

STEREO DISCS 1959 *culling the year's harvest*

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high fidelity

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Handel's Messiah Newly Recorded

*An appraisal of
four new stereo versions*

by **NATHAN BRODER**

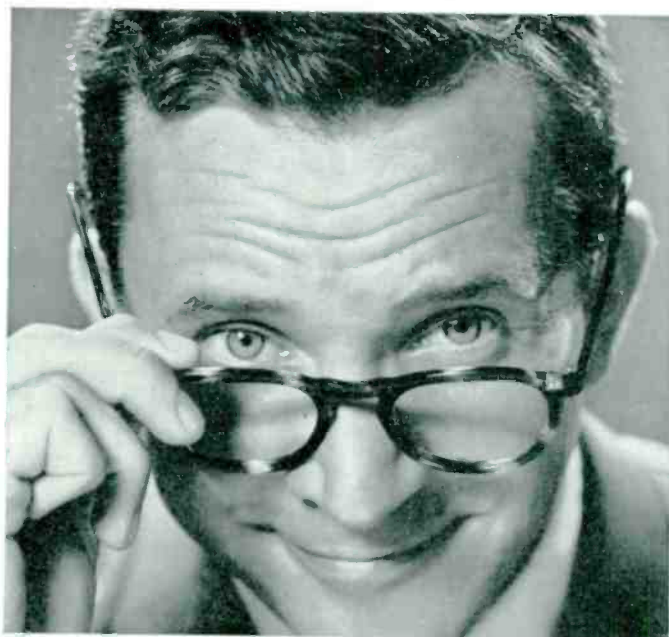
Otto Klemperer

A tall man against adversity

by **PETER HEYWORTH**



3 SECONDS . . . It's the Glaser-Steers GS-77. You can tell by its modern trim styling—a hint of the precise mechanism that's 'under-the-hood'. A record has just completed its play. The tone arm has lifted from the groove and returns to rest. So far, so good—it might be any changer. But, here's where the similarity ends. Watch what happens next.



6 SECONDS . . . the turntable has stopped—the next record drops gently into play position. Suddenly you are aware that you have just seen something different—different from any changer you've ever known. You have seen how *turntable pause* eliminates the harsh grinding action caused by dropping one record on another or onto the turntable while in motion.



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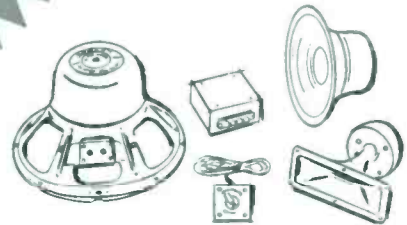


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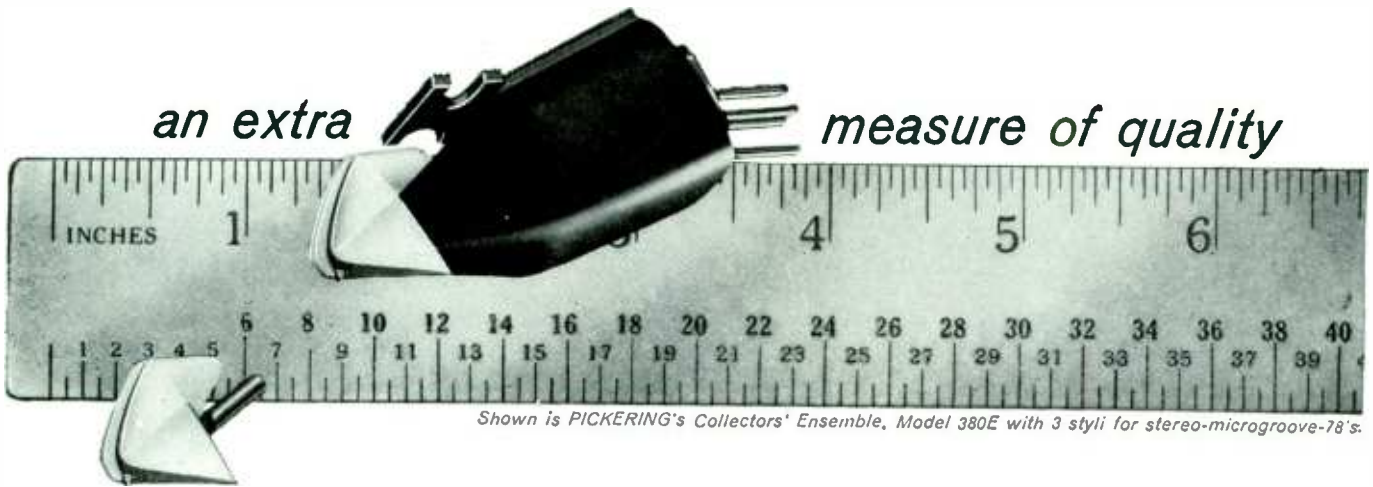


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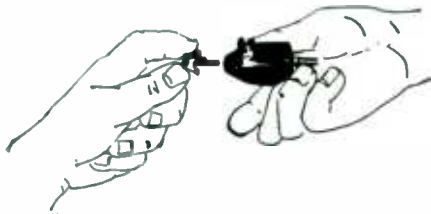
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DECEMBER 1959
volume 9 number 12

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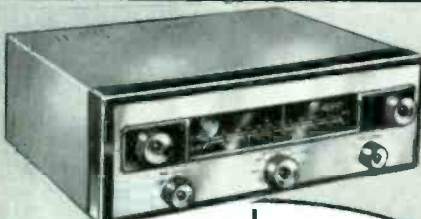
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AUTHORitatively Speaking

Peter Heyworth, former music critic of the *Times* (London) *Educational Supplement* and present music critic of the *London Observer*, was introduced in these pages with his memorial to Ernest Newman in our October issue. In "Otto Klemperer: A Tall Man Against Adversity" (p. 68) we have another discerning interpretation of another musical giant.

One of Mr. Heyworth's predecessors on the selfsame *Observer* was a certain Charles Stuart, also author of the official Covent Garden analysis of Benjamin Britten's opera *Peter Grimes*. We don't really know what happened to Charles Stuart, but we think we detect that pseudonymous hand in the work of music critic (*News Chronicle*, London) and Britten specialist Charles Reid. See "Back to Britain with Britten," p. 72.

Every day on our way to work we pass by a large stone house, framed by massive maples and surrounded by the longest and whitest picket fence we have ever seen. Perfect domicile for a typical country squire, we used to think. It isn't. It's the home of John F. Indcox, owner of a flourishing mail-order business and lifetime amateur of the lively arts. In fact, London-born Mr. Indcox once was a production aide for a couple of touring stock companies, and even appeared on the boards himself. Today he's still faithful to the theatre, as mastermind for local theatrical groups and frequent pilgrim to Broadway. His other great avocation is records: see our "World of Entertainment"—and, in this gift-giving month, Mr. Indcox's report (p. 77) on some of the year's best stereo discs.



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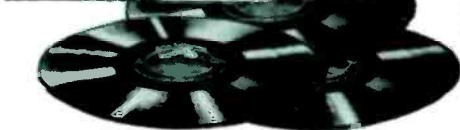
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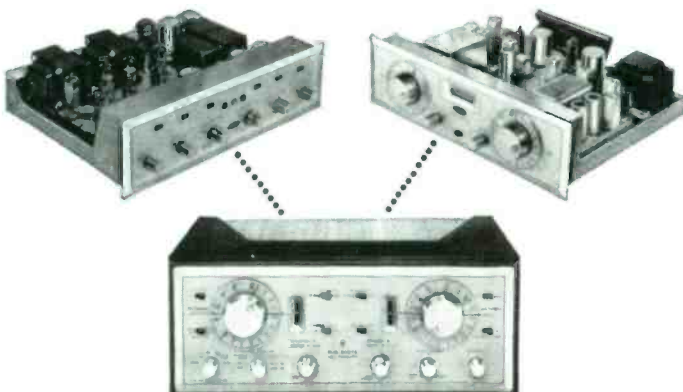
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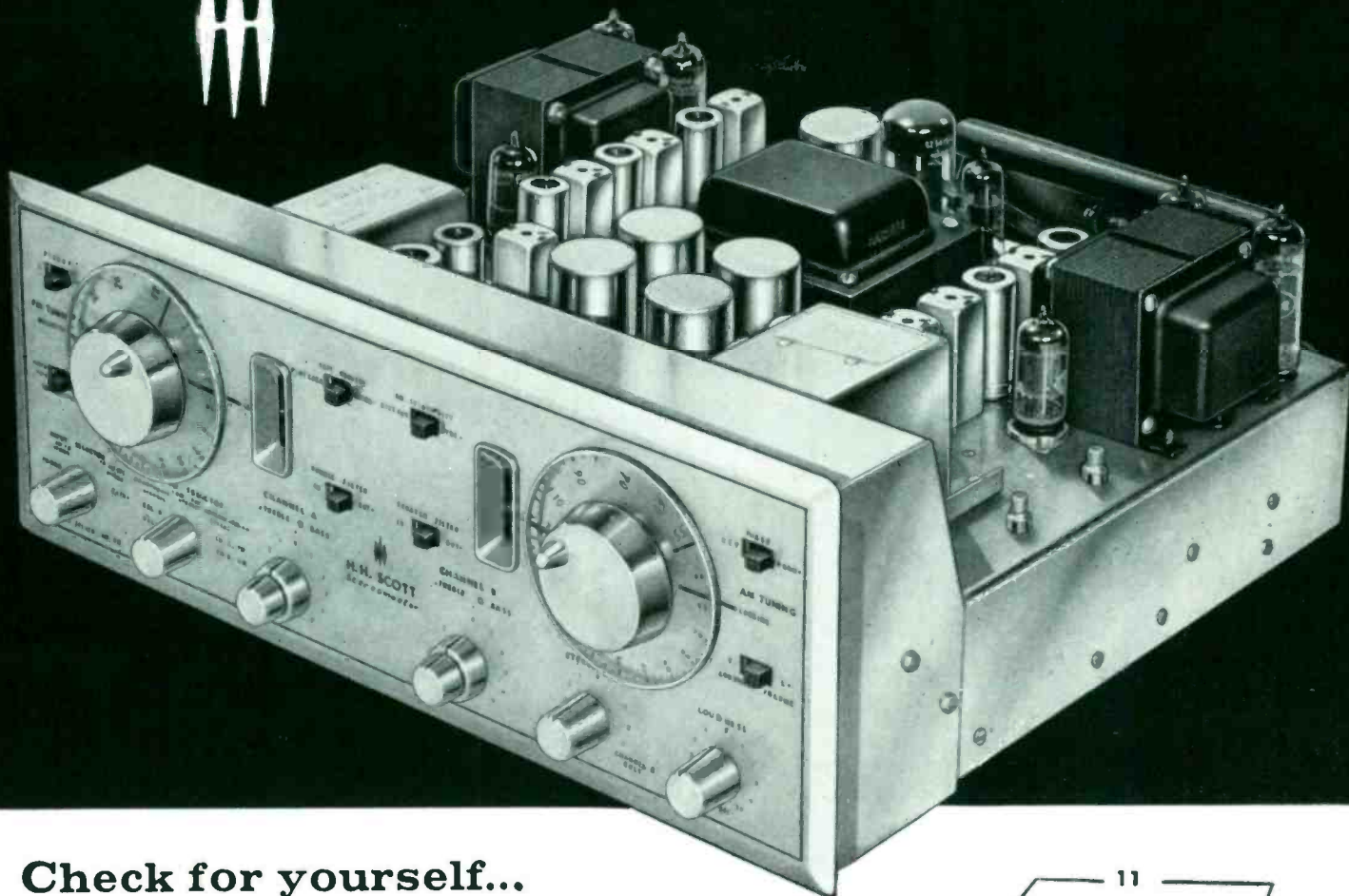
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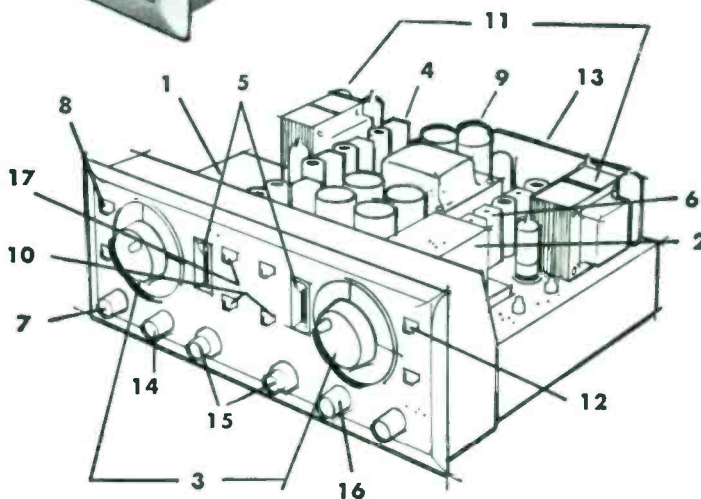
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Sir:
Do proponents of Opera-in-English give any thought to what is called "focus"?

In her autobiography (*My Life*, New York, 1922) Emma Calvé speaks of her refusal to sing *Carmen* in Italian because "the effect of my French diction would be lost and the whole opera would be thrown out of focus . . . I was in despair. I could not make the directors realize what I saw so clearly, that this work of art, conceived in the mind of a Frenchman, put to music by a French composer, must be sung by me, a Frenchwoman, in French. In no other way could it be given its full value, its true flavor and quality. . . . In my agitation and helplessness, I appealed to the elder Coquelin, who was acting in New York at the moment. He sympathized entirely with my point of view, went to the directors himself, and used his influence to persuade them to give up the idea. They told him that they had no French tenor to sing the role of Don José, and that, therefore, I would have to sing in Italian. Undaunted by this rebuff, he determined to succeed where they had failed. He would find a tenor. He went to Jean de Reszke, and laid the case before him. Although it was not in De Reszke's repertoire, he promised that he would sing the role. . . . What a triumphant success was that production of *Carmen* . . . !"

If the idea of a French opera in Italian so shocked such artists as Calvé, Coquelin, and De Reszke, how would they have reacted to the thought of a performance in English?

Dale Warren
Boston, Mass.

Down with Love

Sir:
If the romantic chronicle of Duse and Boito in your October issue is a portent of things to come, please put a stop to it. Leave the tender passion for the ladies, and continue to offer the practical services for which we pay our hard cash. After all, HIGH FIDELITY is

Continued on next page

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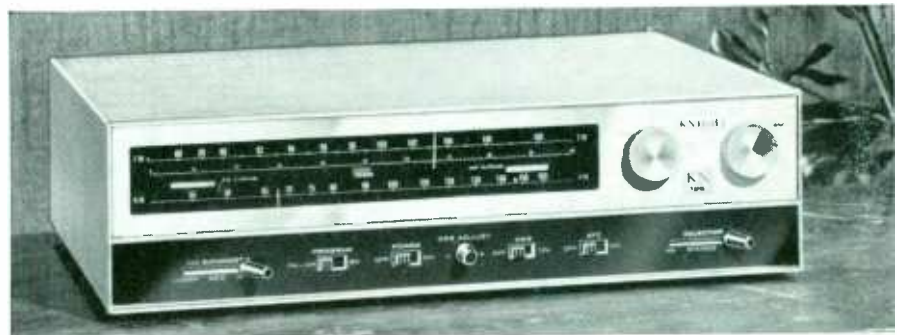
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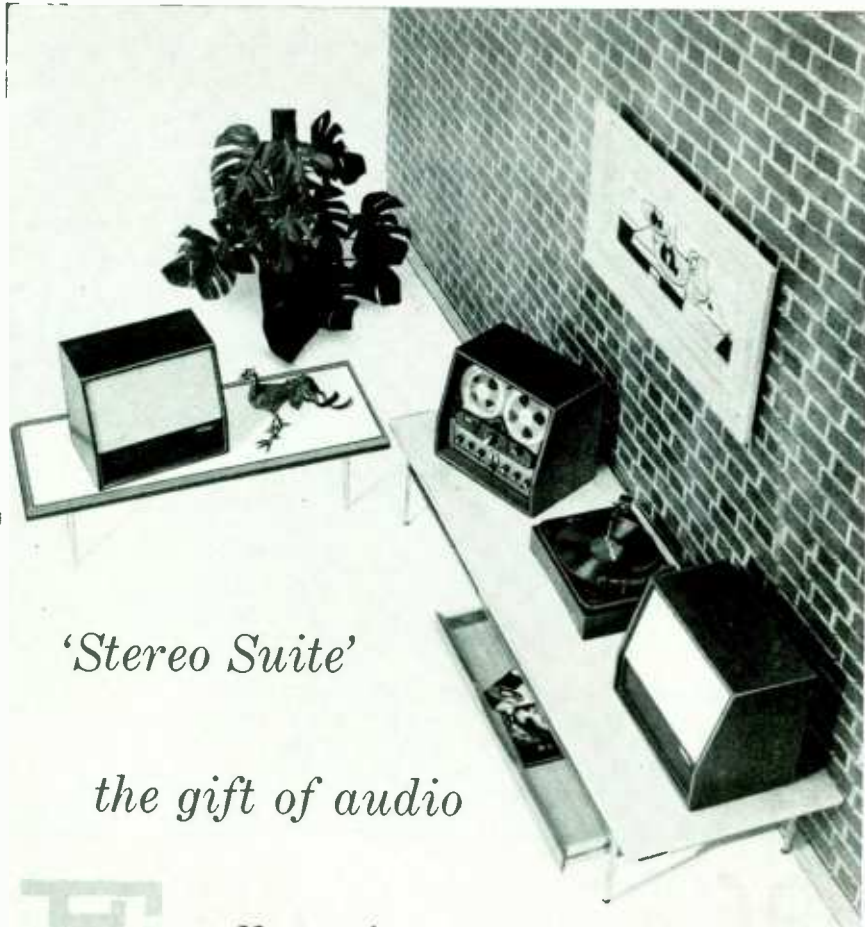
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LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

a man's magazine—or at least we've always thought so.

Charles H. Oakes
 Birmingham, Ala.

Factory-Sealed, Pro

SIR:

If Mr. John Holt cannot afford to buy records to which he has not listened, as he says in September *HIGH FIDELITY*, I cannot afford to buy records to which he *has* listened.

There are persons like Mr. Holt who want so much to hear what they are buying that they will buy no records unless they can first hear them. If I have read good reviews, I am willing to take a chance on the musical content of a record—particularly if by not insisting on having the record played I can make more likely the possibility that its physical condition will be good when I get it home.

Of course, cellophane and cardboard can conceal a record with an off-center hole and visible scratches, but they are not likely to. In the few cases where something is really wrong, a reputable dealer will care. The record manufacturer has already shown that he cares by sealing his records in the first place. If an occasional bad one slips through, it should be replaced without question.

So let the record companies go on sealing their records. Sales will not suffer, and both new and old music will get bought and heard. Since Mr. Holt implies that he will not buy a record unless he likes it the first time he hears it, and since as things are now he cannot hear it unless he buys it, Nussio and Hovhaness may have to be sold to those persons who are willing to take a musical chance. But that is as it should be.

Louise Davies
 Ventura, Calif.

Factory-Sealed, Further Thoughts

SIR:

Mr. Holt's letter in the September issue fully describes the difficulty of hearing new records of nonstandard music. If it were not for WFMT in Chicago, which plays many new records, it would be practically impossible in this area as well.

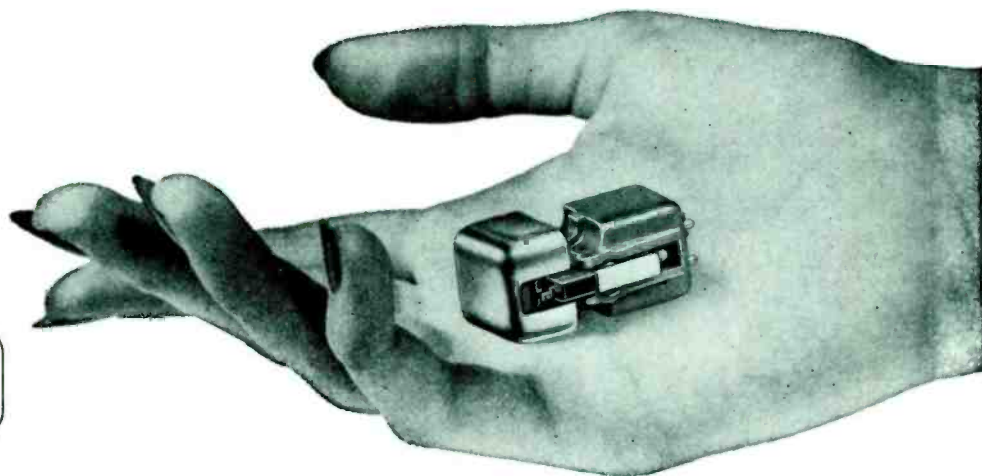
The best solution to this problem would be for recording companies to: 1) Send review copies as a matter of course to as many FM stations as possible, especially in New York, Chi-

Continued on page 12

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

General Electric's all-new VR-22 Stereo Cartridge

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Oliver P. Ferrell
Editor
Hi-Fi Review
as quoted
in issue
of Aug. 1959

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Wm. A. Stocklin
Editor
Electronics World
as quoted
in issue
of Sept. 1959

"... listening tests did not show up any flaws. Frequency response from 30 to 15,000 cps (limits of our test) was within 2.25 db of flat. Provides about the best channel separation available of any checked with the exception of [cartridge selling for \$65.00] in the frequency range from about 5000 to 9000 cps."



C. G. McProud
Editor
Audio
as quoted
in issue
of Sept. 1959

"... is even better than its predecessor with respect to output, channel separation and extended frequency response and the two channels balance within ± 2 db to 15,000 cycles. The shielding has been improved and the grounding of the shield and the method of shorting the two 'ground' terminals are well thought out."

GENERAL  ELECTRIC

Continued from page 10

cago, Boston, Washington, San Francisco, and other large cities; 2) send new recordings to large public libraries with record collections.

I think that the number of recordings of nonstandard music which could be "sold" in this way would be quite a surprise to the manufacturers.

P. L. Forstall
Evanston, Ill.

How To Make Enemies

SIR:

I'd like to add an admonition of my own to those directed at the record makers in your October editorial. It concerns a situation which I, as the owner of a stereo phonograph, have been confronted with all too often. I'm referring to those times when I've gone out and bought the monophonic version of a particular performance, in the absence of the stereo version, only to be confronted shortly afterwards with the issue of said stereo disc! In fact, the record makers' policy towards this matter strikes me as an almost ideal way to Make Enemies and Alienate People. Would it be too much to ask that we be told which monophonic records are destined for release in stereo form?

Edwin R. Kammin
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Eileen No Salome?

SIR:

In the "Letters" section of the September issue Mr. J. T. Henderson rightly deplores the lack of first-rate recordings of *Salome* and *Elektra* and suggests Eileen Farrell for both roles, because "... Columbia's old *Wozzeck* proves that she is equal to the most complex scores. . . ." I would suggest that Mr. Henderson listen to *Wozzeck* sometime with the score in hand, and mark well the incredible inaccuracy of the Farrell performance . . . in rhythm, pitch, and diction. By "inaccuracy" I mean inaccuracy often by miles, and on almost every page.

If these Strauss operas are ever going to overcome their present opposition, let us hope that they do so on the strength of the music they contain. Spare us Miss Farrell, at least for this repertory; there are many other things she does far better.

Alan Rich
Music Dir., KPFA
Berkeley, Calif.



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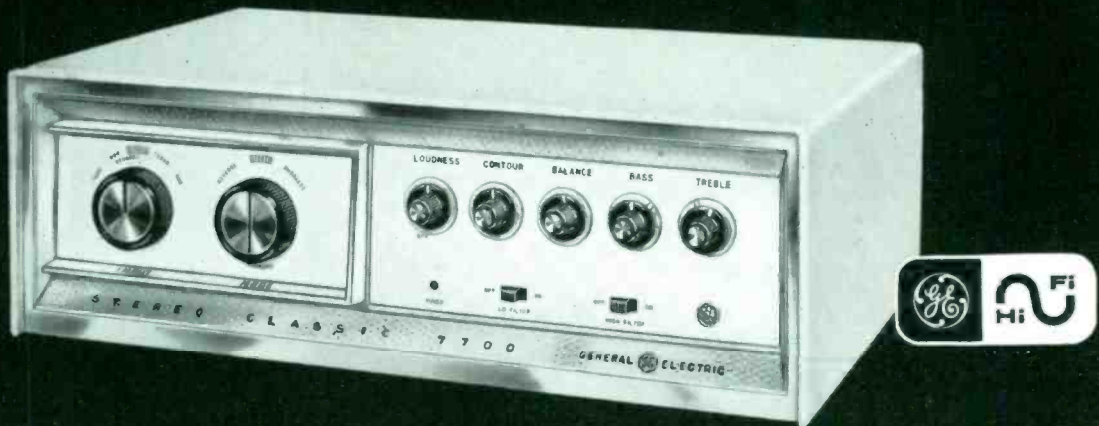
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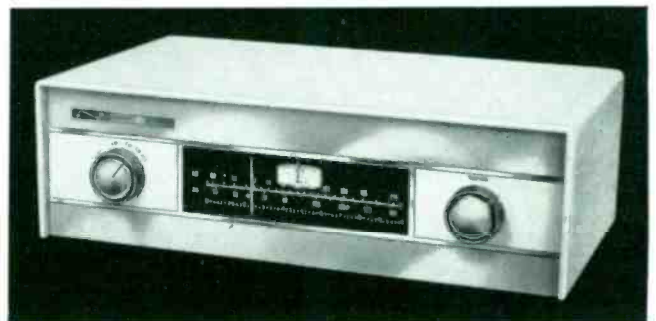
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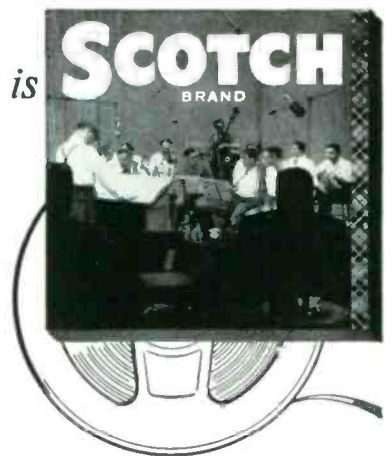
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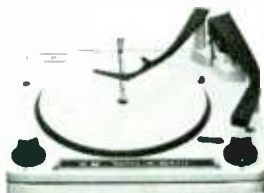
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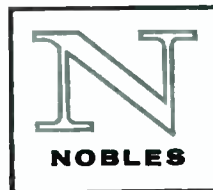


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Books in Review

Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques by the British scholar Winton Dean is, on its face values, a formidably specialized study, running just over 700 closely packed pages, illustrated with 10 plates of period facsimiles and 136 musical examples, including a dozen appendixes, numerous tables, countless footnotes, a four-page general bibliography, and two indexes—and priced (not at all unreasonably) at \$20.20. And yet, in all seriousness, I urge nonspecialist music lovers not only to buy a copy—and read it in full—but to send copies to their favorite conductor, chorus leader, singer, or record company executive. If even a few should do so, it might well put an end to some two centuries of the most disgraceful neglect and grossest distortion any great composer has suffered. Some of us have long suspected that the great wealth of Handelian music we know must be only a tiny fraction of that never given a hearing; many of us have realized that most Handel performances (including practically all of those on records) depart widely from the original scores; but not until we read Dean's book can we grasp any real measure of what we're missing and what travesties have been perpetuated by otherwise honorable musicians.

It is almost incidental that this detailed study of some eighteen specific works (and their times) is a monument of inspired scholarship or that it signalizes the emergence of Mr. Dean as one of the musicological giants of our age. The real value of Dean's study lies partly in its reminder that a true scholar can see his facts in the large perspectives of both artistic and social history (and that he can write with acidulous bite as well as accuracy), but even more vitally in its single-handed triumph over some of the most deeply rooted misconceptions in all music. Here is a heartening reminder that (thanks to the preservation of original scores, librettos, and sketches, and to the revival of knowledge about authentic baroque instrumental and interpretative practices) it is now possible for a more enlightened generation to make belated atonement for the sins of its fathers. The power to move mountains is seldom given to one man, but Dean has provided a practical lever and fulcrum which the rest of us can use to work the miracle (Oxford University Press, \$20.20).

Continued on page 44

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Tracking Pressure	3-5 grams in professional arms 4-6 grams in changers	5-7 grams
Output Voltage	0.3 volt	0.5 volt
Cartridge Weight	7.5 grams	2.8 grams
Recommended Load	1-5 megohms	1-5 megohms
Stylus	Dual jewel tips, sapphire or diamond.	Dual jewel tips, sapphire or diamond.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

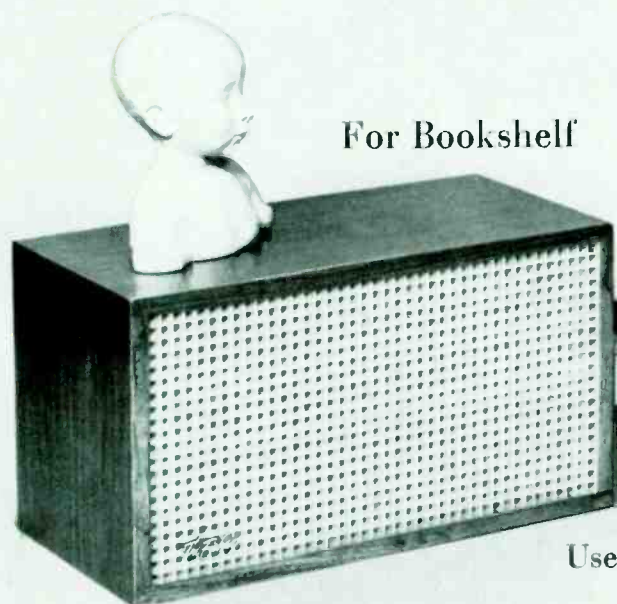
Continued from page 42

✓ **Kathleen Ferrier: Her Life and a Memoir.** Barely a year after the contralto's premature death in 1953, a collection of tributes edited by Neville Cardus achieved best-seller status in Great Britain and quickly led to the publication (1955) of an authorized biography by her sister, Winifred Ferrier. Cardus' memoir apparently never became widely known in its American edition (now out-of-print) and the "life" was not issued here at all. So it is surely one of Penguin Books' happiest inspirations to reprint both works in a single low-cost paperback volume, which also includes some forty of the original photographs as well as an updated discography. The singer's sister writes artlessly, but includes a generous selection of "Kath's" own even more artless—and deliciously jaunty—letters; the contributors to the memoir (Bruno Walter, Sir John Barbirolli, Benjamin Britten, Gerald Moore, Roy Henderson, and Cardus himself) frankly write panegyrics; yet at their best all of them convey much of that wholly unique, heart-wrenching tenderness which those of us who never knew "Kath" herself found so precious in her memorable recordings of *Blow the Wind Southerly*, *Das Lied von der Erde*, and so many (yet so few!) other masterpieces. The story of this country girl's and onetime pianist's rise to world-wide fame within a scant ten years is one of the most remarkable in musical history, but the present memorial is to be treasured in particular for its disarmingly warm portrait of an individual whom to know, or even to hear once, was to love wholeheartedly (Penguin paperback, \$1.25).

Designing and Building Hi-Fi Furniture. As audio literature burgeons, it begins to spread out to extremely peripheral, yet by no means unimportant, fields—in the present instance to what is elegantly called the décor of home sound systems. So much nonsense on this subject and so many overfancy installations have been published and illustrated in the audio press that it's refreshing indeed to find that this book by Jeff Markel not only describes and pictures highly practical cabinetry, but also includes a wealth of useful information on basic design principles and specific constructional procedures. To many audiophiles—and perhaps particularly to their wives—the last chapter alone, on furniture finishing, re-touching, and repairing, will be worth the price of the entire book (Gernsback Library paperback, \$2.90).

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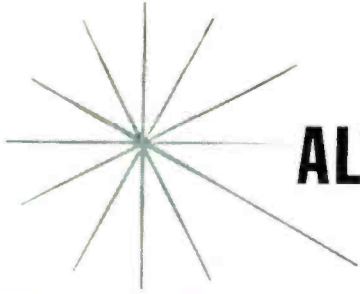
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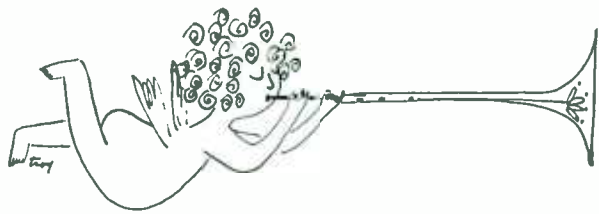
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NOTES FROM ABROAD

LONDON—According to the reckoning of EMI's Walter Legge, his company's recently completed recordings of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, with mainly Italian casts, absorbed 344 rehearsal hours, including 160 hours at the piano for soloists and ensembles, 96 recording hours with orchestra (the Philharmonia), and 62 recording hours for recitatives with harpsichord. Mr. Legge, who planned the recordings, said Angel would issue them sometime in 1960.

At EMI's Abbey Road studios here, I sat in on one of the 160 hours of piano rehearsal. Joan Sutherland (Covent Garden's noted Lucia, who a fortnight earlier had sung Donna Anna at the Vienna State Opera) was



Giulini

perched on a contrabass player's stool with a music stand in front of her, in the throes of the "Fuggi, crudele!" duet from the first act of *Don Giovanni*. She was partnered by a young Ottavio, Luigi Alva, who while serving with the Peruvian Navy won a prize for the best male voice in South America. Giuseppe Taddei (Leporello and Figaro) and Eberhard Wächter from Vienna (Giovanni and Almaviva) awaited their turns on the far side of the piano, with their elbows on its lid. On all entries and at all climaxes, Miss Sutherland looked frowningly away from the music. Somebody asked why. "Because," explained Miss Sutherland, "I cannot sing the notes when I'm looking at them."

Heinrich Schmidt, principal coach of the Vienna State Opera, was at the piano. Herr Schmidt was engaged for both recordings to school the singers—especially the twelve Latin principals out of a total of eighteen—in Mozartean style. (To complete the balance, Antonio Tonini, principal coach from La Scala, Milan, was brought in to watch the Italian diction, especially that of the German-Austrian group, who—except for a fluent minority—tend, for example, to turn their *maledettos* into *maledetos*.) At the keyboard Herr Schmidt was joined by Mr. Legge, a recording and concert im-

presario who has some strong convictions of his own about phrasing, expression, and technicalities of the singer's trade, breathing included. There were constant stoppages, rectifications, repolishings; Schmidt and Legge, between them, gave Mozart's vocal line the minutest going-over I ever heard.

Now for the casts. Apart from singers already named, *Don Giovanni* has Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Mrs. Walter Legge) as Elvira (her greatest role, as some of us think), Graziella Scitti (Zerlina), Piero Cappuccilli (Masetto) and Gottlieb Frick (Commendatore); *Figaro* has Schwarzkopf (Countess), Anna Moffo (Susanna), Fiorezza Cossotto (Cherubini), Ivo Vinco (Don Bartolo), Cappuccilli (Antonio), Renato Ercolani (doubling Don Curzio and Don Basilio), Dora Gatta (Marcellina), and Elisabetta Fusco (Barbarina).

The trend here is away from the Germanic approach to the Da Ponte librettos, so brilliantly pursued in Vienna immediately after the war, and back towards the Italianate casts and ambiance of Mozart's time. In keeping with this tendency, the Italian conductor Carlo Maria Giulini was engaged for *Figaro*. He came new to the work (though not to many of the singers—or to the Philharmonia Orchestra) and studied it for a year before going into rehearsal. Giulini also took over *Don Giovanni*, when illness forced the withdrawal of Otto Klemperer from the recording sessions.

CHARLES REID

PARIS—The word *enfin*, pronounced with fervent accent on the first syllable, has been heard rather often at Pathé Marconi this fall. At last, if there are no perfectionist afterthoughts, the long adventure of recording in stereo Sir Thomas Beecham's *Carmen*, with Victoria de los Angeles singing the title role, has been completed. As this is being written, Sir Thomas is listening to his achievement and preparing to approve the release, and so the discs (Capitol label in America) should soon be available. Nicolai Gedda is Don José. Janine Micheau and Ernest Blanc, of the Paris Opéra, are Micaëla and Escamillo. The orchestra

and chorus are those of the French National Radio network.

Few recording enterprises in recent years have required so much hard work in the face of so many misgivings and misfortunes. The epic began more than a year ago in the Salle Wagram in Paris. There soon developed what can best be described as clashes of temperament, and finally the whole business sputtered and ground to a suspension. Pathé Marconi made several attempts to get the principals together again in Paris; but whenever all the temperaments seemed in tune, one of their owners had to leave for South America or some place equally far from the Salle Wagram. Prospects were bright early this year, and then the French musicians' union called a strike that lasted for two exasperating months. When it was over Mr. Gedda and Mme. De los Angeles had engagements elsewhere. The cast could not be reassembled until the first week in September. Then, helped by the charm and tact of the new Lady Beecham, everybody pitched in and finished the job with surprising speed and immense enthusiasm. The records should be interesting not only as music, but also as a sort of documentary on perseverance, a theological term which Webster defines as "continuance in a state of grace until it is succeeded by a state of glory."

Victoria de los Angeles is reported to be so pleased with her performance as Carmen that she is thinking of undertaking the role in the opera house.



Micheau

Diminuendo. The talk of a new deal at the Paris Opéra and Opéra-Comique has subsided a bit, as was perhaps to be expected, now that the season is well under way and the hopes of last spring are encountering the usual wintry realities. The administration has had trouble nailing down some of its arrangements with foreigners—with Callas and the Bayreuth com-

Continued on next page

pany, for example. The thousandth performance of Gounod's *Roméo and Juliet*, in a new production at the Opéra-Comique, was scarcely the triumph the occasion called for, although Janine Micheau's Juliet was justly admired. On the credit side should be placed a new *Carmen* (Bizet is having a good year) with Jane Rhodes and Gloria Lane alternating as the heroine, and Roberto Benzi, suddenly twenty-one years old, conducting. Mine. De los Angeles may, only may, appear at the Opéra at the end of winter, but if she does it will not be in *Carmen*. *La Traviata* is probable. In the meantime, lacking great voices and star personalities, the Paris public is consoling itself as in other years—with old acquaintances in such spectacular sets as those for Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes*, now well past its three-hundredth performance. Even on the big nights there is a close-family atmosphere which tends to disarm criticism. Opera in the eighteenth century at some provincial court must have been rather like this.

