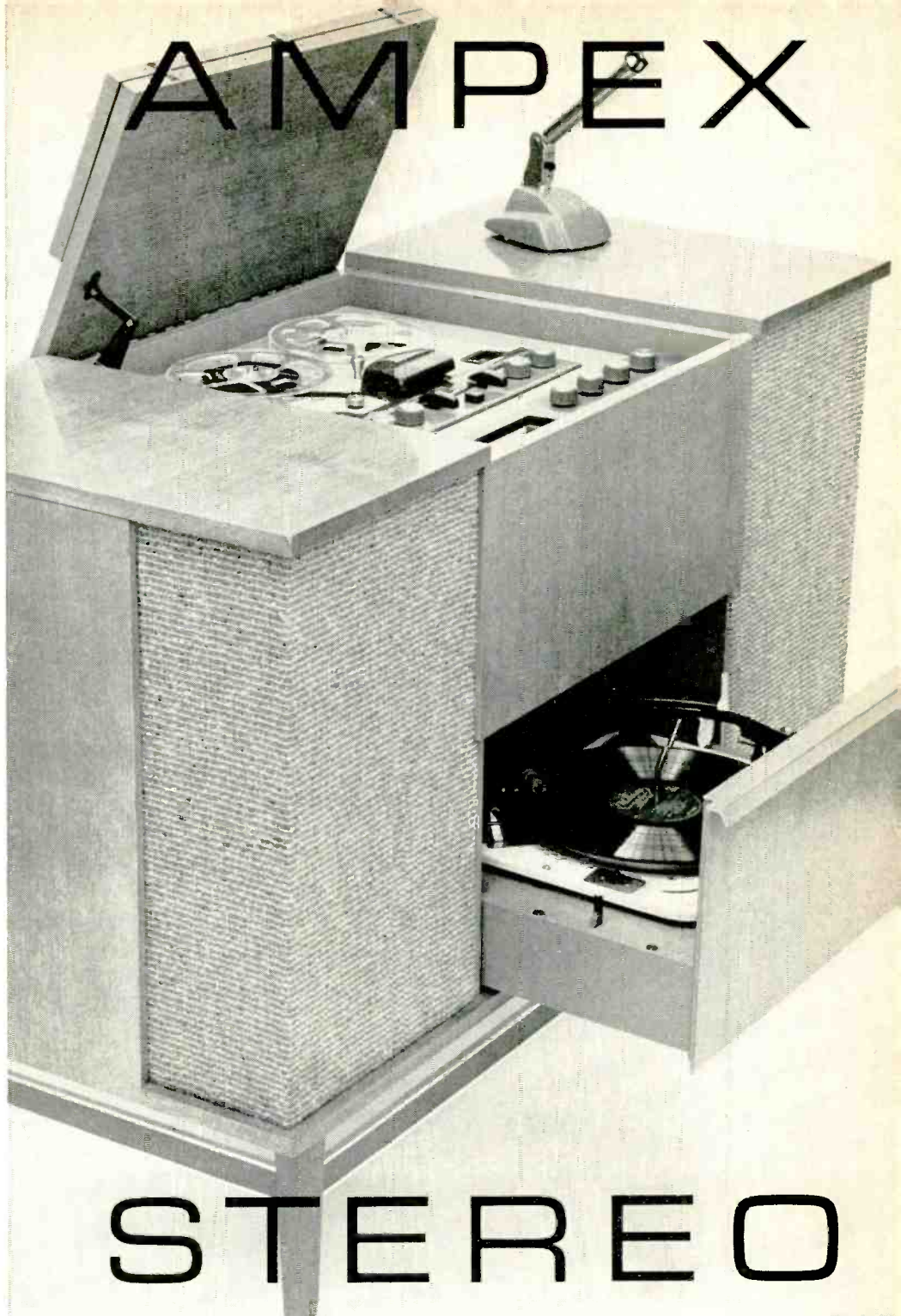
Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.
SONOTAPE SW 1040. 7-in. \$7.95.

I have spoken before about tape's special affinity for chamber-music reproduction—an aptitude which oddly enough italicizes the present release's principal *raison d'être*. James Hinton, Jr., in reviewing the LP version (Westminster W-LAB 7035), remarked on the "almost chamber-music transparency" of the engineering, a quality which, along with the use of what seems a comparatively small orchestra, is even more marked in the present tape edition. It's definitely intriguing, at least on first hearing, and for anyone engaged in analytical studies of Wagner's orchestral scores, perhaps no more orthodox treatment could be as illuminating. But a Wagner without overwhelming breadth and devoid of unrestrained emotional fervor is surely not the Wagner we know best or one who imperiously commands complete surrender from his devotees. The latter are best advised to shun the present release, but collectors of outstanding audio curios may feel it amply novel to warrant preservation. (July 1956)

• • ORGAN RECITALS

Kurt Rapf, organ.
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Continued on next page

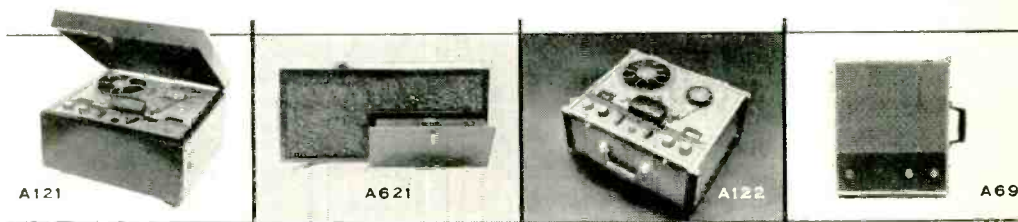


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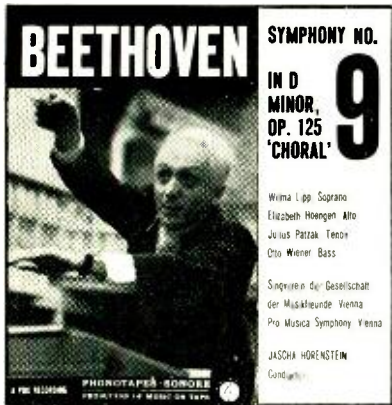
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MOZART: Requiem, K. 626

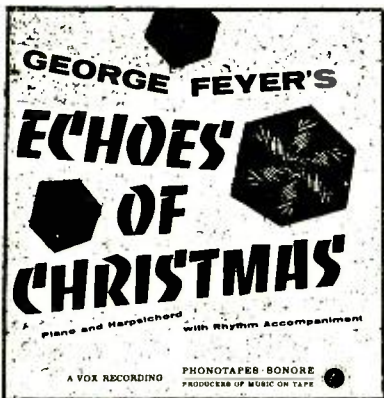
Soloists: Wilma Lipp, Elizabeth Hoengen, Murray Dickie, Ludwig Weber
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TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

each (\$7.50 to Livingston Tape Club members).

Originally released a year or two ago, these two reels were among the very first stereo tapes I received, but I have procrastinated for months in preparing a review—largely because they struck me as so uneven, both musically and technically, and I feared that my unfamiliarity with the new medium was warping my judgment. Replaying them recently, however, my first impressions are sustained that Rapf (for all his considerable fame as a conductor and harpsichordist) is no adequate Bach interpreter. His ponderous, heavily registered Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565 (in 711), is only passable at best, while his Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582 (in 712), is—for all its earnestness—too lumbering and unsteady in tempo to be even passable.

Querying a German organ-specialist friend about Rapf's reputation abroad as a Bach interpreter, I elicited only a contemptuous dismissal of all Viennese musicians as unfitted for any music earlier than Haydn's—one of the grossest examples of aesthetic intolerance I've ever come across, yet not entirely without a grain of truth in this particular instance. At any rate, the indubitably Viennese Rapf seems far more at home with the Mendelssohn Organ Sonatas, Op. 65, Nos. 1 and 2 (one on each reel); or, to put it another way, the rather pompous romantic fervor of these works lends itself better to his treatment. And Rapf proves that he cannot be dismissed as a merely sincere but pedestrian interpreter when he suddenly comes to life in the lushly chromatic breadths of the first Franck Choral in E major (in 711). However leisurely he lingers over these, it is with a loving eloquence that achieves a genuine radiance in the heaven-storming conclusion.

My puzzlement over the apparent failure of the separate speakers' outputs to "fuse" more evenly, as they are generally supposed to do in proper stereo reproduction, evaporated when I realized that obviously any listener located as close to the organ lofts as the stereo microphones must be would hear a similar separation between the pipe ranks on either side of the church chancel. Apart from this characteristic, however, stereo does add markedly to the "spacious cathedral" effect of hearing an organ in its natural habitat. Certainly it contributes impressively to the comparative clarity of the present recordings, for the reverberation period is so long that the polyphonic lines here, and the use of the full organ to which Rapf seems so addicted, would be hopelessly blurred in the single-channel medium. The instrument itself (that of Vienna's *Piaristenkirche*) is one which should be extremely fascinating to connoisseurs, for it is apparently an old one with many extremely attractive timbres (when we are given a chance to hear them unblended). Because these recitals are not currently available on LP (and may never be), and because of the knotty problems of evaluation they present, I have dealt with them at exceptional length. They

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remain enigmas in many ways; but if they must be ranked as only dubiously successful, they certainly are not lacking in provocative interest.

REEL MUSIC NOTES

ALPHATAPE: *Third Man* Anton Karas' zitherings on earlier Alpha and Omegatapes proved such palpable hits with all types of listeners that further examples were inevitable. The present *Zitherama* is "more of the same" in that he blends some seventeen typical Viennese café-entertainment tunes into an all-too-brief medley, but the vibrantly twangy tones of his instrument are captured even more iridescently here (AT 22, 5-in., \$3.95). Anton Paulik's *Vienna Nights* is not a new recording, but extracts from Omegatape OT 3003 (reviewed here Aug. 1956), featuring the starred attraction of that longer tape, the too-seldom heard Johann Strauss *Carnival in Rome*, along with a less distinctive *Blue Danube* and brother Josef's *Feuerfest* Polka. Yet unless my ears deceive me, this shorter tape seems to have been more carefully processed, for the Vienna Pro Arte Orchestra's playing—while still hardly full-bodied—is reproduced somewhat more effectively (AT 23, 5-in., \$3.95).

BEL CANTO: *Music for Hearth and Heart* is exactly the sentimental background inanity you'd expect, novel only for the augmentation of Frank Hunter's salon orchestra by rather ridiculously realistic wind and rain "effects" and the occasional intrusion of a small chorus, whose soloists (Dotti Malone and Joe Foley) pop brashly out of the fireplace to croon with disconcerting intimacy right in your ears (106, 5-in., \$6.95; also available on Jubilee LP 1020). *Carl Perkins at the Piano*, with traps and string bass accompaniment, never gets very heated, but he plays with a cool, if somewhat spasmodic, jauntiness, some fairly intricate ornamentations, and at his best a quite expressive lilt. The recording is extremely bright and close, yet try as I may I can't distinguish any particular aural evidence of Perkins' chief claim to originality—the use of "his left hand in a backward position . . . suspending his left arm over the keys and using his elbow to play additional bass notes" (502, 5-in., \$6.95; also available on Dootone Modern Jazz LP DL 211).

CONCERTAPES: It's not quite my idea of real jazz, but *Swingin' Easy!* invests some six (mostly standard) tunes with a plentitude of brash spirit, a touch of pseudo-exoticism (Sauter-Finegan brand), and some decidedly piquant tonal colors and contrasts by the Modernes' odd combination of percussion, accordion, vibraphone, and string bass. At their best, in the exceedingly catchy *Song of the Vineyards*, they play with infectious verve, and the stereo recording makes the most of their distinctive *timbre* schemes (• • 508, 5-in., \$7.95).

CONCERT HALL: While waiting impatiently for review copies of the complete first Concert Hall stereo release list (the three works reviewed in the Nov. 1956

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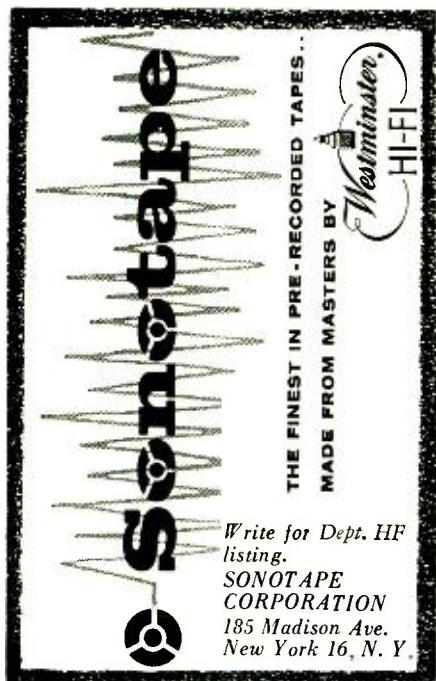
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TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page



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Tape Deck are all I have heard so far), my appetite is further whetted, as well as partly assuaged by a "demonstration-sampler" devoted to excerpts from both the first and a forthcoming second list. I can hardly say this is the best of the stereo samplers, for it's the only one I've heard to date, but it certainly will be hard to beat, for not only are the selections well diversified (if mostly on the familiar *Finlandia-Fire Dance-Firebird* symphonic-favorites order, except for an amusingly jazzed-up *Kerry Dance*), but they are mercifully free from vocal announcements and plugs, and for once they are all complete pieces or movements—that is, if the *Andante* and *Finale* of the *Rhapsody in Blue* can be considered so. In all, a highly effective (and at its price, extremely enticing) introduction to musical stereo-phony (• • CHT/Dem. 1, 7-in., \$4.00).

JAZZTAPE: One of the most ingenious exploitations of stereo potentialities I've yet come across is the misleadingly named *Sounds . . . Crazy*, where what is billed as the Paul Severson Quartet turns out to be essentially a contrapuntal and antiphonal duo, backed by discreet traps and bass accompaniment. The pieces themselves, apart from a few standards, are Severson originals of notable imaginative lyricism and danceable lilt, but even these owe much to the special charm of the relaxed yet jaunty interplay of trombone (on the

left) and sax (on the right), which never could achieve such buoyant equilibrium and contrast in the single-channel medium. At its best, as in Severson's *Too Much*, this is both semijazz and stereo in exceptionally attractive and novel veins (• • ST 4016, 7-in., \$10.95).

PHONOTAPES-SONORE: In Jonel Perlea's long Russian program with the Bamberg Symphony (also available on LP as Vox PL 9530), the outstanding item is the shortest piece: César Cui's once immensely popular but now seldom-heard *Tarantella*, Op. 12—a blessed relief from the perennial *Oriente* as well as in its own right a brilliantly bouncy symphonic-dance hit which for once justifies Cui's inclusion among the "Mighty Five." Perlea apparently expended most of his interest and animation here, for his Balakirev *Thamar*, while romantically atmospheric, lacks the integrated drama of Von Maticic's Angel LP version, while the also-included Borodin *Polovtsian Dances* and Mussorgsky *Night on Bald Mountain* carry little conviction even when they are not relaxed to the point of lackadaisicality. The recording, however, is warmly rich throughout (PM 145, 7-in., \$8.95).

SONOTAPE: It's a bit of a shock to find the invariable technical perfection of Sonotape processing and Westminster recording (WP 6005) expended on *Music in the Night*. The pop-classic melodies chosen here (*None But the Lonely Heart, Plaisir d'amour, Rosamunde Entr'acte*, etc.) are no doubt appropriate enough as "beauty-rest music to go to sleep by," but the expected suave sentimentality of these salon performances is disconcertingly sluggish. The mostly-string ensemble's leader, one Montini, lacks a good deal more than an extra syllable to his name to warrant his stumbling far along the paths to popular glory trodden by Mantovani (SW 1027, 7-in., \$7.95).

SONY STERECORD: It's even more startling to find that the one tape of *Christmas Hymns and Carols* received in advance of the holidays stems from—of all places—Japan. The Tokyo Culo Costello male chorus here is liberated from most of the built-in hum of their earlier R 5 tape (Nov. 1956 Tape Deck), but nevertheless seems inexplicably dispirited as it plows stolidly through *Adeste Fideles*, two German and three English seasonal favorites, topped off by the inevitable (but why?) Schubert *Ave Maria*. Only in the too-brief *fa-las* of *Deck the Halls* does it come momentarily to life, and never is it sonorously expansive enough to fill out the sonic spaciousness of the stereo medium (• • F 4, 7-in., \$6.95).

TICO: One of the most dubiously valuable tape-enlargements of my musical horizons has been a not entirely docile introduction to the literature of mambos and cha-chachas (if that's the proper plural for the latter). A little goes a long way with me, and in the case of Tito Rodriguez's *Mambo Madness*, even extremely crisp recording can't dissuade me that the trumpet squeals and extended (Spanish, of course) vocals here don't go entirely too far. (TI 5-6, 5-in., \$6.00; or \$4.50 to Livingston Tape Club members.)

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TESTED IN THE HOME



Equipment reports appearing in this section are prepared by members of HIGH FIDELITY'S staff, on the basis of actual use in conjunction with a home music system, and the resulting subjective evaluations of equipment are expressed as the opinions of the reviewer only. Reports are usually restricted to items of general interest, and no attempt is made to report on items that are obviously not designed primarily for high-fidelity applications. Each report is sent to the manufacturer before publication; he is free to correct the specifications paragraph, to add a comment at the end of the report, or to request that it be deferred, (pending changes in his product) or not be published. He may not, however, change the report. Failure of a new product to appear in TITH may mean either that it has not been submitted for review, or that it was submitted and was found to be unsatisfactory. These reports may not be quoted or reproduced, in part or in whole, for any purpose whatsoever, without written permission from the publisher.

RCA 501S1 Biaxial Speaker

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a 12-in. dual-cone two-way loudspeaker. **Frequency range:** 40 to 18,000 cycles. **Power capacity:** 12 watts continuous. **Magnet weights:** woofer — 14.5; cone tweeter — 1.47 oz. **Nominal impedance:** 8 ohms. **Dimensions:** 12 1/8 in. diameter by 6 1/2 deep. **List price:** \$55.95. **MANUFACTURER:** RCA Electronic Components Division, Camden, N. J.

RCA's design engineers have long felt, as have many others in the loudspeaker business, that a cone woofer could best be matched in sound by a cone tweeter, and that phasing difficulties between the drivers in a multiway system could be minimized by coaxial mounting of the units.

The 501S1 is a true dual-cone coaxial, with its tweeter mounted in front of the woofer cone, but it differs from most conventional coaxials in that the tweeter is mounted off-center, probably to reduce the annoying cavity effect that is often set up between the rear of the tweeter and the woofer cone in similar designs. The woofer itself has the usual corrugated paper suspension, to a distance of about a half inch inward from the edge of the frame. This is then attached to the main cone by means of a ring of sponge rubber (see illustration) which effectively damps the edge motion of the cone, provides increased compliance, and adds a small amount to its mass. The result is a very free-moving, low-distortion suspension, having a measured free-air cone resonance of about 58 cycles.

Installation of the speaker is as simple as that of any single-cone 12-inch speaker. The tweeter is already mounted on a Y-shaped bracket, and need not be removed for installation. As an added convenience, RCA has thoughtfully attached a 2 1/2-foot cable to the speaker, with a plug at one end that fits into a receptacle on the speaker frame, and a pair of screw terminals at the other end for mounting on the rear of the enclosure. One of these terminals is marked with a red dot, and the enclosed instructions explicitly state that positive polarity on the red terminal will give forward cone movement — thus permitting precise phasing of the 501S1 with any other speakers, and without the need of resorting to battery tests.

Efficiency of this speaker is quite high



The Biaxial with its connecting cable.

for a direct radiator; I would estimate about 5% or 6% in free air. Its low-frequency characteristic is such that it performs best in a reflex-type enclosure, and when so baffled and properly tuned it produces very nicely integrated and well-blended sound from its twin cones. It is unmistakably on the bright side, with a crisp high end that brings brass instruments and violins to the fore, and its low end seems very smooth down to a little below 55 cycles, where it starts to drop gradually to about 40, disappearing below that. There was very little trace of doubling below cutoff, and this lack of distortion is reflected in its ability to reproduce bass instruments with considerable definition and cleanliness.

An ear check with a test oscillator bears out RCA's high end specification on this speaker. Its response begins to rise above about 1,500 cycles, hits a broad peak at around 3,000 or 4,000, and begins to roll off slowly out to around 8,000, where there are several more sharp peaks of lesser amplitude out to around 13,000, and a gradual falling off above that to around 17,500 cycles, where my ears give out.

This is a fine speaker for those who demand presence from a high-fidelity system, although it is a little too bright for my taste. The 501S1 is well worth the consideration of anyone shopping for a medium-priced high-quality speaker.

— J. G. H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The primary purpose of the off-center (biaxial) tweeter mounting is to avoid exact in-phase and out-of-phase relationships between the two cones in the crossover region, thus minimizing irregularities in frequency response. The response as described in this report suggests that the tests were conducted under average acoustical conditions with the speaker mounted in a parallelepiped enclosure, and it confirms our response specifications. The choice of an enclosure is in our opinion a matter of personal taste. We respect the opinion of others who have expressed decided preference for the 501S1 in all other types of enclosure. The comments on brightness were gratifying indeed. Good high-frequency response is difficult to obtain without resort to horn loading of the tweeter, so we have achieved our goal. To those who like sound on the deeper or mellower side, we say "Turn down the treble control, or try our 502S1 single-cone speaker."

Fisher 20-A Power Amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a single-chassis self-powered basic power amplifier. **Power output:** 15 watts. **IM distortion:** below 1.5% at 10 watts; below 0.7% at 5 watts. **Frequency response:** ± 0.1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles; ± 1.0 db, 10 to 100,000 cycles. **Power response:** ± 1.0 db, 15 to 30,000 cycles at 15 watts. **Hum and noise:** better than 90 db below 15 watts. **Damping factor:** 16. **Sensitivity:** with level-set control full up, 0.7 volts required for 15 watts output. **Input:** one, at high impedance, from control unit. **Control:** input level-set. Power supply socket for control unit. **Outputs:** 4, 8, and 16 ohms to speaker. **Tubes:** 12AX7, 2 — EL84, EZ-80. **Dimensions:** 13 in. long by 4 1/4 wide by 6 3/4 high. **Price:** \$59.50. **MANUFACTURER:** Fisher Radio Corp., 21-21 44th Dr., Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Put this down as a neat, light, compact power amplifier, and a truly outstanding



Fisher's 20-A 15-watt power amplifier.

example of how much it is possible to simplify the design of a high-quality amplifier.

For all its simplicity, the 20-A retains most of the convenience features that will be found on the more expensive Fisher

equipment. The attractively styled case is also quite similar to that used on some of the larger Fisher amplifiers, with the main difference being the neat compactness of the 20-A.

Within its modest power limitations, the amplifier performs much like the best of Fisher's high-powered models. Its hum level is extremely low—I was able to detect only the slightest trace of hum with my ear up against the loudspeaker cone. At low-to-medium volume levels, the sound of the 20-A is outstandingly clear and well defined. Its tightly-controlled bass performance nicely complements its crisp, transparent high end, and the over-all subjective effect is that of an amplifier having excellent control over the loudspeaker it is feeding.

Because of its rated 15-watt output, the 20-A should not be used with low-efficiency loudspeakers. Its compact, practical design and reasonable price make the 20-A well worth the consideration of the hi-fi enthusiast, particularly where a modest budget and limited space are important.

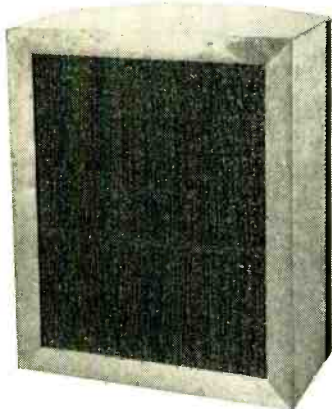
— J. G. H.

Heath SS-1B Range-Extending Loudspeaker Kit

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a low-frequency driver and super-tweeter installed in a ducted-port bass reflex enclosure, and supplied as a home-construction kit. **Frequency response** (when used with Heath SS-1 system for mid and high range coverage): ± 5 db, 35 to 16,000 cycles. **Power rating**: 35 watts, speech and music. **Nominal impedance**: 16 ohms. **Speakers**: specially-designed Jensen 15-in. woofer; specially-designed Jensen horn-loaded super-tweeter. **Magnet weights**: woofer, 56 oz; tweeter, 6.8 oz. **Crossover slope**: 12 db/octave. **Balance control**: 16-ohm L-pad for super-tweeter. **Dimensions** (SS-1B only): 29 in. high by 23 wide by 17 1/2 deep. **Price**: \$99.95. **MANUFACTURER**: The Heath Company, Benton Harbor, Mich.

The Heath SS-1 two-way speaker kit was reported on in this department in May 1956. It was found to be a truly remarkable performer for its low cost and small size, but it was unquestionably lacking in response at both ends of the audible spectrum, a condition that was to be expected in such a system.

The SS-1B range extender, however, does away with this limitation by adding the few additional octaves at the top and



The completed Heath Range Extender.

bottom which make the difference between a "very nice little system" and one with really wide range.

This is one of the few multi-way speaker systems which, despite four different types of drivers, spaced fairly far apart, manages to produce very well-blended and cohesive sound. There is a remarkable lack of "source shifting" or changing coloration with changing frequency, and the over-all sound has about it a considerable sensation of openness.

With two level-set controls to adjust (one for the super-tweeter and one for the high-frequency section of the SS-1) it can be a rather tricky matter to adjust the whole system for optimum balance, since enough recordings are variable enough in sound so that a correct setting for one does not sound right for another. I found that the simplest way of setting the level controls was by means of the "white noise" hiss produced by an FM tuner when set between stations. Using this signal source, it was fairly easy to set the controls so that a minimum of audible "pitch" was discernible from the system. Incorrect settings of driver level controls will produce "steps" in the response curve which show up as definite pitches when reproducing white noise. Optimum settings reduce this pitch to a minimum.

When so adjusted, the Heath system produced sound which fairly closely matched the balance of my standard system, but which had significantly more projection in the middle and high ranges (due to the horn drivers). Its sound could best be described as being "forward", with a full, deep low end and surprisingly smooth top. The super-tweeter is notably smoother than most of its type, and when operated at low to moderate volume levels, sounds much like some of the better cone tweeters.

In terms of flexibility, one of the more attractive features of the Heath speaker system is the inclusion of a separate pair of input connections and a throwover switch enabling the woofer to be connected separately to a second amplifier, for bi-amplifier operation. When operated bi-amplifier, the sound from the Heath system becomes, as might be expected, perceptibly cleaner and better defined, particularly at the low end (where the main advantages of bi-amplifier operation are realized). Either way, though, the SS-1B range extender is an ideal addition to the smaller SS-1 system, and is a logical choice for the hobbyist who likes to build his own equipment but who also likes to be certain it will work properly when completed.

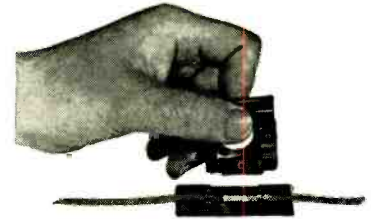
— J. G. H.

Gibson Girl Semi-Pro Tape Splicer

DESCRIPTION: a small tape splicing jig and cutter, with protective cover for cutting instrument. **List price**: \$3.50. **MANUFACTURER**: Robins Industries, 214-26 Forty-first Ave., Bayside 61, N. Y.

Nearly every book that has been written about tape recording includes a short section on how to splice tape. The instruc-

tions provided usually suggest holding the two sections of tape together, cutting them at an angle (to prevent clicks) using a pair of non-magnetized scissors, and then holding the ends of the tape in line while a piece of splicing tape is bridged across the butted ends of the tape. At this point, the splicing tape is likely to be much wider than the 1/4-in. tape, so the scissors must be used again to trim it off, cutting slightly into the edges of the tape



Twin curved blades trim edges of splice.

itself to make doubly sure that there is no splicing tape overhanging the tape edges.

For a tape splice to be silent and non-adherent to adjacent layers on the reel, there must be no exposed areas of coated tape. The ends of the splice must fit squarely together (without any gap between them), and the edges of the splicing tape must be exactly even with (or slightly inward from) the edges of the tape itself. Also, the spliced ends must be precisely in line, or the tape will buckle or shift sideways as it passes over the playback head. Obviously, it takes more than a little manual dexterity to turn out a perfect splice with nothing more than a roll of splicing tape and a pair of scissors. For this reason, professionals and amateurs who do considerable editing prefer to use a splicing jig of some kind to hold the tape firmly in place and perfectly in line.