Comparison. Speaking of the eighteenth century, at one point in that period Paris had 194 composers. The figure comes from Professor Barry S. Brook of Queens College, N. Y., who has just completed his doctor's thesis at the Sorbonne. If the total had kept pace with population growth the city would have more than 1,200 today. Perhaps all that is wrong with modern music is that not enough people are writing it to give us a percentage break.

ROY McMULLEN

MILAN—Ricordi, the noted music publishing firm, has completed its La Scala recording of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. From what this writer heard at the sessions, it should prove to be a first-class effort. Renata Scotto handled Lucia's pyrotechnics very well, and her associates—notably Giuseppe di Stefano and Ettore Bastianini—were in top vocal form. Prior to taping *Lucia*, Ricordi and its American recording team (Mercury's Robert Fine, Wilma Cozart, and Harold Lawrence) turned their attention to



Panerai

some off-the-beaten-path opera repertoire. The sessions took place in Brescia and had the collaboration of Renato Fasano and the Virtuosi di Roma.

Rossini's *La Cambiale di Matrimonio*, starring Renata Scotto, Nicola Monti, Rolando Panerai, Renato Capecchi, and Mario Petri, was followed by Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona*, with Scotto and Sesto Bruscantini. However, the *pièce de résistance* of these Brescia sessions was undoubtedly the first recording ever made of Paisiello's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (it antedates



Di Stefano

Rossini's opera by thirty-four years), with Craziella Sciutti, Monti, Panerai, and Capecchi as featured singers.

Ricordi has an ambitious future recording schedule, rumored to include a complete *Cenerentola* with Giulietta Simionato, a *Madama Butterfly* with Antonietta Stella, and a first edition of Mascagni's *Iris* with Giuseppe di Stefano and an as yet unnamed soprano. Meanwhile, this fall the company is undertaking a series of orchestral recordings in conjunction with Westminster Records. Fernando Previtali and the Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia will concentrate on twentieth-century music, in particular the tone poems of Respighi.

REMY VAN WYCK FARKAS

HAMBURG—Deutsche Grammophon continues to accelerate its classical recording program. Three important Beethoven projects are now under way. The Amadeus Quartet is to record the sixteen string quartets, Pierre Fournier and Friedrich Gulda the five cello-piano sonatas, and Wolfgang Schneiderhan and Carl Seeman the ten violin-piano sonatas. In addition, DGG has brought off a real coup by recording in stereo the celebrated Soviet pianist Sviatoslav Richter in a large repertoire, including concertos by Mozart, Schumann, Rachmaninoff, and Prokofiev. The sessions were held in Poland with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Warsaw under the direction of Stanislaw Wislocki.

Electrola, the German branch of the international EMI empire, is also stepping up its activities. At St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig this company has recorded the *Christmas Oratorio* of Bach. Kurt Thomas conducts; the soloists are Agnes Giebel, Marga Höffgen, Josef Traxel, and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Two hitherto unreleased recordings by Wilhelm Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra have been brought to light: Brahms's Third and Fourth Symphonies. Finally, mention should be made

of two recordings by pianist Elly Ney of Beethoven's Opus 111 Sonata. One was made in 1936, the other last year. Electrola has paired them back to back on one LP so that we can compare two fascinatingly different interpretations by the same artist.

Telefunken has signed up a young American violinist, Joan Field, for a series of concerto recordings. Miss Field has a first-rate technique (she was pupil of Jacques Thibaud) and employs it on a Stradivarius that once belonged to Joseph Joachim. So far she has recorded concertos by Bruch and Spohr.

WALTER FACIUS

BUDAPEST—What with all the Purcell-ing and Handel-ing this year, the sesquicentennial celebration of Haydn's death has not achieved much notice—except in Central Europe (where Handel and Purcell are not very popular). Burgenland, the small Austrian province of which Eisenstadt is the capital, has put on a series of interesting concerts and operas—including a performance of Haydn's marionette opera *Philemon und Baucis* with real marionettes from the Siegfried Wehrle troupe—but Eisenstadt is well off the usual tourist route, and the Burgenland Haydn Festival has not attracted an international public.

Music lovers were therefore interested to read, some months ago, of a peregrinating Haydn Festival which was to take place in three countries: it was to start towards the middle of September at the famous Benedictine Monastery of Gottweig, one of the oldest centers of *Haydnkultur* (the monks there copied a Michael Haydn Mass in 1759 and a Joseph Haydn symphony three years later); from this magnificent abbey, towering over the Danubian valley near Krems, the festival was to pass along the Danube from Austria to Czechoslovakia, where in Bratislava (formerly Pressburg) the next phase of the celebrations was to take place; from there, the guests were to be put aboard a ship to float down the Danube to Budapest, where a large-scale Hungarian Haydn conference and festival would mark the close of this enterprising plan.

As matters turned out, the Austrian part of the project fell flat, and the "International Haydn Festival" became a purely Czech-Hungarian affair. A number of scholars from America, Germany, the Soviet Union, Rumania, France, Denmark, and, of course, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary made up the musicological part of the proceedings.

Continued on page 52

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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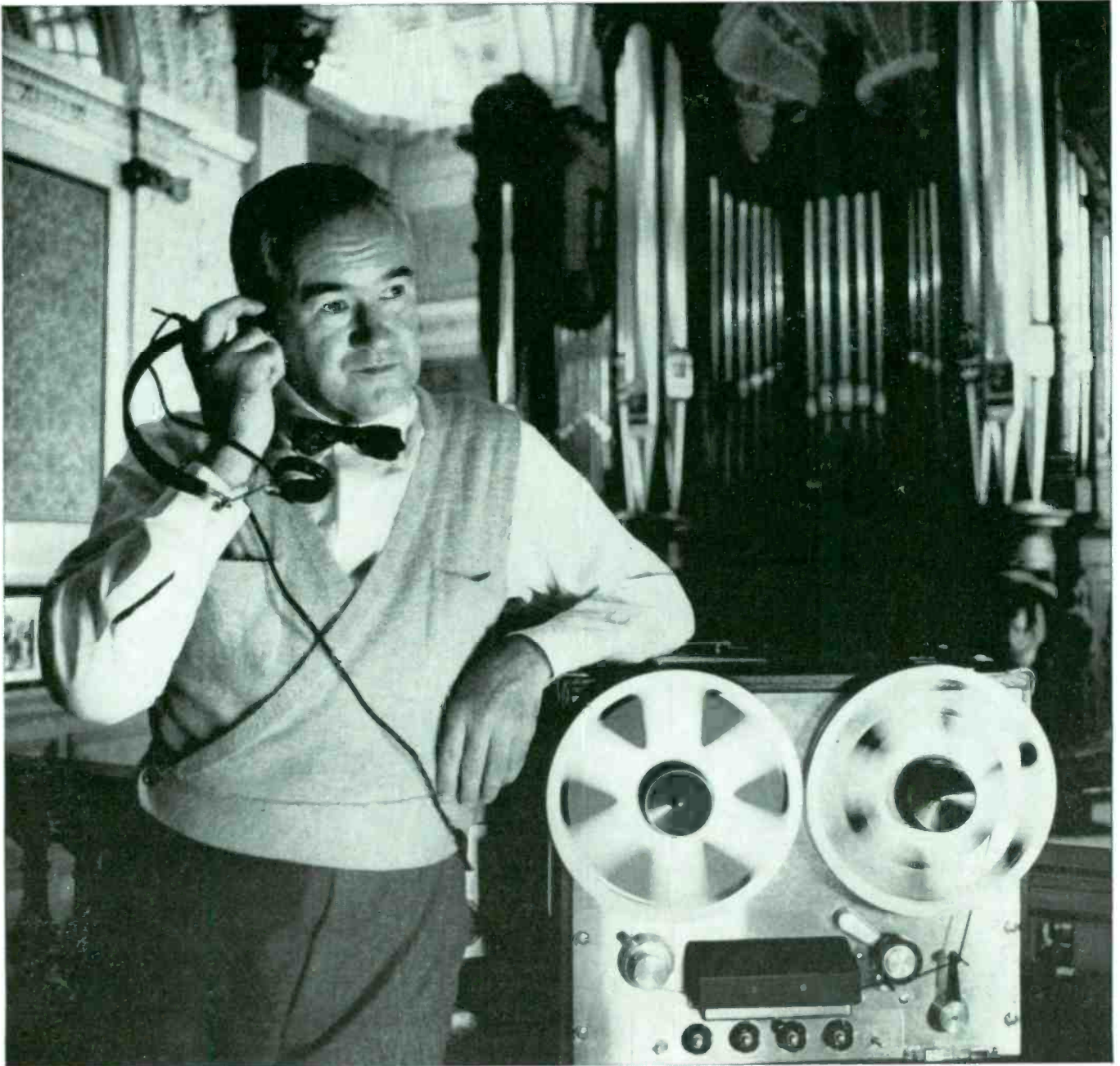
NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 50

The two highlights of the festival were undoubtedly the visit to the newly renovated Castle of Esterháza (see *HIGH FIDELITY*, August 1959) and the revival of Haydn's opera *L'infedeltà delusa* at the Budapest State Opera.

Having seen Esterháza half a year ago, your correspondent doubted that the Hungarian authorities would ever get it ready for the festival: the interior had been a shambles; huge wooden beams had supported the roof, and enormous scaffolding had covered the walls; piles of building material and rubbish were scattered over the floors, and gaping holes in the ceiling had allowed buckets of cement to be transported from the ground floor upwards. When we drove out for the festival (as a guest of the American chargé d'affaires) on a mellow autumn afternoon, the stately and beautiful castle looked as if there had never been a cruel war in which German and Russian soldiers had reduced the place to a shabby and dirty ruin. The façade shone in the gentle afternoon sun; the peasants had donned their best *Trachten*, and the courtyard was brilliant with the reds, blues, and greens of costumes which had hardly changed since Haydn's time. Furniture from local museums had been placed in the stately reception rooms, and Gobelin tapestries hung on the walls. The sleepy town (now called Fertöd) somehow reminded us—quite incongruously—of Lenox: a quiet, Massachusetts town which suddenly comes alive in the summer. Outside Esterháza Castle they had erected, as at Tanglewood, a huge car park in the fields, with policemen directing traffic; the whole *corps diplomatique* had been invited, and when our car, the American flag waving on the right mudguard, turned past the main gate, we were confronted by television cameras and radio announcers. From the balcony of the castle, trumpets screamed fanfares. It was all rather like a fairy tale; but then, Esterháza has always been something of a fairy tale, too good to be true. Later, we heard *The Seasons*, performed in the castle courtyard: the sun gradually set, and the shadows lengthened along the yellow and green and gold of the façade; Professor Jens Peter Larsen, the great Danish Haydn expert, leaned over to me; "This is the way it must have been," he said, "this is the secret of those thirty years"—referring to the three decades in which Haydn served

Continued on page 54



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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 52

as Esterházy Kapellmeister before going to London. And indeed that afternoon at Esterháza told us more of Haydn's life than you will find in many a biography.

L'infedeltà delusa was written at the height of Haydn's creative power, in 1773, following the *Stabat Mater*, the powerful symphonies in minor keys (*Trauer, Farewell, La Passione*, No. 52 in C minor), and the string quartets of Op. 20 which so changed the face of classical chamber music. Haydn called his new opera "Burlletta," and the work has much of the razor-sharp sarcasm of late Mozartean drama. The Hungarians chose it partly because the whole autograph (except that of the Overture) is in the National Library at Budapest, and partly because the Director of the National Library's Music Division, Dr. Jenő Vécey (who edited the score for the present performance) thinks it is Haydn's greatest opera.

L'infedeltà is in two acts and lasts about two hours. In the Budapest stage version, they cut half an hour so as to enable a wretched ballet to be played after intermission. The cuts were in part pretty barbarous, including a chunk out of the magnificent first-act finale, which is as tight a musical-cum-dramatic structure as Haydn ever wrote. The conductor, Ervin Lukacs, gave a sensitive stylistic account of the work, however; the orchestra played very well (though here and there a touch on the heavy side); and the stage sets and costumes were delightful. The overall *mise en scène* was, we thought, a trifle old-fashioned, rather like the nineteenth century's conception of what Haydn and Mozart were supposed to have been.

It is hard to predict whether a revival such as the Budapest staging of *L'infedeltà delusa* will achieve Europe-wide attention, that is, whether the opera is now on its way to a permanent place on the stage. But after the sensational success of Haydn's *Il mondo della luna* at the Holland, Aix, and Salzburg Festivals this year, it looks as if *L'infedeltà*—which is a far greater work musically, though it lacks the more obvious Sputnik attractions of *Il mondo*—is on its way to international recognition. It may interest readers to know that the score is about to be published by Universal Edition, Vienna.

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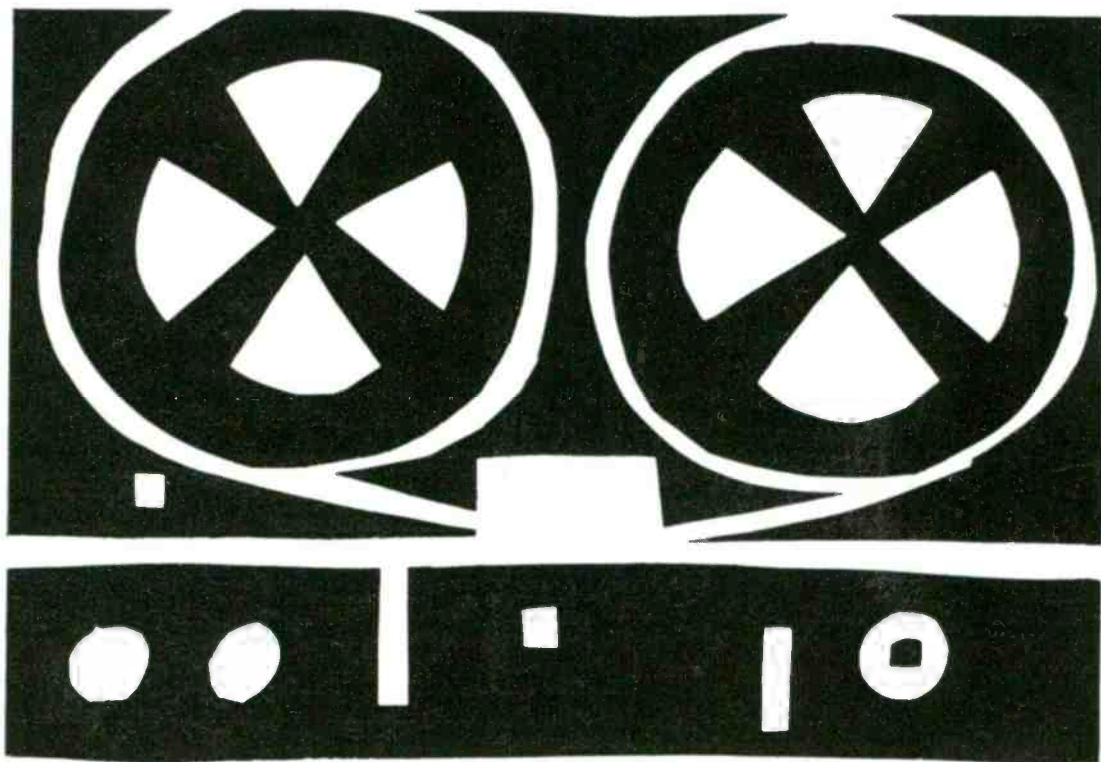
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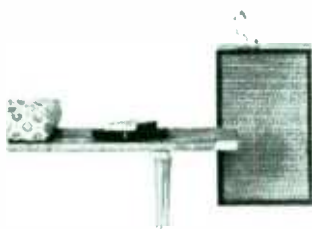


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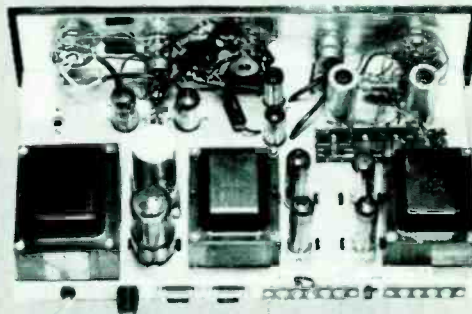
Delivers 14 watts per channel stereo, or 28 watts total monophonic. Maximum flexibility is provided by the 6-position function switch which gives you instant selection of "Amp. A" or "Amp. B" for single channel monophonic; "Mono. A" or "Mono. B" for dual channel monophonic using both amplifiers and either preamp; and "Stereo" or "Stereo reverse". A four-position input selector switch provides choice of magnetic phono, crystal phono, tuner, and high level auxiliary input for tape recorder, TV, etc. The magnetic phono input is RIAA equalized and features 3 mv sensitivity—adequate for the lowest output cartridges available today.

Other features include a speaker phasing switch, two AC outlets for accessory equipment and hum balance controls in each channel. As beautiful as it is functional, the SA-2 will be a proud addition to your stereo sound system. Shpg. Wt. 23 lbs.

SPECIFICATIONS—Power output: 14 watts per channel, "hi-fi"; 12 watts per channel, "professional"; 16 watts per channel, "utility". Power response: ± 1 db from 20 cps to 20 kc at 14 watts output. Total harmonic distortion: less than 2%, 30 cps to 15 kc at 14 watts output. Intermodulation distortion: less than 1% at 16 watts output using 60 cps and 6 kc signal mixed 4:1. Hum and noise: mag. phono input, 47 db below 14 watts; tuner and crystal phono, 63 db below 14 watts. Controls: dual clutched volume; ganged bass, ganged treble; 4-position selector; speaker phasing switch. AC receptacle: 1 switched, 1 normal. Inputs: 4 stereo or 8 monophonic. Outputs: 4, 8 and 16 ohms. Dimensions: 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " H. x 15" W. x 8" D. Power requirements: 117 volts 50/60 cycle, AC, 150 watts (fused).



HEATHKIT SA-2
\$52⁹⁵



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The amazing SA-3 delivers more than enough power for pure undistorted room-filling stereophonic sound at the lowest price anywhere. Delivers 3 watts per channel stereo—or 6 watts monophonic. The built-in high level preamplifier has two separate inputs for each channel, designed for use with ceramic or crystal cartridge record players, tuners, tape recorders, etc. Ganged tone controls provide convenient bass "boost" and treble "cut" action, while a dual concentric clutched volume control makes possible precise channel balancing. A channel reversing position is provided on the function switch and a speaker phasing switch on the back panel allows optimum performance with any speaker system. Tastefully styled in black with gold trim. Shpg. Wt. 13 lbs.

SPECIFICATIONS—Power output: 3 watts per channel. Power response: ± 1 db from 50 cps, 20 kc at 3 watts out. Total harmonic distortion: less than 3%, 60 cps, 20 kc. Intermodulation distortion: less than 2% @ 3 watts output using 60 cycle & 6 kc signal mixed 4:1. Hum and noise: 65 db below full output. Controls: dual clutched volume; ganged treble, ganged bass; 7-position selector; speaker phasing switch; on-off switch. Inputs (each channel): tuner, crystal or ceramic phono. Outputs (each channel): 4, 8, 16 ohms. Finish: black with gold trim. Dimensions: 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " W. x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " D. x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " H.



HEATHKIT SA-3
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NOTE THESE OUTSTANDING SPECIFICATIONS—Power output: 14 watts, Hi-Fi; 12 watts Professional; 16 watts Utility. Power response: ± 1 db from 20 cps to 20 kc at 14 watts output. Total harmonic distortion: less than 2%, 30 cps to 15 kc at 14 watts output. Intermodulation distortion: less than 1% at 16 watts output using 60 cps and 6 kc signal mixed 4:1. Hum and noise: mag. phono input, 47 db below 14 watts; tuner and crystal phono, 63 db below 14 watts. Output impedances: 4, 8 and 16 ohms.

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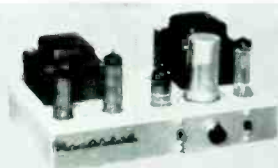
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SPECIFICATIONS—Tuning range: 88 to 108 mc. Quieting sensitivity: 2.5 uv for 20 db of quieting. IF frequency: 10.7 mc. Image ratio: 45 db. AFC correction factor: 75 kc per volt. AM suppression: 25 db. Frequency response: ± 0 db 20 to 20,000 cps. Harmonic distortion: less than 1.5%, 1100 uv, 400 cycles 100% modulation. Intermodulation distortion: less than 1%, 60 cycles and 6 kc mixed 4:1 1100 uv, 30% modulation. Antenna: 300 ohms unbalanced. Output impedance: 600 ohms (cathode follower). Output voltage: nominal .5 volt (with 30% modulation, 20 uv signal). Overall dimensions: 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " H. x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ " W. x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " D.

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SPECIFICATIONS—Tape speed: 7.5" and 3.75" per second. Maximum reel size: 7". Frequency response (record-playback): ±2.5 db, 30 to 12,000 cps at 7.5 IPS; ±2.5 db, 30 to 6,500 cps at 3.75 IPS. Harmonic distortion: 1% or less at normal recording level; 3% or less at peak recording level. Signal-to-noise ratio: 50 db or better; referred to normal recording level. Flutter and wow: 0.3% RMS at 7.5 IPS; 0.35% RMS at 3.75 IPS. Heads (3): erase, record, and in-line stereo playback (TR-1C, monophonic playback). Playback equalization: NARTB curve, within ±2 db. Inputs (2): microphone and line. Input impedance: 1 megohm. Model TR-1D & TR-1E outputs (2): A and B stereo channels. Model TR-1C output (1): monophonic. Output levels: approximately 2 volts maximum. Output impedance: approximately 600 ohm (cathode followers). Recording level indicator: professional type db meter. Bias erase frequency: 60 kc. Timing accuracy: ±2%. Power requirements: 105-125 volts AC, 60 cycles, 35 watts. Dimensions: 15 1/2" W. x 13 1/2" D. Total height 10 1/2". Mounting: requires minimum of 8 1/2" below and 1 1/2" above mounting surface. May be operated in either horizontal or vertical position.

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Monophonic Record and Playback. \$16.00 DN., \$14.00 MO.

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MODEL C-TR-1CQ: Converts TR-1C to TR-1E (see TR-1E description above). Shpg. Wt. 2 lbs. \$19.95

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TR-1A SPECIFICATIONS—Frequency response: 7.5 IPS ±3 db 50 to 12,000 cps; 3.75 IPS ±3 db 50 to 7,000 cps. Signal-to-noise ratio: better than 45 db below full output of 1.25 volts/channel. Harmonic distortion: less than 2% at full output. Bias erase frequency: 60 kc (push-pull oscillator).

MODEL TR-1AH: Two-track monophonic and stereo record/playback with fast forward and rewind functions. Two TE-1 Tape Electronics kits. Shpg. Wt. 36 lbs. \$15.00 DN., \$13.00 MO. **\$149⁹⁵**

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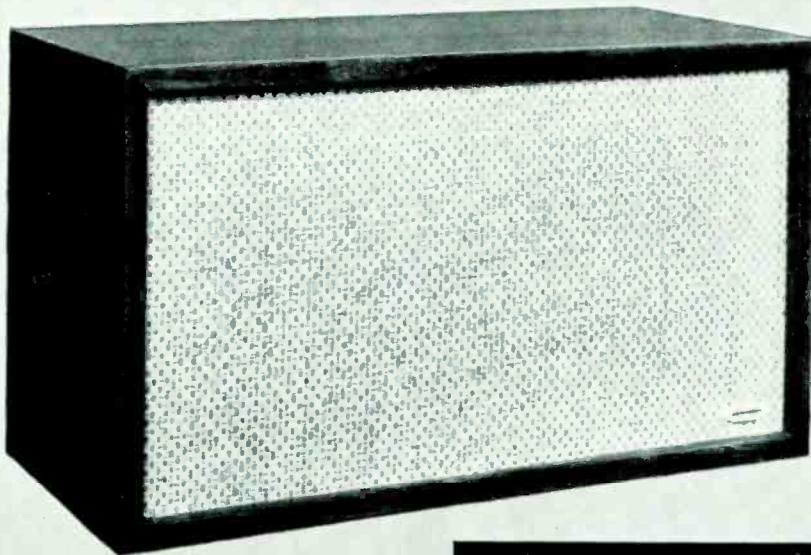
MODEL TR-1AQ: Four-track monophonic and stereo record/playback with fast forward and rewind functions. Two TE-1 Tape Electronics kits. Shpg. Wt. 36 lbs. \$15.00 DN., \$13.00 MO. **\$149⁹⁵**

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HEATHKIT is proud to be the sole kit licensee of this Acoustic Suspension principle from AR, Inc. and now offers for the first time this remarkable speaker system in money-saving, easy-to-build kit form.

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RECOMMENDED AMPLIFIER FOR THE AS-2

The Heathkit W-7A high fidelity amplifier has proven by laboratory tests to be ideal for driving the new Heathkit AS-2 acoustic suspension speaker. See full details and specifications for the W-7A in this ad.

SPECIFICATIONS—Frequency response (at 10 watts input*): ±5 db, 42 to 14,000 cps, 10 db down at 30 and 16,000 cps. **Harmonic distortion:** below 2% down to 50 cps; below 3% down to 40 cps; at 10 watts input in corner room location. **Impedance:** 8 ohms. **Suggested damping factor:** high (5:1 or greater). **Efficiency:** about 2%. **Distribution angle:** 90° in horizontal plane. **Dimensions:** 24" W, x 13½" H, x 11½" D.

*Power input level required for average listening level will not exceed 10 watts.

NEW

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\$19⁹⁵



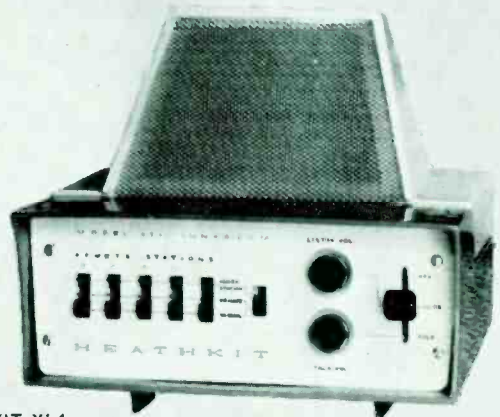
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Transistor circuitry means long life, instant operation and minimum battery drain. Eight ordinary, inexpensive "C" flashlight batteries will run a unit for up to 300 hours of normal "on" time. Circuitry is especially designed for crisp, clear intelligible communications and the instant operation feature allows turning off units between calls, extending battery life. Use of battery power does away with power cords. Only two wires are required between the master unit and each remote station. Beautifully styled in ivory and turquoise for a rich, quality appearance. Batteries not included. Shpg. Wt. 6 lbs.

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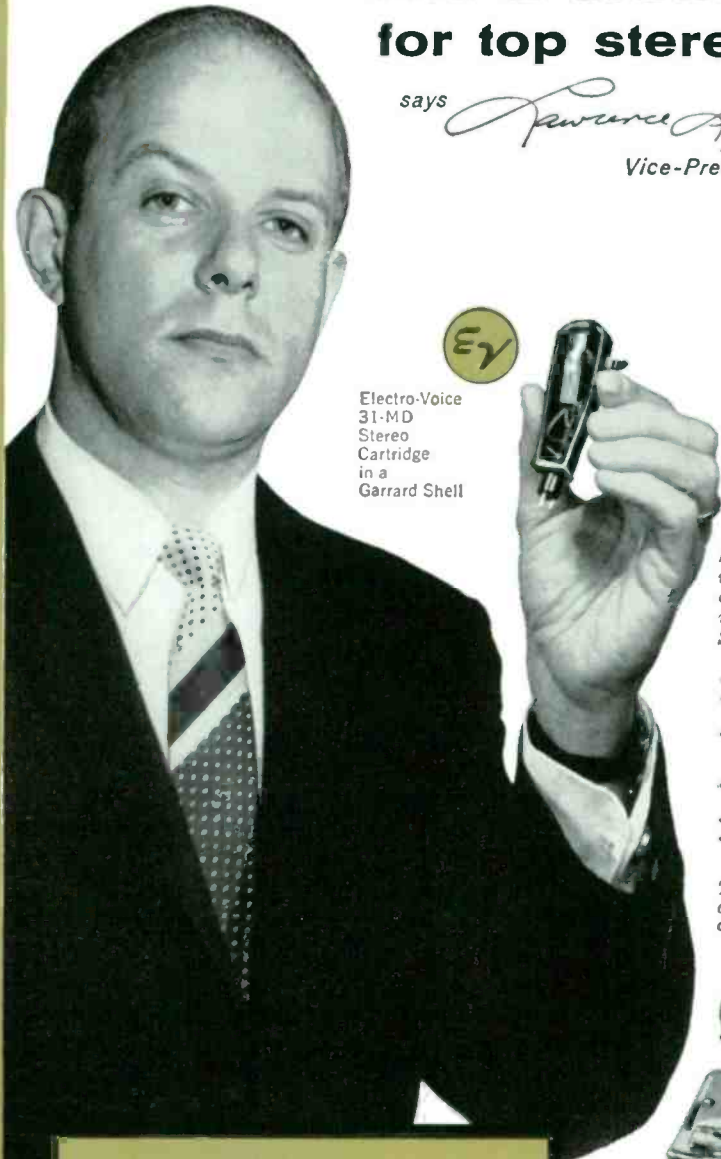
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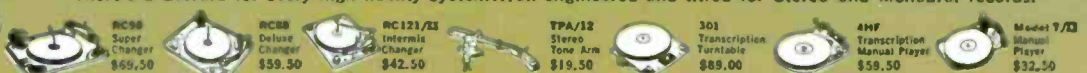
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A Nay for NARAS

ON NOVEMBER 29 the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences meted out thirty-four awards to the supposedly most meritorious records of 1959. NBC televised the proceedings on a coast-to-coast hookup, and a constellation of high-powered show people was on hand to attract a large audience. It was An Event calculated to receive—in the cant of Madison Avenue—"maximum exposure." The Academy (best known in the trade as NARAS) quite obviously hopes to turn its record awards into a national institution akin in glamour and prestige to the movie industry's Oscar Awards.

The above is couched in the past tense because you will be reading this issue of HIGH FIDELITY in December, after NARAS' so-called Grammy Awards have been made. Actually their presentation was a month away when we went to press. We did not know at deadline time which specific records were to be honored. But we did know the slate from which the award-winning records were to be chosen. And we did know that this slate was by no means wholly representative of the record industry's best achievements in 1959.

Consider the category of "Best Classical Performance—Orchestra." The final choice for the 1959 Grammy Award was selected from these five, and only these five, recordings: Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony conducted by Monteux, Debussy's orchestral *Images* conducted by Munch, a collection of Rossini overtures conducted by Reiner, a pairing of the *Capriccio italien* and *Capriccio espagnol* conducted by Kondrashin, and a pairing of the *1812 Overture* and *Bolero* conducted by Morton Gould. All five recordings were issued by RCA Victor. Bruno Walter's and Otto Klemperer's new stereo versions of the Beethoven symphonies, Sir Thomas Beecham's Franck Symphony and Delius collection, Ernest Ansermet's *Swan Lake*, Leonard Bernstein's *Italian* Symphony were not even in the running.

Or consider the category of "Best Classical Performance—Opera Cast or Choral." The winner was to be chosen from these five: Mozart's *Figaro* conducted by Leinsdorf, Rossini's *Barber of Seville* also conducted by Leinsdorf, excerpts from Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila* conducted by Fausto Cleva, Verdi's *La Forza del destino* conducted by Fernando Previtali, and a collection of "Beloved Choruses" performed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. All but the last are RCA Victor recordings. London's complete recording of *Das Rheingold*, Angel's of Richard Strauss's *Capriccio*, Capitol's of *A Life for the Czar* did not make the finals—neither, to focus on the "Choral" part of the category, did the Archive or Vanguard recordings of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*.

Something is clearly amiss. We do not quarrel with some of the candidates nominated for this year's awards.

We do quarrel with the list of candidates as a whole. And we second most emphatically the contention of Goddard Lieberson, the president of Columbia Records, that these 1959 candidates "in no way reflect either the status, the quality, or the scope of the record industry."

This is the second time that NARAS has fumbled the ball. Its first awards, announced earlier this year, were—we felt—deplorable. The Academy saw fit to award the "Orchestral" prize to Felix Slatkin's recording of *Gaîté Parisienne*, the "Operatic or Choral" prize to a Roger Wagner Chorale miscellany entitled "Virtuoso." We held our tongue then, hoping for better things to come. Alas, they have not materialized, and the time has come to speak out. The public should not be gulled by poorly adjudicated record awards no matter how impressively they are publicized.

The recordings chosen for Grammy Awards are nominated and voted upon by members of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. Membership in this organization is open to anybody responsible in some capacity for the artistic or technical production of records. Artist-and-repertoire men, sound engineers, and musicians qualify as members. Merchandising and promotional personnel in record companies, dealers, disc jockeys, and critics do not qualify. NARAS is for the creative people in record making.

The question must immediately be raised whether the creators of records are necessarily the best judges of records. We doubt that they are. For one thing, creators are so busy creating that they do not have time really to keep up with the work of their confreres. For another, creators by their very nature are apt to take a highly partisan view of their art. As they survey a year's output of records, the image they receive may very possibly be partial and distorted. Paradoxically, some of the people who are specifically excluded from the Academy are in a far better position than those enfranchised by NARAS to evaluate the immense crop of records issued over the course of a given year. It is the job of critics and disc jockeys and dealers to keep fully and objectively abreast of every important new record. These people are certainly not infallible. But at least they don't start out with two strikes against them.

This year's sadly unbalanced nominations for Grammy Awards show beyond doubt the limitations of the present NARAS balloting procedures. Agreement on a workable alternative may not be easy to reach. But some new method of choosing the year's best records must certainly be devised. We urge that the board of NARAS take heroic measures towards overhauling its awards. Nothing is more difficult to restore than a tarnished reputation.

R. G.

AS THE EDITORS SEE IT



A black and white portrait of Otto Klemperer, an elderly man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a serious expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

Otto Klemperer:

A Tall Man
Against
Adversity

Capitol Records

*Tyrants, fire, and ill-health have failed to fell the towering
Otto Klemperer or disturb the growth of his majestic style*

EVERY GENERATION of listeners has to come to terms with that great line of Viennese classics, stretching from Haydn to Brahms, which still provides the basis of our concert programs. For each generation the journey of discovery is different; each discovers qualities that preceding ones had missed and refuses to accept what its predecessor had taken for granted.

In this constant rediscovery of what remains our staple musical fare, great conductors play an essential part, for in their performances they advance a view of Mozart or of Beethoven that, if time and circumstances are propitious, comes to be accepted as authoritative—until there arises another great conductor whose view is different. Thus the established classics are always with us, but the manner in which we regard them varies, focusing now on certain characteristics, now on others, generally in accordance with the interpretations of the leading conductors of the day. Sometimes a generation produces two conductors of genius, whose interpretations are directly conflicting and who, like Furtwängler and Toscanini in the matter of Beethoven, divide the world between them. Today, in the minds of many, the new shaper of the classical repertoire is Otto Klemperer.

Does the hour fashion the man, or does the man await the hour? Who can tell? But only ten years ago this man on whom the mantle of Toscanini and Furtwängler fell was a half-forgotten semi-invalid. When able to work, he conducted—now in Australia, now in Hungary, now in Canada. Occasionally people who had lived in Berlin in the last years of the Weimar Republic would mention his name with a respect bordering on reverence, but after all everyone has his own private list of neglected artists. About 1948 this figure from the past turned up in London to conduct two or three concerts in a popular series organized by some impresario in a sports arena a good distance from the center of the city. That Klemperer was available for work of this nature suggests that his services were in small demand from the great orchestras of either the New or Old Worlds. Yet today he fills the largest European concert halls; and although there are, naturally enough, sharp differences about the merits of

his interpretations of the classics in general and of Beethoven in particular, few will deny the extraordinary power and authority they carry. How has this astonishing reversal of fortune come about?

Otto Klemperer was born in Breslau in 1885 of Jewish parents. Four years later the family moved to Hamburg, and it was here that their son grew up. Klemperer's father was not a noticeably keen businessman and the family were by no means well off. But both parents were musical, and Klemperer's mother, who seems to have been a particularly strong-minded and forceful woman, accompanied her husband in Lieder and gave her son his first piano lessons. Gustav Mahler was still the young *Generalmusikdirektor* in Hamburg when the Klemperers arrived, but it was not until later that the great conductor was to cross their son's path so fatefully.

Klemperer left the *Gymnasium* at sixteen and went to study first at the famous Hoch conservatory in Frankfurt and then in Berlin, where he worked at composition under Hans Pfitzner. Klemperer still composes a little, although I can find no record of any of his works having been performed. (Some years ago, however, the manager of the London branch of a famous publishing house was telephoned by an agitated secretary, who said that a Dr. Klemperer had called to inquire how his works were going. His initial assumption that this was a practical joke was abruptly ended by the unmistakable appearance of Dr. Klemperer himself.) But it soon became clear in Berlin that Klemperer's future lay in conducting rather than in composition, and in 1905 he made his debut in a production by Max Reinhardt of Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*. In the same year he conducted the off-stage choir in a performance of Mahler's huge *Resurrection* Symphony. The composer was present and nodded his approval.

This brief meeting with Mahler was to prove auspicious. Klemperer was overwhelmed by the symphony and set about making a piano reduction of the vast score. (It is still one of the works of Mahler that lies closest to his heart, and it is also one of the few that he has recorded.) This piano reduction Klemperer took for



KLEMPERER

Mahler's inspection to Vienna, where the composer was at the time nearing the end of his historic ten-year rule of the *Hofoper*. They must have made a curious couple, for, like many composers, Mahler was a tiny man, and Klemperer's huge frame towered over him. But something must have struck the older man about the gangling youth before him (it is hard to think of Klemperer ever showing the conventional social graces); he took out his pen and wrote on a small correspondence card headed "K.u.K. Hofoper, Wien" a recommendation to Angelo Neumann, the famous intendant of the German Opera in Prague, expressing his belief that Herr Klemperer was "predestined to the career of a conductor." Klemperer's son still carries that card, and almost the only time I have seen Klemperer reveal pride was when he asked his son to show it to me.