The original Gibson Girl tape splicer was an ingenious, though expensive, splicer which clamped the tapes in place and cut them at a precise 45-degree angle. Then after the strip of splicing tape was laid across the splice, a pair of curved cutters would trim off the edges, putting a slightly concave cut into the edges of the splice, hence "the splice with the Gibson Girl shape."

The Semi-Pro Gibson Girl splicer is a much less expensive and greatly simplified version of the earlier model. Made of plastic, it consists of a channeled aligning jig and a two-sided cutting tool. The tapes to be spliced together are pressed into the jig's channels and held in place by friction (the channels are very slightly narrower than the tape). The angled side of the cutter is then placed between four guide posts on the jig and pressed downward, cutting both tapes at a 45-degree angle. A strip of 1/2-in. splicing tape is laid across the jig between the indicated guide lines and pressed onto the tape. Then the other side of the cutter (with the two curved blades) is placed between the guide posts and pressed downward. This puts the concave cuts into the edges of the tape, and completes the splice.

Continued on page 134



SKITCH...on his Presto Turntable

"MY CUSTOM HI-FI OUTFIT is as important to me as my Mercedes-Benz sports car," says *Skitch Henderson*, pianist, TV musical director and audiophile. "That's why I chose a PRESTO turntable to spin my records. In my many years working with radio and recording studios I've never seen engineers play back records on anything but a *turntable*—and it's usually a PRESTO turntable.

"My own experience backs up the conclusion of the engineers: for absolutely constant turntable speed with no annoying 'Wow' and 'Flutter,' especially at critical 33½ and 45 rpm speeds, for complete elimination of motor noise and 'rumble,' I've found nothing equals a PRESTO turntable. It's heavy . . . it's brilliantly machined . . . it's the only instrument on which the genuine audiophile should ever allow his records to be played."

Visit the *Hi-Fi Sound Salon* nearest you to verify Mr. Henderson's comments. Whether you currently own a conventional "one-piece" phonograph—or custom components—we think you'll be gratified with the difference you'll hear when you play your records through custom hi-fi components teamed with a PRESTO turntable. Write for free brochure, "*Skitch, on Pitch.*" to Dept. WX, Presto Recording Corporation, P.O. Box 506, Paramus, N. J.



MODEL T-2 12" "Promenade" turntable (33½ and 45) four pole motor, \$49.50

MODEL T-18 12" "Pirouette" turntable (33½, 45 and 78) four pole motor, \$75.00; with Hysteresis motor (Model T-18H), \$131.00



MODEL T-68 16" "Pirouette" turntable (33½, 45 and 78) four pole motor, \$99.00; with Hysteresis motor (Model T-68H), \$170.00

WALNUT "PANDORA" Turntable Cabinet by Robert W. Fuldner, \$42.50

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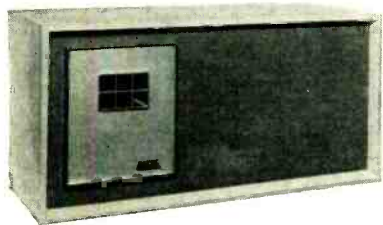
Continued from page 132

There's not much that can be said about anything as simple as this, except that it is very easy to use and is quite effective. The jig comes with two strips of adhesive on it which can be used to attach it firmly to the top panel or head cover of the recorder, where it is always within easy reach of the tape. When using the Semi-Pro, make sure that the tape is laid out straight at both ends of the jig before making the first cut; the channels are deep enough to hold the tape firmly in place, but they aren't quite long enough to prevent the cut tape ends from getting slightly out of alignment when the tape is twisted before it enters the jig.

All in all, a neat and effective splicer. — J.G.H.

Altec Lansing 901B Record Reproducer and 700B, 824A, and 826A Speaker Systems

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer):
MODEL 901B—a record changer and amplifier installed in a compact finished cabinet. **Record changer:** Collaro RC-54. **Amplifier:** Altec Melodist 339B. **Amplifier frequency range:** 20 to 22,000 cycles. **Power output:** 10 watts at below 2% harmonic distortion. **Gain:** 132 db, maximum. **Inputs:** total of three, one for high-impedance microphone or phono cartridge, two for tape and tuner. **Controls:** selector/equalizer (RCVR, TAPE, MIC, EUR, LP, RIAA, 600); volume or loudness and AC power; bass (± 13 db, 50 cycles) treble (± 15 db, 10,000 cycles); loudness off-on; input level-sets for all channels. **Outputs:** 4, 8, or 16 ohms, to speaker. Two switched AC convenience outlets. **Tubes:** 12AY7, 12AX7, 12AU7, 2-6CM6, 6AX5-GT. **Cabinet finishes:** mahogany or blonde. **Dimensions:** 20 3/4 in. wide by 15 3/4 deep by 10 1/8 high. **Price:** \$237.00. Iron legs \$4.05 per set. **MODEL 700B**—a small two-way speaker system. **Power rating:** 20 watts. **Impedance:** 8 ohms. **Frequency range:** 70 to 22,000 cycles, guaranteed. **Low-frequency driver:** special 10-in. unit. **Tweeter:** model 3000A. **Cabinet finishes:** mahogany or blonde. **Dimensions:** 22 3/4 in. wide by 10 1/8 deep by 11 1/4 high. **Price:** \$111.00. **MODEL 824A**—a compact two-way speaker system. **Power rating:** 20 watts. **Impedance:** 8 ohms. **Frequency response:** 50 to 22,000 cycles, guaranteed. **Low-frequency driver:** model 412A. **Tweeter:** model 3000A. **Cabinet finishes:** mahogany or blonde. **Dimensions:** 19 1/2 in. wide by 16 deep by 28 high. **Price:** \$198.00. **MODEL 826A**—a two-way speaker system consisting of a 15-inch 803A woofer and 802C horn-loaded tweeter, installed



The 700B Melodist speaker system.

in a bass-reflex lowboy furniture enclosure. **Frequency response:** guaranteed 35 to 22,000 cycle range. **Power rating:** 30 watts. **Impedance:** 16 ohms. **Cabinet finish:** mahogany or blonde. **Dimensions:** 37 1/2 in. wide by 20 1/2 deep by 28 high. **Price:** \$324. **MANUFACTURER:** Altec Lansing Corporation, 9356 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif., or 161 Sixth Ave., New York 13, N. Y.

Once upon a time you either wired your own amplifier, with nothing much more than a schematic as a guide, or you went out and bought a ready-made piece of

cabinetry with some tubes inside. Over the years, the wide gap has been better and better filled. At one end, we now have kits which almost anyone can assemble with success. At the other extreme, we have radio-phonograph consoles which amply qualify as high fidelity. Near this end of the line is the group of Altec-Lansing equipment reviewed here. It makes an impressive addition to the once very short, but now gradually growing,



The 901B houses a changer, amplifier.

list of components which anyone who has two eyes and two hands can interconnect—and thereby achieve true high fidelity. With this equipment, Altec helps kill the persistent rumor that hi-fi is only for college graduates with degrees in audio engineering.

The Altec systems adhere, first, to their commendable concept that to qualify as high fidelity, the speaker must be in a cabinet separate from the equipment. So we start with an equipment cabinet (the 901B reproducer) containing a Collaro changer, a GE dual-sapphire* cartridge, and a Melodist 339B amplifier. The Melodist amplifier's earlier counterpart, the A-339A, was TITHed in April 1955. The 339B differs from it only in the addition of a switch to cut the loudness control in and out of circuit, and in having more explicitly identified equalizer positions.

These components have been assembled in a compact, attractively styled cabinet to form the 901B reproducer, and all it requires is the addition of an external loudspeaker to complete the entire system. The 901B is supplied for table-top location, but 16-in. iron legs are available at small extra cost so the unit may be used as a chairside console. All connections to and from the amplifier are accessible through the bottom of the cabinet, and leads may be brought out through holes in the rear, to the speaker and AC wall outlet. As in the A-339A, there are also additional input connections on the amplifier for a tape recorder, tuner, and high-impedance microphone.

Sound from the 901B is clean and quite listenable at all levels up to moderate room volume, at which point the 10-watt nominal rating of the amplifier begins to limit its output. It will produce

*Suggestion: when the microgroove sapphire wears out in 10 to 50 plays, replace it with a diamond.

plenty of volume with a reasonably efficient speaker, but cannot be expected to compete in cleanliness with the more deluxe Altec systems.

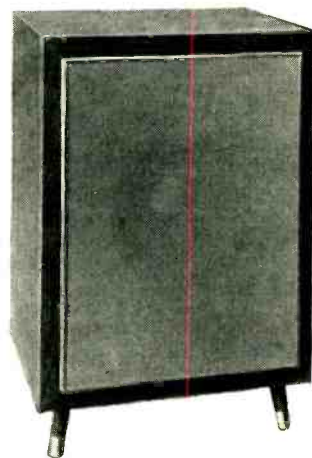
To go with the record reproducer are three different speaker systems. (In passing, we might point out that Altec has (a) more elaborate equipment and (b) more elaborate speaker systems.) Smallest of the three is the 700B Melodist, which was reviewed in the April 1955 issue.

Our listening tests with it this time have strengthened our earlier feelings. It produces quite clean bass, and crisp, well-defined highs. The 70-cycle low-frequency limit tends to make it sound rather thin in contrast to its extended high end.

The 824A Iconic speaker system is larger and has much more ambitious pretensions than the miniature Melodist system. It is a two-way system incorporating a 12-in. woofer and a compression-type super-tweeter, with 3,000 cycle crossover network. Its sound is rather on the bright side, but this is nicely offset by a full, solid low-frequency end. The driver units blend unusually well with each other, and the tweeter exhibits remarkably little of the spitty quality that often characterizes super-tweeter sound.

Voice reproduction is somewhat bass-heavy, but the over-all impression from orchestral program material is of remarkably powerful, crisp sound. This is all the more surprising in view of its size, since the apparent sound source somehow seems to be considerably larger. A very nice medium-sized speaker system

The 826A is built into quite an attractive lowboy cabinet, and stands about eight inches from the floor on four tapered legs. It can be located anywhere along the wall of a room, leaving the corners for more conventional appointments such as chairs, bookcases, or doorways. But wall location is still of some importance; I got best results with the 826A located against a wall about three feet from a corner, although this optimum positioning will vary from room to room.



The middle-sized 824A Iconic system.

In this position, sound from the 826A was crisp, well defined, and a little on the bright side (to my ears, anyway).

On music, the low end was tight and quite deep, but rather cold and sparse.

Continued on page 136

“as silent as
the stars”



STARLIGHT ARM
MODEL 07



COMPLETE STARLIGHT UNIT
MODEL 671

Exclusive double wrist action... counter-balanced head for *minimum mass* assures *perfect tracking* and *reduced record wear* . . . instantaneous counter-weight adjustment from 4 to 14 grams . . . lifts to vertical position for *easy cartridge replacement* on precision-machined pivot . . . *ball bearing swivel* and *single hole mounting* . . . total arm resonance well outside the audible range . . . beautifully finished in *black* and *satin chrome* . . . 12 inches long overall, plays all records up to 16".

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- ★ *Micrometric* speed adjustment from 16 to 83 rpm.
- ★ Wow and flutter is *less than 0.2% RMS*.
- ★ Noise and rumble better than *40db below average recording level*.

- ★ *Fully shielded*, 4-pole motor . . . laminations cast in lead.
- ★ Entire unit supported on “Lord” *anti-vibration mounts*.
- ★ Attractive *satin-finished* aluminum mounting plate.

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Metzner ENGINEERING CORPORATION
HOLLYWOOD 38, CALIFORNIA

TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 134

The fact that it was possible to follow the bass line in music without too much difficulty indicates that this system is quite smooth down there, but I had some trouble in identifying one bass instrument from another.

The high end of the 826A is obviously very wide-range, and its horn-loaded tweeter is about as smooth as any of this type that I've heard. As a result, record



Lowboy model 826A two-way system.

surface noise and fuzziness are subdued, and strings and brass instruments have some of that "sheen" that is present in live performances but isn't often heard in the home.

The 826A is equally good on reproduced speech; very little boom from the male voice, and no gross accentuation of sibilants.

I don't know how far up this system extends; my ears collapse at a little above 17,000 cycles anyway. I would estimate that the system's low end falls gradually below about 70 cycles and increasingly rapidly below 50. This may, however, just be a subjective reaction to the slightly bright sound of this system (which seems to subdue the low end).

Generally, the 826A gives a nice replica of live sound in the living room, although it brings the performers a little more forward than they were recorded. Personally, I like a somewhat warmer sound from a speaker system, but many people still prefer a more "powerful" sound, as might be heard from a fairly close vantage point in the concert hall.—C.F.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Our purpose in bringing out these four furniture packaged units was to make available to non-do-it-yourselfers ready-assembled units made up of our genuine catalogued high-fidelity components, and to provide a central amplifier/record player package which could be used with any one of several sizes of matching loudspeakers, so as to fit a broad range of budgets and a variety of room sizes.

Fisher Transistor Pre-amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): **MODEL TR-1**—an all-transistor self-powered pre-amplifier. **Inputs:** two; one for high-output cartridge requiring 27,000 ohm load, and one for microphone, low-impedance cartridge, or high-impedance cartridge requiring 47,000 ohms load. **Controls:** Phono/Microphone selector switch; High/Low-impedance selector switch; combined volume control and power on-off switch. **Output:** one, at low impedance, to high-impedance input. **Frequency response:** ± 0.5 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles.

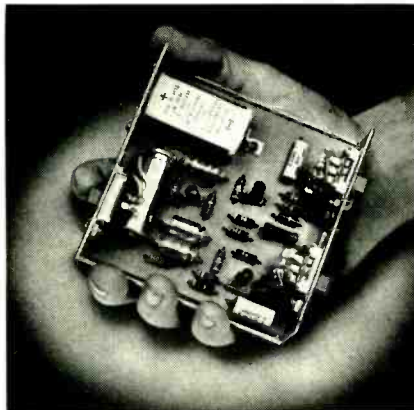
Gain: 48 db max. **Harmonic distortion:** below 0.3%, 20 to 20,000 cycles. **Hum and microphonic noise:** absolutely non-existent. **Noise:** essentially white noise, 65 decibels below 10 millivolts input for Hi-Z cartridges. **Output voltage:** 0.5 to 1.0 volt. **Power supply:** self-contained battery or auxiliary AC power supply. **Power consumption:** 0.0217 watt. **Transistors:** 3—2N109. **Dimensions:** 2 in. high by 4 1/8 wide by 4 1/2 deep, over-all. **Price:** \$29.95. **MANUFACTURER:** Fisher Radio Corporation, 21-21 44th Dr., Long Island City 1, N. Y.

When I first examined this tiny preamp I put it down mentally as a bit of competition to the usual one-tube preamp, selling for around \$10 or \$12, which can be used between a given cartridge and a power amplifier. Such simple, inexpensive preamps find wide application, particularly for the modernization of older equipment; you install a magnetic cartridge, add the preamp, and you have the first step toward a hi-fi system.

The Fisher TR-1 looked as if it would fill this bill perfectly. The price was a bit high but that, I supposed, was because transistors were used—and maybe their primary purpose, I thought, was as an advertising or sales gimmick.

So I connected everything up and, to my astonishment, the sound that came from my system was some of the cleanest and most transparent I have heard from my "reference" system. The TR-1 is, in fact, the first example of transistorized equipment I have encountered that really gives some indication of the potentialities of transistors in hi-fi applications.

It has long been known that transistors



The transistor preamp, minus its cover.

offer several properties important in high quality audio equipment. Among these are lack of microphonic susceptibility, lack of hum (because their very low current consumption allows them to be powered by a small battery) and potentially very low noise. On the other hand, though, they have seemed unsuitable for use in precision low-distortion applications because of their variability from one to another of the "same" type and production run, and because of their critical power supply regulation requirements. But if the Fisher TR-1 sent to us is typical of what can be done with transistors at their present state of development, I for one am willing to overlook their theoretical disadvantages and acknowledge that careful selection of components somewhere during the assembly process can circumvent the hazards of erratic transistor manufacture.

It may be that the TR-1 is a compromise between hope and caution on the part of

its makers. Cautiously, they kept it small, since smallness sells even when the buyer is doubtful about performance. Hopefully, they built in RIAA equalization and four input functions, so that the unit could serve as a self-sufficient preamplifier when used with just a pickup, power amplifier, and loudspeaker. Which is to say, it need not play through, nor be limited by (in freedom from distortion) an auxiliary control unit. Using the two receptacles (see specifications) in various combinations with the selector switch positions, practically any cartridge can be accurately matched to the TR-1, or the fixed RIAA equalization can be switched out so the preamp can be used with any high-impedance microphone that will operate properly with a 47,000 ohm load.

The TR-1 is normally supplied with its own built-in battery supply, but an external AC power supply is available for those who do not wish to be concerned with battery life and periodic replacement. In either case, the switch on the TR-1's volume control acts as the power switch for the preamp alone, so it must be turned off separately from the power amplifier it is being used with. A suggested way of controlling both the preamp and power amplifier from a common switch would be to use the TR-1's external power supply and connect both it and the power amplifier to a single AC switch.

Because the TR-1 tested was battery-powered, its hum level was for all intents and purposes nonexistent. Its hiss level and microphonics were equally low, but its sound is what makes it a truly outstanding performer.

Used directly into my power amplifier, however—by-passing all tone-controls—the accuracy of the TR-1's RIAA equalization, together with its remarkable cleanliness of sound, fully exposes the differences in equalization between disks recorded with the old Columbia LP, AES, and early London curves. One can, of course, feed the TR-1's output into the high-level input of a conventional control unit, and while this still precludes the use of the equalization controls, it allows the tone controls to be used for trimming up the playback balance. However, it also brings in the latter-stage distortion of the control unit, which we were trying to avoid. So—for the nonce—this preamp is at its best when used by itself with RIAA disks.



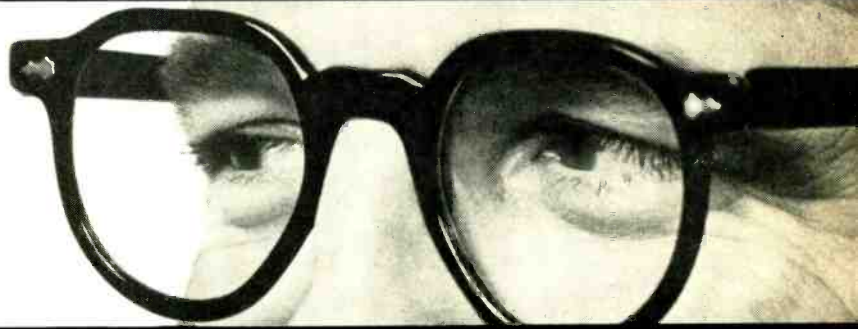
One knob controls volume and power.

If the TR-1 could have been a complete control unit, comparable in flexibility to, say, Fisher's own 80-C, it would be formidable competition for any preamp-equalizer on the market.

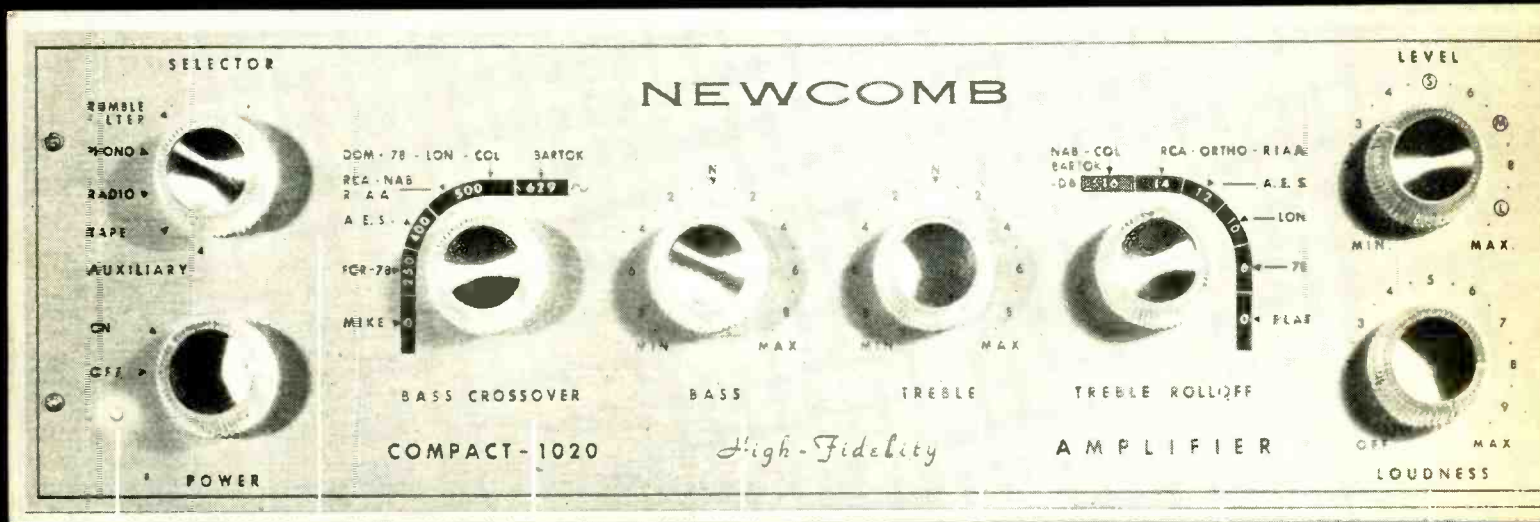
As it is now, it is a first-class part-time

Continued on page 138

LET'S TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT



CONCENTRATED QUALITY!



A pilot light. Essential to the Newcomb Compact 1020 control unit—preamplifier—power amplifier. With rum so low, you'd have no other reminder you left the power on. Power! Plenty of smooth, clean power for the largest multiple speaker system.

Inputs for every need. Note the crystalline control knobs, chosen as a visible symbol of the crystal-clear job of amplification you get from the 1020. It is elegant, stylish, beautiful to look at. Brushed brass-colored face plate, case is dusted with gold.

Separate bass and treble compensation for precise record reproduction. 36 possible combinations help you "tune in" a note-for-note recreation of the original performance. It's fun to work with controls which permit so high a degree of flexibility.

Wide-ranging bass and treble "tone" controls are separate, of course. But they are also of especial excellence. Advanced Newcomb engineering and meticulous assembly result in tone controls which preserve the absolute purity of the amplified signal.

Tone controls must never be taken for granted. They are essential for bringing into balance all of the irregularities present in the recording and reproduction processes... such as recording hall acoustics, living room acoustics, speaker variations.

See how the compensation controls are marked both by number and by record make. Notice how all controls have index marks so that you can exactly duplicate settings which are perfect for your listening area, source material, and your own taste.

Level and loudness controls form a smooth-working team to bring you music exactly the way your sensitive ear requires it. Superior hearing curve compensation furnished by the loudness control is tailored to the individual room by the level control.

NEWCOMB

...since 1937. Hollywood's leading producer of precision instruments for the control and amplification of sound—high fidelity components, record and transcription players for professionals, radios, public address systems.

Concentrated into the Newcomb Compact 1020 are three integrated components—a preamplifier sensitive enough for the lowest level pickup, exceptionally flexible control section, a flat, smooth, clean power amplifier. When he combines them, the manufacturer assumes total responsibility for the perfect performance of your complete amplification system. And when this manufacturer is Newcomb, you get a distinctive, clean and balanced sound that is all but impossible to attain any other way. Newcomb amplifiers are worked, tested, and reworked until they meet Newcomb standards—the highest in the high fidelity industry.



A companion in concentrated perfection to the Compact 1020 is the Newcomb Compact 200, an extremely sensitive, exceptionally stable, beautifully refined FM-AM Radio Tuner.

TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 136

"front end" for a phono-only system of the very highest quality. It can also serve as the preamp section of a more flexible system, in which application its volume control could be used as a pre-set phono input level control.

The TR-1 has proven to me that transistors *can*—if it is possible to apply quality-control effectively to their selection—play an extremely potent part in the improvement of early amplifier stages. How well they stand up under long usage remains to be seen. Further, I should be interested in knowing whether Mr. Fisher is contemplating a companion unit, furnishing the other facilities of conventional control units. Meanwhile, the TR-1 can provide a level of performance in the home from RIAA disks that will come as a revelation to owners of many current preamps. — J.G.H.

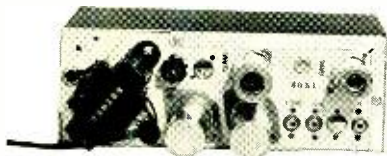
The Van-Amp

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): an electronic dividing network for use between a control unit and two amplifiers in a bi-amplifier system. **Crossover frequency:** continuously variable from 90 to 1,100 cycles. **Voltage gain:** 8 times. **Attenuation rate:** 12 db per octave. **Price:** in kit form, \$39.95; completely assembled, \$56.95. **MANUFACTURER:** General Apparatus Co., 346 East 32nd St., New York 16, N. Y.

This unit originated a long time ago in the pages of HIGH FIDELITY, when we first discussed bi-amplifier systems in the November-December 1952 issue. The circuit has been modified and improved since then, and we now have a smart-looking three-knob device which provides continuously-variable crossover between about 70 and 1,000 cycles (these were the 3-db-down points, according to our tests). The rate of attenuation appears to be about 8 db/octave, according to our workbench tests, at least until you get far away from the crossover point, when it begins to approach its rated 12 db/octave.

The left-hand knob controls the high-frequency level, the center one the crossover frequency, and the right one controls the low-frequency level.

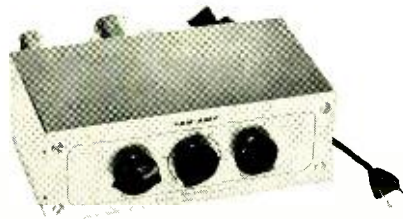
The Van-Amp provides a substantial amount of gain. We found that considerable care must be exercised in the adjust-



Connections to the Van-Amp are at rear.

ment of levels throughout the system. Because of the gain in the Van-Amp, there is at least some possibility of overloading power amplifiers connected to its output. There is also definite danger of overloading the first stage of the Van-Amp, thereby producing excessive amounts of distortion. The usual procedure should be followed: turn the level control on the input channels of the preamp-control unit *off*. Then

adjust level controls (wherever they exist) to three-quarters full on in this order: power amplifier, Van-Amp, preamp-control unit main volume (with the loudness function, if any, switched out, naturally), and finally bring up the level control(s) on the input channel(s) of the preamp-control unit until maximum desired loudness is obtained.



The Van-Amp variable crossover unit.

Hum and tube noise are a major problem in several of the electronic dividing networks with which we have worked recently. The Van-Amp minimizes this problem, but it still does add a bit of hum to the system. By starting out with no audible hum, and then exercising every care in connections, the small amount inherent in the Van-Amp will not be objectionable and may not be audible at all.

—C.F.

Components Professional Junior Turntable

DESCRIPTION: a compact, 12-in. belt-driven single-speed turntable. **Speed:** 78, 45, 33.3 or 16 rpm, selectable by installing appropriate motor shaft bushing. **Dimensions:** 12 in. wide by 14 1/2 long, 2 1/2 in. required under motor board. **Turntable height:** 1 1/8 in. **Price:** \$39.50. **MANUFACTURER:** Components Corporation, Denville, N. J.

Several readers have written to us during the past few months asking why no manufacturer made a really high-quality *single-speed* 33.3-rpm turntable that could be sold at lower cost than the multi-speed units. All we could do was tell them we didn't know why, but we'd try and find out. Now, however, we can point to the Components Professional Junior and say "there is such a thing."

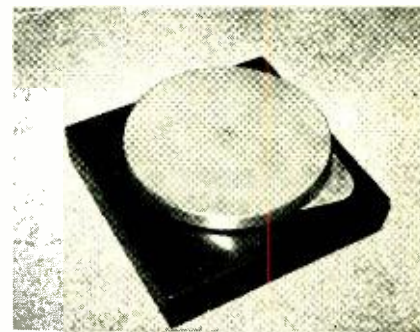
The standard Components Professional turntable (TITHed in the Jan.-Feb. 1954 HIGH FIDELITY) is a very heavy and bulky unit whose design succeeds in reducing rumble and speed variation almost to the vanishing point, through the use of a high-inertia turntable and a light belt drive system. Its three speeds are selectable by lifting the cover from the drive motor and simply shifting the cloth belt to another step on the motor shaft. The principle of the thing lends itself ideally to simplification without significant loss of quality, and the Professional Junior is the result.