For over half a century Klemperer has repaid that debt to Mahler by an unflagging advocacy of his music. The Mahler he presents is far removed from the sweet lyricism and rather self-conscious Viennese charm of Bruno Walter's approach. Perhaps typical of Klemperer's reading was his memorable performance of *Das Lied von der Erde* at the Edinburgh Festival in 1957—memorable because, if it missed the nostalgic tenderness that is surely a part of Mahler, it brought out all the anger and bitterness that is a no less essential element. Of Mahler the conductor, Klemperer says quite simply that he was the greatest he has ever heard (even to this day Klemperer is frequently in the audience at other men's concerts). "Why do you say that?" I asked. There was a pause. Then Klemperer replied: "Because his tempos were always right."

Armed with Mahler's recommendation, Klemperer was able to get a job at the Prague Opera. From there he graduated to Hamburg, and thence to Cologne, where he met and later married a dramatic soprano named Johanna Geissler. (She died in Zurich about three years ago.) It was also in Cologne that Klemperer was converted to Roman Catholicism. It would be quite wrong to suppose that this was a mere matter of convenience. Klemperer's intellectual interests, unlike those of many musicians, are broad. Throughout his life he has sustained a deep interest in philosophy (on a recent visit to London he was immersed in Spinoza). In Cologne he moved a good deal in the circle of the philosopher Max Schlegel, and as this

group advanced towards the Church, Klemperer traveled with them. That his faith is an essential part of his life was made startlingly clear during a lunchtime conversation some four years ago. I had made some observation about the tragedy of Erich Kleiber's sudden death. Klemperer looked at me across the table in rather an astonished manner and said very simply: "But God had called him." Klemperer's religious and philosophical preoccupations are a less publicized part of a character better known for its inexhaustible flow of bawdy bons mots.

His unique opportunity came in 1927 when he was appointed director of the Kroll Opera in Berlin. The city was already well provided with opera. In addition to the State Opera on Unter den Linden, under Kleiber's aegis, Berlin had in the western district of Charlottenburg its own municipal opera, with Bruno Walter as musical director. But under the inspiration of Leo Kerstenberg, the enterprising official responsible for music in the Prussian Ministry of Education and the Arts, it was decided to establish yet another opera house. The new organization was to devote itself not to maintaining a general repertory—a task already admirably fulfilled elsewhere—but to presenting experimental productions and new works. Kerstenberg found exactly the man he needed in Klemperer. At forty-two he was an experienced opera conductor, a fanatical perfectionist, with the wide intelligence and culture necessary if an opera director is to be something more than his own first conductor, and with a mind open to the new artistic forces that had emerged in the Twenties and found a fertile field in Berlin.

The four years during which Klemperer was at the head of the Kroll Opera sound today like a continuous festival. Certainly no opera house since then, even post-war Hamburg under Günther Rennert, has equaled its achievements. Stravinsky's great *Oedipus Rex* was there given its first stage performance, and so were, among others that are today part of musical history, such works as Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, Hindemith's *Cardillac*, and Janáček's *From a Prison Camp*. But the significance of the



Paul Weber

Klemperer and the Philharmonia Orchestra, at Lucerne.

Kroll lay not only in what was done but in how it was done. Productions were strongly influenced by Stanislavsky's methods. Because the repertory was made up of a very small number of operas that were often repeated, rehearsals were almost without limit and continued until everyone was satisfied or until the whole production was abandoned as inadequate. In particular, scenic design marked an abrupt reaction from traditional naturalism: *Madama Butterfly* was confided to an artist from the Bauhaus (I'm not sure whether I would have liked that) and Ewald Dulberg designed abstract sets for *Don Giovanni*. The only opera house that today runs on anything like comparable lines is the East Berlin Komische Oper. But if in Felsenstein the Komische Oper has a producer of extraordinary genius, its musical standards are far from remarkable and the political regime that supports it ensures that sharp limits are put on any "formalist" experimentation.

During the Weimar Republic, Berlin was a center of extraordinary artistic energy and experiment, and the Kroll Opera was a focal point of much that was vital and controversial in the city's cultural life. But there is always something about what is exceptional that attracts the hatred of the mediocre; and there was no lack of the exceptional at the Kroll Opera or of hatred in the Berlin of the early Thirties. Although Klemperer is a man quite without political interests, the mere fact that the Kroll had been established by the socialist government of Prussia, enjoyed the financial support of the trade unions, and was a center of experiment, was enough to make it a target for nationalist and Nazi abuse. Klemperer's evident joy in experiment and his revulsion from romantic *espressivo* seemed a deliberate slap in the face of the average German burgher's conception of "healthy" art in general and of "*heilige deutsche Kunst*" in particular. This, together with the fact that the director was a Jew, who had been seen sporting a blouse in the Russian style, was enough to prove that the Kroll was a nerve center of *Kultur-Bolschewismus*. By 1931 the Prussian government was probably quite glad of the excuse of

growing financial crisis to shut a theatre that was causing so much trouble. Three years later the building was to shelter what remained of the German Parliament after the burning of the Reichstag. Today, like so much else in Berlin, it stands in ruins.

Years of Exile

For Klemperer, his four years as director of the Kroll are those that he looks back on with the greatest satisfaction. It is indeed sad that among all the organizations which now compete for his services scarcely an opera house is to be found. Before his recent illness this fall the Metropolitan had expected to welcome him as conductor of the *Tristan* revival there. It is still hoped that a long-planned *Fidelio* at Covent Garden will eventualize next spring. Klemperer brought an action against the Prussian government for closing the Kroll. Of course he lost it, but he seems to have entertained himself in court by shouting at one moment, "I consider the title of *Generalmusikdirektor* defamatory," and at another, "My case is like Dreyfus'. Only instead of being sent to Devil's Island I must go to Unter den Linden." As this action suggests, Klemperer enjoyed striking exaggerated attitudes, in scandalizing and shocking the public, rather as Beecham does.

In 1933 the Nazis came to power and Klemperer was dismissed from the Staatsoper in Unter den Linden. On this great interpreter of the German classics a Berlin newspaper made the supremely ironical comment that "his whole outlook ran counter to free German thought and feeling." Klemperer emigrated to the United States and for six years was director of the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra. He makes no bones about the fact that he was not happy in America. He is the first to pay tribute to the high technical achievements of the great American orchestras, but he was not much drawn to American life, and his years in Los Angeles do not seem to have been markedly successful. But the real reason for his failure to settle happily in America probably lies in the fact that at this time his health had begun to give him serious trouble. In 1939 he was struck down with the terrible affliction of a brain tumor. Klemperer had always been an eccentric, unconventional character and he still is; but it is very possible that the increasing eccentricity of these years was due to his illness. An operation was what the doctors like to call successful, but Klemperer emerged stricken in mind and body.

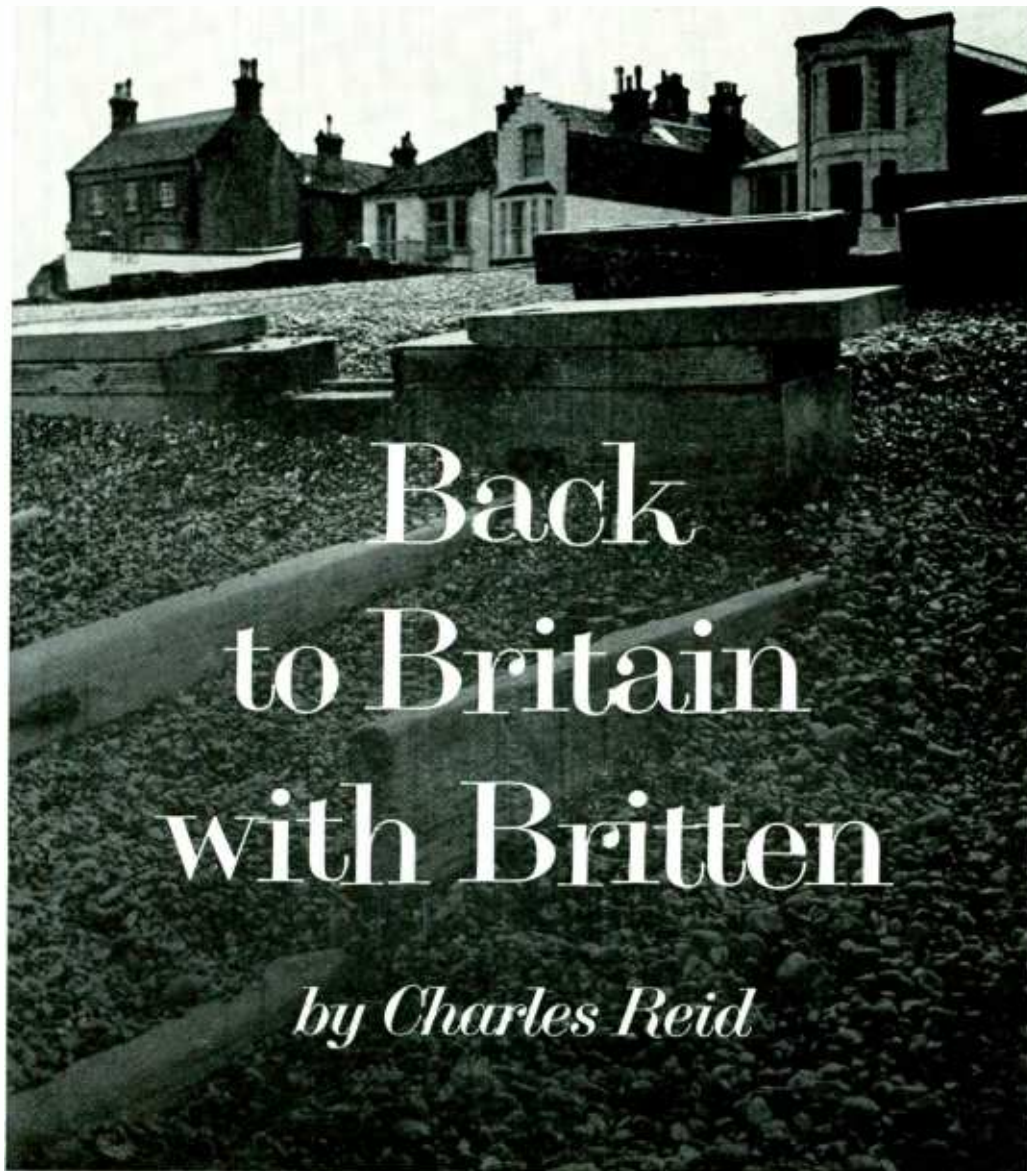
It was not until 1946 that he appeared again in public, in Budapest, as director of the opera. This, of course, produced the usual charges of Communist sympathies, whereas in fact Klemperer was merely anxious to find what he considered adequate conditions of work. In 1948 he left Budapest owing to Communist interference and from this time he wandered from one continent to another filling casual engagements. Photographs of this period tell a terrible story. His huge frame is emaciated, great black eyes stare feverishly out of

Continued on page 174



Paul Weber

For many, "the new shaper of the classic repertoire."



A visit with England's once-rebellious composer, who fled from frustration at home to frustration in America and who is now settled—unfrustrated—in the Peter Grimes country he made famous.

AS THE DIESEL TRAIN honked its way across the salt marshes towards the Peter Grimes country, where Benjamin Britten and his friend Peter Pears make their home, I thought back over the composer's successes, frustrations, and personal mellowing since the day in April 1942 when he and Pears landed in England after their three "wander years" in the United States.

I remembered, among other things, their joint recitals in blacked-out provincial towns, with occasional raiders or flying bombs overhead. Britten, at the piano, had a beaky nose and crinkled hair. His keyboard touch was precise and lithe. Pears sang Purcell, Bach, Schubert, and new Britten song cycles—the Michelangelo sonnet

settings and, rather later, the *Holy Sonnets of John Donne*—from beneath a prophet's pregnant forehead and rapt regard, his tenor a little chalky for some tastes. His phrasing and musicianship were agreed to be nonpareil.

Pacifist and peace pledger of prewar standing, Britten was granted, a few months after his return from the U. S., unconditional exemption from military service—a very rare concession. The exemption was made on the ground that in the cultural field (including musical broadcasts to America) he was already devoting his energies fully to the national advantage. Politically he was Leftist, with a lingering ambience from choral

concerts and street demonstrations during the late Thirties on behalf of Republican Spain and the International Brigades. But Britten wore his Leftism with a difference. He was never taken in by its usual concomitant, "scientific humanism," and scoffed mildly at "intuitive manipulation of memory" as accounting for aesthetic inspiration. He spoke of God with the unself-consciousness of people who believe as naturally as they breathe. At that time he didn't know which attracted him the more, Quakerism or Roman Catholicism. Although "not much of a churchgoer," he has since settled down as a Church of England man.

Another thing I remembered was the *Peter Grimes* first night, June 7, 1945, at Sadler's Wells Opera, London. Packed house, shining eyes, jubilant smiles. Britten took clamorous curtain calls with a diffident smile. Next morning he read in a respected newspaper that melody was not the chiefest of his remarkable gifts. He screwed the paper into a ball and cast it furiously from him. But *Peter Grimes* was emphatically and widely adored. . . .

The diesel train gave a final honk and fetched up in a small terminal station. The platform signs said Aldeburgh. For Aldeburgh read The Borough (*vide* the *Grimes* libretto). Much of this East Anglian fishing village looks as if built according to the *Grimes* stage directions. Moot Hall, "Auntie's" public house, Parson Adams' flint-gray church—all are there in snug proximity. The only thing missing is the sadistic populace of *Peter Grimes* which—if it ever existed outside librettist Slater's imagination—has been refined out of existence by social evolution and the benign influence of Aldeburgh's summer arts festival, now in its twelfth flourishing year under Britten's personal direction.

A more recent change is the Britten-Pears abode. From 1947 on they shared pink-walled Crag House on the Aldeburgh sea-front. Eventually holidaymakers took to swinging their legs on the sea wall opposite in the hope of seeing the famed tenants take tea on the lawn. Crag House having thus become untenable, Britten and Pears moved to The Red House, a rambling mansion in vintage red brick, which stands on heathland a mile or two outside the village.

My purpose in calling was to talk with Britten, specifically about the years between 1930, when he entered the Royal



The Red House, near the village of Aldeburgh, where Britten and Peter Pears make their home. Below, Britten at the seashore, not far away.



College of Music, and 1942. About these twelve years there have been fugitive references in print; little or nothing straight from Britten's mouth.

But first a word about his chrysalis stage.

Son of a prosperous Lowestoft (East Anglia) dentist and a voraciously musical mother, he began putting notes on ruled paper (mainly because they looked pretty) at five and composed a Schubertian setting of Burns's *O that I'd never been married* at nine. By fourteen the schoolboy's output included ten piano sonatas, six string quartets, three piano suites, one oratorio, and a tone poem, *Chaos and Cosmos*. His boyhood musical studies were guided by Frank Bridge (1874–1941), an English composer of wide-ranging craftsmanship who stood rather apart from the nationalistic main trends of early twentieth-century English music. Over now to our interview:

Reid: Please throw your mind back to 1930. You settled in London as a raw sixteen-year-old. Just where?

Britten: I took a bed-sitter up under the roof in a boardinghouse at Prince's Square, Bayswater. I hired a small upright piano and took care not to play it after ten at night. I hadn't much money. As the youngest of four children I lived on a smallish allowance from my father. I was a "scholar," of course, but that didn't amount to much; it merely meant that my tuition fees were paid.

Reid: I understand you weren't happy at the Royal College of Music. That true?

Britten: Let's put it this way: I was rather a failure as a student. The trouble was, I had been studying with Bridge since I was a young boy. Bridge's approach was that of the highly professional international musician. The attitude of most of the R.C.M. students was amateurish and folksy. That made me feel highly intolerant.

Reid: How did you get on with your two teachers—John Ireland [composer, born 1879] and Arthur Benjamin [composer, born 1893]?

Britten: Well enough. But they didn't wield anything like as much influence on their students as the great Vaughan Williams. For my own part I was frankly suspicious of V. W. My struggle all the time was to develop a consciously controlled professional technique. It was a struggle away from everything Vaughan Williams seemed to stand for.



Britten, Pears, and dachshunds at ease on their terrace. In the photograph below, the composer assists in hanging pictures for a local exhibition — the large portrait in the background is an artist's conception of Peter Pears.





Photographs by Hans Wild

Britten at work in his studio. His opus roll has grown to Number 60, but his music still is "shot with marvel, touched with dawn and dew."

Reid: But, like everybody else I suppose, you were swept off your feet by his Symphony No. 4?

Britten: The Fourth Symphony impressed me greatly. But an odd story went round the College after a rehearsal of it. Vaughan Williams was reported to have said of his own work, "If that's modern music, all I can say is I don't like it." This story, I must say, shocked me profoundly. In those days I was very violent in my opinions, very ready to have grievances.

Reid: In a biographical essay he wrote about you several years ago, the Earl of Harewood said you won a traveling scholarship at the College and wanted to go to Vienna and study with Alban Berg but were stopped by the College "authorities." What's the background to this?

Britten: I had won the Arthur Sullivan scholarship, worth £100 and enough to keep a youngster on the Continent for six months in those days. I decided to spend my £100 studying with Berg. I put in an application to the College administration, because the £100 had strings attached. I heard nothing more until one day my mother said she had been told by someone important at the College (she didn't say who it was, and I have never found out) that Berg was an "unsuitable

person." The insinuation seemed to be that he was unsuitable on more than just musical grounds. I was furious. But there was nothing I could do. Berg died the following year.

Reid: You were glad to see the end of your student days?

Britten: I only started enjoying myself as a human being after I left college and got down to real work.

Reid: Your first "real work," I seem to recall, was writing documentary music for the G.P.O. [General Post Office] Film Unit?

Britten: *And* helping rig lights. *And* hold cameras. *And* cut films. *And* fix sound effects. All for £3 a week. The scores I wrote were for seven players at the outside. Exciting work. Exciting people to work with. W. H. Auden looked after the words side. [With Auden, Britten worked on a celebrated documentary, *Night Mail*. It was Auden also who, between 1936 and 1942, wrote the texts for several other pieces by Britten.]

Reid: By this time you had left your Bayswater attic?

Britten: I was sharing a flat with my sister in West Hampstead. It was a mews flat over a garage, the coldest in London, built on top of nothing, with nothing on either side of it. On the strength of my choral variations,

A Boy Was Born [written while he was at college and broadcast by the BBC early in 1933], Ralph Hawkes the publisher gave me a contract. I forget what he paid me. Something like £5 a week, I think. On his part it wasn't a hopelessly long shot, but he didn't start getting much of his money back for three or four years.

Reid: But I always had the impression that after leaving college you prospered rather.

Britten: Not really. A day came when the G.P.O. Film Unit no longer wanted me. One had a struggle to get things performed.

Reid: Which is why you decided to settle in America?

Britten: Money was not really the issue. Frustration was more important. It was frustration that sent me to America. I felt there was a wall of laziness and apathy against new things.

Reid: Did politics enter into it?

Britten: Yes, politics too. I was under the influence of the Auden-Isherwood group and frightfully "political," as all of us were in the Thirties. After Munich the morale of Europe seemed about as low as it could get. Things were becoming steadily more rotten.

Reid: And you were a pacifist.

Britten: Yes, I was a pacifist. Not that I was running away from war when I went to America. At that time—the spring of 1939—there was no certainty that war was coming. But I wanted to have nothing to do with a military system that, to me, was part of Europe's decay. Mistakenly, as it turned out, I felt that Europe was finished. And it seemed to me that the New World was so much *newer*, so much readier to welcome new things.

Reid: You traveled to America with Peter Pears?



George Maran, an American, sings many Britten roles.

Britten: Peter was going to America on holiday and had fixed incidental singing dates there. He and I had been thrown together professionally a year or so before. I liked him enormously, admired his way of thinking, found him stimulating. So we made the voyage together, stopping off first in Canada for a few weeks' holiday in the Laurentian Mountains above Quebec. We rented a cabin there, very cheap. It was a combined walking and working holiday. I worked on *Les Illuminations* [a setting for voice and strings of poems by Rimbaud] and the Violin Concerto. Then to Toronto, where I wrote incidental music and one commissioned piece (orchestral) for the CBC. Next for a spell with Aaron Copland—I had met him in England and admired him a lot—at his holiday place in upstate New York.

Reid: It had been your intention to become an American citizen?

Britten: True. But the war changed all that. The change wasn't an intellectual one primarily. I don't think I ever consciously reasoned it out. Certainly I underwent a lot of personal tension. Practically all of 1940 I was ill. Outwardly the ailment was infected tonsils. But the real cause was my mental perplexities. It was a frantically difficult position. Gradually I realized that, for better or worse, I was a European.

Reid: Did you get any work done during your streptococcal phase?

Britten: *Paul Bunyan* and the *Sinfonia da Requiem* date from that time.

Reid: Tell me about *Bunyan*. As it isn't in print, I'm vague about it.

Britten: Paul Bunyan as you know is the mythical giant of American folklore. Some of my music was good—I wouldn't say very good. When the piece was produced by the Opera Department of Columbia University, Auden and myself weren't at all popular. In fact, *Bunyan* caused quite a scandal, mainly because of Auden's words. Auden thought fit to utter many home truths about America. It was as if an American living in England had written a derogatory piece about John Bull.

Reid: And the *Sinfonia da Requiem*?

Britten: That's an odd story. While I was in America, the Japanese government approached various composers (Strauss for Germany, Milhaud for France, me for Britain) and asked us to write pieces in commemoration of the 2,600th anniversary of the foundation of the Mikado's dynasty. The invitation came to me through the British Council. I cabled back to London accepting, subject to my not being expected to write anything jingoistic. On this point I got the necessary assurance. The *Sinfonia* as I had originally conceived it was in memory of my mother, but in scale and type it was well suited to a festival. Through the British Council I cabled to the Japanese a description of the work, with title and subtitles [*Lacrymosa*, *Dies Irae*, and *Requiem Aeternam*], all of which struck me as compatible with a creed that involves ancestor worship. Continued on page 178



Stereo Discs—1959

CULLING THE YEAR'S HARVEST

by John F. Indcox

RECORDS have long vied with books as perhaps the most popular and acceptable of all Christmas gifts. This year, with the advent of stereo, they are more appropriate than ever. In the course of the past twelve months the stereo disc has triumphantly come into its own; and for anyone who has recently converted to stereo, records make the gift *par excellence*.

Most of the gremlins that plagued the early stereo releases have vanished. The gimmicks, the Ping-pong effects, the hurtling railroad trains have given way to an industry-wide concern for realistic, rather than exaggerated, sound. The stereo catalogue itself has expanded vastly. It now runs the gamut from Adam to Zeller, and encompasses too a tremendous variety of popular and jazz titles.

In fact, the stereo convert is now offered such an embarrassment of riches that some culling of the year's harvest is in order. In my dual role of record critic and record dealer, I have had occasion to hear a large proportion of the 1959 crop, though a few important fall releases had unfortunately not appeared before this issue went to the printers. From all this bounty I have chosen the following as the recordings most likely to enrich you and your friends' listening pleasure this Christmas season and for years to come.

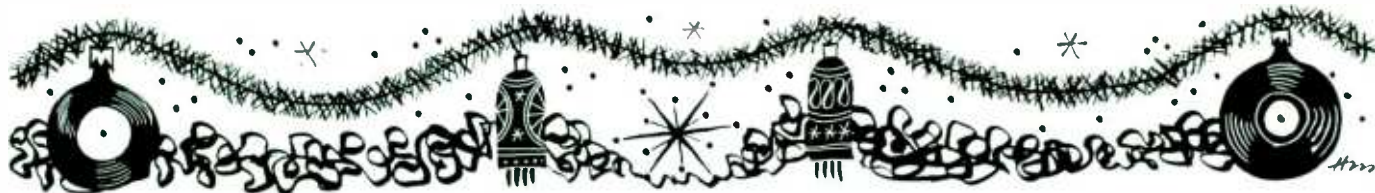
Symphonic

Stereo has been particularly successful with symphonic music. You might well start with Bruno Walter's noble, lyrical, and uniquely genial reading of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony (Columbia MS 6012). Not since his renowned

version with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, recorded almost twenty-five years ago, has Dr. Walter reached such heights. If you admire the *Symphonic fantastique* of Hector Berlioz, that powerful work of the composer's youth, Audio Fidelity provides the most satisfactory recording of it now available. Alfred Wallenstein directs a dramatic, bold, and meticulously articulated performance, and the engineers have clothed it in truly spectacular sound (FCS 50003). For Angel, Otto Klemperer has recorded the four Brahms Symphonies. I consider his version of the Third the most beautiful I have ever heard: a superb commingling of warmth and power (S 35545).

Those who know Dvořák only by way of his Fifth Symphony (*New World*) should by all means investigate his marvelous Fourth Symphony as performed under the sure hand of George Szell (Epic BC 1015). Szell made a memorable recording of the work some years ago, but this new issue is even better. Two Haydn symphonies, Nos. 100 (*Military*) and 101 (*Clock*), performed by the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under Mogens Wøldike are available from Vanguard at the bargain price of \$2.98. Bargain is not a misapplied term here, for this wonderful disc contains the best performance of each symphony now available on records, and in particularly grateful stereo sound (SRV 109-SD).

I doubt that many people normally associate Leonard Bernstein with the music of Felix Mendelssohn. He seems, however, to have a remarkable affinity for that composer, to judge from his delicate, tasteful reading of Mendelssohn's Fourth (*Italian*) Symphony (Columbia



MS 6050). There is more elegance and less frenzy here than in most Bernstein recordings, and this performance easily bears comparison with Koussevitzky's superb interpretation of some twenty years ago. Camille Saint-Saëns's Third Symphony, with organ, may not be the greatest music ever written, but from the early days of high fidelity it has been a score to gladden the hearts of audiophiles. In stereo its sounds seem more stupendous than ever, as you may readily discover if you listen to a performance of the work by the Detroit Symphony under Paul Paray, admirably assisted by veteran organist Marcel Dupré (Mercury SR 90012).

Schubert's Symphony No. 9 in C has been very well played by Josef Krips and the London Symphony (London CS 6061). I do not find myself seriously disturbed, as do some others, by the slackening of impetus in the finale, and I consider this easily the best Schubert Ninth on records, particularly as London's stereo sound is unusually compelling.

It would be an odd list that did not include a symphony by Tchaikovsky. My preference here goes to a thrilling version of the Fifth Symphony, magnificently played by the Boston Symphony under Pierre Monteux (RCA Victor LSC 2239). The taut understatement, even coolness, with which Monteux projects the composer's intention is far more telling than the hysterical treatment some conductors prefer.

It may seem still a little early to call Vaughan Williams' Ninth Symphony a masterpiece, though it strikes me as one of the few great scores of the past fifty years. This remarkable composition can be heard in a sincere and dedicated performance under the leadership of Sir Adrian Boult (Everest SDBR 3006). It is just possible that there is more excitement, more drama in the music than Boult manages to convey; but until another stereo recording of the work comes along, this will serve well the memory of a great composer. Everest, a comparatively new company, deserves a special word of praise for its astonishing stereo sound.

Other Orchestral Music

Of miscellaneous orchestral music there is no lack either. At the head of the list I would place a collection of the misty, perfumed orchestral poems of Delius, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham with mastery and magic. The English baronet, long-time Delius champion, is in superb form, and EMI-Capitol's excellent sound helps to make this record a stereo triumph.

If your mind is set on things closer to home, I confidently recommend for consideration Gershwin's orchestration of a suite from his opera *Porgy and Bess*. Compared to the composer's spare, exciting orchestration of his own music, other arrangements sound overblown and

dreary. Westminster has put out a splendid performance of this Gershwin suite by the Utah Symphony Orchestra, led with keen enthusiasm by Maurice Abravanel (WST 14063).

Jumping from the twentieth to the eighteenth century (not such a great feat as it may sound), attention should be directed to a charming recording of Handel's *Water Music* by the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra under the late Eduard van Beinum (Epic BC 1016). The *al fresco* quality of Epic's stereo sound is singularly appropriate.

Lovers of ballet music will discover new delights in Delibes's beautiful score for *Sylvia*. So many musical "bon-bons" appear in this work that one can readily understand why Tchaikovsky—no tyro himself in the field of ballet—despaired of ever matching them. The complete score is available in a topnotch performance by the London Symphony Orchestra led by Anatole Fistoulari, and the stereo sound is unusually persuasive, suggesting more the atmosphere of a ballet performance than of a recording studio (Mercury OS 2-106).

Concertos

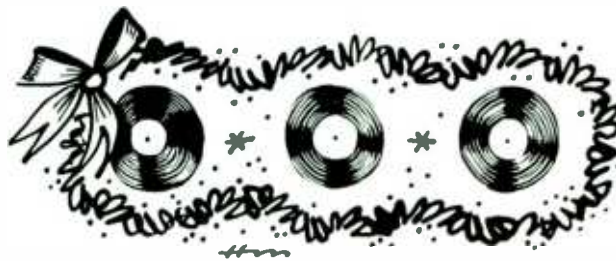
A great many of the early stereo concerto recordings suffered from drift. Pianos especially were wont to wander from one speaker to the other. This annoying defect has been fairly well eliminated now, and the following are suggested as outstanding recordings in the concerto category.

The most beautiful of all Beethoven's piano concertos, the Fourth, is given a melting performance by Leon Fleisher and the Cleveland Symphony under Szell (Epic BC 1025). As an interpretation it ranks alongside the recording made by Fleisher's teacher, Artur Schnabel, and the Philharmonia Orchestra just after the war. Here we have the advantage of Epic's beautifully balanced stereo sound. There is magic in this disc.

Fabulous technique and unbounded temperament are not the only attributes of a comparative newcomer, violinist Henri Szeryng. A scintillating performance with the London Symphony of Brahms's Violin Concerto

shows him to be a musician of keen insight and imagination. Here is playing of dazzling virtuosity such as one seldom encounters these days (RCA Victor LSC 2281). Spectacular sound allied to equally spectacular pianism is to be found on a London disc featuring Julius Katchen in the two piano concertos of Franz Liszt (CS 6013). These pieces may sound a trifle old-fashioned to some listeners these days, but such exciting performances as these should keep them from fading away.

Rudolf Serkin has turned his attention to two of Mozart's piano concertos, No. 11 *Continued on page 170*



by NATHAN BRODER

Handel's *Messiah* Newly Recorded



For purist, traditionalist, or iconoclast—Handel's oratorio appears again, in stereo versions conducted by Beecham, Ormandy, Sargent, and Scherchen.

Handel: MESSIAH

Jennifer Vyvyan, soprano; Monica Sinclair, contralto; Jon Vickers, tenor; Giorgio Tozzi, bass; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.

● ● RCA VICTOR LDS 6409. Four SD. \$25.98.

Elsie Morison, soprano; Marjorie Thomas, contralto; Richard Lewis, tenor; James Milligan, bass; Huddersfield Choral Society; Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.

● ● ANGEL 3598C. Three LP. \$14.98.
● ● ANGEL S3598C. Three SD. \$17.98.

Eileen Farrell, soprano; Martha Lipton, contralto; Davis Cunningham, tenor; William Warfield, bass; Mormon Tabernacle Choir; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

● ● COLUMBIA M2L 263. Two LP. \$9.98.
● ● COLUMBIA M2S 607. Two SD. \$11.98.

Pierrette Alarie, soprano; Nan Merriman, contralto; Léopold Simoneau, tenor; Richard Standen, bass; Vienna Academy Chorus; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.

● ● WESTMINSTER WST 401. Four SD. \$17.95.

HANDEL'S *Messiah* is not only far and away the most popular oratorio in English-speaking countries, but also the most frequently performed large choral work of any kind. And this has been true practically since Handel's own time. Yet it is also one of the most enigmatic compositions in the entire literature. Not only does it offer a great mass of performing problems to the conductor and his forces, but the very meaning of the work has been subject to different interpretations at different periods. Many studies of it were published in the nineteenth century, and in our own analytical age fresh examinations have been made from various points of view. Since the end of the Second World War no fewer than four monographs in English have been devoted to *Messiah*, two of them full-length books. No other single musical work of any sort has been so painstakingly examined in print. And still each performance differs in important respects from the others.

Why should this be? To understand the nature and extent of the puzzles that *Messiah* presents, it is necessary to glance at its history. Sometime during the late summer of 1741 Handel was invited by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to visit Dublin and perform some of his oratorios there. On August 22 Handel began to compose furiously, and he did not leave his house until he finished twenty-four days later, on September 14. He set off for Dublin early in November. Whether *Messiah* was composed specifically for performance there is not known; but it is definitely established that the work was first performed in Dublin, at a public rehearsal on April 8, 1742, followed by a public performance on April 13. Even before the first performance Handel had begun to make changes. It had turned out that some of the singers were not capable of doing justice to their parts, so some movements were omitted and others much modified.



Columbia Records

Ormandy



Derek Allen

Beecham

Handel was an extremely practical composer. He never hesitated to change and rewrite to meet the needs of the moment. If anybody had suggested to him that in so doing he was creating headaches for unborn generations of editors and conductors, he would probably have considered the notion interesting and then shrugged it off as irrelevant. The point was to get the job at hand done in the most effective way with the forces available.

And that is what happened at subsequent performances Handel directed, of which there were many in England beginning in 1750 (after a few unsuccessful ones in the previous seven years). Almost all of the changes, cuts, restorations, and additions concern the solo parts; the choruses seem to have remained virtually untouched. Consequently we have, for example, two different versions for bass, and a third for soprano, of "But who may abide." "Rejoice greatly" may be sung by a soprano or tenor, but there is another, rather different version for a soprano. One version of "He shall feed His flock" is begun by the alto and completed by the soprano, another is for the soprano throughout. "He was despised" was sung sometimes by an alto, sometimes (in a higher key) by a soprano. "How beautiful are the feet" and "Their sound is gone out" make an especially complicated pair: in the familiar version they are sung by the soprano and the chorus respectively, but other versions survive in which both are done by the soprano, or the first by an alto and the second by a tenor or soprano, and "How beautiful" by a soprano and alto duet or by a pair of altos. Handel sanctioned all of these variants at one time or another. "We must conclude," writes Jens Peter Larsen in his recent study, "that it will scarcely ever be possible to determine an absolutely standard form of *Messiah* as the one authentic version, though in the case of nearly every number we can say which form is to be preferred for inclusion in a performance aiming at as close a reproduction as possible of Handel's own practice. In the great majority of cases we can settle on a particular version as *the* version, but in a few instances we must either regard each of two versions as valid or else leave the matter in doubt."

If there is uncertainty about the music itself in some of the movements of *Messiah*, the question of the work's orchestration is equally foggy. The original score calls for

strings and continuo, to which are added one trumpet in "The trumpet shall sound," a pair of trumpets in "Glory to God," and trumpets and drums in the "Hallelujah Chorus" and in "Worthy is the Lamb." And that is all. But we know from other reliable sources that in certain of the London performances Handel's orchestra comprised four oboes, four bassoons, and two horns in addition to twenty strings and a pair of trumpets and of drums. The oboes played along with the violins in instrumental introductions and supported the sopranos in the choruses, the bassoons reinforced the basses, and the horns probably played from the same parts as the trumpets. In only one case, "Their sound is gone out," do we have independent oboe parts that are authentic.

When Handel died, in 1759, the world of music was in the throes of a radical change of style. The baroque was already almost completely ousted by the new rococo, or *galant*, or "pre-Classical" style. By the 1780s, when *Messiah* was establishing a foothold in central Europe, the Handelian orchestra was disdained as old-fashioned, primitive, and wholly inadequate to convey the glories of his music. New orchestrations were prepared and performed. Among them was one done in 1786 by Johann Adam Hiller, a successor of Bach at Leipzig and one of the earliest composers of German comic opera. He not only altered and shortened some of the solo numbers but wrote, as he said, "a quite new score, such as Handel would have written if he were alive today." This is the first appearance on record of an idea that spawned many monstrosities. The new version that was destined to become the most influential, however, was Mozart's, made in 1789 for Baron van Swieten.

Mozart omitted only two numbers, the chorus "Let all the angels of God worship" and the aria "Thou art gone up on high" from Part II; he did not tamper with the vocal writing and he changed little in Handel's string parts. The younger master wrote out parts for flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns. He added trumpets and drums in some places where Handel had not used them; he rewrote Handel's high trumpet parts because the art of playing such parts was no longer known in Mozart's time. He introduced trombones, and in the "Pastoral Symphony" added a piccolo. The added woodwind parts filled out the harmony and wove new counterpoints around the vocal melodies. All this, of course, was very deftly and effectively done, but in the Mozartean, not the Handelian, style. Why did a Mozart take such liberties with someone else's masterpiece? For one thing, he was simply executing a commission for his friend, the Baron; he probably had no idea that his arrangement would ever be used again (it was not published until a decade after his death). More important, it was an age in which a composer's own score was not regarded as anything sacred; in fact, performers often treated such a score as merely a basis for elaboration or manipulation for their own ends. Mozart himself suffered grievously, if posthumously, from this attitude: the scores of his great

operas were grotesquely distorted when they were first performed in France and England.

Mozart's version of *Messiah* remained the most popular, though by no means the only one used, for more than a century. Then, at the beginning of our century, it was challenged by a new one, at least in English-speaking countries. It must be remembered that during the nineteenth century, in England and America, many large choruses were newly established, or grew from smaller beginnings. Some conductors began to feel that Mozart's orchestration was not sufficiently powerful to support a chorus of a hundred or more. One of these musicians was Ebenezer Prout—teacher, composer of a sort, and author of successful books on musical theory. He brought out a new edition of *Messiah*, retaining many of Mozart's ideas but in general thickening the orchestral texture and adding a full organ part in many of the numbers. Because certain movements are "never performed," he relegated them to an appendix. These are, in addition to two snatches of recitative, the arias "Thou art gone up on high" and "If God be for us," the duet "O death, where is thy sting?," and the choruses "Let all the angels of God" and "But thanks be to God." It is this version or Mozart's, or some modification thereof, that is remembered by most of us who at one time or another have participated in amateur performances of *Messiah* with orchestra.

Today the tendency is to scrape off the barnacles. A large and growing number of music lovers has come to appreciate the characteristic textures and colors of the baroque orchestra. These listeners want to hear what Handel did, not what numerous editors and arrangers thought he should have done. Although it will never be possible, for various reasons, to hear a performance exactly like one conducted by Handel, enough authentic material is available and has been thoroughly enough studied to make possible performances that are reasonably close to Handel's—that in any case render it no longer necessary to look at his baroque masterwork through classically or romantically colored glasses.