In the Junior model, a 9-in. diameter ceramic turntable supplies the flywheel inertia, and a machined aluminum turntable fits over it like an inverted dish. The 1 1/2-in. space between the edge of the flywheel and that of the turntable is sufficient to clear the top of the motor, and it is from there that a flat rubber belt runs around the outer edge of the ceramic flywheel. Essentially, then, this is a sys-

tem of belt drive onto the turntable rim, but the fact that it is an *inner* rim means that all of the business section of it is concealed from view. It also enables the turntable to be installed where space is at an absolute minimum, because the only area occupied by the whole system is that of the turntable itself. As a matter of fact, if a sufficiently compact arm were used, this turntable could easily fit into the record changer compartment of an existing phono console.

I am sure that Components Corporation did a lot of careful considering before they decided to produce a turntable which is essentially single-speed. Its speed can, of course, be changed by replacing the drive motor pulley with one of a different size (at a cost of \$2.50 per extra pulley), but it is no little bother to do this, because the turntable must be unscrewed from the ceramic flywheel and then the motor must be carefully reoriented to true-up the drive belt. However, there are many record collectors who own nothing but LP disks, and of those whose collections include 78s, many use a record changer exclusively for them. So it would appear that the demand for a turntable such as the Junior will be quite high, particularly in view of its price and performance.

As might be expected from a belt-drive table, the Professional Junior's speed regulation is excellent, and its rumble very low. Since the rubber drive belt in the unit I tested tended to rub gently against a pair of guide pins that keep it centered on the motor pulley, it might be expected to wear out before heat from the motor attacks the rubber, but the belts are inexpensive and easy to replace. However, the gentle rubbing of this belt on its guide pins also tends to increase slightly the Junior's rumble level to above what it might otherwise be, so the Junior's performance is not as good as that of the



The Components Junior belt-drive table.

full-sized professional table. (But then its price isn't as high, either.)

The Junior will, however, outperform some turntables costing substantially more, and it is definitely well worth the attention of anyone looking for extreme compactness and very high quality at a price that should be expected to buy less ambitious performance. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Recent developments in the manufacture of belts have enabled us to eliminate the guide pins, as well as the need for occasional adjustment of the motor alignment. We are now using the new belt system on all Junior tables, and have made available a moderately-priced kit containing the new belts and pulley, for replacement on earlier Junior turntables.

ASTOUNDING PERFORMANCE

FROM

20 to 20,000 CYCLES

WITH A

SINGLE CHANNEL SPEAKER SYSTEM

GOODMANS

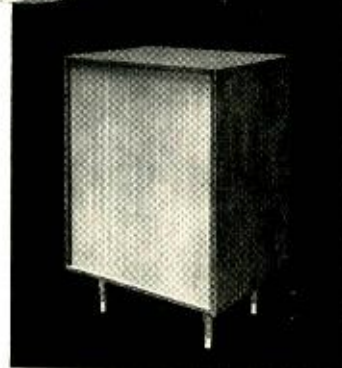
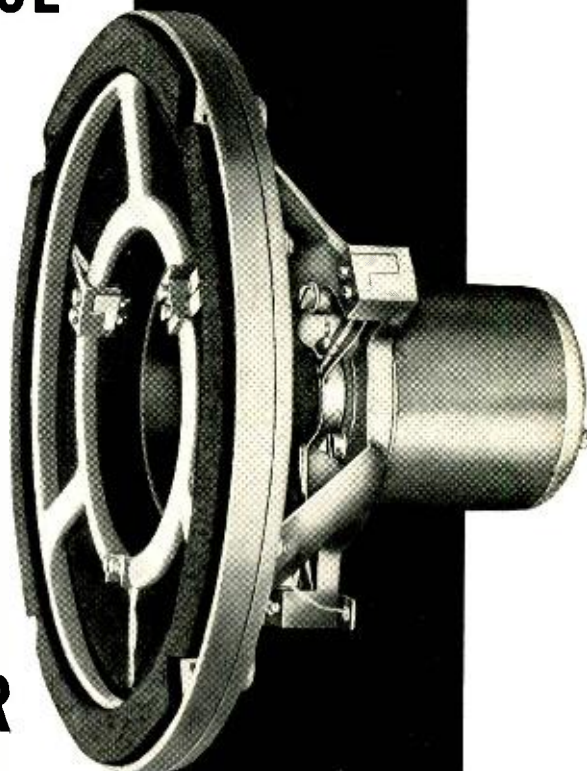
'free suspension'

AXIOM 80 LOUDSPEAKER

IN

'friction loaded'

ARU ENCLOSURE



The Goodmans Axiom 80 is a 10-inch, twin-cone, full range loudspeaker, whose performance, in a proper enclosure, is as astounding as its unique design.

The most revolutionary advance embodied in the Axiom 80 is its achievement of *free cone suspension*—the theoretical ideal that permits the cone to move as a true piston at low frequencies, without restriction and without distortion. Another direct result is that the fundamental resonance of the Axiom 80 is only 20 cycles—lower than that of any other commercially available loudspeaker.

The new ARU Friction Loaded Enclosure represents the perfect solution to the enclosure requirements of this superb reproducer. The Axiom 80, mounted in a Model C-1800 ARU Enclosure, will reproduce true bass fundamentals down to 20 cycles—with no 'hang-over' and without peaks above that frequency. Mid-range reproduc-

tion is clean and articulate and the 'highs' smooth to 20,000 cycles. All of this is accomplished without the use of special 'tweeters' and elaborate crossover networks.

Power handling capacity of the single Axiom 80/ARU system is entirely suitable for use in most home systems (8-12 watts, continuous program material; 4-6 watts, rms sine wave). Where greater power handling is desired, two Axiom 80 loudspeakers may be used together in the Model B-2800 ARU Enclosure or four may be used in the Model A-4800.

No multi channel system, however elaborate or costly, can surpass in performance these dual and quadruple Axiom 80/ARU systems.

ARU Enclosures are now available in easy-to-assemble kits, supplied complete with the necessary pre-cut lumber, grille cloth, padding, glue, hardware, instructions and the all-important ARU Acoustical Resistance Unit.

AXIOM 80 LOUDSPEAKERS

each \$68⁵⁰

ARU ENCLOSURES

Model C-1800 24" h x 18" w x 16" d
(for 1 Axiom 80)

59²⁵

Model B-2800 26" h x 20" w x 20" d
(for 2 Axiom 80s)

66⁸⁵

Model A-4800 30" h x 24" w x 20" d
(for 4 Axiom 80s)

74⁹⁰

slightly higher west of Rockies

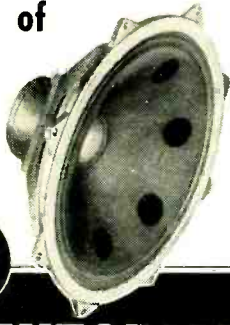
For complete details, see your hi-fi dealer or write to Dept. WM-2



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Low-Cost Hi-Fi with the SOUND ECONOMY of



STENTORIAN LOUDSPEAKERS

THE SOUND THAT STANDS ALONE . . .

Now, with W/B Stentorians, you can enjoy high-quality high fidelity at unbelievably low, low cost!

Manufactured in England by world-renowned Whiteley Electrical Radio Company — originators of the first commercial permanent magnet loudspeakers in 1927 — Stentorians provide a beauty and realism that has won the unqualified praise of nearly every leading audio critic and user, both here and abroad.

But hearing is believing! Hear the W/B Stentorians at your very first opportunity . . . and discover for yourself why these distinguished units are the leading low-cost speakers in the world today.

- 15" STENTORIAN WOOFER Model HF 1514**
Response, 25 — 4,000 cps.; bass resonance, 35 cps.; power rating, 25 watts; 10 lb. Magnet System **\$89.50**
- 12" STENTORIAN EXTENDED RANGE LOUDSPEAKER Model HF 1214**
Response, 25 — 14,000 cps.; bass resonance, 39 cps.; power rating, 15 watts; 5½ lb. Alcomax Magnet System **\$49.50**

STENTORIAN UNIVERSAL IMPEDANCE LOUDSPEAKERS WITH 4 — 8 — 16 OHM VOICE COILS

- Model HF 1012-U (10")** Response, 30 — 14,000 cps.; bass resonance, 35 cps.; power rating, 10 watts; 12,000 gauss; 2 lb. Alcomax Magnet System **\$17.95**
- Model 812-U (8")** Response, 50 — 12,000 cps.; bass resonance, 65 cps.; 12,000 gauss; 2 lb. Alcomax Magnet System. Other specifications as above. **\$13.95**
- Model HF 816-U** as above but with 16,000 gauss; 3½ lb. Alcomax Magnet System **\$29.50**

STENTORIAN EXTENDED RANGE SPEAKERS

- Model HF 810 (8")** Response, 50 — 12,000 cps.; bass resonance, 65 cps. **\$10.95**
- Model HF 610 (6")** Response, 60 — 12,000 cps.; bass resonance, 70 cps. **\$8.95**

- STENTORIAN TWEETER Model T-10**
Response, 2,000 — 16,000 cps.; power rating, 5 watts; 2½ lb. Alcomax Magnet System. **\$19.95**

- STENTORIAN CROSSOVER UNITS**
Correct matching inductances and capacitors for level crossover responses. Input and output impedances, 15 ohms. Individual units for crossover at 500, 1,500 cps. **\$13.95** or 3,000 cps. **\$9.95**

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For mid-range, high frequency system balance, or control of remote loudspeakers. Individual units for 4, 8, or 16 ohm impedance. **\$6.95 ea.**

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*T/M Whiteley Electrical Radio Company

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STRAIGHT TALK from Lectronics on Power Amplifiers

Many music lovers are terribly confused concerning the power requirements for high quality reproduction in the home. One common misapprehension is expressed: "I would like the quality of a high powered amplifier, but my speaker is rated at only twenty-five watts."

There is, in fact, no direct relation between speaker ratings and total amplifier output. For instance, I have found that my own speaker, which is rated at six watts continuous power, only begins to give real dynamic impact on a true fifty watt amplifier—one capable of furnishing the short duration, dynamic musical pulses that give color and power to music. It is, then, not so much a matter of how many watts one uses continuously, or can on test equipment; as it is a matter of ability to handle faithfully the dynamic power peaks that are part of music. Indeed, I have already measured (by certain new techniques) very short peaks up to fifty watts going into my six watt speaker!

Regardless of the technical controversies, the bigger amplifiers produced more musical quality with any loudspeaker. Every listener, even the casual one, comments on the improvement, on the greater solidity of bass passages, and the smoother, sheenier, string sound. Even the experts who publicly argue for moderate powered amplifiers, on a technical basis, will privately concede that, with a big amplifier, "It sounds better."

The Custom Series amplifiers were designed for better listening, rather than as technical tour de forces. With no gadgets or gimmicks, they definitely fulfill their purpose, to give the music lover better listening at a moderate price. The music lover can now enjoy his system more fully, without bankrupting himself for the sake of useless gadgets that contribute nothing to the musical result. The Custom Series Brochure describes the reasons in greater detail. The Custom "56" has been proven time and again on all kinds of music to outperform any other known amplifier. The Custom "100" is designed expressly for the perfectionist who will always insist on the final refinements. Its unique dual chassis construction, oversized power and output transformers, complete laboratory quality of design and construction show that it is intended to provide final quality under home conditions for years to come. Indeed, each of these amplifiers is covered by a two year unconditional guarantee, without parallel in the industry!

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Sincerely
Irving M. Fried

A brief resume of specifications. More complete specifications are available in the CUSTOM SERIES Brochure.

The Custom "56" \$119.95

Power: 50 watts continuous at .5% I.M. or lower rapidly decreasing at lower powers

Response: Plus or minus 1/2db. from 6cps to 60KC, with gradual roll-off beyond, for stability on large electrostatic systems

Stability: Virtually absolute

Tubes: 6BA8, 6550(2), 5U4GB

Hum and Noise: less than 2mv. absolute, referred to open circuit

The Custom "100" \$199.50

Power: 100 watts continuous at .5% I.M. or lower 50 watts at .2% I.M. or lower

Response: Same as above, with marginally improved stability on the larger electrostatic systems

Tubes: 6BA8, 6550 (4), 5U4GB(2)

Hum and Noise: same as above

Construction and weight: dual chassis, with separate power supply. All transformers fully encased. 8 7 16 ohm leads fused against continuous speaker overload. Bias and laboratory quadri-balance controls sealed against tampering.

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FI-MAN'S STOCKING

Continued from page 66

unaware of the advantage of using really good solder, so a roll of Kester or Dutch Boy 60/40 rosin-core solder should be especially welcomed. (60/40 refers to the ratio between lead and zinc in the compounded solder.)

Another very handy little device which unfortunately has not been widely publicized is a type of double-ended phono socket which can be inserted between two standard RETMA interconnecting cables to extend their length. These are more than worth their 59¢ price in convenience and added flexibility.

Not all hi-fi enthusiasts are do-it-yourselfers, but regardless of one's manual dexterity, the addition of a quick-heating soldering iron to the tool box will be a long-lasting asset. Weller or Wen soldering guns (\$5.85 to \$11.75) heat to full temperature in 2 1/2 to 5 seconds after their pistol-grip trigger is pulled, and cool off rapidly after use. Other tools which will prove useful are diagonal cutters (5 to 6-in. size) at \$2.00 to \$3.00, needle-nose pliers (\$2.00 to \$3.00), and Phillips-head and standard (3/32 to 1/4-in.) screwdrivers. Socket wrenches of all sizes (from 3/16 to 5/8-in.) come in handy from time to time, while a set of automatic wire strippers (made by Speedex, \$3.88 to \$4.85) will prove invaluable to the inveterate component builder.

If the workbench seems lacking in tools, a Stevens-Walden tool set (\$12.00) will rectify the situation in short order. This kit includes diagonal cutters, needle-nose pliers, and a set of interchangeable screwdrivers and socket wrenches with a single general-purpose handle.

Then, just in case the beneficiary of all this equipment should be at a loss as to how to use it, there may still be room at the top of the Christmas stocking for Charles Fowler's *High Fidelity: A Practical Guide* (\$4.95) and *The Hi-Fi Year Book* (\$2.25) listing all current British hi-fi equipment. And when the workbench is completely equipped and the sound system working perfectly, the true audiophile will want to curl up for a happy Christmas hour or two with Roland Gelatt's new *High Fidelity Record Annual—1956* (\$4.50) or Roy H. Hoopes' compilation, *Building Your Record Library* (\$3.95). Then to all, a good night.