There are consequently two main types of performance now. One is the "traditional" sort, for large chorus and large orchestra of un-Handelian constitution, performing a version that is more or less heavily cut to fit the long work into an ordinary evening's playing time. The other type might be called, though in no pejorative sense, the "purist" sort, for forces nearer the size and constitution of Handel's (who is known to have had available for the first performance a chorus of fewer than thirty, including the soloists) performing the complete work in a manner that reveals it as it may have sounded in Handel's time. Both types seem to me to have value, though of very different kinds. The traditional type, with all its faults, has for some of us a sentimental worth: it is the form in which we first came to know and love this wonderful music, and it evokes memories of younger days. But the true flavor of this "divine entertainment" can be fully



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Scherchen



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Sargent

appreciated only when its clean lines are unencumbered by foreign accretions and its continuity is undisturbed by drastic excisions.

The cause of authenticity is aided by the microphone. No doubt large halls require large forces, but records do not. On discs the conductor using a purist version can make a splendid sound on, say, "Wonderful, Counsellor" in "For unto us a Child is born" without Mozart's horns and trumpets, to which Prout adds trombones. And he can convey the full effect of Handel's careful use of the trumpets. Handel does not let them play at all until the chorus "Glory to God," where he specifically instructs them to sound "from a distance and *un poco piano*." He then keeps them silent until they peal forth in their brassy glory, together with the drums, for the first time in the "Hallelujah Chorus." Mozart and Prout, however, introduce them as early as "For unto us" and spoil Handel's subtly calculated effects.

Of the four new recordings of *Messiah*, the Ormandy and Sargent belong to the traditional type, the Scherchen to the purist, and the Beecham to neither. Let us examine this last version first.

Sir Thomas has gone off on a musical spree. Like other conductors before him, starting, as we have seen, with J. A. Hiller, he decided that the *Messiah* accompaniments ought to be done over "as Handel would have scored them if he had been living today." Now this is of course an illogical idea to begin with. If Handel were alive today, he would shape his music entirely differently. With a composer of genius the accompaniment is not an independent thing, detachable at will and replaceable, like the tires on a car. It is an integral part of the musical thought; if you color the accompaniment in one style and leave the accompanied material in another, you have a mishmash. Beecham gave the assignment to Sir Eugene Goossens. (Incidentally, nothing is said about this in the notes for the album. HIGH FIDELITY readers will remember, however, that the whole story was told in the November issue in Charles Reid's London "Notes from Abroad.") Goossens, very able composer and excellent conductor, apparently *Continued on page 176*



STEREO RECEIVERS

Equipment Survey

**A
NEW
BREED
SOLVES
MANY
PROBLEMS**

by Charles Fowler

TO THE INCIPIENT stereophile, few things are more alluring than the shining row of components, stretched across a dealer's counter, which may soon constitute his stereo system. There will be at least a turntable or changer, with diamond-studded cartridge; a stereo FM-AM tuner; a preamp-control unit with myriad clutched, ganged, and concentric knobs; a dual power amplifier; and, over on the floor, the two or more units of the speaker system. This is indeed a happy moment; months may have been spent preparing for it.

Yet, for some, this moment of bliss may be shattered by a simple question that must be asked sooner or later: "How do you hook it up?" Now everyone in the world has a certain amount of bravery in his soul. Many, many people have had the courage to connect a monophonic high-fidelity system. "You start with a wire from here to

there; then one from here to here; plug this in here and run the other end over there; connect a piece of zip cord from these screws over to those on the speaker."

And many people have had the courage to connect a stereo system; but, unfortunately, there are those who, at the last moment, have quailed. We don't blame them, particularly; there can be an awful lot of wires snarled around the back of a stereo system. (Our approach to the problem is timid: we pretend we're hitching up two separate monophonic systems, and do one ear at a time. Left channel all the way through, then the right-ear channel.) If the problem is approached slowly and carefully, there should be no trouble. But there may be some hum; this is the second bugaboo of the process.

Component equipment manufacturers have made a major advance towards solving both problems by intro-



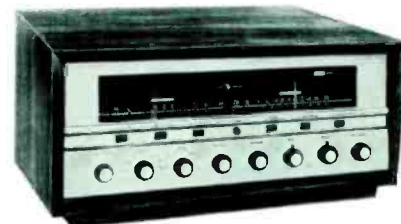
Bogen RC412



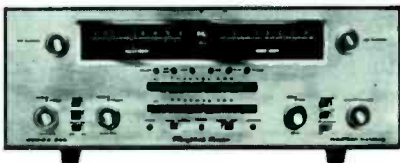
Bogen SRB20



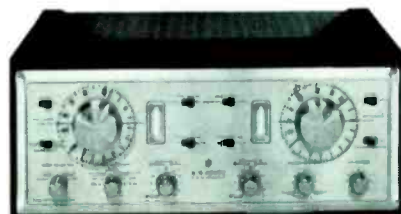
Fisher 600



Harman-Kardon TA230

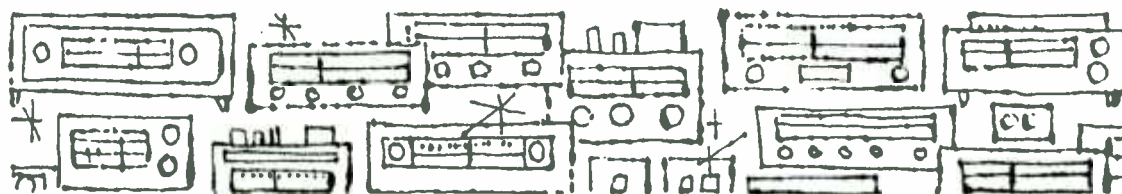


Madison Fielding 440



Scott 399

MAKE	MODEL	PRICE	WATTS per channel	REMARKS and partial list of features
Bogen	SRB20	199.50	10	Inputs: Mag Ph or tape head; Aux. Separate volume controls. Separate bass and treble controls. Stereo reverse switch. Tape output. MPX output.
	RC412	169.50	6	Inputs: Mag Ph; Aux. Tape output. Ganged bass and treble controls. Separate volume controls, coaxially mounted.
Fisher	600	349.50	20	Inputs: Mag Ph; Tape Head; MPX; Aux (hi-level). AM sharp-broad control. Loudness switch. Lo and Hi filters. 5 input level controls. Tape output connection; tape monitor switch. 2 tuning indicators. 3 equalization settings. Center channel output.
Harman-Kardon	TA230	259.95	15	Inputs: 4 pairs; dual phono, switched; microphone; 2 tape outputs. Rumble and scratch filters. Contour selector. Phono record and tape head equalization. 2 tuning indicators.
Madison Fielding	440	325.00	20	Inputs: Mag Ph; Tape Head; Mic; MPX; Aux. Tape output. Tape Monitor. Output for Headset. Third channel speaker output. Aural Null circuit for balancing. Separate tone controls. Rumble and scratch filters. Phasing switch. Provision for two channel mixing. Loudness switch.
Scott	399	399.95	20	Inputs: 2 Mag Ph, selected by front-panel switch; tape head; MPX; Aux. Equalization: tape head and phono. Rumble and scratch filters. Continuously variable and defeatable loudness control. Tape monitor control. 2 tuning indicators. Front panel phase reverse switch. Center channel output. 4 separate tone controls.



ducing the integrated units described in this article. Almost any degree of integration is available; we show only the stereo tuner + preamp-control + power amplifier version, which is as far towards integration as most component manufacturers have gone so far. Of course, very many models are available that exhibit slightly less integration: stereo tuner + preamp-control. (The preamp-control + power amplifier arrangement is so common now that we devoted our October feature to it.)

These receivers, as several but not all manufacturers are calling them, have their advantages and disadvantages. The advantages have been suggested in the opening paragraphs. They are very easy to install; connecting a pair of speakers is all that is necessary to complete a stereo (radio) system. One more unit—turntable or changer—will be the final addition until a tape recorder rounds out the whole. So, wiring and hum problems are 95% solved. Installation in a cabinet, or on a shelf or table, is simplicity itself.

Some units have as many features as the most knobbed of preamp-control units. Their quality will be just as good as the manufacturer wants to build into them. There is no sound technical reason why their fidelity should not be the equivalent of individual components, though they may cost a bit more to manufacture (because, for example, the manufacturer becomes responsible for eliminating hum caused by the interconnection of components).

Their single outstanding disadvantage is the buyer's inability to replace a section of the system without making the complete receiver obsolete. This, of course, is a major and often-emphasized advantage of individual components. If some improvement or change takes place in broadcasting, the tuning section can be replaced without affecting other components. If more power is needed in the power amplifier section, that can be achieved, again without throwing out the rest of the system. The new breed of receivers does not have this advantage. Therefore you should be as certain as possible that the unit you choose has all the features you may need in the foreseeable future, and that the quality is good enough for high-fidelity sound reproduction and for long life. It

may cost more to buy the best all in one gulp, but it will be an economy in the end.

The receivers are complete radio units. Many people will do no more than add speakers. But many others will want to expand the system; some likely additions are listed below, to help you check receiver features.

Phonograph: every receiver provides for the addition of a cartridge. Is there any need to handle two cartridges?

Television: will you run your TV set through the hi-fi system? Then the receiver should have an AUX input, and a corresponding position of the selector switch.

Tape recorder: with the increasing emphasis on stereo tapes, both reel-to-reel and cartridge, many stereophiles will want to add a tape recorder. They may want to use it for recording as well as playback. For playback only, an AUX input arrangement, as described under television, is desirable. This is not the same as a tape head connection; such a connection will probably not be needed except for the more rudimentary tape machines. (This connection is useful if an old tape recorder is to be converted to stereo; saves buying a tape preamp.)

For recording, the receiver should have tape output connections; these are usually taken off ahead of tone and volume controls.

Microphones: these can always be connected direct to the tape recorder; but if you have or plan on having a permanent installation, look for a receiver that enables you to connect the microphone to the preamp-control section.

Third channel: this is too complex a subject to cover in a thumbnail paragraph; we'd like to point out, however, that some third-channel (for center fill) arrangements take off at the preamp-control output, some at the power amplifier output. The former require a separate power amplifier; the latter do not.

Other features: there are dozens of other features which appear on stereo receivers. All of them duplicate facilities provided on unintegrated components and have been discussed in preceding articles in this series.





by Roland Gelatt

Music Makers

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM'S new recording of *Messiah* is certain to become one of the most controversial albums of this or any year. Let the controversy start right here. On page 79 of this issue Nathan Broder takes a decidedly dim view of the "late romantic" accompaniments employed by Beecham, and his dislike of these accretions to Handel's own orchestration rather colors his view of the whole undertaking. I, on the other hand, confess to having found the performance a delight from beginning to end: the accompaniments ravishing and (to my admittedly non-purist ears) usually in good taste, the chorus precise and mellifluous, the soloists (Jennifer Vyvan, in particular) as fine as any I've heard, and the over-all spirit of the conducting quite irresistible. I urge everybody at least to listen to this fascinating recording. Whatever else may be said of it, it's not a bore.

COLUMBIA'S classical artist-and-repertoire department is under new management. Its former chief, David Oppenheim, has switched allegiance from records to TV and is now musical director of Robert Saudek Associates (producers of the Leonard Bernstein shows, among others). In his place, Goddard Lieberman has appointed two men to share the running of the department: John McClure and Schuyler Chapin.

McClure has worked his way up from the bottom. He landed a job with Columbia seven years ago as a tape editor, later became one of Oppenheim's assistants, and in the last two or three years has been responsible for a good many of the company's important recordings; most of Bruno Walter's sessions in California, for example, have been under McClure's supervision. Chapin comes to Columbia Records from

Columbia Artists Management (no relation), where he managed the careers of thirty-odd instrumentalists.

The division of authority between them runs something like this. McClure will be responsible for the creation of The Product, from recording session to finished album. Chapin will be responsible for the administration of the department and for all business negotiations with artists. The actual selection of artists and repertoire is intended to be a matter for joint decision. This sort of split personality provides, we can see, a fine opportunity for passing the buck when disgruntled artists pose awkward questions.

We asked the Messrs. McClure and Chapin about their future plans. "Our general aim," Chapin began, "is to run a department which has the adventuresomeness and mobility of a small company plus the resources and follow-through of a large company. We don't want just to play it safe with standard pieces and already established artists. As a matter of fact, we intend to establish our own artists. The old-time concert managers who devoted themselves to shaping the careers and creating an indelible public image of one or two artists have just about disappeared from the scene. We hope to fill this vacuum somewhat—as Columbia already has, for instance, in the case of Glenn Gould."

"As for details," McClure continued, "it's a little early to be very specific. However, I can tell you that Columbia is going back into the field of opera. As you know, the operas that have appeared on the Columbia label recently have been produced mostly by Philips. Now we shall begin again to make opera recordings ourselves. Artists? Well, we start off with our own Eileen Farrell and Richard Tucker, two of the greatest singers before the public. With these as

a nucleus it won't be too hard to assemble good casts. The tendency these days is for record companies to sign exclusive contracts with only a very few top artists. You'd be surprised at the number of well-known singers who are available now to make recordings on a free-lance basis. I should emphasize, though, that we don't intend to make operas simply for the sake of making operas. The catalogues are too full of 'me too' productions as it is. We shall confine ourselves to repertoire with which we can do something really superior and first-class."

Also on the Columbia schedule are more recordings by Bruno Walter—the Brahms symphonies, the Bruckner Ninth, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*—and more by Igor Stravinsky. The Stravinsky sessions will be the outgrowth of three New York concerts, one in Carnegie Hall and two in Town Hall, which are being presented this winter by Columbia Records. At these concerts the podium will be shared by Stravinsky and Robert Craft, and immediately following the concerts the Stravinsky compositions will be recorded under the composer's direction. They will include *Le Sacre*, *Les Noces* (with composers Barber, Copland, Foss, and Sessions at the four pianos), and two new works—*Movements for Piano and Orchestra* and *Epitaphium*. Later on, Columbia hopes to have Stravinsky re-record *Fire Bird* and *Pétrouchka*, for which an orchestra will be assembled on the West Coast.

Of course, McClure and Chapin will continue to keep the New York Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestras busy. This season the Philadelphia agenda includes some sessions under the direction of Leopold Stokowski, who will return in February after an absence of twenty years to conduct the orchestra he made famous.



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Records in Review



Publifofo

Tullio Serafin

In London's Expert

Stereo *Mefistofele* Makes

a Fine Effect

by CONRAD L. OSBORNE

I THINK that if I were called upon to select a particular case that would best illustrate the basic injustice of artistic life, I would decide on that of Arrigo Boito, who wrote *Mefistofele*. Here is a work laden with stunning dramatic effects, blessed by a libretto of real poetic strength, informed throughout with an intellectual honesty that will not compromise with the philosophical content of its source. Yet it is almost never performed, largely because it has come out second in a popularity contest with an opera by Gounod which purports to treat the same subject.

I have heard it argued that although the French opera possesses not one of the admirable qualities listed above, it is nevertheless a better opera because it is invested by a greater wealth of melody. But nowhere does Gounod's melody carry his Marguerite to such tragic heights as "*L'altra notte in fondo al mare*" or "*Spunta l'aurora pallida.*"

While Boito's *Faust* is singing the lovely, contemplative "*Dai campi, dai prati,*" Gounod's is muttering over his cup of poison; while the Italian tenor is pouring forth the passionate "*Calma il tuo cor,*" the Frenchman is mincing his way into "*Eternelle!*" And what is Gounod's *vrai gentilhomme* to Boito's cosmic devil? I say all this not to disparage *Faust*, which is a charming and touching work, but to bemoan the absence from the repertoire of one of the greatest of nineteenth-century Italian operas.

There can be no doubt that *Mefistofele* is a better opera than, say, *La Gioconda*, in which Boito also participated, though a bit shamefacedly. Boito was a sophisticated fellow, and would probably find a wry amusement in seeing *La Gioconda*—libretto by "Tobia Gorrio"—revived with deadly regularity while his own masterpiece sits on the shelf.

It may be that the recording industry has

been of a mind to restore the balance somewhat, for Gounod has been very shabbily treated on LP, whereas devotees of the Boito score have had at least the aged Columbia-Entré set, a magnificent creation of bygone days, featuring expert conducting by Lorenzo Molajoli and inspired singing by Nazareno de Angelis, Mafalda Favero, and Antonio Melandri. This album is now all but impossible to obtain, and with the withdrawal of the Victor performance (which was, in any event, unevenly sung and cut almost beyond recognition), the field has been left to the Cetra and Urania sets, both starring Giuseppe Neri, both of passing interest only. The new London performance, therefore, has been eagerly awaited by admirers of this opera, among whom I count myself.

So far as I am concerned, the unknown quantity in this production was Serafin. *Mefistofele* is a tricky, not to say devilish,

opera to put together, and is just the sort of score with which the unpredictable Maestro Serafin is likely either to score a triumph or experiment himself to death with unorthodox tempos. I am relieved to report that he has done the former. There are times when he builds much more slowly than Molajoli, and I, who have lived with the older recording for a number of years, feel momentarily let down by the more deliberate pace. But Serafin knows just where he is going each time, and there can be no question of eccentricity. He gives sharp definition to the rapidly changing rhythms of the *Domènica di Pasqua* scene and leads firmly into the great climaxes of the Prologue, the Witches' Sabbath, and the Epilogue. In all this he is given staunch service by the Santa Cecilia forces, especially the Academy's matchless chorus under Bonaventura Somma, which is here given extended opportunity to display its rich body of tone, accurate attack, and lucid articulation.

What we might call the conservative stereo policy of London's engineers is very much in effect on this recording; that is, directionality is deemphasized, and depth and clarity of sound given the greatest care. A few listeners will doubtless feel cheated, and I should have thought that the opening of the opera, with its trombone calls reverberating through the ether, would have been a logical place for boldness. In the massive choruses, however, the London approach is a wise one; it would have been

a mistake to place the Cherubim here, the Penitents there, and the Celestial Host somewhere else. As it is, the stereo spread makes its own effect, and the gigantic choral climaxes are enormously impressive.

Finally, there is the matter of the soloists. While this is, on balance, the best-sung *Mefistofele* since the days of the Molajoli album, I cannot endorse unreservedly any one of the leading singers. Siepi is a true *basso cantante*, meaning that his voice is smooth in texture, voluptuous in quality, and pliant in its handling. These attributes make him an outstanding singer of music soft in contour, demanding a legato approach. But a born Mefistofele—such as De Angelis—is a man with a huge black voice which rolls and peals, plus a flair for the demoniacal histrionics of the role. Siepi adjusts himself to the part like the intelligent artist he is, and comes up with fine work in the *Whistling Ballad*; indeed, it is impossible to fault anything that he does. But his voice is not a wide-open, declamatory one, and at times I almost wished he would allow himself more liberty from the printed page.

Del Monaco deserves respect for his Faust, for he does his best to rein in the steeds. He does not, of course, sound very metaphorical, and his muscular renditions of "Dai campi" and the haunting "Lontano" duet are best passed over. His Faust is, however, at least virile, and he brings more line to the Garden Scene than I had expected. Tebaldi has not the bright, naïve sound

which is needed for this same scene, but her opulent, soaring tone is most welcome in the Prison Scene, and Margherita's final heart-rending plea for grace is superbly brought off. Cavalli sounds like a singer with fine potential, but the role of Elena poses some cruel difficulties, and she is insecure. Piero di Palma is an excellent Wagner. (In Boito's version, by the way, Wagner is a genuine character, with a dramatically useful relationship to Faust, and not a mere chorus leader.)

Together with the usual essay and synopsis, London's accompanying booklet has some Delacroix lithographs, unpleasant close-ups of the La Scala production, and a libretto designed to show us which lines are sung simultaneously. Unhappily, they cannot be read simultaneously, and the resultant chaos is of discouraging proportions.

Those who know and love *Mefistofele* will find this album a good investment; those who do not know it have a fine opportunity to make acquaintance with one of the masterworks of Italian opera.

BOITO: *Mefistofele*

Renata Tebaldi (s), Margherita: Floriana Cavalli (s), Elena: Lucia Danieli (c), Marta and Pantalìs; Mario del Monaco (t), Faust: Piero di Palma (t), Wagner and Nero: Cesare Siepi (bs), Mefistofele. Orchestra and Chorus of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Tullio Serafin, cond.

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From Carnegie Twenty Years Ago,

A Jazz Landmark — *Spirituals to Swing*

by JOHN S. WILSON

BACK in the late 1930s, when jazz concerts were still a novelty, three such concerts were held at Carnegie Hall, memorable today not only because of the artists who took part in them but because of their careful planning and preparation, qualities that have pretty well gone by the board since jazz concerts became everyday (or every-night) occurrences. One of the three was the Benny Goodman concert, held in January 1938, which was released on LP discs (Co-

lumbia OSL 160) several years ago amid much—and deserved—fanfare. The other two were the *Spirituals to Swing* concerts of December 1938 and December 1939, presented by John Hammond (who, needless to say, also had a hand in the Goodman concert).

Hammond's concerts were the first attempt, with live musicians as distinct from records, to show jazz in perspective, and in the succeeding twenty years no one else has

managed this feat as well. Hammond has now gathered material recorded at both these concerts (we are happily learning that a surprising amount of the publicly played jazz of the late Thirties and early Forties has been preserved) for a magnificent two-disc set with copious annotation by himself and Charles Edward Smith.

The idea of a concert that would bring together representatives of the root, trunk, and branch of jazz not only provided the

Blackstone Studios



Impresario John Hammond.

basis for an impressive line-up of performers but it caught almost all of them at a particularly fortunate time. Benny Goodman's sextet had just received the tremendous stimulus of the addition of Charlie Christian's guitar. Count Basie's young stars, not yet widely known, were still unselfconsciously free-swinging. Sidney Bechet, standing on the threshold of his later fame, was still known best for his wildly exultant New Orleans Feetwarmers recordings of 1932. For James P. Johnson, these concerts meant a return to the spotlight after years of virtual retirement. On the other hand, they were the springboard to fame for the Golden Gate Quartet, Joe Turner, Sonny Terry, Meade Lux Lewis, Albert Ammons, and Pete Johnson.

There is scarcely a tired note in the course of these four LP sides (there are several confused ones, but that is to be expected). The sound at best is only serviceable, sometimes muddy and even scratchy (as in the Goodman concert recordings, the problem of balancing a full band is not even attempted), but the vitality and unpretentiousness of the performers cut through these minor handicaps.

Among the jazz treasures these discs offer are numerous solos and accompaniments by Lester Young (on both clarinet and tenor saxophone) at the height of his fluent powers; an unusual piano solo by Count Basie in a filled-out style that makes clear his close connection with Fats Waller; Lips Page playing with the original Basie band in what must be the best trumpet solo he ever recorded; Helen Humes, introduced by Hammond as "the new blues singer with Count Basie's band," singing with a subdued poignance complemented by Buck Clayton's beautiful muted trumpet backing; Mitchell's Christian Singers, one of the most remarkable (though neglected) of all gospel groups, displaying the majesty of their exhilarating, almost grating harmonizing; Big Bill Broonzy rolling through his classic, *Louise, Louise*; Lewis, Ammons, and Johnson—who met for the first time on the stage at the concert—banging out one of the most exciting, and certainly most spontaneous, versions of their six-handed boogiewoogie; Ida Cox showing how a real stand-up-and-let-it-roll blues singer sounds; the Benny Goodman Sextet playing with enthusiasm and spirit; guitarist Charlie Christian sitting in with Count Basie's superbly relaxed Kansas City Six; Sidney Bechet, James P. Johnson, and Tommy Ladnier soaring and stomping through *Wearry Blues*. And more, much more.

The great merit of this set is not simply that it gathers together a long list of performers of tremendous talent but that it catches them in an atmosphere that seemingly induces more direct, more full-blooded performances than the studio recordings of those days have been able to capture. This is an album of major importance, a jazz landmark.

SPIRITUALS TO SWING. ✓

• VANGUARD 8523/4. Two LP. \$7.96.

DECEMBER 1959

by Robert Charles Marsh



Hans Wild

Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic

In Happy Reunion on Discs

TAPED by a London-Decca crew in the Sofiensäle last spring, these five discs reunite for an international audience Herbert von Karajan and the orchestra he conducts as director of the Vienna State Opera. It has been some years since Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic were together on records, and the reunion is a happy one for all parties.

Four of the records appear in this country on the RCA Victor label, a fact testifying to the potential of the overseas alliance between RCA and London-Decca. Moreover, as a beautifully produced album (entitled *Vienna Philharmonic Festival*), they serve as one of the first fruits of the new RCA Soria series, providing more than a hint that the RCA-London-Soria triumvirate is going to prove an important source of distinguished productions. The fifth disc, Richard Strauss's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, has been issued in a special package under London's own auspices.

Taken as a whole, these performances not only commemorate the American concerts of the orchestra's current world tour, but are a sort of mutually inspired love song in which artists, record manufacturers, and the public can join in a chorus of "Wien, Wien, nur du allein. . . ." At their best, they are among the finest recordings stereo has given us. Even when there are comparable editions, these must be counted among our assets.

The music is all associated with the orchestra and its 117-year history. The Beethoven Seventh opened its first concert in March of 1842, the great Mozart G minor was a part of its second program in Novem-

ber of that year. The Haydn belongs to its heritage, while the Brahms, and the music of the Strausses, Johann Jr., Josef, and (although no relative) Richard, all became a part of the orchestra's familiar musical speech soon after completion. Familiar here implies intimate rather than commonplace knowledge, for the Vienna Philharmonic not only has over the content of these works a mastery probably unexcelled anywhere, but it knows how to play them as an ensemble, with each man blending his individual contribution into the scale of the whole. The Vienna Philharmonic, indeed, is really a chamber orchestra of 124 players. It is this fact, more than the skill of any individual conductor, that accounts for its unique qualities. A conductor can take rehearsal time to ask for only so much by way of polish and nuance; the Philharmonic, working with someone it respects as much as it does Karajan, invariably gives more than is required of it.

The resulting performances are always as much the orchestra's interpretative responsibility as the conductor's. Compare, for example, the Beethoven Seventh in this Soria set with Karajan's earlier version. Rhythmic drive here is subordinated to ensemble playing with a beauty of finish few orchestras in the world could challenge. The thematic line sings at its own comfortable pace. A cadence can be fully—and firmly—accented, with even a little pause inserted for additional stress. I doubt if Karajan would play the score this way with London's Philharmonia, despite its excellence as a group (nor am I sure that the music is not better served by a more vigorous statement). But this is Vienna's way, and it is good to hear it

as an antidote to those who out-Toscanini Toscanini in this music.

The rest of the Victor album is another matter. Haydn's No. 104, whether you take its tunes to be Croatian or English in their genesis, has rarely been given us in a performance at once so powerful and *gemütlich*. Together with the Mozart Fortieth, with which it shares a record, it constitutes a performance unique among those in the catalogue. If the Mozart is to be further characterized, let me suggest that one play the opening and listen to the rhythmic phrase in the violas that begins the work. Most orchestras and conductors treat it as if it were of little importance, but it is important—since it establishes both rhythm and tonality before the entrance of the principal theme in the violins. Here it is given full measure, with all the time and care necessary to let us discover Mozart's architectural genius in operation.

Brahms requires something quite different in sonority and style, but he benefits equally from the orchestra's sensitivity to detail as well as to larger outlines. This is, if we must use such a term, a romantic performance of

the score, extraordinarily rich and grand in sound, and highly flattering. For many, it will probably become the unexcelled version of the Brahms First.

As for the collections of *les frères* Strauss, one may argue at length about the merits of Mr. X's "Viennese style" over Mr. Y's "Viennese style," but here is Vienna's Viennese style, with a pleasing collection of works you know well and works you probably don't know so well, the zither interludes a nostalgic *liebestraum*, and the total a moving evocation of the city of the waltz.

The German Strauss, Richard, is equally favored with magnificent ensemble playing that brings to the level of direct awareness details in the scoring too frequently lost. Karajan's performance of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* is not the traditional one; nonetheless, I am attracted to what he does with the score, as well as by the extremely wide dynamic range of the recording. (Karajan provides a surprise, too, by underplaying the "sunrise" climax at the beginning of the work and saving his greatest sonorities for later pages.)

Controversial and provocative are words

that best characterize these beautifully engineered discs, and for just evaluation more than one hearing is in order.

The Soria album, incidentally, adds a very handsome booklet of pictures and commentary to its sonic enticements.

HERBERT VON KARAJAN: "Vienna Philharmonic Festival"

Haydn: *Symphony No. 104, in D*. Mozart: *Symphony No. 40, in G, K. 550*. Beethoven: *Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92*. Brahms: *Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68*. Johann Strauss, II: *Overture to Die Fledermaus*; *Overture to Der Zigeunerbaron*; *Tales from the Vienna Woods*; *Annen-Polka*; *Schnellpolka*; *Auf der Jagd*. Josef Strauss: *Delirien Waltz*.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

● ● RCA VICTOR LD LSD 2347. Four SD. \$25.98.

RICHARD STRAUSS: *Also Sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30*

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

● ● LONDON CS 6129. SD. \$5.98.

CLASSICAL

BACH: *St. Matthew Passion, S. 244*

Teresa Stich-Randall, soprano; Hilde Rössl-Majdan, contralto; Waldemar Kmentt, tenor; Uno Ebrelius, tenor; Hans Braun, bass; Walter Berry, bass; Vienna Chamber Choirs; Boys' Choir of the Schottenstift; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Mogens Wøldike, cond.

● VANGUARD BG 594/7. Four LP. \$11.90.

● ● VANGUARD BGS 5022/25. Four SD. \$17.85.

Hard on the heels of the first stereo recording of the *St. Matthew Passion*, from Archive, comes this Vanguard release, which also has many fine qualities. Avoiding strong contrasts, Wøldike seems intent on maintaining a kind of sobriety that shuns any trace of the theatrical. In so doing, he sometimes comes close to that detachment which seemed to me the weakest aspect of the Archive performance. For example, all the chorales except the last one are sung at the same dynamic level (between mezzo forte and forte), regardless of the situation they comment upon or the sentiment they express. On the other hand, Wøldike's approach sometimes achieves great eloquence: the marvelous final chorus, for instance, is overwhelming here. Another virtue of this performance, though a negative one, is that Wøldike never lapses into the bouncy dogtrot motion that some German conductors are fond of in certain choral movements, such as "*Sind Blitze, sind Donner*."

His soloists all reflect—some more than others—the conductor's attitude. Ebrelius,

the Evangelist, is a remarkably skillful singer with a most agreeable timbre, but he makes little attempt to convey nuances of feeling in the text. In this respect his opposite number in the Archive set, Ernst Häfliger, is more effective. Braun, as Jesus, is competent, and steadier than Archive's Keith Engen, but not especially distinguished. (Nobody on records, I think, sings this role as magnificently as Heinz Rehfuss, in the Scherchen-Westminster set.) Stich-Randall sings with a pure but disembodied tone, as though she were performing Gregorian chant. Seefried in Archive is much more moving. The experienced Kmentt does well with the music allotted to him, though his negotiation of high-lying passages, as in "*Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen*," is not entirely effortless. Rössl-Majdan is at the top of her form here. Her lovely alto has character and firmness throughout its range. This is consequently a better performance than she turned in on the Scherchen set, and much superior to that of the alto in the Archive. The bass here, however, the veteran Walter Berry, very able as he is, has to face the powerful competition of Fischer-Dieskau on Archive. The chorus is nicely balanced and does not seem large; the texture is, accordingly, fairly transparent.

From the standpoint of stereo recording, this set seems to me considerably superior to the Archive. Here the familiar virtues of two-channel recording enormously enhance the effectiveness of the sound. In the big double choruses, the two choirs are clearly separated, yet there is no gaping hole in the middle. In the wonderful duet with chorus, "*So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen*," the extraordinary clarity of the recording throws into bright relief the different colors that Bach mixes: the nonlegato violins and violas

playing in unison, the carefully articulated phrases of the flutes and oboes, the solo soprano and alto singing their long, curved melodies, and the short, sharp interjections of the chorus. And so on in the rest of the work. If it is first-class recording more than anything else that you want, this is the set for you. N.B.

BACH: *Two-Part Inventions, S. 772-786 (complete)*; *Three-Part Inventions: Nos. 1, 2, 5, 11, 13-15*

Wanda Landowska, harpsichord.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2389. LP. \$4.98.

The tiny company of musical giants of our time dwindles. With the death of Wanda Landowska we have lost an artist who almost single-handedly restored the harpsichord to the public concert and taught a whole generation of pupils to play it. For her, playing keyboard music of the past on the type of instrument for which it was intended was only the first step. She immersed herself in the musical and theoretical literature of the eighteenth century, studied the performance practices of that time, and applied her findings in her own performances. But the value of her playing does not rest merely on its authenticity and style; it is raised to the highest art by its rare combination of penetrating understanding, pervading vitality, and sheer musicality.

Age brought no diminution in these attributes. There is no sign whatever in the full-blooded performance of the seven Three-Part Inventions presented here that they were played by a frail woman of eighty (death prevented her from completing the set of fifteen). In these and in the two-part works (given in the same splendid performance that was formerly coupled with Bach's D minor Harpsichord Concerto on LM 1974) we

find Landowska at the unparalleled top of her form—profound, eloquent, imaginative yet utterly convincing. As a final, touching memento of this great lady, we hear her speak, urging performance of the Inventions by mature artists, not merely by beginners. It takes not only a mature but a great artist to play them as they are played here. N.B.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in C, Op. 15; Sonata for Piano, No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique")

Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond.

• • LONDON CS 6099. SD. \$4.98.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37

Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond.

• • LONDON CS 6094. SD. \$4.98.

With this dual release, pianist, orchestra, and conductor have made three of the five Beethoven piano concertos available on London stereo. Numbers two and five will probably follow without great delay.

In my opinion these most recent additions to the series are more impressive than the initial Fourth Concerto, which I reviewed in these pages last February. In the present releases one actually hears illustrated what John M. Conly observed in writing about the Vienna Philharmonic in HIGH FIDELITY'S November issue: "It is almost false to identify the pianist as *the* soloist; it's rather as if he were playing duets with the sundry orchestral instruments, in musical repartee almost incredibly articulate."

Backhaus, for all his three quarters of a century, plays with agile and accurate fingers, projecting the quasi-Mozartean character of the First Concerto and the more solidly Beethovenian strength of the Third with a remarkable blending of authority and grace. The orchestra matches him note for note.

In short, these are ensemble performances with such a unity of spirit that they go beyond mere musical satisfaction to provide a lesson in what can be achieved in the vintage years of a great musical tradition. No other stereo recording projects anything quite as magical as this, nor, indeed, do more than a couple of the older monophonic sets.

Backhaus' playing of the *Pathétique* sonata is quite as fine as his concerto performances and incomparably better than its only stereo competition.

In the Third Concerto a cadenza by Carl Reinecke is used. I find it inferior to the Beethoven cadenza commonly played (and available in stereo in the Badura-Skoda-Scherchen set), but this does not outweigh the assets of the performance. In the First Concerto the second of the three cadenzas given in the Kinsky *Beethoven Verzeichnis* is performed. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Violin, in D, Op. 61

Henryk Szeryng, violin; Orchestre de la

Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Jacques Thibaud, cond.
ODEON XOC 111. LP. \$4.98.

Inasmuch as Thibaud was killed in an airplane crash in September 1953, this set must be more than six years old—a fact worth noting only because the engineering is of such quality that one might think the session was held last month.

My first impressions are that this is one of the great recordings of the concerto. Szeryng is, in my opinion, a violinist of monumental talent, and Thibaud here gives him the kind of support that only another violinist of greatness could provide. The result is an edition that deserves wide circulation. We are very fortunate to have it available, at last, in the United States. Equalization, incidentally, is the AES curve. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 21, in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"); No. 30, in E, Op. 109

Rudolf Firkusny, piano.

• CAPITOL P 8493. LP. \$4.98.
• • CAPITOL SP 8493. SD. \$5.98.

These are reserved, well-considered, and musicianly performances, characteristic of the best we have heard in Firkusny's recent work on records. This release also offers the first stereo *Waldstein*. I found the two-channel version slightly more agreeable than the mono, but the increase in presence or sonic elegance was hardly worth a dollar surcharge.

If you want excitement stressed, particularly in Op. 53, other editions are preferable to this one. If refinement in artistic values counts heavily, these are performances you will probably come very quickly to respect. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; Coriolan Overture, Op. 62

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

• • LONDON CS 6070. SD. \$4.98.

This is one of the few Beethoven Fourths which rivals the qualities of the great Toscanini-BBC edition, long deleted from the American catalogue. It suggests, moreover, that Ansermet deserves more

recognition as a Beethoven conductor than he customarily receives. Predominantly relaxed and warmly lyric, his performance nonetheless has a firm pulse to provide consistent rhythmic foundation. There are also the sharp attacks and electrifying energy needed to give the first movement its full stature or provide the needed contrasts in the remainder of the work. The same qualities make Ansermet's *Coriolan* plainly the best on stereo, and one of the finest we have had in the long-play era.

Indeed, the only possible complaint against this disc is that, although in general extremely well engineered, the registration of the winds in the symphony is sometimes overbalanced by the strings—not, however, to a degree that makes the recording in any appreciable way less than desirable. R.C.M.

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

Hamburg State Philharmonic Orchestra, Joseph Keilberth, cond.

• • TELEFUNKEN TCS 18005. SD. \$2.98.

There are nine stereophonic Fiftths in the current Schwann, none of them so good as to exclude from consideration two or three of its competition or to diminish one's regard for the best of the twenty-two monophonic editions.

Keilberth's performance is *echt Deutsch* in its solid metrical patterns and big resonant sound. Either of these characteristics in excess could produce an uninteresting record, but fortunately neither gets out of hand. The firm pulse is governed by musical rather than metronomic considerations and through it the performance gains strength—emerging as a powerful and satisfying reading in the Central European tradition.

Similarly the sonics, although somewhat too resonant for my taste, are a good example of what European engineers and record purchasers want as "big sound." Stereo effects are not especially pronounced, proving more apparent in the agreeable, uncramped quality of the reproduction than in the precise indication of instrument locations.