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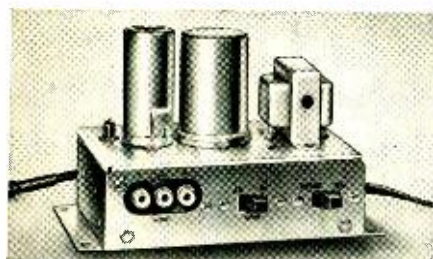
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OPERA

Continued from page 57

when the musical staff and the engineers consult one another. I find that this establishes discipline."

Misciano, a very good-looking young fellow with a mop of blue-black hair, sang the Count's lines buoyantly, but Erede ran into the kind of difficulties that seem unavoidable at these sessions: The flute and the oboe were not together (according to Walker over the loudspeaker); Misciano made a false entrance, stopped and apologized—"Scusi, maestro"; a chair was found to be creaking somewhere; the horns sounded harsh (and were accordingly muffled); the position of the chorus had to be adjusted for reasons of proper balance.

As I was pondering on the infinite patience required from all concerned, Giulietta Simionato and Fernando Corena put in an appearance, standing expectantly in the wings. Erede accordingly passed to some of the scenes that involved the cast's Rosina and Don Bartolo. Corena had a slight cold, so that he wisely whispered, merely suggesting Bartolo's aria, letting out his voice only rarely. Erede obviously cared mostly about rehearsing the accompaniment.

Simionato, one of London's most favored singers, looked pert and sprightly in a pink ballerina skirt. In contrast to Callas, this apparently uncomplicated lady seemed a complete extrovert—gay, assured, very good-natured. Walker had told me that she was easy to work with. "I wish they were all like her," he said wryly. "Matters would be *so* simple."

"Ready, Signora Simionato?" asked Erede, as they began Rosina's second aria—incidentally, the one Rossini himself composed for the lesson scene and which has come into vogue again of late. The singer's mezzo-soprano tones were superbly supported; the articulation sounded wonderfully clear, as she tossed the aria off with impressive ease. When she returned to the stage, after listening to a playback, she exclaimed with a laugh, "*Ma, quanti chilometri!*"—referring to the long trek between the recording studio and the stage.

Later in the morning, Ettore Bastianini (Figaro), just back from successes as Rigoletto in Barcelona, joined Simionato in the duet, "*Dunque io son?*" Bastianini, in capital spirits,

went through the movements of some fandango steps before he took his place in front of the microphone. He sang with his hands plunged into the pockets of his khaki pants, swaying in time to the music.

You could tell that the whole thing was going well. Even when Bastianini came to grief on a tongue-twisting patter passage, everyone, including the culprit, laughed. In excellent voice, he sang, it seemed to me, with remarkable breadth and *slancio*.

When a technician came up to him and interrupted an expansive gesture to place him in what was considered a preferable position, Bastianini looked down at the floor, where his feet had been planted—"Per sempre?" he asked of the bewildered man.

As the duet was in full swing, Cesare Siepi, tall and handsome in his elegantly cut clothes, walked in. Behind Erede's back, he went through a series of elaborate gestures (so much Greek to the uninitiated) for the benefit of Bastianini, who was on the verge of laughter as he counseled Rosina to give him a note for the unknown Lindoro.

Siepi had hardly finished this mysterious pantomime, when he disappeared just as suddenly as he had materialized. I did not see him again until a later session, when he was recording the famous *La Calunnia*. He had lost some of his debonair unconcern, for he was having trouble with the penultimate note of Basilio's aria, which up to that point had sounded smooth as silk from a purely vocal standpoint. He was not happy with this recalcitrant tone, which somehow eluded him. After several attempts, success was attained, Siepi beamed again, and the session moved securely to its finish.



I left Florence, the glorious weather holding to the last. As the train ran northward to Paris along the fresh-blue outline of the Mediterranean, I could hear, in my head, snatches of Rossini's music, and I recalled all the patient devotees of this most fascinating of the arts whom I had seen working so hard for so many days in their proud effort to earn an adjective—the word definitive.

I felt a little thankful about the whole thing.

MOZART YEAR

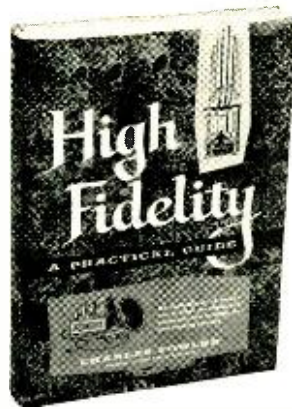
Continued from page 53

record, then, which dictated the direction and compass of the Bicentennial, while the Bicentennial gave new encouragement and impulse to the record. The eminent conductor preparing for a momentous Festival could hardly pretend that there were only three Mozart symphonies, in face of the evidence recorded, and the most celebrated pianist was forced to acknowledge that reliance on the D minor Concerto had become hazardous since the phonograph had proved that among the twenty others there are no weaklings. The record has incalculably enriched the concert hall, and the concert hall will give back to the record a facsimile of its most memorable achievements.

Disregarding its annex and the several emendations, we know that the Köchel catalogue of Mozart's works contains 626 numbers. Nothing is more elastic than a Köchel number, which may cover a minute gigue or a *Don Giovanni*, but it ought to be noted that of the 434 numbers on LP at this writing, the great majority are of the most substantial works, the principal large omissions being of the most obscure operas, or of the operas unfinished. Most of the Masses remain unrecorded, with a heterogeneity of small vocal works and instrumental fragments. Philips (Epic), under the stimulus of the Bicentennial in which the company has taken an aggressive part, has announced that it will continue, as a kind of epilogue, its Bicentennial Edition until every last Köchel entry—be it the most flippant canon—has been included. This announcement now seems eminently reasonable and practicable. Ten years ago it would have been monstrous fantasy.

Of the recorded Köchel numbers, more than two hundred—about half—appeared for the first time as some company or other's contribution to the Bicentennial. In the same contribution are an even greater number of records duplicating music already in the recorded repertory. About 1,500 sides have been devoted to Mozart since LP began the restoration, including freakish bounties and impoverishments: superfluities of excellent versions of Serenade No. 10,

Continued on next page



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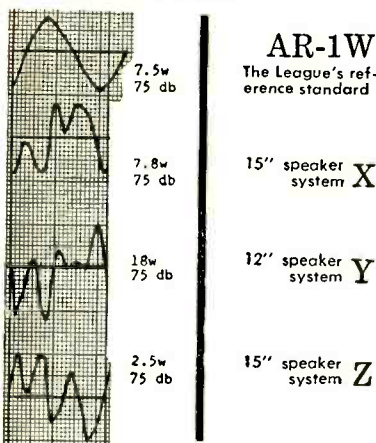
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AR-1

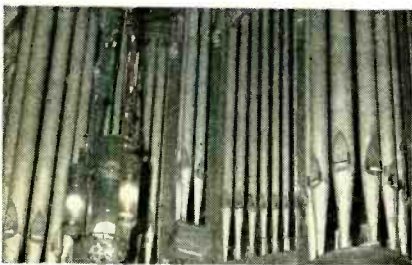
Report from the LABORATORY The Audio League Report*

Fig. 5
Acoustic Output at 30 CPS



*Vol. 1 No. 9, Oct., '55. Authorized quotation #28. For the complete technical and subjective report on the AR-1 consult Vol. 1 No. 11, The Audio League Report, Pleasantville, N. Y.

Report from the WORLD OF MUSIC



The Aeolian-Skinner Organ Co. uses an AR woofer (with a Janszen electrostatic tweeter) in their sound studio. Joseph S. Whiteford, vice-pres., writes us:

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MOZART YEAR

Continued from preceding page

Figaro, Symphonies No. 36, 38, and 40, Clarinet Concerto, Clarinet Quintet and many quartets; absence of a thoroughly admirable *Don Giovanni*, of entirely satisfactory versions of six or eight concertos, and of adequate presentations of many concert arias and works for solo instruments. No doubt we shall get them.

There was no authoritative international impresario for the Mozart Bicentennial. The celebration would have taken place if the phonograph had never been invented, but the phonograph gave conscience to the celebrants, who gave depth and scope to the festivities—and much more Mozart than they would have dared without the prodding presence of Mozart on records.

The instrument—in no lovely repute for most of its life—was the power behind the scene. The manufacturers of records may not be Mozartians or even music lovers first, but they managed their Mozartean part with decency, dignity, and effectiveness. We are a lot richer in great music because of their pains, and will not complain of occasional poor records no worse than poor concerts, or begrudge bread and butter to the manufacturers because so many good records were the product of an occasion nearly solemn.

A JEWEL

Continued from page 59

resonance frequency, less mechanical damping is required to control the resonance-peak, so the compliance of a low-mass stylus can usually be made somewhat higher than that of a heavier one.

Among current makes of quality cartridges, the dynamic mass at the stylus tip averages about 4 milligrams. Some models run higher, in the interest of durability. A stylus mass of 2 milligrams or less is considered very light, and may be expected to lengthen your records' lives substantially, provided, of course, that the lateral compliance is correspondingly high enough to allow operation at a light tracking force.

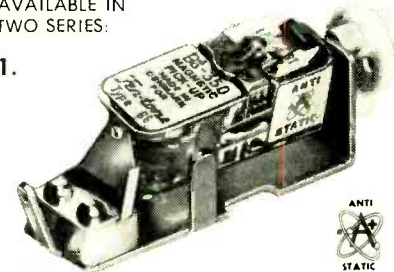
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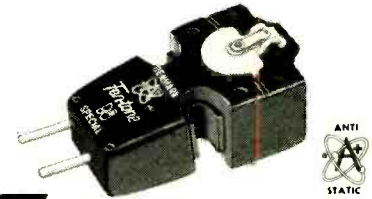
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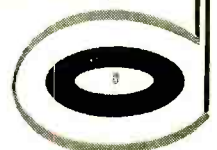
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sponse throughout the audio spectrum also tends to prevent surface noise from assuming undue prominence. But another thing which will directly affect the surface-noise level is the vertical sensitivity of the pickup.

All the program material on a disk is impressed as lateral groove undulations, so for a pickup to collect this program it is only necessary for it to respond to side-to-side motion. If, however, the cartridge is also able to convert vertical motion into electrical impulses, it will increase the audibility of scratches and dust particles lodged in the bottom of the record grooves, and will generate irrelevant sound when it encounters severe pinch-effect.

There does not seem to be any accepted method of expressing a lateral-to-vertical sensitivity rating, so until such time as there is, the best way to check a cartridge for this would be to examine and analyze its mechanical and magnetic system.

Most cartridges produce their signal output from motion of the stylus relative to a fixed source of energy. This source of constant energy may be a magnetic field or a constant-frequency oscillator, and it is motion of the stylus toward or away from the fixed energy source which creates the electrical impulses. Any motion of the stylus which does *not* change its distance from the fixed pole pieces will not produce any output. Hence the popularity of systems so arranged that the pole pieces laterally flank the moving stylus. With these it is fairly safe to assume that vertical motion will produce no output. Of course, it is possible to use a generating system which prevents *any* vertical motion; with such there is no possibility of getting output from a vertical force, but there arises the danger of record wear due to pinch effect. One way to offset this is by mounting the stylus on a short, trailing shoe, which serves to provide the needed vertical compliance. This and its variants usually are visible to your inspection. Makers of ceramic and crystal cartridges commonly use a kindred technique, a knee-action bend in the stylus bar. This effectively insulates the crystalline element inside, which translates stylus motion into electrical impulses, from the vertical component of the motion.

The foregoing descriptions of pickup characteristics tell something of how a cartridge ought to perform when

Continued on next page

AR-2

The AR-1 acoustic suspension* speaker system is now widely recognized as reproducing the cleanest, most extended, and most uniform bass at the present state of the art. It is employed as a reference testing standard, as a broadcast and recording studio monitor, as an acoustical laboratory test instrument, and in thousands of music lovers' homes.

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A JEWEL

Continued from preceding page

new and in prime operating condition. They do not, however, tell how it may be expected to behave after it has been in service for some time. This is because the main factor in a cartridge's continuing good behavior is the stability of its stylus damping material. An undamped stylus will resonate at some point in the upper frequency range, introducing an audible peak in the response. To eliminate this resonance, some form of damping material is inserted between a strategic spot on the stylus and the body of the cartridge. The amount of damping is quite critical, so any tendency for the damping material to harden or shift in use is reflected in audible deterioration of the sound.

The commonest damping materials used in cartridges are rubber, neoprene and viscaloid, all applied in block or pad form, and silicon gel, which is contained in the cartridge body and clings to the entire stylus shank. Rubber and most plastics tend to harden with time and use, while silicon paste may gradually creep and work away from the stylus assembly. There is little the user can do to prevent this or to correct the condition when it has taken place, which is why most pickup manufacturers urge users to return cartridges to the factory from time to time for a checkup and reconditioning if necessary. No doubt future research will produce an indefinitely stable damping material, but there does not seem to be one yet.

The preceding suggests that if a high-fidelity enthusiast is not anxious to do without his music for a week or so every few months, it might pay him to keep on hand a second cartridge or (if removable) a second stylus assembly. The second unit can also serve as a convenient performance check on the suspected cartridge, for it is not uncommon that a cartridge is blamed for defects that develop in other components in the system. If this comparison is to be foolproof, the second cartridge should be the same as the first, although one of a different type (and lower price) will suffice simply to provide music while the first is away at the factory.

The pickups most generally covered by perfectionists as best performers when working properly are—perhaps naturally, since extreme precision implies delicacy—also the most vulner-

able to minor ills, but only a few cartridges are so constructed as to permit any remedial action by the user. In variable-reluctance types with detachable styli, the stylus bar can be checked visually for centering between the pole pieces, and can be straightened with tweezers if out of alignment. The only FM pickup currently on the market is supplied with complete instructions for trimming up the oscillator and stylus position. But for most other cartridges, there isn't much that can be done outside of keeping their styli free of dirt and dust.

The factors dealt with thus far are primarily those which affect a pickup's performance per se. Tone arms and the effects of auxiliary equipment on a pickup's performance will be dealt with in a subsequent article.

SCULLY

Continued from page 64

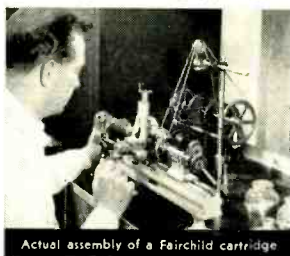
lathe clearly might exceed the capacities even of a veteran orchestral conductor. There also was the additional difficulty of precisely estimating the amount of additional groove-spacing desirable for any musical passage forthcoming from the master tape. In an effort to solve these problems Scully got to work, with W. R. Dresser, an electronics engineer, and after long experimentation came up with an answer: automation.

On the recorder used for mastering playback, a second monitoring head is mounted before the actual playback head. From the supply wheel the tape is led, via a system of rolls and guides, to this "monitoring station" set one or two seconds ahead of "cutting time." Here the volumes and frequencies are measured, and by way of a complex system of amplifiers, potentiometers, feed motors, and adjusters, the variable pitch control is continuously activated and adjusted to whatever pitch width is needed next. An "excursion control" and a "return control" (a time-delay network) see to it that the new pitch is exactly right for the following passage and that it returns to a lower level with a sufficient amount of delay to protect the preceding groove from being cut into.

Really to appreciate this automatic feature one has to see it in operation; it is almost uncanny. Larry

Continued on next page

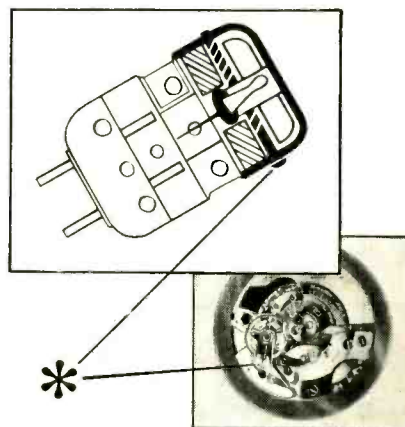
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Christmas is many things to many men.

It's kids, up early, opening presents under the tree.

It's families, together for a conviviality and good feeling that belongs to this time of year.

It's a church service, where the Christmas Story springs to life with real meaning.

It's charity, where man offers fellow-man a lift—clothes for the needy . . . food for the hungry . . . shelter for the cold.

And through it all there's music.

There's the timeless beauty of the Gregorian *Gloria*, or the enduring, almost hackneyed grandeur of *Messiah*. There are hordes of familiar, lovely hymns and carols. And there are traditional readings that are musical in concept, if not always in execution.

Our point is this. If you'd like to enjoy the sounds of this year's Christmas a little more through the medium of hi-fi, we'll be glad to supply any or all the fine elements offered below. They'll make your Christmas music ever the more enjoyable, we promise.

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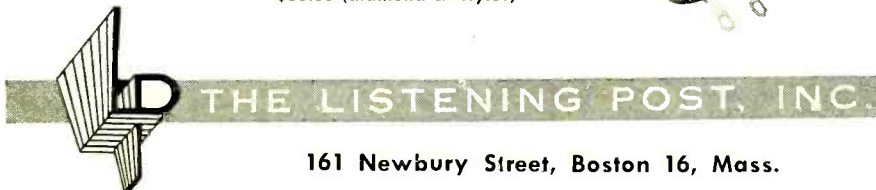
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SCULLY

Continued from preceding page

demonstrated for me the cutting of a "harmless" guitar passage. From the monitoring speaker came the sound of a softly strummed solo, and the automatically controlled pitch dial swayed gently and mysteriously to and fro somewhere between 320 and 360 lines per inch; the disk on the lathe revealed an extremely fine and narrow cut in the microscope. Then the guitar melody began to work toward a climax, and suddenly the dial jumped high, to about 220 lines. Two seconds later the final tone sounded from the speaker, a beautifully sonorous bass E, the instrument's lowest tone. The lathe had cut one single wide-spaced line and then stopped automatically—the piece had ended.

In some awe you stand in front of the machine, realizing that now any high-school youngster can cut a master disk more nearly perfectly than anyone could have done three years ago. The high-priestly art of fine master-cutting, jealously guarded and proudly executed so long, now requires little more skill than it takes to operate a TV set. Push one button, and the lathe cuts a clean lead-in spiral; button No. 2 will cut a narrow spacing band; the next one a somewhat wider band; No. 4 a beautiful lead-out spiral.

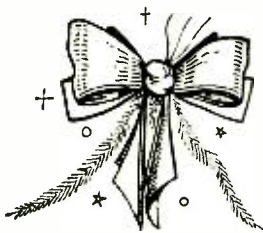
This is what you can see on the outside of the machine, but its greatest beauties of workmanship are hidden beneath and behind the shiny surfaces. Take that turntable, for instance. It appears to be simply a large piece of round polished metal, heavy enough to spin evenly around. But through its surface many tiny holes are bored, all of them leading to a system of canals cast into the bottom of the table. Air is sucked in at high pressure through the holes and canals, thus snugging the disk tightly and evenly to the turntable's surface. The idea: to prevent even the slightest vertical sway of the cutting stylus and to avoid any variation in the depth of the cut, both of which may show up as minor distortions in the final pressing. Other parts of the mechanism cannot be seen at all, but only appreciated from a verbal account of their functioning.

There is the feed-screw which, after accurate machining, is placed in an automatic lapping machine especially

Continued on page 150

HARVEY Reports on HI-FI

November-December, 1956



The hi-fi sets ought to outnumber the neckties under the Christmas trees this year — if we can judge at all from the phenomenal crowds and the alternately rapt and hungry looks we observed at the recent New York High Fidelity Show. That HARVEY's will be the chief supply depot for Santa's hi-fi-bearing reindeer is another pretty safe prediction. As for specific recommendations in the way of components for yuletide electronic cheer, here is a particularly rich harvest of current developments:

Possibly the biggest news is the appearance of the Ampex A series tape recorders and matching amplifier-speakers — a dramatic bid for the home hi-fi market by the most renowned name in strictly professional tape recording equipment. The A series, featuring two-track stereophonic playback in addition to monaural recording and reproduction, is definitely designed and priced for home music systems, but a lot of the famous engineering finesse of the Ampex professional line has rubbed off on it. The newly developed 7½ and 3¾ ips tape transport is very rugged, smooth and accurate, despite its simplicity, and there is no audible flutter or wow at either speed. There is a tape position indicator of novel and foolproof design; a volume level meter as on all Ampexes; mixer-fader controls; and a positive record safety button. The amplifier-speakers are of the already celebrated Ampex design that achieves genuinely wide-range, distortion-free response in a little less than 1½ cubic feet — speaker, tubes, resistors, capacitors, box, air and all . . . The A122 tape recorder (that's the portable, stereophonic model in the A series) sells for \$449.50 less microphone. The A692 amplifier-speakers, in two-tone grey portable cases that match the A122, are priced at \$199.50 apiece — and you'll need two of them for stereo, alas . . . But wait till you hear the sound!



There is great news on the tuner front, too. The two new Sherwood tuners are just about "it" (that elusive "it" pursued by the vanguard of audiophiles and high-fidelity manufacturers) — unless, of course, your quest for quality won't stop short of broadcasting-type equipment, multiple meters and multiple zeros after the price. Both the new Sherwood S-2000 FM-AM tuner (which has been around for some months but is now even further improved in sensitivity) and the even newer S-3000 FM-only tuner have been designed by sound-conscious

engineers with particular attention to audio quality. This is uncommon in the tuner field, where the emphasis has consistently been on RF circuit refinements. It so happens, though, that the S-2000 and S-3000 are just as great RF-wise as they are smooth in sound — with an FM sensitivity of 0.95 μ v for 20 db quieting; special 6BS8 cascode RF amplifier stage; balanced FM input transformer (for maximum noise rejection); super-stable FM oscillator circuit using mixer cathode injection; and an advanced extra-wide-band AM circuit in the S-2000. The S-3000 has, in addition, the most accurate and easy-to-read tuning eye we have seen — it's an entirely new type — and a special switch for suppressing cross-modulation images on strong local signals. But we must come back to the sound: The specified intermodulation distortion on FM in either tuner is less than 1½% at 100% transmitter modulation (most tuner manufacturers are rather vague on this point), and harmonic distortion is less than 1% at 400 cps with 100% modulation. You can hear it, too . . . Best of all, the S-2000 costs only \$139.50 (slightly more for special decorator styles) and the S-3000 only \$99.50.

Speaking of small speaker systems, the brand-new L.E.E. 'Trio' 2-way system is about the finest thing we could name at the moment in the under-\$125 category. It is the fourth in size and price of a new line of five speaker systems headed by an improved version of the already famous 'Catenoid' corner horn. The 'Trio' is definitely your meat if you're looking for a speaker of reasonable but not diminutive size that can approximate that smooth, authoritative sound of the genuinely big systems and will also acquit itself as a handsome piece of furniture in any living room setting. It incorporates a single woofer, partly horn-loaded and partly resistance-controlled by friction loading; two cone-type tweeters (very smooth); and crossover at 6500 cps. It fits nicely into almost any corner, measuring only 19" along the wall and less than 34" from the floor. It covers the 50 to 15,000 cps range without peaks or that cramped, constrained effect — a very rare virtue among smallish systems; handles 20 watts continuous power; is finished in nearly indestructible formica; and costs just \$119.95.



The Christmas shopping season is also a particularly good time to remember that you can always save time and avoid the crowds by taking advantage of HARVEY's famous mail order service. Shop from these pages, look up some of our older ads, enclose a postage allowance with your payment (excess will be promptly refunded), and have faith in our recommendations and our money-back guarantee. Between the two, you can't lose . . .

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SCULLY

Continued from page 148

designed and built by Scully for this purpose. This automatic mechanism continually feels the screw and makes adjustments in the lap to correct any minute errors in the screw. The lapping process in this machine lasts from twenty to thirty hours. In a similar way all other parts are treated, resulting in a degree of precision found in hardly any other contemporary manufacturing process. One realizes easily why this magnificent instrument with its new automatic features sells at the price it does, and why Scully is not making more than about one piece per month. This furnishes plenty of work for himself and for the nine skilled craftsmen working with him in his Bridgeport machine shop. So far only fourteen machines with the automatic variation feature have been put into operation since manufacture of this latest model started in 1955. The production of twelve, or even twenty, lathes a year is not enough to make anyone rich. But Larry Scully now makes a living in moderate comfort and in freedom from worries other than those routine to any normal business activity.

Relaxed in his pleasant, unpretentious home, an admitted family man, he enjoys light records; classical music is not really to his taste although he has done so much to give us the finest classical disks we could hope for.

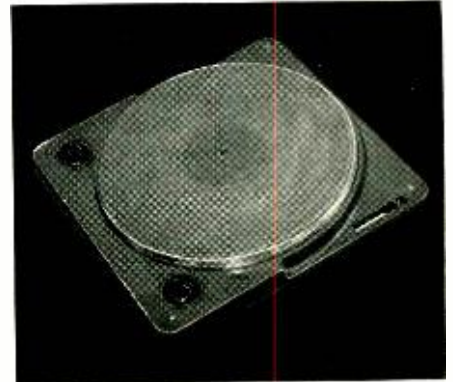
When Scully is hit by an idea or inspiration, he sits for hours in an armchair, or—late at night—even in bed, with a pad of letter paper on his knees, scratching alternately on it and at his head with a pencil. His creative work is done always at home, never at the factory. For fun and exercise, he occasionally plays a round of golf. He claims to have no hobbies; he feels he has made both avocation and vocation of his one great enthusiasm: conceiving and building beautiful precision instruments for the making of records.

However, in his house there is a home-assembled hi-fi system, with loudspeakers projecting through the living-room wall into the adjoining pantry. The system is unfinished, of course. Every genuine system must be, and this one built by a perfectionist is no exception. In the basement, conversion work has produced an amusing mixture of bar, playroom, and playpen, with all the woodwork,



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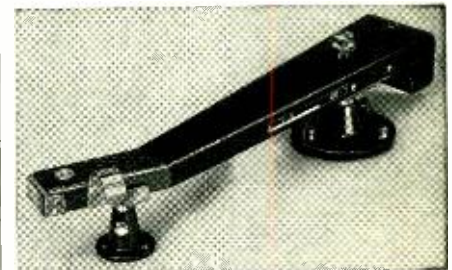


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paneling, floor covering and interior decoration by Larry, with the assistance of the youngsters. The area I call the playpen contains a tremendous array of railroad tracks, trestles, crossings, switches, trains and locomotives, with diesel engines, all operated and steered by remote-control buttons, knobs, and dials. I voiced the opinion that it was, possibly, not Judy and Jerry alone who played with the basement railroad, and I delight to report that Larry's feeble attempts to clear himself of suspicion were completely unconvincing. For hours I searched grimly for at least *one* sign of human imperfection in this perfectionist atmosphere, and finally I found one. The piano is dreadfully out of tune.

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Of this book, Eric Bentley wrote:

"I can only say I had dreamed of writing such a book myself, and contemplate Mr. Kerman's fine work with a sweet, painful blend of envy and admiration."

AUDIO FORUM

SIR:

As I am contemplating improving my present system, I was particularly interested in Charles Fowler's article "Before You Put Your Money Down," published in the September issue. However, there are a few points on which I would appreciate clarification.

First, it is stated that an infinite baffle should be used only with a speaker designed for the purpose. What characteristics determine a speaker's suitability for this type of installation?

Second, the old question of power. I am now using a ten watt amplifier and, since my room is small (12' x 15'), this seems to be adequate. I have been informed by a number of self-styled experts, however, that the switch from my 12-in. speaker to a 15-in unit will necessitate more amplifier power. An equal number inform me that the 15-in speaker will require less, rather than more, power.

I would sincerely appreciate your opinion concerning these problems.

W. A. Wright

Garden City, N. Y.

Use of the average cone-type woofer in an infinite baffle will cause some loss of low frequencies, because while the speaker's conversion efficiency remains constant over its frequency range, its transfer of acoustic energy into the air falls off as the wave length of the sound approaches the diameter of the speaker opening. Loudspeakers made specifically for use in infinite baffles generally have low efficiency in their middle and upper range, with increasing efficiency at the low end. Thus, as the cone's area begins to limit the low-frequency coupling to the air, the speaker's rising efficiency maintains the acoustic output at a constant level down to the frequency of cone resonance.

It should be emphasized that low efficiency alone is no criterion for judging a speaker's suitability for use in an infinite baffle. The low efficiency must be accompanied by rising efficiency at the low end. The best rule of thumb to follow in installing any speaker is to use the type of enclosure

recommended by its manufacturer.

The power required to drive a loudspeaker to a certain volume level depends upon its efficiency, not its size. While it will usually be found that a larger speaker will have a higher power rating, this rating determines only how much power it can handle without overload; it has nothing to do with how much sound the speaker will produce when a certain amount of power is delivered to it (unless, of course, it is receiving more than its rated power). As long as the amplifier's power is lower than that of the speaker, the switch to a larger speaker will not usually make a significant difference in the volume capabilities of the system, except insofar as the increased radiating area may increase efficiency. A higher-powered speaker, then, does not require a higher-powered amplifier; it just enables a higher-powered amplifier to be used without overloading the speaker.