For the price, this is, consequently, a remarkably better value than some of the more expensive versions. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; Coriolan Overture, Op. 62

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2343. LP. \$4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2343. SD. \$5.98.

The line of this music, never completely strong or propelling as achieved by Reiner, is here sustained somewhat better than has sometimes been the case, but all the excitement appears to be calculated rather than spontaneous. The result is a craftsmanlike reading of the notes, but in neither work does the true power of either the conductor or orchestra emerge.

Continued on page 94

Coming in

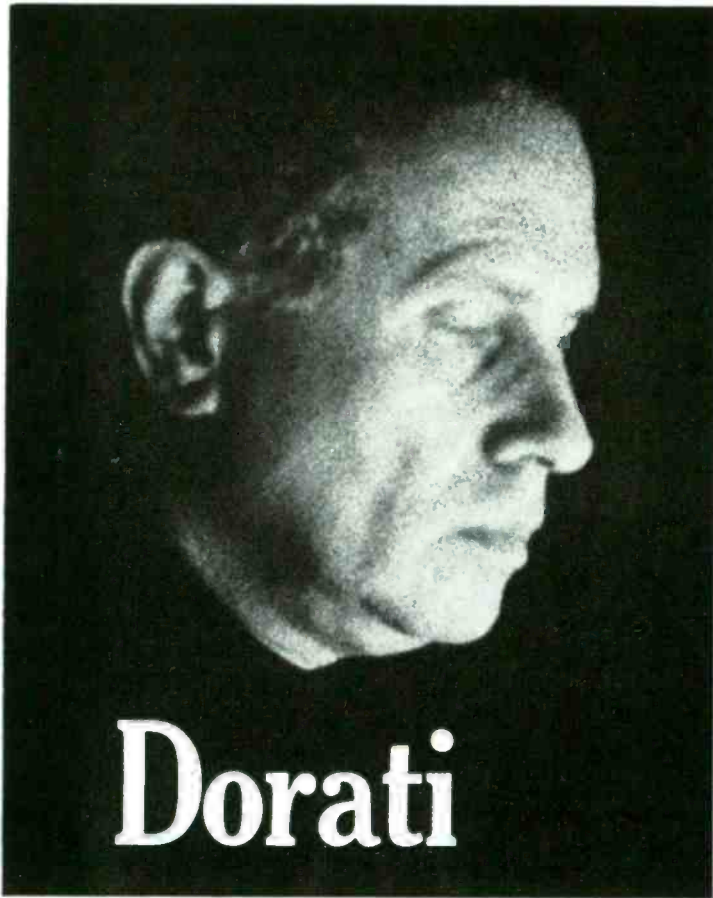
JANUARY ISSUE

VERDI

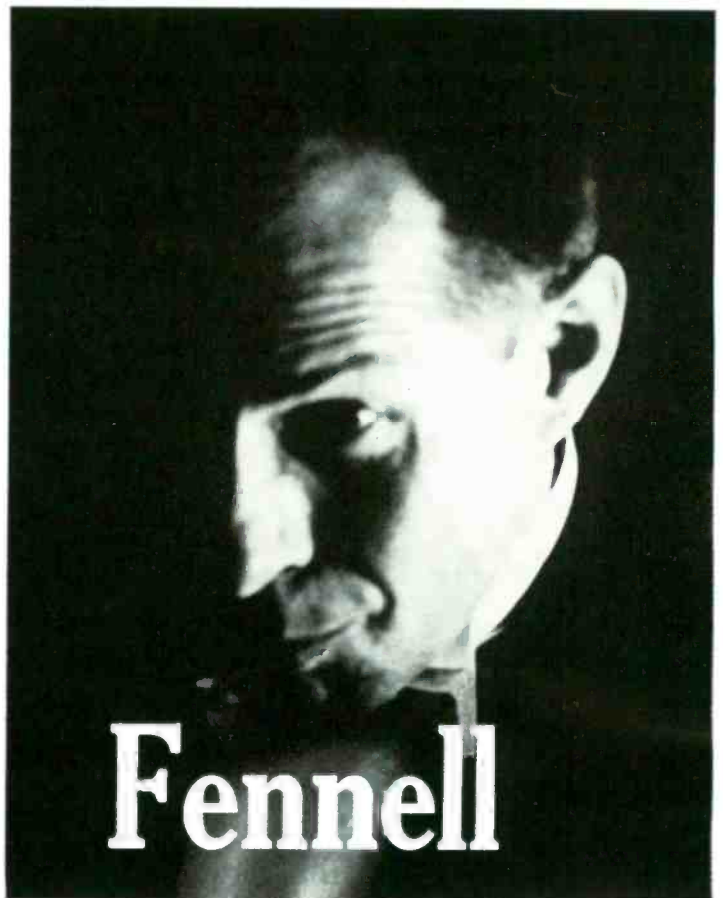
on microgroove

a discography

by Conrad L. Osborne



Dorati



Fennell

MERCURY TAKES PRIDE

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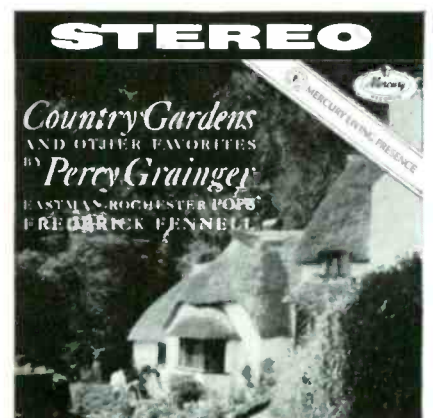
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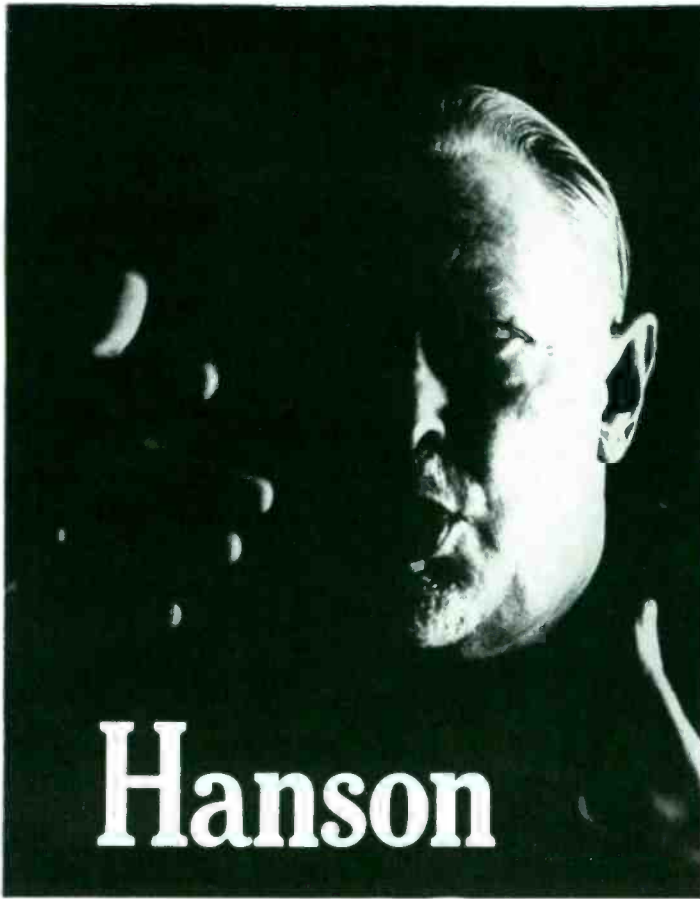
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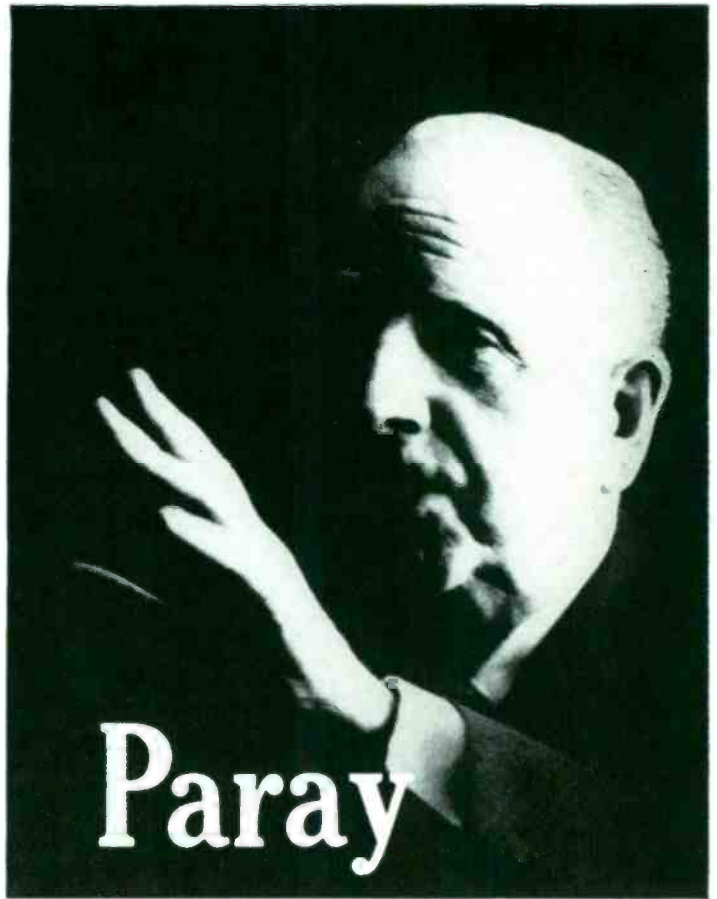
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Paray

IN CONDUCTORS



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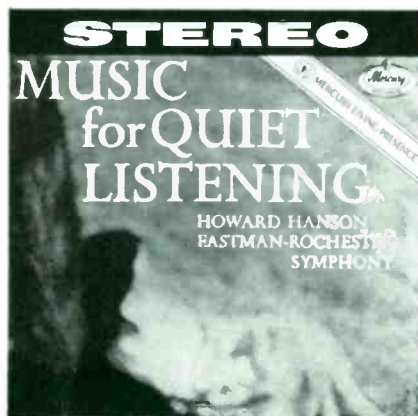
Only Mercury recording techniques catch the expanse of such a treasurable performance. On a Living Presence recording you hear each nuance, each subtlety of balance, each crescendo and diminuendo, no matter how fragile, each intricacy of instrumentation, each broad flow of phrase. You experience as never before the genius of the conductor — the fine conductor who *deserves* Living Presence.

A few of the latest albums by these musicians are shown below. You may get a complete Mercury catalogue at your favorite record shop or by writing Mercury Record Corporation, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.

SR indicates the stereo album number: MG, the monaural number.



SR 90224/MG 50224



SR 90053/MG 50053



SR 90203/MG 50203

As Mercury proved some years ago, Orchestra Hall in Chicago, despite its empty-barrel acoustics when no audience is seated, offers engineers brilliant possibilities. Victor's recent work there has tended to exaggerate rather than minimize the long reverberation period of the room. The present release is coarse, booming, and vulgar in its sonics, and false both to the tone of the orchestra and the experience the hall actually provides during a concert. Stereo only makes matters worse, although the monophonic edition is thoroughly undistinguished by any valid criterion of high fidelity. The lowest point comes at the close of *Coriolan* when the three pianissimo notes of the strings, lacking the blasting quality the engineers apparently were seeking, are all but lost. R.C.M.

BOITO: *Mefistofele*

Renata Tebaldi (s), Margherita; Floriana Cavalli (s), Elena; Lucia Danieli (ms), Marta, Pantalìs; Mario del Monaco (t), Faust; Piero di Palma (t), Wagner, Nero; Cesare Siepi (bs), Mefistofele. Chorus and Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Tullio Serafin, cond. • • LONDON OSA 1307. Three SD. \$17.94.

For a feature review of this opera, see p. 87.

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

Hans Richter-Haaser, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. • ANGEL 35796. LP. \$4.98.

Following soon after Artur Schnabel's masterly recording of the Brahms B flat Concerto there appears another, equally good and considerably different in style. Richter-Haaser, Karajan, and the Berlin Philharmonic give us a concerto almost always slower in tempo than that of Schnabel and his conductor, Josef Krips, more measured in pace, more refined in texture to the point where we have almost an anomaly, a chamber music view of this massive score. Actually, the concerto loses none of its size and strength (and the quieter approach allows sharp dramatic contrasts), but it becomes less cragily imposing.

The refined texture depends a good deal on the instrumental balances and orchestral quality achieved by the conductor and the engineers. Unlike Schnabel's piano, which is very prominent, Richter-Haaser's seems in the middle of the orchestra, delicate in sound yet clearly heard. The strings have a sweetness that makes every dolce and espressivo passage most effective; the woodwinds come through more clearly; and the brass plays more brilliantly.

Richter-Haaser's part in this is to play with the utmost technical finesse in an unhurried fashion, making his points with supple dynamic changes rather than rhythmic ones. The gentle lyricism of the slow movement radiates with the soft glitter of his piano tone, and the delicacy of the final movement is enchanting.

Some may prefer this latest recording, drawn out but superbly beautiful in tone all the way. Others will be happier with the greater color and thrust of the Rubinstein-Krips version and with its tempos closer to those marked in the score. For myself, I would not part with either. R.E.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 4, in E minor, Op. 98; Rhapsodie, Op. 53 ("Alto Rhapsody")*

Aafje Heynis, contralto; Royal Male Choir "Apollo" (in the *Rhapsodie*). Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond. • EPIC LC 3563. LP. \$4.98.

The late Eduard van Beinum directs the symphony in an orthodox fashion, though he is a trifle heavy in portions of the opening movement. His view of the *Rhapsodie* is reverent and subdued. The alto soloist has a warm, refined voice, but here it sounds rather expressionless; and there are spots in the recording where it is not sharply focused—probably the fault of microphone placement rather than voice placement. The assisting male choir is well balanced. All in all, this performance of a most moving work fails to move. P.A.

BRUCH: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 26* †Mendelssohn: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64*

Julian Olevsky, violin; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Julius Rudel, cond. • WESTMINSTER XWN 18860. LP. \$4.98.

In this age of jet flights and jet-propelled virtuoso performances, it is gratifying to find a violinist and conductor who are still willing to allow two nineteenth-century concertos to move at their proper horse-and-buggy pace. This sensible approach bears its greatest fruit in the Mendelssohn, where the gorgeous melodies are allowed plenty of time to sing and expand in an interpretation notable for its poise and beauty. The Bruch is treated with somewhat more incisiveness, but never at the expense of its lyric contours. Lustrous recording adds to the merits of this most welcome disc. P.A.

CHOPIN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in F minor, Op. 21; Polonaise No. 7, in A flat, Op. 61 ("Polonaise-fantaisie")*

Alexander Uninsky, piano; Hague Philharmonic Orchestra, Willem van Otterloo, cond. • EPIC LC 3610. LP. \$4.98. • • EPIC BC 1037. SD. \$5.98.

Alexander Uninsky's performance of the concerto deserves respect for its many good points—strong, clean fingerwork; ringing tone; firmly individual treatment of inner voices and rubatos, sometimes effective, sometimes merely mannered. But pianistic color is limited in use, and as a whole this work sounds more prosaic than it should. The same solidity of attack and virility of style can be noted in the Polonaise, where it makes a slightly

better effect. The stereo engineering, spacious though it is, gives the piano an insistent, overly resonant sound that is subdued in the better-balanced monophonic version. R.E.

CHOPIN: *Scherzos (complete)*

Ann Schein, piano. • KAPP KCL 9040. LP. \$3.98. • • KAPP KC 9040 S. SD. \$4.98.

Miss Schein, only nineteen, is an astounding pianist with a technique almost frightening in its speed, power, and control. She usually makes all the notes sound, too, even when she is playing so fast that a series of left-hand octaves, for example, is reduced to a mere figuration. This dazzling facility serves the fast sections of the Scherzos well; and in the calmer ones there is a singing tone and some deftly spun phrasing. If there is a flaw in the performances, it lies in a restlessness or overanxious drive that urges the pianist into too great, or too abrupt, contrasts of tempo between fast and slow sections and into neglecting variety within the fast sections themselves. This young American is clearly someone to watch in the future and to enjoy, with reservations, now.

The first side of my stereo disc was coarse in sound, blasting a good deal, but all was well on the reverse side, as it was on the whole of the monophonic disc. The piano sounded equally satisfactory in both versions. R.E.

DVORAK: *Quartet for Strings, No. 6, in F, Op. 96 ("American")* †Smetana: *Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in E minor ("From My Life")*

Claremont Quartet. • LYRICHORD LL 80. LP. \$4.98.

The Claremont foursome, a first-rate young American ensemble, plays the Dvořák with considerable freedom of tempo and phrasing, but it is all within the proper framework of the music. The result is that the work sounds fresh and spirited. On the other hand, they somehow miss fire with the more introspective Smetana quartet. The opening movement is amply forceful; but the Trio of the Polka is rather too deliberate, while the performance of the deeply moving third and fourth movements barely scratches the surface. The reproduction throughout is clear and equitably balanced. P.A.

FRANCK: *Symphony in D minor; Psyché: No. 4, Psyché et Eros*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond. • • ANGEL S 35641. SD. \$5.98.

The more I hear Carlo Maria Giulini, either in concert or on records, the more I admire the freshness, spirit, and precision of his work. His readings of these two Franck compositions only serve to strengthen my opinion that he is one of the brightest stars on the horizon. They are marked by a magnificent sense of

Continued on page 96

READ WHAT THE CRITICS HAVE TO SAY!

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HI FI REVIEW: "The most amazing thing about Audio Fidelity's Fantastique is the excellence of its performance . . . a great job of production and organization. Sonically, Wallenstein et al sail past all competitors."

AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE—C.J.L. "Wallenstein's reading is skillful and straight forward and not the least bit eccentric. The first three movements reveal polished playing and no little expressivity . . ."



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NEW YORK TIMES: "This performance is thoroughly competent and the recorded sound exceptionally realistic."

ATLANTA CONSTITUTION: "This disc is a superior one and deserves the best treatment. Few works lend themselves so completely to stereo as this sparkling Berlioz masterpiece. His mastery of orchestration comes through like a sledge hammer and this recording enables one to hear each instrument as each instrument really sounds. It's well played, well conducted and technically excellent."

AKRON BEACON JOURNAL: "Record surface, stereo sound and sonority are excellent . . . particularly noticed, the fine blending of strings, woodwinds and bold brasses and the realistic percussion sounds."

ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH: "The Symphonie Fantastique as recorded by the Virtuoso Symphony of London with Alfred Wallenstein conducting is impressively opulent in sound as a whole and in all its details. The record is one of the FIRST COMPONENT SERIES which is concerned with producing the best possible sound for stereophonic reproduction."

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proportion, resulting in performances of great nobility and depth of feeling, plus a sense of excitement. Beautifully balanced stereo sound helps to put this disc up with the leading versions of both the symphony and the *Psyché* excerpt. P.A.

FRANCK: Variations symphoniques—
See Schumann: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54.*

GRIEG: Peer Gynt: Orchestral Suites:
No. 1, Op. 46; No. 2, Op. 55
†Liszt: *Hungarian Rhapsodies: No. 1; No. 2*

Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Richard Kraus, cond.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON DGM 12014. LP. \$4.98.
• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON DCS 712014. SD. \$5.98.

Kraus's handling of these popular favorites is fairly straightforward, yet tasteful and highly polished. The big feature of this release is the clarity and complete naturalness of its sound and, in the stereo edition, its fine directionalism. P.A.

HANDEL: Messiah

Soloists; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.
• • RCA VICTOR LSD 6409. Four SD. \$25.98.

Soloists; Huddersfield Choral Society; Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.
• ANGEL 3598C. Three LP. \$14.98.
• • ANGEL S 3598C. Three SD. \$17.98.

Soloists; Mormon Tabernacle Choir; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
• COLUMBIA M2L 263. Two LP. \$9.98.
• • COLUMBIA M2S 607. Two SD. \$11.98.

Soloists; Vienna Academy Chorus; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.
• • WESTMINSTER WST 401. Four SD. \$17.95.

For an article on these albums, see "Handel's *Messiah* Newly Recorded," p. 79.

HAYDN: Mass No. 10, in B flat ("Theresien")

Catherine Rowe, soprano; Margaret Tobias, contralto; Donald Sullivan, tenor; Paul Matthen, bass; M.I.T. Choral Society; Graunke Orchestra, Klaus Liepmann, cond.
• Music At M.I.T. CS 58. LP.

The M.I.T. Choral Society, according to the liner notes, comprises members of the faculty and staff as well as students of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The present recording was made last summer on a tour of Europe. Professional American soloists and a Munich orchestra were employed. Under the circumstances

(there could hardly have been many rehearsals with orchestra), this is a laudable performance, showing that the choir had been long and carefully trained. Professor Liepmann keeps everything together and moving briskly, and there are moments when something of the greatness of this very fine work comes through.

It is not, unfortunately, assisted to do so by the recording, which contains rather more distortion than is customary nowadays. The review disc also had some crackling. It would seem that as far as recording is concerned the M.I.T. people are more advanced musically than technologically. N.B.

HOLST: The Planets, Op. 32

Vienna Academy Chorus and State Opera Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.
• • WESTMINSTER WST 14067. SD. \$5.98.

Boult's near-monopoly on this pre-Sputnik musical exploration of outer space (consolidated in 1954 with his Westminster LP) was effectively challenged only last year with the appearance of Stokowski's Capitol stereo tape and disc. Many Holstians resisted the superior sonic attractions of the Stokowski version, however, in the hope that Boult would soon remake his undeniably more authentically British interpretation. Unhappily, their wait has been in vain: the anticipated new Boult version is indeed even more sensationally recorded, but the performance has been entrusted to obviously unidiomatic Viennese musicians, and the conductor himself seems inexplicably to have lost most of his Holstian insights. Most unfortunately of all, the engineers have chosen to exploit their augmented technical resources less to re-create the score than to dissect it. As a result of their unnaturally spotlighting the woodwind and percussion choirs, abetted by the overintensity of the Viennese strings and the conductor's failures of integration, the Planets no longer swim luminously and mysteriously in infinite space, but are cruelly "spread out against the sky/Like a patient etherized upon a table."

Granted that Stokowski misses or subverts a good deal of the inner spirit of the work, he does bring it to vital life; and Capitol's recording is superbly dramatic yet beautifully proportioned and auditorium-authentic. In strong contrast the new Boult version is often awkwardly limping and harsh, and even its wide dynamic range, brazen brass outbursts, and overpowering percussion seem wholly synthetic. I can almost hear Holst's ghost repeating the dry remark he once made at a Boston Symphony rehearsal when the trombones in *Uranus* made an off-key entrance: "Now, gentlemen, that really doesn't sound very nice, does it?" R.D.D.

LISZT: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in A

Raymond Trouard, piano; Association Artistique des Concerts Colonne, Eugène Bigot, cond.
• ODEON XOC 131. LP. \$5.95.

M. Trouard is a strong-fingered pianist with a rather equable temperament. His octave runs have little accent but follow an impressively tireless, steady course. He ignores accelerandos where expected. The Allegretto vivace (scherzo) section of the E flat Concerto lacks sparkle, although its drily exact rhythms are effective. Pianist—and orchestra—are neither dull nor lethargic, only thoughtful and tidy. These are good attributes, producing interesting but sober effects in these essentially flashy concertos. Considerable adjustment is needed to get the right acoustical balance, and there is some surface noise. Program notes are in French. R.E.

LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsodies: No. 1; No. 2—See Grieg: Peer Gynt: Orchestral Suites: No. 1, Op. 46; No. 2, Op. 55.

MAHLER: Das klagende Lied

Margaret Hoswell, soprano; Lili Chookasian, contralto; Rudolph Petrak, tenor; Hartford Symphony and Chorale, Fritz Mahler, cond.
• VANGUARD VRS 1048. LP. \$4.98.
• • VANGUARD VSD 2044. SD. \$5.98.

The composer and conductor are first cousins once removed; and whether it's genes or common musical heritage, Fritz understands what Gustav is about. *Das klagende Lied* was written when Mahler was just beginning to get his career launched, and for a man of twenty it is an enormously fresh and promising score, filled with anticipations of the composer's later powers and already rooted in the style which became characteristic.

The only previous recording is a Vienna product, now on Lyricord LL 69 (after an earlier appearance on Mercury), and for all its age and uneven sonics, it preserves a forceful performance. Stereo is the primary advantage of this new set, making Mahler's vocal and instrumental lines considerably more persuasive as distributed through two channels. Monophonically, those who have the older record could profitably stand by it. And even the stereo recording could have been improved by stronger (and presumably closer) pick-up of the orchestra and more dramatic treatment of the vocal parts. R.C.M.

MAHLER: Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen; Kindertotenlieder

Christa Ludwig, mezzo-soprano; Philharmonia Orchestra; Sir Adrian Boult, cond. (in *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*); André Vandernoot, cond. (in *Kindertotenlieder*).
• • ANGEL S 35776. SD. \$5.98.

After having heard Miss Ludwig as soloist with the Chicago Symphony in *Das Lied von der Erde*, I was prepared for better than this. Her approach to the music is consistently justifiable, and she

Continued on page 98



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produces some lovely sounds and phrases. That, however, is about it. The *Kindertotenlieder* drag with an atrocious accompaniment (surely she didn't want it to go that way?), while in the earlier cycle the extreme demands of range and volume prove too much for her to handle with comfort, and the orchestra tends to occupy a dominant role. Fischer-Dieskau and Flagstad continue to be my choice. R.C.M.

MENDELSSOHN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64*—
See Bruch: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 26.*

MESSAGER: *Les P'tites Michu*

Soloists; Chorus and Orchestra Raymond Saint-Paul, Jules Gressier, cond.
• P_AT_HE DTX 157. LP. \$5.95.

Although there is some very charming music in the score for this operetta, produced with enormous success in Paris in 1894, it is on the whole several degrees below Messenger's best work. The libretto, as involved as most operetta librettos are, concerns itself with the love affairs of two supposed sisters, daughters of the General d'Ifs. Once you know that they are named Blanche-Marie and Marie-Blanche, you can almost write the plot and work out its denouement. In Messa-

ger's music there is the prettiness, the gentility common to all his operettas, but this time the melodies are in rather short supply. A charming and very famous duet for the two sisters, "*Blanche-Marie et Marie-Blanche*," shares honors with a graceful romance in waltz time, "*Ah, Soeurette*" for Blanche-Marie. There is also an amusing Gilbertian-type patter song for the General, in which Messenger uses a rhythm quite out of his usual field. I hesitate to call the balance of the score padding, for the composer was far too careful a craftsman to indulge in that, but it certainly does not sparkle.

The cast of French singers do a splendid job, with some especially fine work from Liliane Berton and Nadine Renaux in the roles of the two sisters. The orchestral performance under the firm direction of Jules Gressier is bright and well paced, and the sound is quite acceptable. J.F.I.

MOZART: *Symphonies: No. 14, in A, K. 114; No. 15, in G, K. 124; No. 16, in C, K. 128; No. 17, in G, K. 129*

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.
• WESTMINSTER XWN 18864. LP. \$4.98.

The latest volume in Westminster's series, this disc completes Leinsdorf's traversal of the symphonies of Mozart (not exactly "completes," however, since two or three works added by Einstein to the list of authentic symphonies are not included). It is an excellent series on the whole, even though one may prefer some of the works in other performances. The four compositions presented here, written when Mozart was fifteen and sixteen, are not very important, yet each has its moments—the mysterious second theme of the opening movement of K. 114 and the delicate, poetic trio of its Minuet; the dissonances and traces of drama in the development section of the first movement of K. 124; the grace of the Andante in K. 128, and its charming, if simple, counterpoint; the playfulness in the first Allegro of K. 129, and the songful naïveté of its lovely Andante. A good case could be made against Leinsdorf's interpretation of some of the appoggiaturas, and the sound of the horns is rather dry; otherwise performance and recording are satisfactory, though those who own the Concert Hall versions of K. 114, 124, and 128 need not, I think, rush to replace them with these. N.B.

MOZART: *Symphonies: No. 38, in D, K. 504 ("Prague"); No. 32, in G, K. 318*

London Symphony Orchestra, Peter Maag, cond.
• • LONDON CS 6107. SD. \$4.98.

There are recorded performances of the *Prague* equal to this one (for example Klemperer's on Angel), if not better, but I have never heard finer recordings of a Mozart symphony than of the two presented here. Even though a large orchestra seems to be used, every nuance of Mozart's sparkling orchestration is perceptible. It is not only that the wind parts

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are clearly audible when they should be, but that each instrument retains its own timbre—which is not, alas, always the case even in stereo. High oboes don't sound like flutes, or bassoons like horns; and when bassoons double the cellos or basses, one hears both the rich reedy sound and the warm stringy one. Timpani strokes are not dull thuds; they have the sharp, imperious character of real, well-tuned kettledrums. In contrapuntal sections, of which the *Prague* is full, the utmost clarity reigns. Put this record on and your favorite chair will be transformed into the best seat in Carnegie Hall. N.B.

NAUMANN: *Andante and Gracioso for Glass Harmonica, Flute, Viola, and Cello, in C; Wie ein Hirt sein Volk zu weiden, Duet for Glass Harmonica and Lute, in G*

†Schnyder zu Wartensee: *Der durch Musik überwundene Wüterich, Duet for Glass Harmonica and Forte Piano, in C*

†Tomaschek: *Fantasia for Glass Harmonica, in E minor*

Bruno Hoffmann, glass harmonica; Instrumentalists.

• ARCHIVE ARC 3111. LP. \$5.98.

The glass harmonica, invented by Benjamin Franklin in 1762, had a limited but happy life of some seventy years and then disappeared. Its thin, delicate, blurry sound, something like that of a celesta with sustainable tones, is approximated here on an instrument built on similar principles by the soloist, Bruno Hoffmann. Of the three composers represented, only Johann Tomaschek (1774–1850) was not content to coast along on the novel sound and went to the trouble of thinking up some worthwhile musical ideas. N.B.

PACHELBEL: *Chorale Partitas (complete)*

Robert Owen, organ and harpsichord.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 18829. LP. \$4.98.

In these sets of variations on Protestant chorales the tunes are usually handled in one of two ways: they are either stated unaltered in one voice while one or two other voices weave over or under or around them, or they are stated in embellished form. The variety which Pachelbel's lively imagination achieves within these rather severe formal restrictions is striking. There are daring chromatic progressions, as in the seventh variation of *Alle Menschen müssen sterben* or the fourth of *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*, or surprisingly "modern"-sounding counterpoint, as in the fifth variation of *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, the same melody that is so important in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*.

Owen, playing on the Aeolian-Skinner organ of Christ Church in Bronxville, New York, favors thin, clean registrations that are nicely varied in color. In each partita he plays some variations on a harpsichord. This is not liturgical music, and the distinction between organ and clavier music was hazy in Pachelbel's day; but it would be interesting to know



Dorati: a real affinity for Respighi.

Mr. Owen's authority for the curious, though not disturbing, practice of switching from one instrument to the other within the same piece. N.B.

RESPIGHI: *Antiche Danze ed Arie: Suites: No. 1, Il Conte Orlando; No. 2, Gagliarda; No. 3, Villanella*

Philharmonia Hungarica, Antal Dorati, cond.

• MERCURY MG 50199. LP. \$3.98.

Although excellence marks the whole of this refugee Hungarian ensemble, based in Vienna and touring the United States this fall, its strings make a particularly sensuous effect in these tastefully dressed-up versions of old lute pieces. Dorati seems to have a real affinity for them, informing the lovely music with gaiety, vigor, or tenderness as the mood demands. The engineering gives the most faithful kind of reproduction, with wide dynamic range and depth of aural perspective. Victor also puts out a one-disc recording of these three suites; it might be the equal but not the superior of this set. R.E.

ROSSINI: *Overtures*

Guillaume Tell; La Cenerentola; La Gazzaladra; Semiramide.

Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Peter Maag, cond.

• LONDON CS 6089. SD. \$4.98.

These are somewhat deliberate performances. Maag is most convincing in the larger-scaled works—*William Tell* and *Semiramide*—and then mainly in the less tempestuous pages, such as Sections I and III of the *Tell* Overture. The *Cenerentola* is too measured and a bit heavy, and so, to a lesser extent, is *Gazzaladra*. London's stereo is nothing short of triumphant—as good as any I've heard, and it goes far to compensate for whatever shortcomings one may find in Maag's readings. C.L.O.

SAINT-SAENS: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in F, Op. 103; Septet for Piano, Trumpet, String Quartet, and Double Bass, in E flat, Op. 65*

Jeanne-Marie Darré, piano; R. Delmotte,

trumpet; G. Logerot, double bass; Pascal Quartet; Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française, Louis Fourestier, cond.

• PATHE DTX 252. LP. \$5.95.

For a piano concerto that is rarely played in public in this country, Saint-Saëns's Fifth, sometimes called *Egyptian* for its quasi-Eastern middle movement, has been well represented on discs. This is the fifth available recording, as well as the third of the Septet, with its prominent role for the trumpet. Miss Darré has the right equipment for these decorative and good-humored works—cool, bell-like tones, beautifully matched in scales and arpeggios, and elegantly precise timing. Not many sounds are as entrancing as her feather-light, glinting pianissimo runs. In the concerto, the orchestra plays satisfactorily, if a little staidly, but it is not recorded with the utmost clarity. In the Septet, Miss Darré's distinguished colleagues make accurate, cheerful, brightly harmonious noises—particularly the trumpeter—and the engineering is first-rate. Some surface noise afflicts the disc. These are the superior performances to be had of these works, but not so much so as to warrant the higher price. Program notes are in French. R.E.

SAINT-SAENS: *Samson et Dalila*

Hélène Bouvier (ms), Dalila; José Luccioni (t), Samson; Paul Cabanel (b), Le Grand Prêtre; Charles Cambon (bs), Abimelech; Henri Medus (bs), Un vieillard Hébreu. Chocur et Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris, Louis Fourestier, cond.

• PATHE PCX 5007/5009. Three LP. \$17.85.

This 1946 performance by Paris Opéra personnel is the same one, still doing service, issued in this country a dozen years ago by Columbia on a heap of 78-rpm discs. Even at the time of original publication the set was regarded widely as technically backward. Reheard today, Pathé's *Samson et Dalila* sounds bone-dry—orchestrally thin and nasal, chorally congested and, throughout, confined by four studio walls. Even so, it has managed to survive as the only available complete recording of a period score popular in many quarters.

At the time Louis Fourestier hadn't the fire, or at hand the firepower, to set *Samson* ablaze, but this careful and orderly performance is notches higher than most of his subsequent efforts on behalf of the New York Metropolitan. Hélène Bouvier's Dalila was respected when new, and must continue to be, for the musical intelligence at work, if not for the voice. The Samson of Luccioni, sounding aged even in '46, nevertheless was something of an act of heroism in the face of insuperable odds. Paul Cabanel, singing the High Priest of Dagon, summoned a vocal power and musical suavity matched only in my experience by a younger Martial Singher than we hear today.

Those with versatile amplifiers (and an appetite for *Samson* unabridged) are

advised to use a "European 78" control setting (or its equivalent) rather than RIAA. A presentation pamphlet, in French, is included, but not one word of the libretto, or so much as a single note of musical illustration. ROGER DETTMER

SCHMITT: *Quartet for Strings, Op. 112*

Quatuor Champeil.

• PATHE DTX 232. LP. \$5.95.

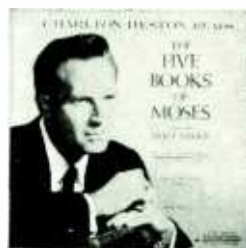
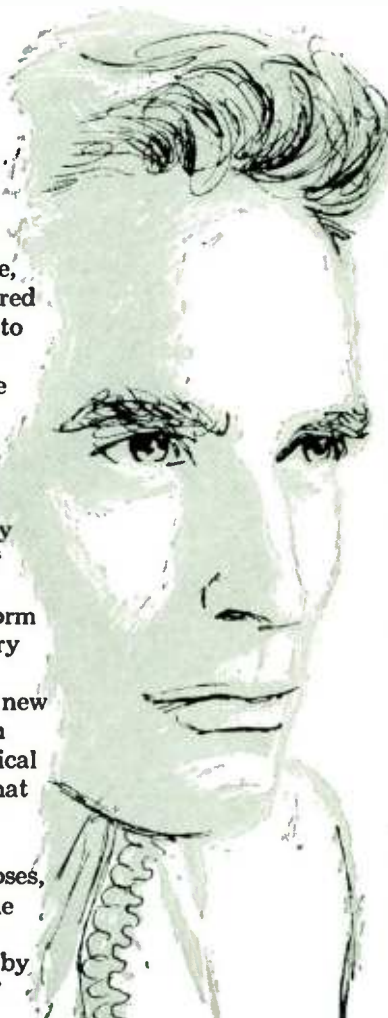
Written in 1947, when Florent Schmitt had reached the advanced age of seventy-seven, this long and involved work is in four movements—*Rêve, Jeu, In Memoriam*, and *Elan*. Of these, the middle two sections are more interesting and more unified than their two companion movements. *In Memoriam* is par-

ticularly moving, lyrical, and expressive. The entire quartet contains many echoes of Debussy and Ravel, though there is an individuality of style that would never permit the listener to believe that it had been written by either of these men. On the whole I find the work interesting, often rewarding, but far from great. The music is not easy to play, and the performance here shows a great deal of devotion on the part of the musicians, whose efforts have been accorded satisfactory reproduction. P.A.

SCHNYDER ZU WARTENSEE: *Der durch Musik überwundene Wüterich, Duet for Class Harmonica and Forte Piano, in C*—See Naumann: *Andante and Gracioso for Class Harmonica, Flute, Viola, and Cello, in C*.

LANGUAGE AND MUSIC

The highest praise we can give to a work of music is to say that it "speaks" to us. Conversely, there are words so exalted, like those of the Holy Bible, where the language, fired with emotion, turns into poetry, and the poetry is transformed into the urgency of music. In Charlton Heston's readings from *The Five Books of Moses*, accompanied by the Robert DeCormier Chorale, poetry and music intermingle to form a unity of extraordinary power and beauty. So, *The Creation* takes on new levels of meaning when intensified by the musical image of "My Lord, what a morning, when the stars begin to shine." And the tragedy of *Moses*, unable to cross into the Promised Land, is lent unutterable poignance by the song "Deep River."