SIR:

In a new home I am completing, I am constructing a Hi-Fi Center with music "piped" to several rooms. A part of my high-fidelity equipment is a German TEFL tape player, purchased in Mannheim, Germany. This tape player is designed for operation on 220 volts, 50 cycle.

Would you advise me how to hook it up to operate with other equipment on a 110 volt 60 cycle AC supply? I have an extra 220 volt circuit which could be used with it if necessary.

R. H. Bassett

San Diego, Calif.

A step-up transformer or 220-volt outlet (as is used for electric stoves in many homes) will allow you to use your German tape recorder in the United States, but the difference in frequency will cause the unit to run faster than it should, increasing the pitch and tempo of standard-speed tapes, and slightly upsetting the equal-

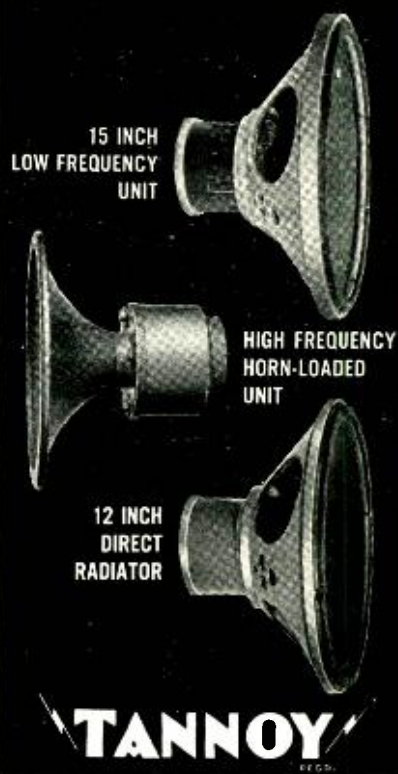
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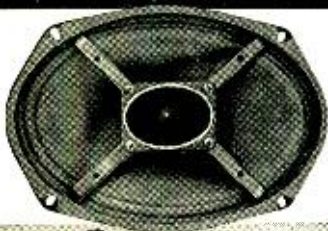
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

ization characteristics of the electronic section.

If you can obtain a reduction sleeve for the drive motor in your recorder it would solve the problem; otherwise you'll have to accept the inaccuracies that the higher speed will create. Tapes made on the recorder here in the United States will, of course, play back at the proper speed.

SIR:

I have recently purchased a transcription turntable and arm. Instructions for installing the arm specify a certain distance from the center of its base to the center of the turntable center pin, and then specify that the pickup stylus must overhang the center pin by a given distance. In installing my pickup cartridge, it appears impossible to satisfy both requirements, since the specified base position gives the wrong overhang distance.

Which is correct—to have the stylus overhang the center pin by the proper distance, or to have the distance from the arm base to the turn-

table center pin as specified? Or is there a way to accomplish both?

H. R. Long
Statesville, N. C.

The distances specified in a pickup arm's mounting instructions for stylus overhang and arm base location are calculated to provide minimum tracking error over the entire surface of the record, and some arms and pickups have adjustable studs or elongated mounting holes to permit both distance specifications to be met.

In those cases where both distances cannot be precisely obtained, the position of the arm base with respect to the turntable center should be changed, in order to obtain the precise stylus overhang distance. The reason for this is that tracking error (the condition where the cartridge is not perfectly tangent to the groove at the point of stylus contact) becomes increasingly significant as the inner grooves are approached, because the groove undulations are sharper, more twisted toward the center of the disk.

A tracking error of several degrees is not audible in the outer grooves of a disk, but as the inner grooves are approached, the same tracking error will produce progressive

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amounts of distortion. If the pickup arm is long, its path of travel across a disk begins to approach a straight line, so if the cartridge is perfectly tangent in the inner grooves, its tracking error will not increase significantly as it moves outward. A short arm, however, moves the stylus through a fairly small arc, so perfect tangency in the inner grooves will give poor tangency in outer grooves. Consequently, in any arm shorter than, say, 3 feet in length, its tracking must represent a slight compromise between perfect inner-groove tangency and perfect outer-groove tangency. And because the inner grooves are more critical of tracking error, they must be favored.

The manufacturer's recommendation for stylus overhang distance in a pickup arm of given length will produce optimum tracking in all grooves, so it should be followed closely when installing the arm. The resulting change in the arm's outer-groove tracking angle will be so small as to be absolutely negligible, as far as the sound and record wear are concerned.

SIR:

At the present time I have a Sargent-Rayment tuner, a Heathkit amplifier, and a 12-in. University coaxial speaker. I get very good reception from three FM stations (two of them about 100 miles away) and have enjoyed a lot of good music for my investment in equipment.

The question is, is an FM signal (considering frequency response, etc.) of sufficiently high quality to warrant my putting more money into more ambitious equipment? Would the improvement in quality from FM broadcasts be noticeably improved?

I have no record player or record library. I depend upon the outfit described above for whatever music we hear in the home, so the question I have posed is important to me.

Harold Casiday
Yuba City, Calif.

The potential quality of FM broadcasts is more dependent upon that of the individual stations than it is on the FM medium itself.

Some FM stations broadcast signals that are as good as the best obtainable in the home, and for these it is worthwhile to use the best receiving and reproducing equipment that you can afford. On the other hand, some stations use such poor quality pickups

and transmitting equipment that you might be better off listening to them on a narrow range system.

There are, however, very few of the latter, so it would probably pay you to improve your system. The improvement in listening quality is likely to be quite significant from most FM stations.

SIR:

Until quite recently I thought there was some necessary reason why the lead-in and run-out grooves of micro-groove records were made so very noisy. In most records the start is like the sound of a buzz-saw, followed at the end of the record by a grinding, thumping noise as the stylus rides the eccentric run-in groove.

Today I purchased the Vanguard-Bach Guild album of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, and I am delighted with the quiet starts and stops of these records, as well as with the beautiful performances. I hope that other manufacturers will follow the step that Vanguard has taken.

W. L. Knaus
Mountain Lakes, N. J.

Much of the rumbling noise that is heard from the lead-in and run-out grooves on a disk is caused by meshing of the gears on the spiraling mechanism, which is part of the disk cutter system. The click in the run-out groove represents that point where the cutting stylus was lifted from the disk at the completion of the cut.

Since few people devote much attention to listening to lead-in and run-out grooves, record manufacturers have never felt obliged to try to make them quieter. The fact that some of the newer record releases have very quiet lead-in and run-out grooves is probably just the side result of using a different type of cutter mechanism. It is doubtful that such noise reduction was specifically planned.

SIR:

Does the power of an amplifier govern the dynamic range of the sound it will produce from a given record under given circumstances? Or, to put it a little differently, if my wife can't endure the fortissimos from a 25-watt amplifier, would a 10-watt amplifier prove more humane? In asking this, I am assuming, of course, that the soft passages are set at about the same sound level in each case.

Continued on next page

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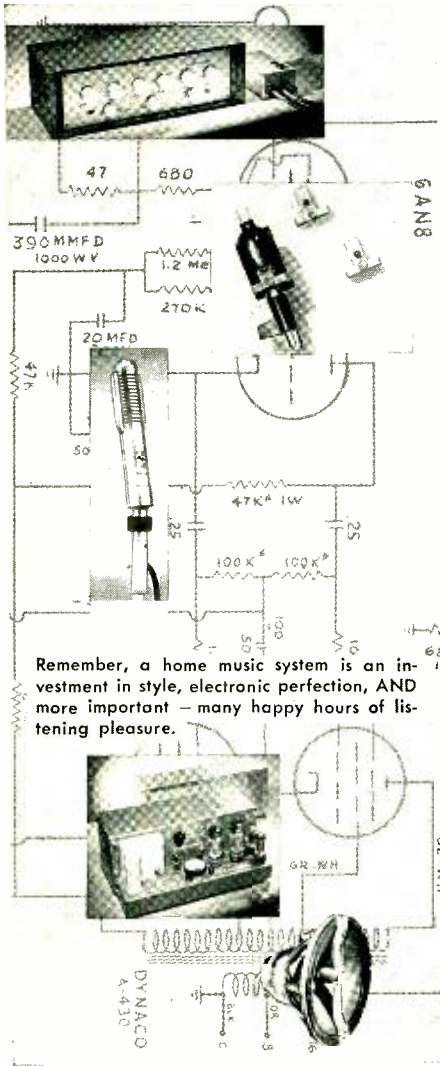
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

And if this is true, is the loss of peak decibels roughly proportional to the loss of watts between similarly rated units?

If hi-fi addicts gain a reputation for playing everything too loud, it is probably because they can't help it. Too many of my symphony records can't be played through at a single setting without someone walking out. Record production must be aimed at the small record player and the five watt combination, and the buyer of a fifty watt outfit should realize that he's going to have to hire a hall.

Would replacing the 5881s in my amplifier with lower-power types be a satisfactory solution? Or using a smaller speaker? Will changing the pickup load resistance affect the dynamic range?

Anything you can tell me about this will be very much appreciated.

W. B. Davis
Las Cruces, N. M.

A lower-powered amplifier will reduce the peak volume that is obtainable from a reproducing system, but the manner in which it does it prohibits its application as a compressor of dynamic range.

High-powered amplifier proponents claim that, at low volume levels, the only audible difference between a 10-watt amplifier and a 50-watt one is in the definition and transparency of sound, with the difference favoring the higher-powered amplifier. Within their rated power range, both amplifiers will reproduce accurately whatever dynamic range is recorded onto a disk.

At high power levels, however, (particularly when a low-efficiency speaker is being used) the 10-watt amplifier will overload on crescendos, producing very unpleasant distortion. The net result, rather than a uniform compression of dynamic range, is full dynamics up to the point of overload, and gross distortion beyond that. The overloading amplifier will clip the loudest peaks from the program material, but it will do so in such a manner that few listeners could tolerate the sound for any period of time.

Since disk recordings already have some volume compression on them, it is unusual for anyone to find further compression desirable. Volume compressors are available at rather high

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cost, from recording and broadcast equipment manufacturers. We would tend to suspect, though, that your complaint about excessive dynamics on disks is prompted by some defect in your system, which is introducing high distortion on program peaks. You may, in fact, find that your amplifier is actually under-powered for use with your speaker, and is thus introducing the distortion that adds unpleasantness to high-volume recorded passages.

Replacing your 5881 tubes with another type is certainly not the answer. This would produce even greater amounts of distortion at lower volume levels, and might damage your amplifier irreparably. The smaller speaker would not be likely to give you better results either, because of the likelihood of response peaks in a loudspeaker of lower cost than the one you have. Reducing the pickup loading will reduce the entire volume of the sound, rather than its dynamic range, and will simultaneously cause a serious loss of high frequencies. The cartridge should be loaded as recommended by the manufacturer.

SIR:

I am very puzzled as to why there is such an audible difference between two good full-range speakers of equal rated frequency response.

M. Lane
Brooklyn, N. Y.

No two loudspeakers have identical frequency response, transient distortion, harmonic distortion, and spatial distribution characteristics, and these differences between speakers are immediately evident to the listener.

The fact that two speakers may have identical published characteristics is not necessarily any guarantee that they will be the same, because within the ± 3 or ± 5 db rating of a speaker over its range there is still much room for audible response variations. There are also many loudspeaker characteristics for which ratings are never given. Some of these, as a matter of fact, cannot even be measured in absolute terms, but all of these things can influence the way a speaker will sound.



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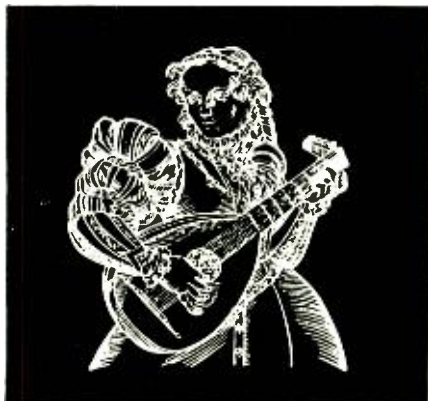
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Edwards, A. C.: *The Art of Melody* Oct. '56
Einstein, A.: *Mozart: His Character, His Work* Jan. '56
Erickson, R.: *The Structure of Music* Mar. '56
Feather, L.: *Encyclopedia of Jazz* Mar. '56
Fischer, F. A.: *Fundamentals of Electroacoustics* Apr. '56
Fowler, C.: *High Fidelity-A Practical Guide* Nov. '56
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Girdlestone, C. M.: *Mozart's Piano Concertos* Jan. '56
Grun, B.: *Private Lives of the Great Composers* July '56
Haggin, B. H.: *The Listener's Musical Companion* July '56

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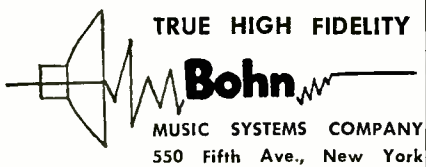
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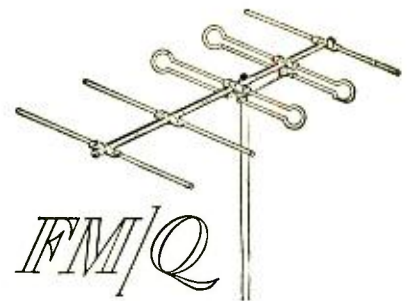
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Hickey, H. V. & Vallines, W. M.:	
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<i>Course</i>	Sept. '56
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<i>Your Record Library</i>	May '56
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Saint-Foix, G. de: <i>The</i>	
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Salter, L.: <i>Going to the Opera</i>	Apr. '56
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Turner, R. P.: <i>Basic Electronics</i>	
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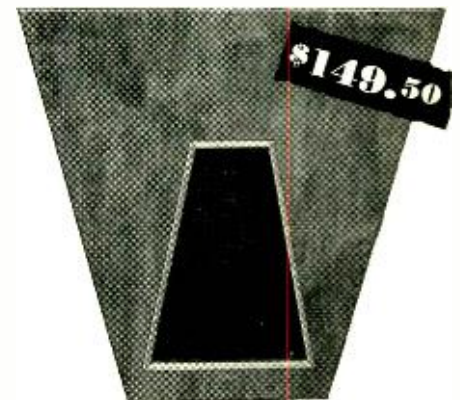
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