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SCHUBERT: *Sonata for Piano, in A minor, Op. 143; Sonata for Piano, in B flat, Op. posth.*

Joerg Demus, piano.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 18845. LP. \$4.98.

A proper Viennese, Joerg Demus is also a proper Schubert interpreter—in more than one sense of that word. In these sonatas he is serious-minded, expressively contained, formally coherent. He does not reveal all the emotional facets of the music, and the tone gets slightly edgy at its loudest, but the music is presented for its own sake, without fuss. Friedrich Wührer, on Vox Records, gives equally faithful, equally selfless, but stronger interpretations of this same pair of sonatas. After all these years, Westminster still seems to capture piano playing with less distortion than most record makers. R.E.

SCHUBERT: *Sonata for Piano, in A minor, Op. 143*

Stewart Gordon, piano.

• WASHINGTON WR 425. LP. \$4.98.

Stewart Gordon, a former Gieseking pupil now teaching at Wilmington College in Ohio, has been extravagantly praised in some quarters, and this first disc of his suggests that much of it is deserved. None of his admirers that I know of, however, has mentioned the artist he most calls to mind—Guimar Novaes. He shares with her a concern for the luminous, clinging tone that makes possible a true legato on the piano, plus the desire to "orchestrate" the different voices of the music.

To a large extent Mr. Gordon achieves these two difficult aims, and the rich piano tones, varicolored from top to bottom, bathe the Schumann with warmly vibrant sounds. The tone is a little overripe for the Schubert, where a drier, more delicate texture seems warranted. What is problematic in the playing here is the treatment of rhythm and tempo. In repeated hearings of the Schubert sonata, I could never become reconciled to the sudden changes of tempo for small phrases or to the premature plunging into a new phrase when an old one was scarcely ended. The fluctuations in tempo are not so disturbing in the amorphous Schumann sonata, and the listener can revel in the tonal color lavished on its inspired melodies and harmonies. The piano is too close to the microphone for my taste, but otherwise it has been cleanly recorded. R.E.

SCHUBERT: *Sonatinas for Violin and Piano, Op. 137: No. 1, in D; No. 2, in A minor; No. 3, in G minor. Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A, Op. 162 ("Duo")*

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Riccardo Castagnone, piano.

• EPIC LC 3609. LP. \$4.98.

Continued on page 102

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

EUGENE ORMANDY AND THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

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LISZT: Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major; Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Major—with Philippe Entremont, Piano.

ML 5389 MS 607*

FRANCK: Symphonic Variations • D'INDY: Symphony On a French Mountain Air—with Robert Casadesu, Piano.

ML 5388 MS 607*

TCHAIKOVSKY: Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, Op. 23—with Eugene Istomin, Piano.

ML 5399 MS 607*

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Here, on a single record, are all the sonatas for violin and piano that Schubert wrote. As a matter of fact, with the exception of the *Rondo Brilliant*, Op. 70, and *Fantasia in C*, Op. 159, it contains all his chamber music for these two instruments. In this respect, it is quite a bargain, for Johanna Martzy and Jean Antonietti took two full Angel records for their performances of the sonatas. That matter taken care of, it remains a question as to which is the preferable interpretation.

As usual, Grumiaux's tone is both sweet and rich, but there is a bit too much reverberation in the piano tone (the recording seems to have been made in a room that was acoustically a trifle too live). Martzy's tone is a good deal less ravishing than Grumiaux's, though it is very fine indeed, but there is a more

felicitous chamber music balance between the two instruments on the Angel discs. After racing through the charming *Sonatina No. 1* and dismissing it almost as a trifle, Grumiaux and Castagnone proceed to treat the remaining two sonatinas and the slightly more ambitious *A Major Sonata* with tenderness and care. Martzy and Antonietti, on the other hand, are less hurried and less cavalier about the first sonatina and considerably more intense about their approach to the other three works. Therefore, though I revel in Grumiaux's tone and the economy of Epic's package, I believe that the Angel discs give a more faithful picture of the music. P.A.

SCHUMANN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54*
 †Franck: *Variations symphoniques*

Peter Katin, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Eugene Goossens, cond.
 • EVEREST LPBR 6036. LP. \$4.98.
 • • EVEREST SDBR 3036. SD. \$5.98.

It is possible to admire the unblurred extraresonant empty-hall sound captured here and to enjoy the widespread separation of the stereo version, but in fact these engineering achievements detract noticeably from the warmth and intimacy of Schumann's and Franck's music. Again, Mr. Katin's playing of the Schumann is faithful to the letter but a shade cool and rational in spirit. Surprisingly, the Franck is touched with sentimentality. Goossens and the orchestra collaborate efficiently but with occasional excesses of zeal. The LP disc, with the same spacious acoustical effect, is better than the stereo because the ensemble has greater unity. R.E.

SCHUMANN: *Sonata for Piano, in F sharp minor, Op. 11—See Schubert: Sonata for Piano, in A minor, Op. 143.*

SCHUMANN: *Symphony No. 1, in B flat, Op. 38 ("Spring"); Manfred, Op. 115: Overture*

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.
 • • EPIC BC 1039. SD. \$5.98.

Szell and his orchestra bring their familiar virtues of logic and vitality to this reading of the symphony. The lyricism of the *Larghetto* movement is projected within a welcome rhythmic discipline; too insistent accents, with resultant monotony, are avoided in the *Scherzo*; and the final *Allegro* has the *grazioso* spirit marked on the score—indeed, the playing might even be called playful. On the other hand, the *Manfred* Overture is full of a fine passionate energy. With its well-balanced stereo engineering, this recording can be recommended for its special, admirable, and unspectacular qualities. R.E.

SMETANA: *My Country ("Ma Vlast")*

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik, cond.

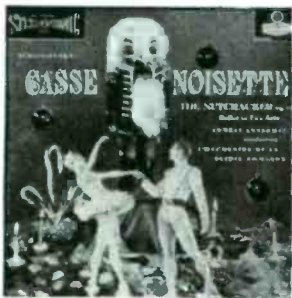
• • LONDON CSA 2202. Two SD. \$9.96.

Ma Vlast is a cycle of six symphonic poems, of which *Vltava (The Moldau)* is extremely popular in this country and *From Bohemia's Meadows and Forests* gets an occasional hearing. The cycle as a whole is almost never given. In its native Czechoslovakia, however, *Ma Vlast* is frequently performed in its entirety.

This is as Smetana wished it, for he designed the cycle to be played as a unit. There is an underlying theme representing Vysehrad, the ruined castle on the Moldau, that is heard in two of the symphonic poems in addition to the one so titled; and *Tabor* and *Blanik* complement each other, and rightfully should never be played separately. Then there

Continued on page 104

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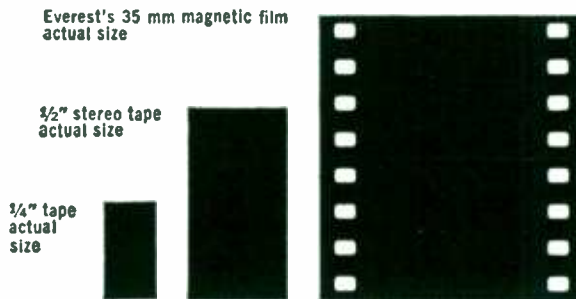
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Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64. Sir Malcolm Sargent, the London Symphony Orchestra. LPBR 6039 SDBR 3039*

*Stereo number

is *Sárka*, which contains some of the most beautiful passages Smetana ever penned. In other words, *Ma Vlast* presents a rounded picture of Smetana's impressions of his native country and its legends, and the two symphonic poems that are more familiar to us take on new meaning when heard in context.

Being Czech-born himself, Kubelik has an intense feeling for this music which he communicates to the listener in a series of forceful and altogether convincing readings. The Vienna Philharmonic, too, is in fine fettle, and the sound engineers have provided luminous, evenly spread stereo reproduction. P.A.

SMETANA: Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in E minor ("From My Life")—See Dvořák: *Quartet for Strings, No. 6, in F, Op. 96 ("American")*.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: Also Sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
• • LONDON CS 6129. SD. \$5.98.

For review of this record, see p. 89.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40

London Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond.
• EVEREST LPBR 6038. LP. \$3.98.
• • EVEREST SDBR 3038. SD. \$4.98.

The first stereo disc of *Heldenleben* is going to be difficult to surpass. The performance is an excellent one, and the engineering is extraordinarily fine.

The arrival of this record coincided

with my installation of a new speaker system for stereo which allows me to handle the largest sound intensities with ease. Blasting away with this performance at a much higher volume level than most are likely to use, I found no distortion in the recording, once I had adjusted the playback curve to the characteristics of my fairly bright listening room. The effect was just about that of a live performance, a performance, moreover, that avoids the excessive beefy quality of some German conductors and presents a hero who is youthful, muscular, and full of vitality.

Monophonically the set is up to all its competition, with the older Reiner edition the only serious challenger. Stereo, however, adds so much for this music that there is no real comparison between the effect of this recording in the two forms.

The album cover, incidentally, is as fine a piece of pictorial satire as I have seen in a long time. R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Swan Lake, Op. 20 (excerpts)

Yehudi Menuhin, violin; Philharmonia Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz, cond.
• • CAPITOL SG 7188. SD. \$5.98.

Mr. Menuhin gets featured billing on this recording and more prominence from the engineers than his share in the proceedings deserves. He plays the solo violin passages for the *Pas de deux* in Act I (usually found in Act III), the *Pas de deux* in Act II, and a supplemental Russian Dance (not usually performed today). Beautiful and important though these solos are, they should not sound, as they do here, as if the violinist had stepped onstage to take over from the dancers. Furthermore, Mr. Menuhin's first solo is not always precise in pitch and is replete with large-scale rhythmic liberties. The second solo goes better and on its own terms has extremely lovely moments; the last goes best of all and enjoys a flashy cadenza and finale. In all other ways this is an expert recording, for Mr. Kurtz is an old hand at ballet conducting; and, of course, it contains many more of the standard excerpts than those mentioned above. In any case, Mr. Menuhin's presence gives the disc curiosity value. R.E.

TOMASCHEK: Fantasia for Glass Harmonica, in E minor—See Naumann: *Andante and Gracioso for Glass Harmonica, in C*.

WEBER: Overtures

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Philharmonia Orchestra, Wolfgang Sawallisch, cond.
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Continued on page 106

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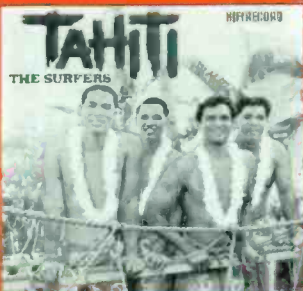
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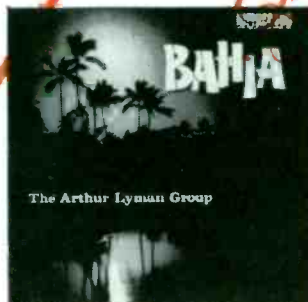
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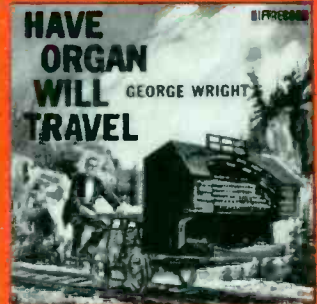
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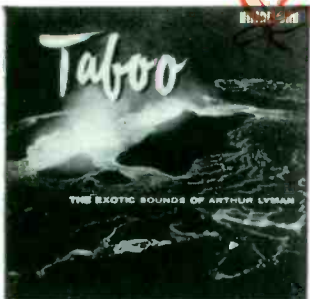
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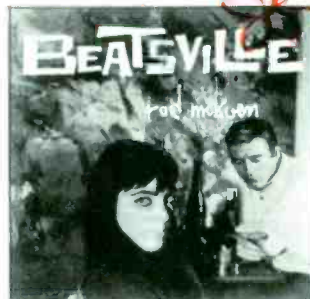
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Ansermet for London, Scherchen for Westminster, and various conductors for Decca. And for sonic excellence, the extremely wide dynamic range, natural but grandly broad stereoism, perfect transparency, and warm yet solid sonorities here would be hard to match, let alone surpass. My only real criticism is that Sawallisch seems determined to out-Toscanini Toscanini: he comes quite close to doing so, but too often exaggerates his pace and dynamic contrasts, and is generally so vehement that the scores' more brilliant effects overpower their romantic lyricism. Nevertheless, the program as a whole is impressively dramatic.

R.D.D.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

MARIA CALLAS: "Mad Scenes"

Donizetti: *Anna Bolena: Piangete voi?* . . . *Al dolce guidami castel natio* . . . *Coppia iniqua*. Thomas: *Hamlet: A vos jeux* . . . *Partagez-vous mes fleurs* . . . *Et maintenant écoutez ma chanson!* Bellini: *Il Pirata: Oh! s'io potessi* . . . *Col sorriso d'innocenza* . . . *Oh! sole, ti vcla.*

Maria Callas, soprano; Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Nicola Rescigno, cond.

• • ANGEL S 35764. SD. \$5.98.

If Maria Callas was heard in tense, tremulous, even squally voice at least half of the time in her recent collection of "Verdi Heroines," it is cause for all the more rejoicing now to report, as one of the lady's earlier and intemperate admirers, that she sings these "Mad Scenes," each and all, splendidly. On prior discs La Callas has characterized for posterity no fewer than seven of opera's more spectacular victims of lunacy, and three more driven beyond the purlicus of sweet reason. It strikes me forcibly, however, listening to this new collection of unhappy ladies, that none before has been so nobly deranged as (or for that matter better vocalized than) Anna Bolena. None, surely, has suffered affliction more prettily embroidered than Ophélie in Ambroise Thomas's elsewhere tepid *Hamlet*. And none has lost her senses—Boito's Margherita possibly excepted—more limpidly than gentle Imogene of Bellini's *Pirata*.

The final scene of *Anna Bolena*, scored for mad soprano, concerned chorus, and consoling *comprimarie*, follows a scheme of recitative, aria, quartet, and cabaletta. Its harmonic vocabulary is unusually more inventive than our generation has come to expect from Donizetti, with musical pathos proportionately intensified. Notwithstanding, "Coppia iniqua" is a virtuosa's test course through a series of ascending full-voice trills to thickets of hemidemisemiquavers up and down three octaves. The *Hamlet* music, in contrast, merely polishes a borrowed expressive device without involving so wide a range of dramatic inflections. A killer it can be technically, however,—happily not once the case here. Most lyrical is the Bellini cavatina, followed by a poignant outcry, this introduced by a thwacked tam-tam and solemn chorus.

To discuss in detail the Callas sound, vocal method, expressive agility, and theatrical intuition would be, at this late date, pedantic. Suffice it to say that all the familiar beauties, and the few familiar lapses from classroom grace, are to be heard in pristine estate, at the full service of interpretative penetration. Nicola Rescigno, who appeared content merely to accompany Madame's Verdi scenes, here conducts—in repertory more congenial to his temperamental equipment—with force, spirit, and much stylistic awareness. The Philharmonia Orchestra, as a collaborative entity, is keenly responsive, especially solo flute and oboe. A chorus, unspecified but assumed to be Walter Legge's Philharmonia, assists as ably. And if the four additional solo recruits heard in *Anna Bolena* are uniformly substandard, at least there is uniformity of a kind.

Angel's stereo in this instance is of greater depth than lateral spread, but otherwise quite the most satisfactory recording to date of Maria Callas. Surfaces on my copy were generally quiet with

Continued on page 109

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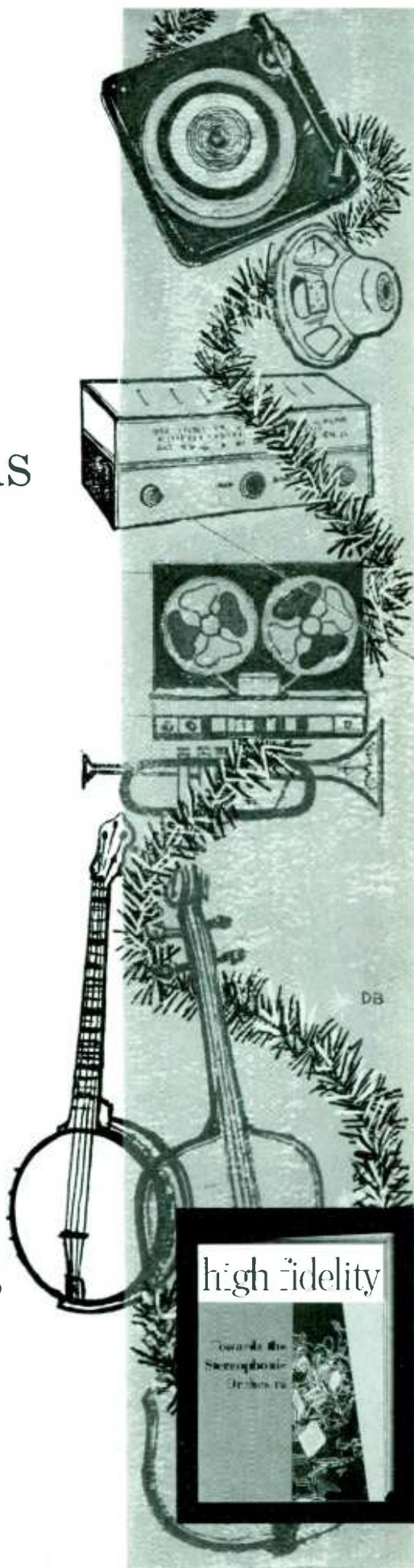
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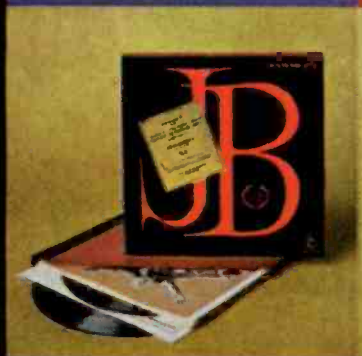
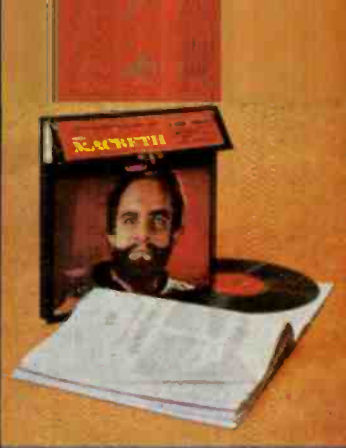
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GIUSEPPE DI STEFANO: Operatic Recital

Giuseppe di Stefano, tenor; Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, Franco Patané, cond.

• • LONDON OS 25081. SD. \$5.98.

The tenor is certainly in better voice on this recording than on the recent *Forza*, and the program has been carefully chosen to show him at his best. All the same, his work here does nothing to alter my impression that he is getting deeper and deeper into serious vocal trouble. The high voice is touch-and-go—he clamps himself to the note, holds on for dear life . . . and the longer he holds, the more boring it becomes, since it is a dead sound to start with. Above E, all vowels become variants of a flat "ah" or "eh"; he seems unable to sing the sound "o" in the upper register.

All this is very much too bad, for his is an extraordinary natural gift, and every selection on this disc contains moments of unusual beauty. Surprisingly, the French side makes better listening than the Italian. The *Manon* excerpt offers a melting half-voice, and "Pourquoi me réveiller?" is feelingly sung. Of the Italian numbers I like best the "E lucevan le stelle" and, from *Turandot*, "Non piangere, Liu" and "Nessun dorma!"—though Di Stefano's final "Vincero!" in the latter is a cliff hanger. The accompaniments are appropriately red-blooded or delicate, as the case may be, and the sound lush. C.L.O.

MARCEL GRANDJANY: "Introduction and Allegro"

Ravel: *Introduction and Allegro for Harp, Flute, Clarinet, and String Quartet*. Debussy: *Danse sacrée et Danse profane*. Grandjany: *The Children's Hour; Rhapsodie pour la Harpe*. Roger-Ducasse: *Barcarolle*.

Marcel Grandjany, harp; Arthur Gleg-horn, flute; Hugo Raimondi, clarinet; Hollywood String Quartet; Concert Arts String Orchestra, Felix Slatkin, cond.

• CAPITOL P 8492. LP. \$4.98.
• • CAPITOL SP 8492. SD. \$5.98.

Ravel's lovely work receives an elegantly handsome performance at the hands of Mr. Grandjany and his colleagues, and it sounds almost breathtakingly sensuous as the stereo version gives a specific place to the individual and beautiful timbres of each instrument. An equally good performance of the Debussy dances cannot hide their essential dullness. The other works, all harp solos, give Mr. Grandjany's artistic and technical resources a workout. The artist wrote his six-part, Fauré-like *Children's Hour* suite for his pupils, his *Rhapsodie* to exploit the coloristic capacities of his instrument; with the former he creates delight, with the latter virtuosic brilliance. Even for a solo harp, stereo pays a dividend here by

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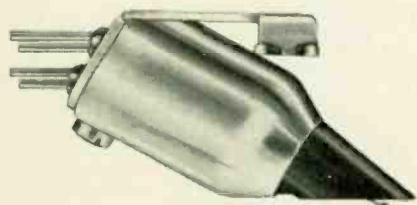
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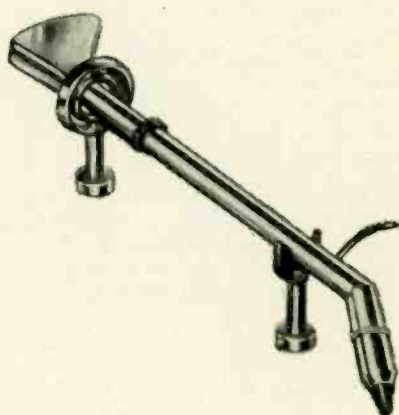
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giving the instrument more depth of tone than is usual. On its own terms, the LP version has ideal clarity and balance, too. R.E.

FRANCESCO MARCONI: *Recital*

Francesco Marconi, tenor; orchestra; piano.
• Rococo R 22. LP. \$5.95.

I'm not sure how many collectors can tolerate the steady din made by these old records for the sake of listening to the eminent nineteenth-century tenor, but those who persevere will hear some stunning singing, as well as some liberal re-writing of the music in the best (or worst) Golden-Age fashion.

The voice has a silken quality and a wonderfully free ring at the crown. Marconi could apparently do just about anything he wished with it, and his versions of most of the pieces here will stand beside any. The aria from Rubinstein's seldom-heard *Nerone* is a superb one, and Marconi's partners in the duets from *I Puritani*, *Forza*, etc. are all of interest on their own merits. Verdi would be edified by the improvements made upon his "Questa o quella," and Donizetti by the corrections made in the tempos of his "Tu che a Dio." A novelty is the recording of Masini's *I Mulattieri* with the legendary baritone Cotogni; what it sounded like in the studio (or, more likely, the warehouse) is impossible to judge, but the noise that emerges is a remarkably sustained caterwauling, punctuated by cries of what seems to be "Hurry!" C.L.O.

MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR: *"The Spirit of Christmas"*

Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Richard P. Condie, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5423. LP. \$4.98.
• COLUMBIA MS 6100. SD. \$5.98.

Easily the most impressive of the new Christmas recordings I have yet heard this season is this superb concert of carols by the Salt Lake City choristers, a well-balanced program incorporating a few of the old favorites (*Silent Night*, *Adeste Fideles*, etc.) plus a larger number of lesser-known carols, some of them extremely obscure. It is the latter that are the real delights of the record. The beautiful Pergolesi anthem *Glory to God in the Highest*, the haunting Catalan song of the Nativity *The Three Kings*, the unusual *Bethlehem Night* of Arthur Warrell, and Gustav Holst's superbly constructed vocal fantasia *Christmas Day* are particularly noteworthy. The intricacies of the vocal lines in some of these works are handled with assurance and understanding, and the singing throughout is both stimulating and moving. In every way this is a very beautiful record.

Columbia has achieved an extremely wide spread of sound in the stereo version, but one that also tends to over-brighten the quality of the female choir, particularly the sopranos. This is much less noticeable in the monophonic version, which I find preferable. J.F.I.

"NEAPOLITAN SONGS BY THE IMMORTALS"

Aureliano Pertile: *Nun me sceta*; *Musica proibita*. Giacomo Lauri-Volpi: *La Serenata* (Tosti); *Luna d'estate* (Tosti). Tino Pattiera: *Mamma mia che vo sape*. Fernando de Lucia: *Aprile* (Tosti); *Carmela*. Enrico Caruso: *La mia canzone* (Tosti); *Non t'amo più*. Tito Schipa: *Santa Lucia*; *Marechiaro* (Tosti). Nino Piccaluga: *L'ultima canzone* (Tosti). Enzo de Muro Lomanto: *Core ngrato*. Alessandro Bonci: *Nina*. Giovanni Zenatello: *Ninetta*.

• ETERNA 728. LP. \$5.95.

There is enough high-grade vocalism on this release to justify its existence for those interested in the songs as tenor vehicles, and not as romantic dinner music. The best singing comes from De Lucia and Caruso, the former demonstrating what perfect vocal control and aristocratic taste can do with the simplest material, and the latter bringing exuberant splendor to both his songs. Bonci and De Muro Lomanto also handle their material perfectly. Lauri-Volpi is shown to advantage in *La Serenata* (this is not the more familiar song beginning "Vola, o serenata . . ."), but his *Luna d'estate* is a poor example of his work, and both Schipa and Zenatello have been heard to better effect. The others are all worthy representatives of the tradition, Pattiera making an especially engaging contribution. C.L.O.

NETHERLANDS CHAMBER CHOIR: "The Birth of Christ"

Netherlands Chamber Choir, Felix de Nobel, cond.

• EPIC LC 3614. LP. \$4.98.
• • EPIC BC 1041. SD. \$5.98.

This disc provides a beautiful selection of seventeen Renaissance motets for the Christmas season. They are grouped under four heads—"Advent," "The Birth of Christ," "The Good Tidings to the Shepherds," and "Rejoicing"—and eleven composers are represented: Lassus (three pieces); Palestrina, Sweelinck, Handl or Gallus, and Praetorius (two each); and Victoria, Croce, Willaert, G. Gabrieli, Hassler, and Clemens non Papa (one each). There is considerable variety in texture, from the two-part *Puer natus in Bethlehem* of Praetorius to the eight-part *O Jesu mi dulcissime* of Gabrieli, but the predominant mood is naturally one of rejoicing. The listener is therefore likely to find more enjoyment in playing two or three of these pieces at a time than the whole thing at one sitting, but wherever he digs into this disc he will strike gold.

The expert Netherlands Chamber Choir sings with its accustomed verve, fine tone, excellent balance, and generally good intonation. The recording in both versions is first-rate, though more advantage, it seems to me, could have been taken of stereo, as in the Gabrieli piece for double chorus, where the obvious separation is not made. N.B.

EZIO PINZA: "Ezio Pinza Sings Italian Songs"

Sarti: *Lungi dal caro bene*. Buononcini: *Pupille nere*. A. Scarlatti: *Chi vuole innamorarsi*. Legrenzi: *Che fiero costume*. Giordani: *Caro mio ben*. Falconieri: *O bellissimi capelli*. Torelli: *Tu lo sai*. Paisiello: *Nel cor piu non mi sento*. Monteverdi: *L'Incoronazione di Poppea: Oblivion soave*; Arianna: *Lasciatemi morire*. Cavalli: *Donzelle, fuggite*. Handel: *Floridante: Alma mia*.

Ezio Pinza, bass; Fritz Kitzinger, piano.
• RCA CAMDEN CAL 539. LP. \$1.98.

Unlike Camden's previous Pinza disc of operatic excerpts, this release does not bring us the singer's voice in vintage condition, and *arie antiche* were not the strongest part of his repertory. Here his voice betrays hints of the hooseness on top and throatiness below that set in during the last years of his career, and despite the rich tone he summons, he seems to be reaching for effect. *Lungi dal caro bene* and *Bellissimi capelli* turn out well, and Pinza's dark, relaxed sound is eminently suited to *Oblivion soave*, which is in any case a supremely beautiful piece of musical sculpture; but many of these songs sound rather silly if not sung by a voice and in a style appropriate to them. Kitzinger's accompaniments are sufficient, but only fairly well recorded. C.L.O.

HANS RICHTER-HAASER: "The Romance of the Piano"

Hans Richter-Haaser, piano.
• EPIC LC 3620. LP. \$4.98.

Coincident with Mr. Richter-Haaser's first American concert appearances this fall, Epic has issued this curious disc devoted to popular "encore" pieces and the Beethoven Sonata No. 24, Op. 78. Whether or not the report is true that this miscellany was assembled from European recordings of another day, the image emerges therefrom of an intelligent, technically adroit, musicianly pianist, consistent with, but not as remarkable as the Richter-Haaser who is soloist in Angel's current release of Brahms's B flat Piano Concerto. Warmth and poetry have little place in these clear-headed interpretations of nineteenth-century works; for this reason the reading of the brisk little Beethoven Sonata gives the most satisfaction. The pianist also elicits considerable charm in Grieg's *Vanishing Days* (Op. 57, No. 1) and *Wedding Day at Troldhaugen*. Clean, natural recording of the piano tone. R.E.

HERBERT VON KARAJAN: "Vienna Philharmonic Festival"

Haydn: *Symphony No. 104, in D*. Mozart: *Symphony No. 40, in G, K.550*. Beethoven: *Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92*. Brahms: *Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68*. Johann Strauss, II: *Overture to Die Fledermaus*; *Overture to Der Zigeunerbaron*; *Tales from the*

Continued on page 115

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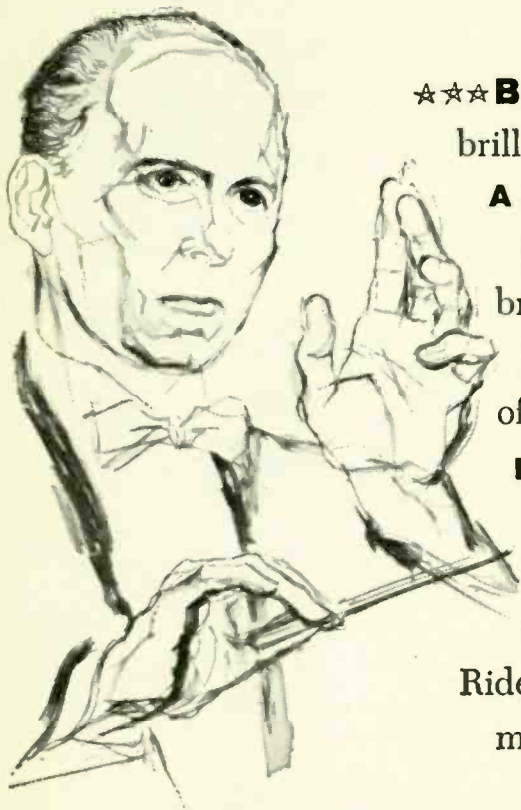


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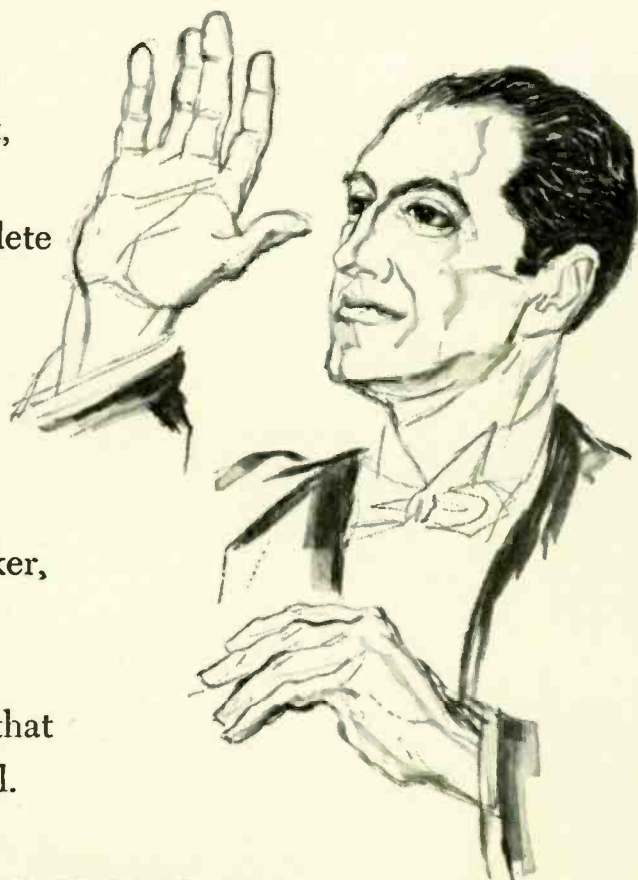
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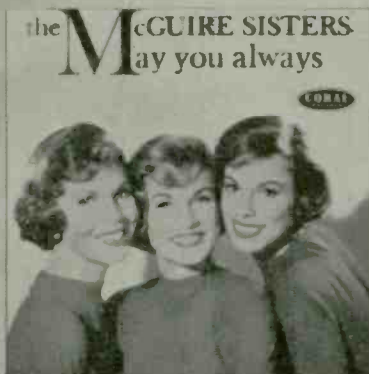
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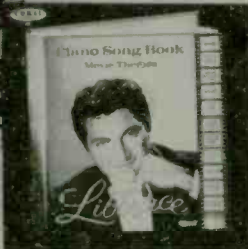


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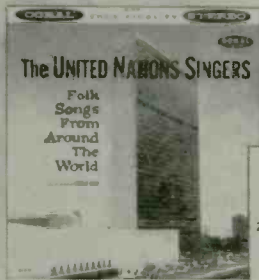
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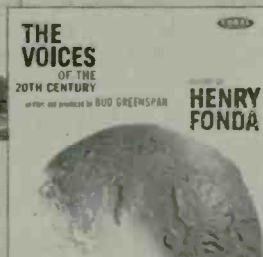


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Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR Four SD. \$25.98.
For a feature review of this album, see p. 89.

LOVRO VON MATACIC: "Russian Program"

Borodin: *Prince Igor: Overture; Prelude, Act III (Polovtsi March); Polovtsian Dances, Act II.* Mussorgsky: *Fantasia: Night on the Bare Mountain.* Rimsky-Korsakov: *Easter Overture, Op. 36 ("Grande Pâque Russe").*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Lovro von Matatic, cond.

• • ANGEL S 35768. SD. \$5.98.

For sonic liveness and spaciousness, extremely wide dynamic range, darkly rich tonal coloring, and the most naturally balanced, differentiated, and blended of stereo recording, this record is one of the finest symphonic SDs available today. But its appeal extends far beyond the sound fancier's somewhat circumscribed domain. I myself was quite unprepared to encounter such mastery of both Slavic insight and orchestral virtuosity as Von Matatic displays here. Perhaps some of his contrasts, in both tempo and volume level, are a bit extreme, but his immense gusto and precise control persuade one that they are just what the composers themselves desired. In any case, every one of these works seems born anew, blazing with the barbaric ferocity which first made them distinctive. An extraordinary disc, and one which I trust will soon be followed by other revelations of Von Matatic's—and the EMI engineers'—superb talents.

R.D.D.

JOHN WILLIAMS: Guitar Recital

Bach-Duarte: *Suite No. 3 for Cello Solo, in C.* Albéniz: *Torre Bermeja.* Ponce: *Three Mexican Popular Songs.* Villa-Lobos: *Etude No. 1, in E minor.* Crespo: *Norteña.* Duarte: *Variations on a Catalan, "Canco del Llabre," Op. 25.*

John Williams, guitar.

• WASHINGTON WR 424. LP. \$4.98.

Nineteen-year-old, Australian-born John Williams would deserve attention if only because of the accolade he has earned from one of his teachers—Segovia. With Latin eloquence, the master has written of his young pupil: "A prince of the guitar has arrived in the musical world. . . . God has laid a finger on his brow, and it will not be long before his name becomes a byword in England and abroad." The recording bears Segovia out to the extent that we hear a completely schooled technician, with a generous command of instrumental color, and a tidy phrase turner. Nothing Mr. Williams does can be faulted, but he has yet to make the guitar the personal, seductive instrument it is in the hands of more mature artists.

Some of this impersonal effect can be traced to insufficient dynamic and rhythmic variety, some to insufficient subtlety in phrasing. Still, the young guitarist's musical and technical exactitude is rare and has its own value. The Bach suite is correctly handled in terms of accent and line, although it tends to plod along, and the rest of the music is appealing and unhackneyed. The variations by John W. Duarte, another of Mr. Williams' teachers, were written for the younger man. Colorful and brilliant, they elicit the best playing on this disc, and quite striking that best is. The exceptionally intimate recording emphasizes the extra little clicking sounds that go with guitar playing, but they do not become really disturbing.

R.E.

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• LONDON A 4415, A 4334, A 4414, A 4335. Four LP. \$4.98 each.

The fortunate ones who last year attended Sir John Gielgud's readings from Shakespeare, entitled *Ages of Man*, will be prepared for the brilliance he displays in this Columbia recording, which contains some of the excerpts from George Rylands' Shakespeare Anthology that were presented in the stage performance. Here are captured the poetry, the superb nuance and inflection, the controlled passion that made the stage performance so memorable. One misses some of the excitement generated in a full theatre; there is, however, a compensating intimacy. Above all, the extraordinarily palpable sympathy between Sir John and Shakespeare's thought still shines through every line; and Sir John, polishing the tarnished, surprises the listener with continually fresh insights.

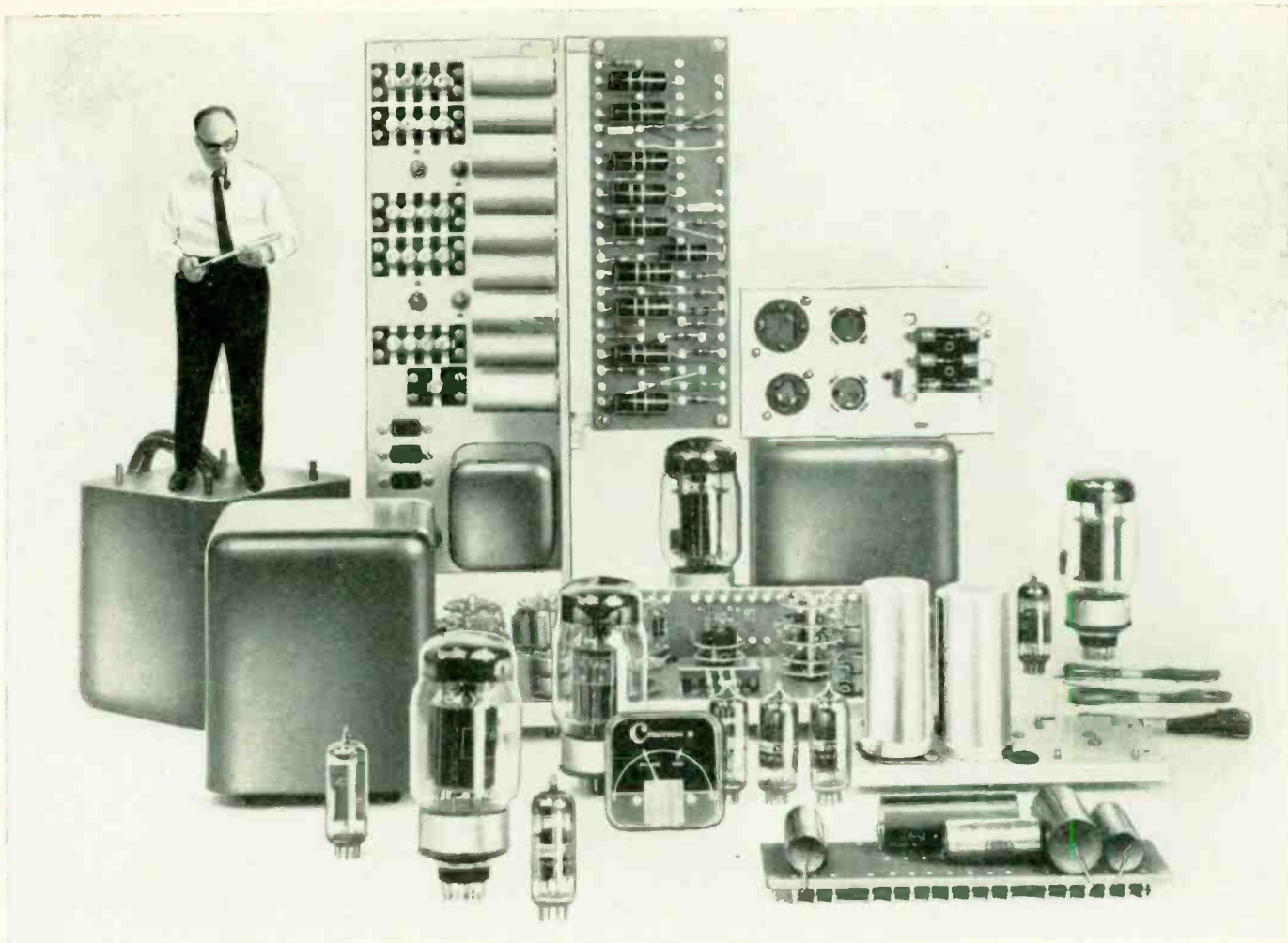
The recordings by The Marlowe Society of Cambridge University need a note of explanation. The society is an undergraduate body devoted primarily to producing Shakespearian plays. But while in these recordings three quarters of the parts are taken by undergraduates, the remainder are said to be filled by alumni who are now professional actors.

As a result, the four plays reviewed here are performed with professional competence, and remarkable consistency of style. They may not touch the brilliance of the Gielgud recording, nor the heights of the Old Vic recordings, nor of Olivier's *Hamlet*; but there is none of the exaggeration and idiosyncrasy of speech, the caterwauling and braying, the strutting and bellowing that so often in mediocre stage productions are used to mask the absence of technique.

George Rylands, though not a professional director, has been employed as such in the past, notably for Sir John Gielgud's London production of *Hamlet* in 1944. Rylands is a Cambridge don, a Shakespeare expert. He is concerned primarily with diction and interpretation rather than with overt dramatics, and this emphasis is apparent in these recordings. He stirred up considerable controversy in British Equity when the discs were first released in England, by stating that they were superior to any professional productions. This reviewer must side with the professionals, but it must be admitted that on the whole these performances are most effective. Their consistent clarity gives full emphasis to the text, allowing the momentum of the drama to build at its own pace. This is most effective in *Othello*, wherein the cumulative drama of the action becomes almost unbearably exciting. It is least effective in *King Richard II*, in which the plot development is less complex, and which depends so much upon its lyric poetry. One longs, for example, to hear Gielgud delivering John of Gaunt's famous speech, "This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle . . ." rather than the fairly conventional reading in this recording. These, however, are minor reservations.

LEWIS M. ALLEN

Reviews continued on page 121



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EDUARD VAN BEINUM

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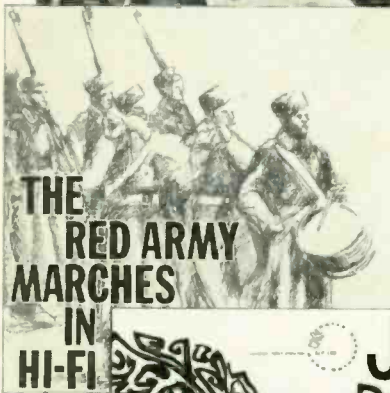
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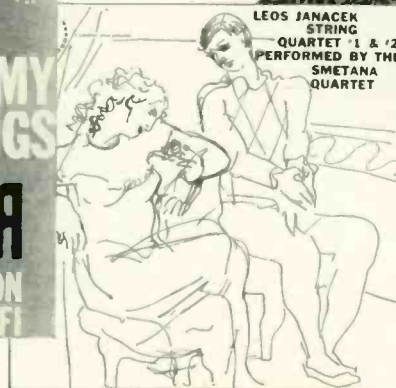
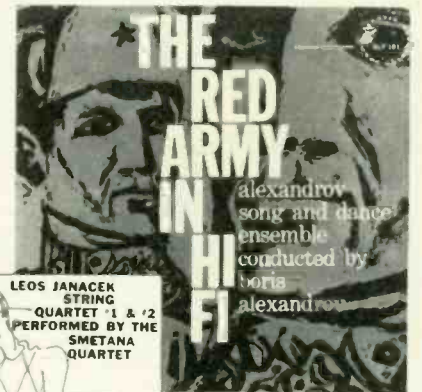
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Records for the Younger Set



It's Christmas shopping time again," Papa announced to the assembled small fry one chill Saturday morning. "Bundle up and we'll see what we can find at the music store." What they found was a treasure trove of records made just especially for the lollypop and post-lollypop group.

Among a good many fine releases, the two outstanding issues of the year are probably *Music for Children* by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman (Angel 3582 B) and a remake by Vox of their Music Masters Series. The former, providing songs, speaking choruses, rhythm exercises, and instrumental pieces in which its audience actually participates, was reviewed at length in HIGH FIDELITY's June issue, where Carl Michael Steinberg found it of "overwhelming importance" in giving children a real understanding of music. The Vox series, first brought out at 78 rpm, is a set of records introducing children to the lives and music of great composers. Each record is devoted to one or two men. Excerpts from the composer's works (very well played) alternate with spoken commentary telling the story of his life. The narration, by Arthur Hanes, is simple and straightforward. The music is carefully chosen with young listeners in mind—melodious and lively sections of a symphony or sonata rather than slower, more contemplative ones. And when, in the Mozart disc (MM 3510), for instance, the text calls for the composer, at age six or seven, to play for his father, the piano playing does sound as if a young but gifted child were performing. And for those interested in historical background the back cover of each jacket lists salient dates in the composer's life along with important public events and contemporary happenings in the world of music and letters. Fifteen of these records have been issued; and though they are primarily intended for pre-teens, they are in fact a charming way to introduce anybody of any age to the classics.

The above releases and those I will discuss below are, of course, LPs, but children's records continue to be made in three speeds. I myself staunchly maintain that for a child up to, say, seven years, 78-rpm is an ideal length. In this category, for example, the Children's Record Guild and Young People's Records still issue their "Almanac" series (historical facts interspersed with old songs), which are both informative and musical. Not every month is equally good, but try May (YPR 419A), or January (CRG 430), or—it's an appropriate

time—December (CRG 424).

For those with longer listening ears there is a bigger list to choose from. Enrichment Records (10-inch, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm) is still adding to its historical series—famous scenes in history acted out with songs of the era. It is impossible to list them all here, but I suggest that you write for their catalogue (246 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N. Y.). In the meantime several other labels have 12-inch, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm records worth spinning. Any of the following would make welcome gifts, especially on un-birthdays. Speaking of the latter there are two good versions of *Alice in Wonderland* out this year, and here's a case of "you pays your money and takes your choice." The Caedmon version (TC 1097) has Stanley Holloway as narrator and Joan Greenwood as Alice. Though Miss Greenwood doesn't have a little-girl's voice, she does have a child's sense of wonder and fun. Mr. Holloway and the supporting cast are excellent. The second Caedmon record (TC 1098) takes Alice through the Looking Glass. London's version (OSA 1206), a stereo album, devotes two records to *Alice in Wonderland* alone, which means that each episode is almost uncut. I prefer Stanley Holloway's reading, but the London Alice sounds more like a little girl.

For contrast to Lewis Carroll's world there is a sort of junior "Sing Along with Mitch" record issued by Kapp (KL 1146, LP and KS 3029, SD) called *C'mon You Campers*: all the familiar songs—*Alouette*, *John Peel*, *I'm Looking Over a Four-leaf Clover* (yes, it runs the gamut)—are here. The songs are sung by children and adults, and you'll want to join in too. An odd disc that appeared this year has Jean Ritchie and the Manhattan Recorder Consort in an unusual and interesting program. Titled *A Day in the Park* (Classic Editions CE 1043), Side 1 includes music by William Byrd and Giles Farnaby, along with some German dances, all played by recorders only; Side 2 contains American folk songs sung in Miss Ritchie's clear, untrained voice. This record was especially produced for children, but it very well may not be for the average child.

RCA Victor has a whole roster of children's records, varying considerably in quality. Our Wild West is represented in an LP of themes from the current TV shows. They are good tunes, well played (LBY 1027). Tales from the *Arabian Nights* (LBY 1028), with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* music, are well told with nice speaking voices throughout (very important, I think). For Bible stories there are *Tales from the Great Book*,

Vol. 2 (LBY 1029): the story of Joseph, read by Brian Aherne, and the story of Abraham read by Ronald Reagan. Both are straightforward narrations, but I could do without the electric organ in the background. For more secular stories there is a record of Aesop's *Fables* (LBY 1019), told by the Hanky Panky players with accompanying sound effects. Except that some of the voices are harsh and poorly pitched, this record has charm.

This year RCA seems to have added something new—a sort of "music minus one" for young actors. *The Bluebird Home Playhouse* (LBY 1026) relates the story of Cinderella and Pinocchio. The story is acted out three times: the first time all the parts are taken by the RCA company; the next time the part of Cinderella is left out and the listener fills in, reading from a script enclosed with the record; the third time around two parts are left for listeners to read. I found it quite amusing to try to act out the missing roles. Face it: for \$1.98 it's worth the fun.

Other labels offer stories and songs of the frontiers—*Cowboy Songs for Little Buckeroos* (don't let the title discourage you), Top L 1658, and *Songs and Stories of the Wild West*, Lion 70103.

For the three-to-eight group Weston Woods Studios has issued several records, among them PBP 101, which tells the stories of "Millions of Cats," "Heracles," etc. against a background of exceptionally effective and interesting music.

On the premise, I suppose, that one cannot introduce a child to the sound of a foreign language too young, Capitol has recorded an hour of Spanish children's tales in story and song. Both singers have very adequate voices, and the familiar Latin rhythms here have the ring of authenticity (Capitol T 10200).

And that seems to be about the crop that Papa selected at the local diskery. But just as he was about to leave, wishing that he had just one extra specially good record for Christmas, his eye fell on *The Ugly Duckling and Other Tales* read by his favorite narrator, Boris Karloff (Caedmon TC 1109). Since there seemed to be no very Christmasy record among this year's harvest, he planned to play Bing Crosby's *An Axe, an Apple, and a Buckskin* (Golden Masterpiece Recordings A29821) on the Great Day again this year and save the Ugly Duckling to spark up December 26, when everyone would be sitting around like wilted balloons.

MIRIAM D. MANNING

Reviews continued on page 125

who am I?

My birthday is January 1st. I'll be thirty-five. I'm married, have two terrific youngsters. I own a lovely home, but then I can afford it. My legal practice is going swell. I'm earning well over \$10,000 a year. Come on, now. You know me. **Who am I?** Okay, here are a few hotter clues . . . I'm loaded. I'm really a millionaire. Why, next year I'm going to spend \$40,000,000 for just the things I love best. No, not mink coats and diamond rings and things and things. But for component high fidelity equipment, and records, records, records! I'm a *musical* millionaire, you see. Gad! That's a sure give-away. **Who am I?**



One more clue. Just one more, no fooling . . .
I am a man of considerable influence
in my community. Ha! How influential? During
the past 12 months I'll bet I have
fervently recommended component high fidelity
to ten other people. What's more,
I happen to know that at least two of them
actually bought complete systems. In
fact, by rough but reasonable calculation . . .
I'd say that in the five years I've
been enamored of high fidelity, I've created
seven new and equally faithful fans.
That gives me away for sure. **Who am I?**
Shame! Here's your very last chance . . .
My favorite magazine is **HIGH FIDELITY**.

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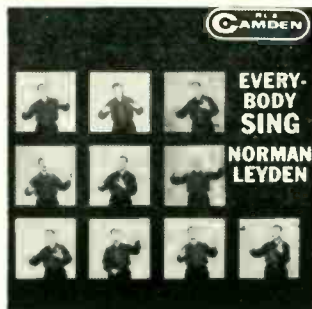
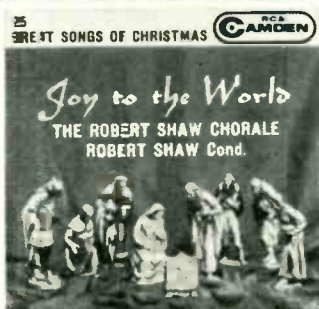
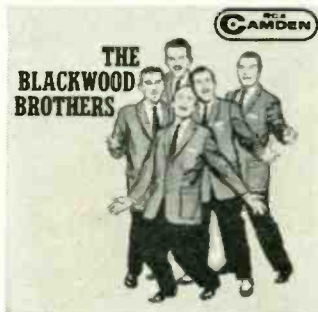
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Here at Home

✓ "Gold on Silk." Ray Wright Orchestra. Everest LPBR 5048, \$4.98 (LP); Everest SDBR 1048, \$5.98 (SD).

This is a difficult record to classify, but one simple to describe. Fabulous is the word for it. Already it's been placed on my turntable at least half a dozen times, and undoubtedly will be played many times more. Each hearing has revealed further enchantments. Over the skillful arrangements for the string section, some of the finest brass instrumentalists play solos that are little short of magical. From the soaring line of Doc Severinsen's trumpet in *Lonesome Horn* and the glowing warmth of the French horn in Jim Chambers' version of *My Man's Gone Now* to the purity of Will Bradley's trombone sound in *Why Was I Born* and the mellowness Don Butterfield extracts from his tuba in *Yesterdays*, everything is perfect. Add the impeccable Everest sound, particularly in the stereo version, and you'll have some idea of why I call this disc inspired. Mood music? Well, perhaps, but actually more than that . . . a great deal more.

"The Fabulous Eartha Kitt." Eartha Kitt; Orchestra, Maurice Levine, cond. Kapp KL 1162, \$3.98 (LP); Kapp KS 3046, \$4.98 (SD).

Not since the day when Eartha Kitt first burst into prominence in *New Faces of 1952* has she sounded as sultry and exciting as she does here. In spite of its pronounced vibrato, her voice has a certain fascinating color and almost as interesting is her style, which seems now to be a knowing mixture of Edith Piaf's earthiness and Lena Horne's sophistication. In *Love Is a Gamble*, I even detect traces of Ella Logan, surely an unlikely artist to influence this singer. But Miss Kitt's feline personality is uniquely her own, and it's particularly well suited to nearly all the songs in this program. These range pretty far afield, from Israeli to South American, from Kurt Weill's *Mack, the Knife* to a very effective version of *Lamplight*. The only miss, or near-miss, is a blues number, which is lacking in real understanding. The sound on the LP is good, but the stereo version is much superior.

"Sing Around the Bandstand." Marty Ames Orchestra and Chorus. Dot DLP 3203, \$3.98 (LP).

This is a far livelier sing-along recording than most of those to which I have listened, especially in that it avoids the standard *Sweet Adelaine-When You Wore a Tulip-Let the Rest of the World Go By* repertoire, and offers you an opportunity to exercise your vocal chords on songs from Broadway shows, movies, and Tin Pan Alley. Here is your chance to be another Harry Richman in *Puttin' on the Ritz*, an Astaire in *Cheek to Cheek*, an Eddie Cantor in *Makin' Whoopee*, or a Ruth Etting in *Love Me or Leave Me*. With the Marty Ames Orchestra and Chorus providing you with strong support, you can have yourself a thoroughly enjoyable time.

"At the Drop of a Hat." Michael Flanders and Donald Swann. Angel 35797, \$4.98 (LP).

For the American production of their urbane and witty revue *At the Drop of a Hat*, the two-man team of Michael Flanders and Donald Swann have wisely retained most of the material that convulsed London audiences for 759 performances. The French and Greek songs that Donald Swann sang on Angel 65042 have been dropped, along with the hilarious finale based on the Lord Chamberlain's London theatre regulations. Presumably the humors of that number

were considered too local in character for Broadway audiences. I'm sorry it's gone, for it made a rousing finish to a delightful record. On the whole, however, the changes seem to me to strengthen the listening appeal of this entertaining farago. To replace some of the casualties, there is a duet extolling the virtues (personal, national, and international) of the bath, Flanders' anguished tale of the trials of an umpire at Wimbledon, and a wacky hymn of praise to "The Wom Pom," an "animal-machine" capable of producing almost anything for the comfort of the human race, from clothing material to liquor. All three are delightful.

Quite as amusing as the songs are Flanders' introductory remarks to each number. These little gems of timing and inflection have been suitably changed for American audiences. The rapport between the artists is as strong as ever, even though Swann has now become the convenient butt of some of Flanders' jests. According to Flanders, the record was made "For Posterity," which may possibly account for a performance that strikes me as lacking the subtlety of the earlier disc. I have not heard the stereo version, but the monophonic is not one of Angel's happiest efforts. The sound lacks clarity, suffers from occasional fading, and is diffuse.

"With These Hands." Roger Williams, piano; Orchestras, Marty Gold, Frank Hunter, Gene Von Hallberg, conds. Kapp KL 1147, \$3.98 (LP); Kapp KS 3030, \$4.98 (SD).

Now that Roger Williams has practically exhausted the repertoire of songs from the Fabulous 40s, 50s, and the Century, he has returned to the type of music better suited to display his considerable talents. These graceful, even distinguished performances of a dozen concertolike arrangements of light music are highly welcome. I particularly enjoyed *O Mio Babino Caro* (Puccini), *Strange Music* (Grieg), and the two delightful Leroy Anderson pieces, *The Syncopated Clock* and *Forgotten Dreams*. But the whole program is pleasurable, not only for Williams' pianism, but also for the excellent orchestral arrangements that support it. Both versions offer excellent sound, in which the piano tone is unusually lifelike. I myself prefer the stereo version, even though my review copy suffered from a high level of tape hiss.



Eartha Kitt: fabulous and feline.



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The "Do It Yourself" Psychoanalysis Kit. Del Close. Hanover M 5002, \$4.98 (LP).

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"Sixty Years of 'Music America Loves Best.'" RCA Victor LM 6074, \$3.98 (Two LP).

At the low price of \$3.98 (for a limited time only) this two-record album of thirty performances by top RCA Victor artists is likely to be one of the most commercially successful sets ever issued. The recordings have obviously been chosen on the strength of their past sales figures. Each, in its original 78-rpm format, sold over a million copies, and one hardly needs to be a wizard at mathematics to compute what they would have cost a buyer, when originally issued at prices ranging from 89¢ to \$2.00 a copy.

Although the intermingling of classical and popular music seems to me regrettable, there are enough good performances in both categories to make this a very attractive release. Perhaps the classical music enthusiast is the more fortunate, since he is offered recordings long absent from the catalogue, by Caruso, Rachmaninoff, Paderewski, Heifetz, Kreisler, Stokowski, and Toscanini. For me, the gem of the entire album is Horowitz's fantastic performance of his *Variations on Themes from "Carmen,"* which in itself is well worth the current price of the entire album. Since there is often nothing deadlier than yesterday's pop hit, that field comes off less well. Historically interesting to some listeners will be the Goodman, Dorsey (with Sinatra), Ellington, and Shaw sides, but the balance are strictly space fillers. The sound, in view of the respective age of each recording, is surprisingly good. Oddly enough, the Whiteman of 1920 sounds more ancient than the Caruso of 1904, although obviously the latter has been heavily doctored. Ellington's *Take the "A" Train* appears to have been made from a master that has sadly deteriorated, but the remainder are all sonically acceptable or better.

"The Billy Barnes Revue." Decca DL 9076, \$4.98 (LP).

This is a bright, fast-moving, intimate revue that has been running off, as well as on, Broadway for the last five months. It seems to be patterned along the lines of Leonard Sillman's *New Faces* revues, though it lacks the wit, the professional dazzle of the most successful of

that series, *New Faces of 1952*. Every member of the talented cast appears to be having such a wonderful time that I can't help thinking there may be a good deal more to the show than what one hears on the record. If the lyrics and the music are not exactly memorable, neither can they be called banal. The Beatniks come in for an almost inevitable roasting in *Listen to the Beat*, and *Where Are Your Children* effectively takes care of the juvenile delinquency problem. In *The Fights* there is a gentle poke at the family problems television raises in the average household, and, rather unexpectedly in a revue that originated on the West Coast, Los Angeles is gently deflated in the amusing *City of the Angels*. If the distaff side of the cast seems to be more successful than the male, I think this is mainly because it has been handed the best material. The musical support from two pianos sounds a little undernourished, and I am sure that this would all have sounded more professional with orchestral backing. But budgets are budgets, and I assume this one was extremely limited.

"Dancing at the Grosvenor House." Vols. 2, 3, and 4. Sydney Lipton and His Orchestra. London PS 160/162, \$4.98 each (Three SD).

These three records played by one of London's top society orchestras suggest the atmosphere of a dinner dance at London's Grosvenor House most realistically. Against a background of subdued conversation and the clatter of crockery, cutlery, and tinkling glass, the Sydney Lipton orchestra plays six sides of continuous dance music, which for the most part looks back to the great songs of the Thirties. To judge from the suitably discreet sound, this is not a very large orchestra, nor is it one given to strong or frantic rhythm. Compared to similar groups in this country, it sounds unusually relaxed. This quality is most pronounced in the few waltzes included, in which the treatment, solo violin against muted orchestra, is sleepy and downright old-fashioned. The fox trots have a nice, easy, comfortable rhythm, and most dancers will find them hard to resist. Under hardly ideal conditions, London engineers have captured very good stereo sound.

"The Lawrence Welk Glee Club." Pete Lance, cond. Dot DLP 25218, \$4.98 (SD).

Since members of the Lawrence Welk Glee Club must also double as musicians in the Welk orchestra, the generally indifferent quality of the singing here is understandable. Had the group more time for rehearsals, doubtless the slipshod attacks and lack of vocal nuance would be rectified, and some rather unusual ideas about rhythm be set right. As for the program itself, it is a curious mixture of selections, chosen apparently because certain people like certain songs. Thus we get *Comin' Thru the Rye* because the president of Welk's TV sponsor, Dodge, is Scotch (*sic*), and *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair* simply because the

director's wife is named Jeannie. The most curious entrant in this hodgepodge is Franz Lehár's *Vilia*, originally written as a soprano solo and no more appropriate for a male chorus than the "Bell Song" from *Lakmé*. Welk admirers will doubtless find pleasure in this record, however, and Dot has invested it with fine stereo sound, admirable both in depth and direction.

"Smash Flops." The Characters. PIP Pip 1900, \$3.98 (LP).

How funny you will find these "Smash Flops"—songs of what might have been—will depend entirely on your personal sense of humor. Most of them have a touch of the macabre; they are decidedly not for the squeamish. If you can stand the most outrageous of them, *When the Hindenburg Lands Today* ("There'll be a hot, hot time in Lakelhurst, New Jersey") or *Bon Voyage, Titanic* ("I'm so lucky to be sailing with you"), you'll probably be able to take the rest. They are served up in barroom quartet style, with an appropriate tinny piano accompaniment. The sound is fair.

"Teddy Tyle Styles Glenn Miller Favorites." Teddy Tyle Orchestra. Golden Crest CR 3059, \$3.98 (LP).

Miller fans will probably raise an eyebrow when they discover that Tyle has taken a dozen of the Maestro's old favorites and replaced the swing with rock and roll. These pieces are strong enough to withstand the onslaught, but they're hardly improved by it. The younger set will likely find this record attractive; those with longer memories will undoubtedly unearth the old Miller recordings, to remind themselves how these fine tunes should sound.

"Song of Norway." Brenda Lewis, John Reardon, Sig Arno, Helena Scott, William Olvis; Orchestra, Lehman Engel, cond. Columbia CL 1328, \$3.98 (LP). Fifteen years old and still going strong, *Song of Norway* was the last successful New York operetta in the romantic tradition of *Blossom Time* and *The Student Prince*. A musical dramatization of incidents in the life of Edvard Grieg, it is plagued by an absurd libretto, but blessed with a superb score, compounded of snippets of Grieg's always charming music. The original cast recording (Decca DL 9019), issued in 1945, offered some unusually attractive vocal performances in sound that is now, unfortunately, badly dated. Even so, I am not certain that it is superseded by this new version. Naturally the Columbia sound is infinitely superior, but the rough and ready performance by the cast of the production at the Jones Beach Marine Theatre is no match, vocally, for its predecessor. The singing may be loud, but it is not always good, and it invariably lacks subtlety and charm. Perhaps the performers all feel that the competition from fishing fleets, icebergs, and waterfalls—scenic effects of the current presentation—can only be surmounted by this broad approach.

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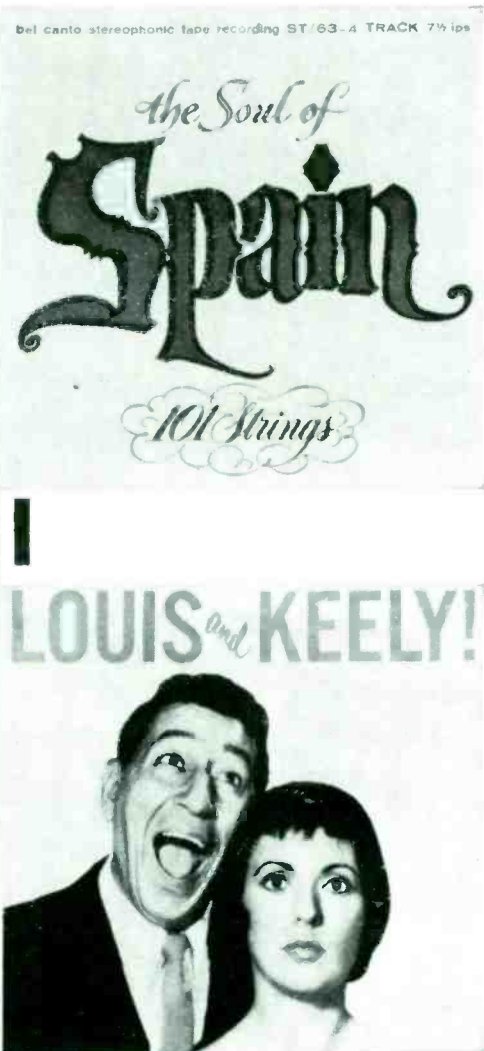
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Foreign Flavor

"Piano Pasha." Erdogan Capli, piano. Dot DLP 3215, \$3.98 (LP).

The Turkish Information Office in the United States thought so well of Capli's interpretations of indigenous Turkish melodies that it sent to its mailing list an outsize four-color view of Istanbul with one band of "Piano Pasha" pressed thereon. Pleasant though this combination may be, its fidelity poses no threat to the velvet surfaces and superclear sound of Dot's original. Capli plays with the supple assurance of a top artist, and he has beautified the melodies—all of them strikingly attractive in their own right—with his imaginative arrangements. Different, arresting, brilliant. Don't miss it.

"Moonlight in Mayo." Bridie Gallagher; Orchestra, Stan Butcher, cond. London PS 163, \$4.98 (SD).

Young Bridie Gallagher has attained a solid popularity with record buyers in the British Isles. In this, her American bow, she shows why. Her voice is sweet, with a distinctive nasal quality, and she approaches her songs—all folk-derived but presented with a dance-band sheen—with a relaxed surety that relaxes the listener as well. An attractive offering, with London's usual superior stereo sound.

"Chansons Populaires de France." Yves Montand; Bob Castella and His Rhythms. Odéon OSX 110, \$5.95 (LP).

Dix Chansons pour L'Eté." Yves Montand; Bob Castella and His Rhythms. Odéon OSX 136, \$5.95 (LP).

Yves Montand, as New York audiences have recently discovered, is almost quintessentially French. His individual talents—none particularly unique—form a whole much greater than the sum of its parts. An artist of deep proletarian sympathies, Montand is effectively at home with *Chansons Populaires de France*. All but four of these well-recorded selections are folk songs, and some date from before the Revolution of 1789. Virility and tenderness, patriotism and rebellion play like light and shadow here, and Montand's baritone reflects every facet. These are complex songs replete with obscure allusions, however, and the album contains not one word of annotation.

In "Ten Songs for Summer," Montand transforms himself into the cabaret entertainer par excellence—polished, nonchalant, with the characteristic wry, self-effacing manner that can become almost a vocal shrug. The songs, all current French favorites, are thoroughly enjoyable, the sound is full and clear, and Montand is marvelous.

"Pinchik, Cantor of Eminence." Pierre Pinchik. Eminent HIC 101, \$5.95 (LP).

Inspired engineering has given new sonic life to the thirty-year-old 78-rpm records here served up in LP format. The ritual songs are emotionally profound and, while the style of the former Cantor of Leningrad is more florid than that of other great

cantors, his voice is ineffably sweet, conveying an underlying ardor that approaches ecstasy. There is, perhaps, an excess of vibrato; but Pinchik's brilliant entrance in *Mah Nomar* and his lyrical *Rozo D'Shabbos*—sung, incidentally, in Aramaic, the everyday language of Palestine at the dawn of the Christian era—redeem any minor blemishes.

"Chants d'Israel." Emile Kaçmann; Berthe Kal; Chorus and Instrumental Ensemble, Léon Algazi, cond. Pathé DTX 291, \$5.95 (LP).

This anthology, "dedicated to the State of Israel on the occasion of its tenth anniversary," is, by a wide margin, the finest disc of Israeli music I have yet heard. The program includes sacred chants, wordless Hassidic songs, folk tunes, Biblical lyrics, two surpassingly lovely Sephardic airs, and a stirring choral treatment of the national anthem *Hatikva*. The breadth of the material, the beauty of its rendition, and the sure controlling hand of director Léon Algazi, a noted Israeli musicologist, shape a stunning album that is stunningly recorded. The copious annotation (also by Algazi) and translations from the Hebrew, Yiddish, and Spanish—all contained in an accompanying booklet—are in French.

"Erich Kunz Sings German University Songs, Volume 4." Erich Kunz; Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Anton Paulik, cond. Vanguard VRS 1045, \$4.98 (LP); VSD 2040, \$5.95 (SD).

There is little left to say concerning the art of Erich Kunz in the field of German folk song. In this, his fourth such album for Vanguard, he displays again the robust baritone and sensitive interpretative faculties that have always illuminated his work. As might be expected at this point, Kunz wanders far from academic halls to seek out fresh songs. He succeeds splendidly: *Die Moorsoldaten*, *Ich hatt' einen Kameraden*, and *Die Gedanken sind frei* have immediate appeal. Fine, bright mono sound, but the stereo edition—crisply separated—quite literally adds a third dimension to the choral backgrounds.

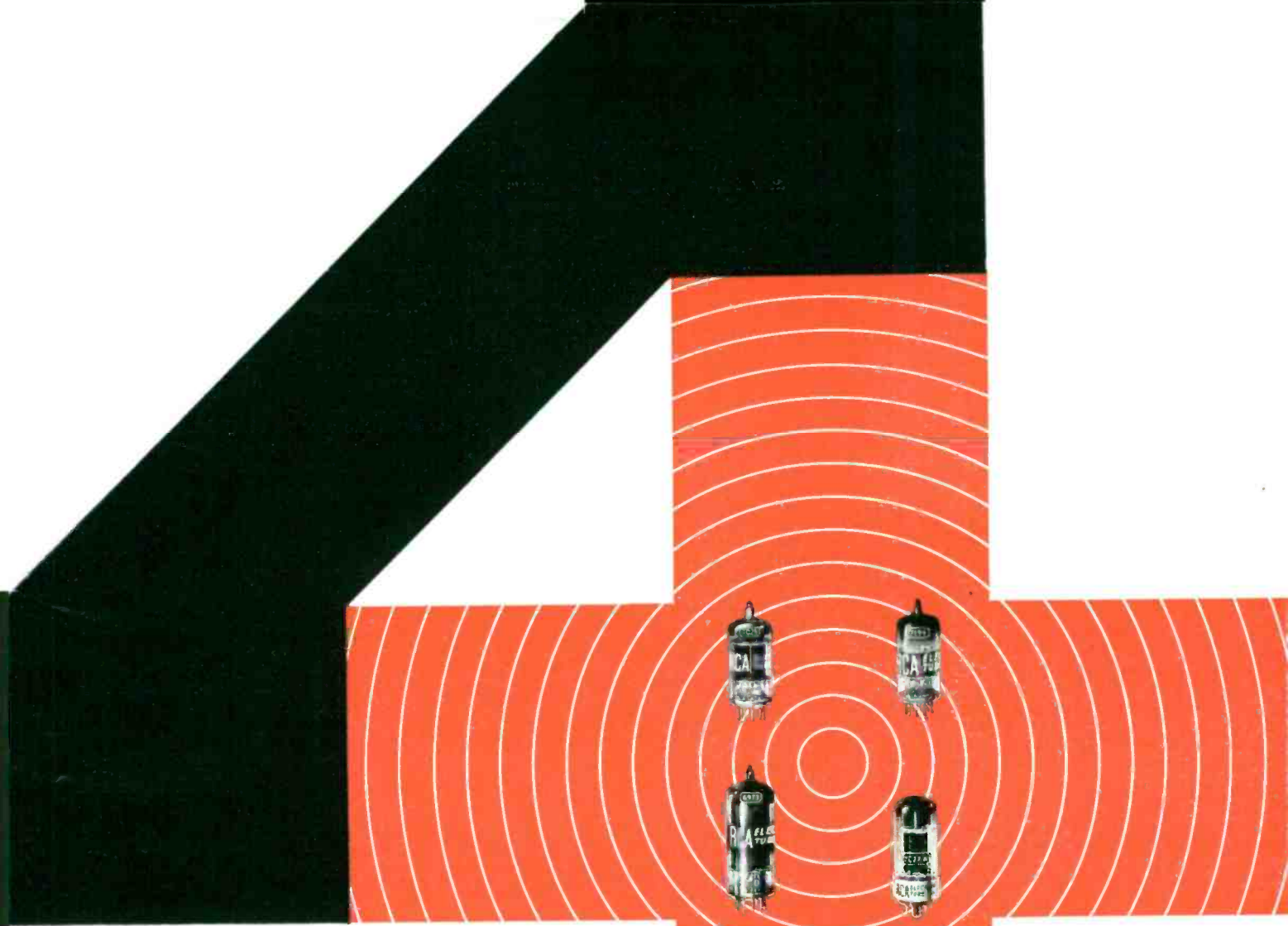
"Bavarian Polka Party." Theo Ferstl and His Orchestra. Epic LN 3618, \$3.98 (LP); BN 548, \$5.98 (SD).

Rustic exuberance informs every measure of this charming release, but Theo Ferstl and his tootlers never allow the proceedings to degenerate into rhythmic frenzy. The Ferstl treatment is rather in the vein of a Sunday afternoon outing where solid *Herren* and *Frauen*—comfortably stuffed with sausage and beer—stomp out a polka more for relaxation than exercise. It's fun to hear and even more fun to dance to. The stereo version, with its dazzling depth, separation, and clarity, carries the sonic day.

"The Favorite of Warsaw." Mieczyslaw Fogg; Orchestra. Bruno BR 50083/84, \$3.98 each (Two LP).

Continued on page 130

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DECCA Gold Label **RECORDS**

According to a correspondent who accompanied Vice-President Nixon on his summer Iron Curtain tour, proceeding from Moscow to Warsaw was "like passing from shadow into sunshine." One shares this impression after contrasting Bruno's two volumes of Polish pops with other fare from beyond the Elbe. Fogg, a mellow baritone, strays far—and fearlessly—from songs of field and factory. Fox trots and tangos are his musical stock in trade, and he even throws in a few delightful decadences such as *Arrivederci Roma*, *Fascination*, and *Around the World in 80 Days*. Bruno's sound falters occasionally, but the general level is acceptable.

"Fiji (Isa Lei)." Adi Cakobau Girls' School Choir; Via Ni Tebara Choir; Alf Bentley and His Islanders; Seni Devuga Damu (The Red Ginger Boys). Capitol T 10216, \$3.98 (LP).

Actually recorded in the Fiji Islands, this release comprises a group of authentic Fijian songs in somewhat Europeanized vocal and instrumental frames. All the artists are islanders, but all have been brushed—and well brushed—by Western ways. Of the songs, several—such as *Sere Ni Manu Manu* and *Bu! Bu!*—are genuinely amusing, and several more—notably the haunting *Isa Lei*—are quite moving. The recorded sound varies in quality from band to band, but is never less than satisfactory. Capitol provides summaries of each selection.

"La Voce D'Italia." Giuseppe di Stefano; Orchestra, Dino Olivieri, cond. London OS 25065, \$5.98 (SD).

Di Stefano has the good sense to meet these popular songs on their own terms. He makes no attempt to transform them into Puccini arias nor does he patronize their innate simplicity. The result is a vocally opulent, emotionally ingratiating recital of Italian favorites such as *Parlami d'amore Mariu* ("Tell Me That You Love Me Tonight") and *Firenze Sogna* ("Florence Dreams"). London's engineers place Di Stefano smack between the speakers and afford Olivieri's orchestral accompaniment reasonable separation if no great depth.

"Bravo Bikel." Theodore Bikel. Elektra 175, \$4.98 (LP).

This is Bikel's eighth disc for Elektra; and while it is the most lavish in format, it is also the least well recorded. (Perhaps this is to be expected, since the singer was taped in the course of two actual Carnegie Hall concerts.) But even though Bikel has been miked distantly and sounds as though he were singing through gauze, his overwhelming personality shines through and his multilingual songs are as electrifying as ever. Complete texts and translations are included.

"The Girl from Paris." Cécile Devile; Orchestra, Russ Morgan, cond. Everest LPBR 5043, \$3.98 (LP); SDBR 1043, \$4.98 (SD).

Mlle. Devile, possessed of a warm, clear soprano and a delicious accent, shows tremendous promise—as well as a degree

of fulfillment—in her Everest debut. At twenty-five, however, she has not quite developed a firm style of her own: her interpretations too often and too obviously derive from those of other French vocalists. But when she gives a Gallic twist—both linguistic and interpretative—to *The Lady Is a Tramp* and *My Heart Belongs to Daddy* she is an unmitigated delight. The stereo edition lacks the sharp focus and general brightness of the mono entry.

"Music from the Welsh Mines." Rhos Male Voice Choir. Washington WR 416, \$4.98 (LP).

Given the renown of Welsh choral singing, it is odd that up to now no Welsh choruses have been represented in the Schwann catalogue. Washington Records has corrected the deficiency with *Music from the Welsh Mines*, originally taped in London by the British label Delysé. The Rhos Male Voice Choir is a splendidly disciplined, musically aware group that—to my ear—is at its best with traditional songs like *Hiraeth* and *Ad Doriad Dydd*. Delysé's recording, however, besides being cursed with an omnipresent tape hiss, is so turgid as to rob the choral sound of virtually all texture.

"Chinese Classical Masterpieces." Lui Tsun-Yuen, pipa and chin. Lyricord LL 82, \$4.98 (LP).

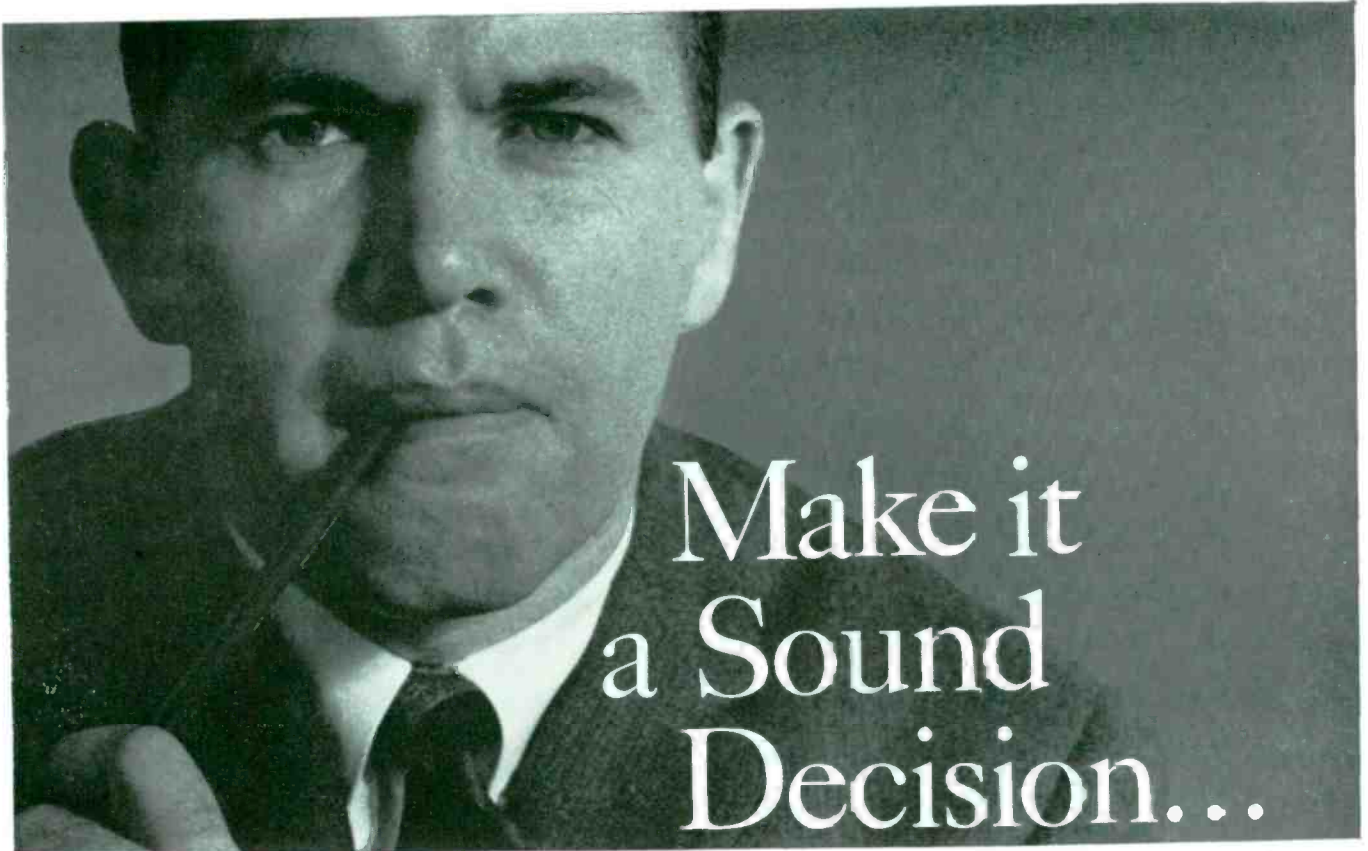
It would be idle to pretend that these Chinese classics, played on the stringed *pipa* and *chin* by Lui Tsun-Yuen, weave an immediate spell. To the average Western ear they are harsh, dissonant, bereft of melody. It is only after exposure to the idiom that one perceives its beauties—in their way as delicate and understated as a Sung Dynasty painting. Lui plays with a lyric command of his instruments, all the while firmly controlling the much-nuanced material. While *Moonlight Over the Spring River*, *Plum Blossoms*, and *The Lament of Empress Chen* are extremely appealing, I found Lui's own *Chinese Soldiers' March* the most striking item on the disc. A superlative recording for anyone willing to give it time and attention, and the sound is crystalline.

"William Holden Presents a Musical Touch of Far Away Places." Warren Barker and His Orchestra. Warner Bros. WS 1308, \$4.98 (SD).

The brothers Warner have pressed one of their Hollywood properties into musical—or antimusical, depending upon your point of view—action for this abyssmal release. Bill Holden not only grins toothily from the cover, but also serves as a genial guide (by way of what seem to be obviously ghosted notes) to the contents. These consist of orchestral vignettes of Far Eastern locales that slop over with every cheap cliché and tired gimmick in existence. A plethora of gongs, disembodied female voices mouthing syllables rather than words, tinkling bells, etc. make this about as authentic—and palatable—as chop suey with *kreplach*.

O. B. BRUMMELL

Reviews continued on page 132



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"White Goddess." Frank Hunter and His Orchestra. Kapp KL 1136, \$3.98 (LP); KS 3019, \$4.98 (SD).

My preliminary groans at the prospect of listening to another example of so-called exotica were immediately silenced when Hunter proved himself to be the most imaginative and tasteful arranger-conductor who has yet explored this recently popular genre. He too employs wordless voices and such off-beat timbres as those of the Ondioline, Bazimba, alto flute, Chinese Bell Tree, and the like—but always with a sure sense of their coloristic and atmospheric point. Furthermore, he brings an individual and often surprisingly poetic touch, together with unflagging rhythmic lilt, to his performances. The pure and bright recording is excellent in monophony, yet stereo reveals not only the expected expansiveness but an even wider dynamic range and many delicious cross-channel antiphonies, which make this an uncommonly effective stereo demonstrator as well as the most musically attractive demonstration of "exotic" sonic potentialities to date.

Strauss Waltzes. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Keilberth, cond. Telefunken TC 8018, \$1.98 (LP); TCS 18018, \$2.98 (SD).

This bargain-price Telefunken program offers performances romantic yet unsentimentalized, distinguished by irresistible gusto and rhythmic animation, by beautifully nuanced phrasing and coloration. The lower-level monophonic recording is rather thin, but the stereo version is more expansive, smoothly spread, and sonically attractive than any other release in this series I have yet heard. At any price it would be a desirable acquisition; at \$2.98 it is not to be missed.

"Rhapsody Under the Stars." Leonard Pennario, piano; Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Miklós Rózsa, cond. Capitol P 8494, \$4.98 (LP); SP 8494, \$5.98 (SD).

Purists can only be shocked by the Hollywoodian notion of inflating into "concertos" not only Sinding's *Rustle of Spring* and Liszt's Second *Hungarian Rhapsody* but such works as the first movement of Mozart's K. 545, and the Adagio of Beethoven's *Pathétique* Sonata. But add a completely straight, if richly romantic, performance of the 18th Variation from Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, Williams' *Dream of Olwen*, and Rózsa's own elaborate Concerto on themes from his score for *Spellbound*; play everything with Pennario's and Rózsa's assured skill; provide supremely natural, wide-range, and broad-spread recording—and there's a best seller in the making which well may seduce, if only by its sonic luxuriance, the most puritanical ears. The LP version is scarce-

ly less glowingly sonorous than the stereo disc, but the latter's radiant tonal qualities are quite incomparable.

"Age of the Tsars." Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Charles Mackerras, cond. Angel S 35752, \$5.98 (SD).

It's extremely interesting to compare the interpretative and engineering styles of this British "Proms" concert with those of a typical Russian program by, say, our own Arthur Fiedler or Carmen Dragon. Mackerras is considerably more relaxed; his men play with less precision and virtuosity, but also with more warmth and evident enjoyment of what they are doing. The recording too is less high-powered, less ultrabright, less obviously stereoistic than many American releases; yet the EMI coaxially mounted microphone technique provides an even more smoothly spread and auditorium-authentic curtain of orchestral sound. These British virtues, and Mackerras' own gracefully romantic touch, show up best in a seductive Tchaikovsky waltz sequence and in Glazunov's Concert Waltz No. 1 and the "Procession of the Sardar" from Ippolitov-Ivanov's *Caucasian Sketches*. The Glinka *Ruslan and Ludmilla* Overture is a bit too slapdash; Rimsky's *Dance of the Tumblers* and Glière's *Russian Sailors' Dance* lack dramatic weight and drive; yet even here the Britons' verve and gleaming tonal colorings are sheer delight to one's ears.

"The Harmonicats in the Land of Hi-Fi." Mercury SR 60028, \$4.98 (SD).

Starring Jerry Murad's solo chromatic harmonica, with Don Les's bass, double-bass, and single-reed bass, and Al Flore's chord-rhythm harmonicas (plus guitars, flute, reeds, and string bass), this novelty program strikes me as much more effective and sonically interesting than those of most harmonica-dominated ensembles I've heard. The characteristic slapping and buzzing qualities can become a bit tiresome; but the arrangements are ingeniously contrived to make the most of channel-antiphonal possibilities and the performances are distinctively appealing in the strongly stereoistic recording they are given here.

"Band and State Trumpeters of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues)." Captain J. E. Thirtle, cond. Washington WR 415, \$4.98 (LP).

Hailed as a recording masterpiece when first issued in England (under the Envoy label) a year and a half ago, this typical British band miscellany is impressive for its clarity and authenticity, but to my ears the sonics are often quite hard, sharp-edged, and dry—faults which probably are considerably mitigated in the stereo version, not yet released in this country. The ensemble seems somewhat small-sized for its more ambitious pieces; Thirtle's performances of some pieces are rather mannered; and his overfancy arrangements of the Schubert *Marche militaire* and a British tear-jerking finale combining *Abide with Me* and *The Last*

Post seem all the more naïve for their obvious earnestness. The conductor does best with the broad "Nimrod" section from Elgar's *Enigma* Variations, a piquant if sentimental Scottish medley, and a number of novelty pieces—including the Knipper-Charroisin *Cavalry of the Steppes*, in which the familiar Russian patrol is atmospherically augmented by the dubbed-in clatter of the Royal Horse Guards' own mounted squadron.

"Seated One Day at the Organ." Ethel Smith. Decca DL 8902, \$3.98 (LP); DL 78902, \$4.98 (SD).

Miss Smith, one of the most popular electronic organ virtuosos, either owns an uncommonly elaborate instrument or knows better than most players how to make the most of Hammond registration potentialities. Certainly she leaves no stops (organological or emotional) undrawn in this miscellany ranging from Addinsell's *Warsaw Concerto* and Lecuona's *Malagueña*, through heart-throbbing versions of *Liebestraum*, *Clair de lune*, Largo from the *New World Symphony*, Brahms and Iljinsky *Cradle Songs*, to such show-pieces as the *Flight of the Bumblebee* and *Ritual Fire Dance*—and even Bach's *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* and Fugue in G minor (the latter patterned more closely on Stokowski's transcription than on the *Gesellschaft* score).

The recording is excellent, both in LP and stereo, though the latter's advantages of greater expansiveness are somewhat counteracted by the many registration changes "jumping" themes from one markedly differentiated channel to the other. I daresay that there is a public which will avidly relish Miss Smith's "radiantly melodic interpretations of the masters" (as they are described on the disc jacket), and even to more sophisticated listeners her "real-sincere" schmaltz may not be lacking in a certain horrid fascination.

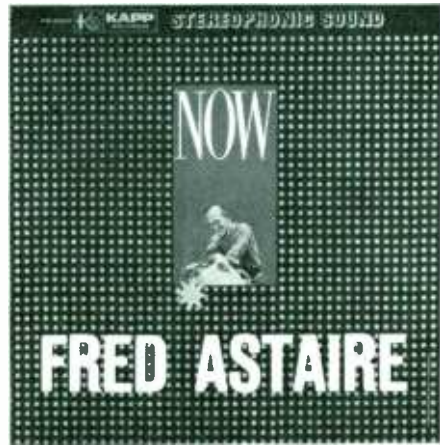
"March Time in Germany." Band of the Berlin Guard. Telefunken TP 2508, \$1.98 (LP).

The conductor is unnamed, the performances are by turns slam-bang and pedestrian, and the closely miked, brilliant but edgy high-level recording seems somewhat top-heavy. Nevertheless, the whole program is probably more typical of average German marching-band playing and materials than those of more famous organizations, especially in the rousing *Hoch- und Deutschmeister* and the jauntily zestful *Solinger Schützen-Marsch* and *Kärntner Liedermarsch*, with their bright glockenspiel parts glittering gaily above the relentlessly plugging drums and ompah tuba.

Strauss Concert. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Eduard Strauss, cond. Vox ST/VX 426030, \$4.98 (SD).

The primary interest of this program is that it is conducted by the Waltz King's grandson, further identified in the jacket's genealogical table as Johann I's great-grandson, Johann II's great nephew, and the nephew of the Johann III who made

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a number of Strauss waltz recordings in 78-rpm days. Apparently the blood has thinned out a bit in the course of the years, for the present Eduard (a comparative youngster, to judge from his photograph) seems extremely nervous and self-conscious throughout. He knows the traditions, obviously, and provides a good, if occasionally overstressed, rhythmic pulse; but he tends to italicize inner details—which are further spotlighted in well-spread, brilliantly clean, but somewhat harsh and too closely miked stereo recording.

“Opera Without Words.” Rome Symphony Orchestra, Domenico Savino, cond. *Rigoletto*: Kapp KCL 9032, \$3.98 (LP); KC 9032 S, \$4.98 (SD). *Carmen*: Kapp KCL 9035, \$3.98 (LP).

To judge by these two examples of the Savino series, which already runs to a dozen releases, Kostelanetz still has this field to himself—and even begins to seem admirable in comparison. The Rome Orchestra is notable only for the coarseness and nasality of its soloists’ tonal qualities and the extraordinary wiriness and lack of true sonority of its tutti. How much of this is the mannered and careless conductor’s responsibility and how much that of the harshly brilliant recording would be hard to determine, but curiously enough stereo (at least in the case of the *Rigoletto* SD) doesn’t seem to help matters at all. Indeed the excessive channel separation accentuates the sonic shrillness and acoustical dryness.

“The Enchanting Organ of Bob Kames.” King 630, \$3.98 (LP).

“Enchanting” is not *my* word for either the now-“popping,” now-piercing tonal qualities of Kames’s electronic instrument or his interpretative oscillations between extroverted briskness and throbbing schmaltz. And the high-level, open recording and excessively dry acoustics expose only too candidly both the unappealing sonics and performances.

“Overture!” and “Popular Overtures.” Virtuoso Symphony Orchestra of London, Arthur Winograd, cond. Audio Fidelity FCS 50011/12, \$6.95 each (Two SD).

Winograd and Audio Fidelity have given us so many musical delights and technical triumphs that this disc is particularly distressing. The conductor is perhaps only pedestrian in his “Popular Overtures” (by Reznicek, Thomas, Glinka, Smetana, Weber, and Rossini), but his weightier program (*The Marriage of Figaro*, *Egmont*, *La Forza del destino*, *Die Meistersinger*, and *Academic Festival* overtures) is intolerably laborious, inept, and deficient in elementary stylistic insight. And the recording of both discs, while not lacking in the expected ultrabright cymbal crashes and bass-drum thunders, can be reproduced only with a tonal shrillness and lack of choir or channel blend that surely cannot be ascribable to the British orchestra alone.

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JAZZ

The Australian Jazz Quintet: "Three Penny Opera." Bethlehem 6030, \$4.98 (LP).

Since the Australian Jazz Quintet has acquired the guidance of Teddy Charles's arrangements, it has made tremendous strides towards gaining a viable jazz feeling. And tunes from *The Three Penny Opera*, in Charles's hands, provided them with the best material they have yet recorded. Kurt Weill's sardonic music translates readily into highly rhythmic modern jazz. Its suitability is most evident in Dick Healey's alto saxophone, with a timbre that for reasons unclear to me is suggestive of the decadent "jazz" of Germany of the Twenties which had its effect on Weill. Most of these pieces are played with a light, leaping swing that complements the tunes admirably.

Count Basie, Billy Eckstine: "Basie/Eckstine, Inc." Roulette 52029, \$3.98 (LP); S 52029, \$4.98 (SD).

After more than a decade of going nowhere as a ballad singer, Eckstine returns to his musical origins, the blues (some, like *Stormy Monday Blues* and *Jelly Jelly*, going back to his days with Earl Hines's band), and he's accompanied by the best big-band backing any blues singer could ask for. He is, if anything, an even better blues singer than he used to be, having acquired polish without losing any of the depth of feeling that polish so often destroys. Even his familiar open-throated gargle on a couple of ballads is not as ridiculously wobbly as it once was. The set is climaxed by a brilliant collaboration between Eckstine and Basie's piano, *Piano Man*—not the old Earl Hines *Piano Man* but a slow, intense, moody blues, set in motion by the singer and carried out to perfection in Basie's solo.

Sidney Bechet: "The Sidney Bechet Story." Brunswick 54048, \$3.98 (LP). This disc contains two episodes in the Sidney Bechet story but it is scarcely the story, as the title suggests. Three selections are 1938 recordings made with members of Noble Sissle's band. The rest are products of his French residence during the 1950s, accompanied by the orchestras of Claude Luter and Andre Rewelioty. None of this is top-drawer Bechet; the accompaniments are pedestrian and the material played is generally uninspired. But Bechet is always himself no matter what's going on around him.

Ruby Braff Quintet: "Blowing Around the World." United Artists 3045, \$3.98 (LP); 6045, \$4.98 (SD).

It would be hard to think of a programming hook less imaginative than the selection of a group of tunes solely on the basis of geographical references in their titles. But Ruby Braff, Bob Brookmeyer (playing piano), Barry Galbraith, Joe Benjamin, and Buzzy Drootin make a delightful, unhackneyed disc of such

matter as *Loch Lomond*, *Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ra*, *South of the Border*, *Song of India*, etc. Braff and Brookmeyer make an excellent team. Both are warm-hearted, witty performers with a strong feeling for melody and rhythm and a very personal inventive bent. Brookmeyer's down-to-earth piano work is decorated with entertainingly sly, off-beat ideas (he roars into his solo on *Chinatown* like a hot Monk), and Braff's trumpet sings with gruff beauty no matter what country they throw him into. This disc is a triumph for the musicians over potentially dreadful circumstances.

Billy Butterfield: "Conniff Meets Butterfield." Columbia CL 1346, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8155, \$4.98 (SD).

Billy Butterfield herewith joins the Jonah Jones parade, pumping out a set of pop tunes on muted and open trumpet over a persistent shuffle rhythm. Butterfield is excellent at this sort of thing—his open trumpet, particularly, can be glowingly exultant—but Ray Conniff's rhythm section gives him stolid accompaniment.

Benny Carter: "Swingin' the '20s." Contemporary 3561, \$4.98 (LP); S 7561, \$5.98 (SD).

In the thirty-odd years during which they have been major figures in jazz, Benny Carter and Earl Hines never found themselves together until November 1958, when these recordings were made. They are joined here by Leroy Vinnegar, bass, and Shelly Manne, drums. Carter and Hines are among the most polished and consistent of jazz musicians, and their performances on this disc are an unadulterated joy from beginning to end. Hines's piano playing is economical and beautifully organized, with occasional sudden splashy splurges reminiscent of his earlier, more glittering style. Carter plays trumpet on three selections, alto saxophone on the rest. He is as smoothly lyrical as one would expect on alto, but his trumpet work, which has sometimes been relatively thinned, is unusually attractive, coming out in gentle, clean singing lines that aptly parallel his alto approach. The selections are sturdy standards of the 20s (*Sweet Lorraine*, *Mary Lou*, *If I Could Be with You* and other worthy pieces) plus Hines's *A Monday Date*.

The Dixie Rebels: "Strike Back with True Dixieland Sound." Command RS 33-801, \$4.98 (LP); RS 801 SD, \$5.98 (SD).

These are lusty and spirited Dixieland performances gaining their interest from the constantly impressive clarinet playing of Kenny Davern and the broad, unquenchably high spirits of Lou McGarity's trombone. The program, however, is made up of war horses of the Dixieland repertory including, inevitably, *The Saints*.

Linton S. Garner: "Garner Plays Garner." Enrica 2001, \$3.98 (LP); S 2001, \$4.98 (SD).

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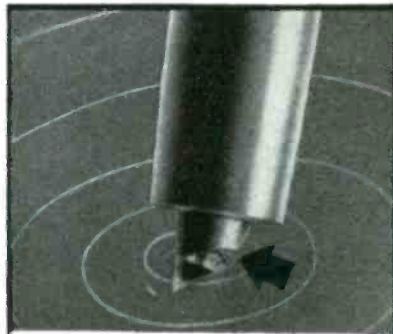
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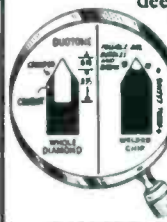
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ceptive title (this Garner is Erroll's older brother) often implying that the record could not get by on its own merits. In this case, the deception puts Linton Garner in an unfair light for he needs no fraternal support. Like his younger brother, Linton is a melodic and rhythmic pianist but he leans more to the modern, bop-influenced school than Erroll does. He makes no effort to follow any of Erroll's typical devices, although his approach to ballads has a family resemblance to Erroll's romantic, cloud-wafted feeling. These are very pleasant, well-ordered piano performances that stand quite firmly on their own.

Benny Goodman: "The Benny Goodman Treasure Chest." M-G-M 3-E-9, \$11.96. (Three LP).

Like the recordings made from broadcasts by the Goodman band and small groups released by Columbia several years ago (in a two-disc package, *The King of Swing*, Columbia OSL 180, and on three individual discs, *The King of Swing*, Vol. 1, 2, and 3, Columbia CL 817/819), this new set consists of air shorts made during 1937 and 1938 when Goodman still had all his early stars—Teddy Wilson, Jess Stacy, Harry James, Gene Krupa, and Lionel Hampton. This album lacks the fire and brilliance of the Columbia set first collection, but it has a merit of a different type in that it shows off to good advantage the gentler, rhythmically melodic side of the Goodman groups.

This is especially true of the trio and quartet performances, most of which are relaxed versions of pleasant pop tunes rather than the relatively hectic originals which formed the other part of their book. The full band drives through some of its standard instrumentals—*Big John's Special*, *Camel Hop*, and *Honeysuckle Rose*, for instance—but again it is in the suave treatments of pop tunes by Fletcher Henderson and Jimmy Mundy (which provided fodder for the band's easy lilt and the floating blend of the Goodman saxophones) that the band comes across best. A dozen of the selections by both large and small groups have not been on records before. The recording in general is relatively shallow and one-dimensional, although most of the pieces by the trio are reproduced quite well.

Edmond Hall: "Rumpus on Rampart Street." Rae-Cox 1120, \$3.98 (LP).

Through most of this disc Hall plays his lithe, lusty, hot-footed clarinet accompanied only by an excellent rhythm section (Dick Cary, Jimmy Raney, Al Hall, Jimmy Crawford), romping and rhapsodizing around themes of relative inconsequence which glow and sparkle once he has had his way with them. On three tunes the group is joined by two more clarinetists, the late Omer Simeon and Ed's brother, Herb Hall, to play arrangements written by the onetime Lunceford pianist, Eddie Wilcox. Two of these have an appealing if minor charm, but the

Continued on page 138

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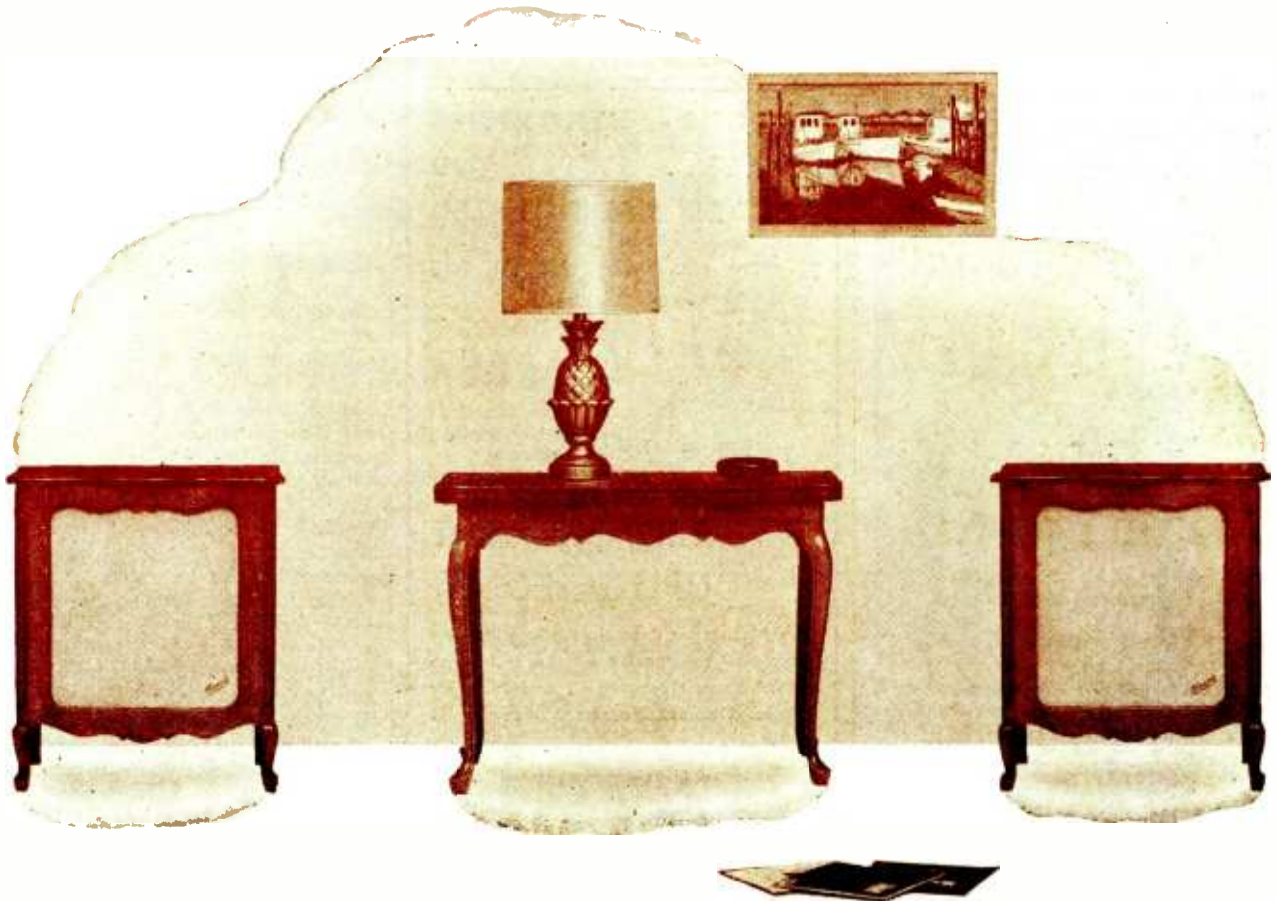
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third effort, *Lover*, is a glorious excursion both in Wilcox's ensemble sketching and in the beautifully shaded playing of the three clarinetists. It's a brilliantly inventive and disciplined jazz performance.

Buddy Johnson and His Orchestra: "Go Ahead and Rock." Roulette 25085, \$3.98 (LP); S 25085, \$4.98 (SD).

Johnson's band, once one of the most successful rhythm and blues groups before that style was corrupted and overwhelmed by rock 'n' roll, still remains basically a rhythm and blues band. On this disc it makes an occasional concession to the rock 'n' roll audience but at the same time it is a much more polished and musically sophisticated group than the relatively simple R & B bands were. It has a pair of very good soloists (a trumpeter and a trombonist who can do wah-wah tricks in the Tricky Sam Nanton manner) and, although its rhythm is always incisive and definite, it has the relaxed, assured attack of the well-adjusted band.

Dick Katz: "Piano and Pen." Atlantic 1314, \$4.98 (LP); S 1314, \$5.98 (SD).

A gentle and persuasive set of performances by a well-grounded pianist who has a light, swinging attack which, on this disc, shows some of the propulsive characteristics of John Lewis' playing. The suggestion of Lewis' pulse is augmented by the presence of the Modern Jazz Quartet's drummer, Connie Kay, who joins with bassist Joe Benjamin to form an admirable rhythm team. Guitarist Chuck Wayne provides an interesting second lead voice on four selections, but the usually dependable Jimmy Raney, who replaces Wayne on the remaining four selections, is surprisingly routine.

Charles Mingus: "Mingus Ah Um." Columbia CL 1370, \$3.98 (LP).

Slowly but surely Mingus is coming into focus as the most thoroughgoing individualist in jazz in the 1950s. Lately his control over a style which, by its very nature, tends to spread out exuberantly in all directions, has become much more certain. On this disc we hear its various facets as well disciplined as they have yet been on a record. He leads what might be classified as a super-Mingus group—his most recent quintet augmented by three ex-Mingusites, Jimmy Knepper, Willie Dennis, and Shafi Hadi—a troupe that is thoroughly indoctrinated to the Mingus techniques. The program is direct and communicative and Mingus' ideas are realized with unusual consistency. He opens with a howling, rocking bit of gospel, moves on to a lovely, touching lament for Lester Young (*Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*—Mingus' talents include an unusual knack for titling), a hard, riding riff-based piece, a slow and misty *Self Portrait in Three Colors*, his hauntingly insistent *Fables of Faubus*, and a setting for a soaring Knepper trombone solo on *Pussy Cat Dues*. Mingus uses irony and a lethal wit very effectively at times, but I think he misses the point in his overdone caricature of

early jazz on *Jelly Roll*. All in all, however, this is a remarkably adventurous and provocative disc.

Googie Rene: "Romesville." Class 5003, \$3.98 (LP).

This is a strange, fascinating, and entertaining bouillabaisse of jazz, cha cha, TV backgrounds, and Hollywood ostentation spiced at times with satire and, at other times, would-be satire. Rene, a pianist with a simple, heavily rhythmic style, has assembled an excellent big West Coast band (the saxes include Willie Smith and Buddy Collette; Gerald Wilson and Conrad Gozzo are among the trumpets; and Jack Costanzo, Larry Bunker, and Red Callender are also present) to play a group of serviceable originals and two standards (*Come Back to Sorrento* and *Serenade in the Night*) in a variety of styles from driving big-band jazz to the syrup of Billy Vaughan's saxophones, plus intermediate blasts from Prado-like trumpets and the Hawaiian tinkle of a pair of mandolins. A vocal group also looms in the background from time to time. It's a big, slick, exuberant variety show that touches an awful lot of bases, none of which seem to have anything to do with Rome.

George Romanis and His Orchestra: "Modern Sketches in Jazz." Coral 57273, \$3.98 (LP); 757273, \$4.98 (SD).

Romanis is a young arranger and bassist who has a fondness for using a tuba as both a bottom and a driving force and for giving his percussionists kicking, melodic passages. The over-all effect of his writing is somewhat like that of Eddie Sauter in the early days of the Sauter-Finegan band although Romanis' arrangements are apt to be more robustly jazz-oriented than Sauter's were. On this disc he has used tunes by George Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, Cole Porter, and Duke Ellington and, strangely enough, he is least effective in handling Ellington. He does his best work in bright, brisk interpretations of Rodgers and Porter. These pieces are played with a crisp, exultant drive by an eleven-piece band which is much more ear-filling than most groups twice that size.

Charlie Shavers: "Charlie Digs Patee." M-G-M 3765, \$3.98 (LP).

This is Charlie Shavers' attempt to cash in on the popular vein set up by Jonah Jones. Shavers is a bit more adventurous than Jones but, within his own format, just as stereotyped.

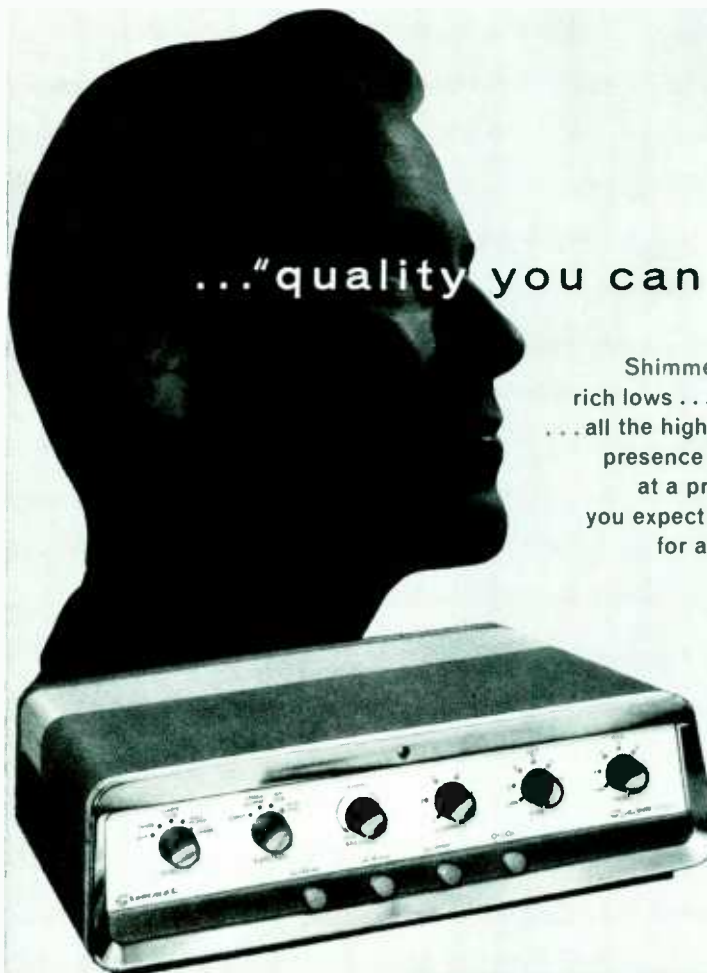
✓ Spirituals to Swing

• VANGUARD 8523/4. Two LP. \$7.96.

For review of this album, see p. 88.

✓ **Joe Viola:** "Plays Manny Albam." Berklee 3, \$3.95 (LP).

Viola, who is supervisor of woodwind instruction at the Berklee School in Boston, has pulled off a double-edged *tour de force* on this disc. On one side he



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performs a group of short pieces for four saxophones and rhythm, playing all four saxophone parts through multitaping. In the other side, also multitaped, he does *Six Pieces for Eight Reeds*, adding oboe, English horn, clarinet, and bass clarinet to his arsenal. The first group is made up of tightly organized pieces which run from a cogitant blues to a brisk little swinger—all low-keyed, provocative jazz performances. The second set, done without the rhythm section, is not jazz in any sense but a series of pleasant "straight" pieces, warmly and skillfully played. Both sides are unusually well recorded, showing none of the seams and stitches that are almost inevitable in such overdubbing jobs. The selections, all composed by Manny Albam, are challenging without being pretentious.

Ben Webster and Associates. Verve 8318, \$4.98 (LP).

Webster's "Associates" are Coleman Hawkins, Budd Johnson, Roy Eldridge, Jimmy Jones, Leslie Spann, Ray Brown, and Jo Jones—an unusually impressive company. Impressive, too, is an easygoing, supple and insinuating version of *In a Mellow Tone* which covers one side of the disc, drawing suitable, if not inspired, solos from every member of the troupe except Webster. Also impressive, on the other side, is the unexpectedly fiery, hard-toned playing of Johnson and the neatly organized, flowing guitar work of Spann. Impressive in another way is the single ballad in the set, *Time After Time*, which brings out all the worst aspects of Webster's ballad playing.

Jimmy Wisner Trio: "Blues for Harvey." Felsted 7509, \$3.98 (LP).

Wisner, a Philadelphia pianist, shows on this disc a wiry, two-handed, buoyantly rhythmic attack which swings in a forthright manner and, when he turns to the blues, a warm, reflective style that suggests an unusually good basic jazz foundation. Considering that all eight tunes on the disc are his originals and that he is accompanied only by bass and drums (Ace Tesone and Chick Keeney, a strong and helpful rhythm team), Wisner is a remarkably consistent and compelling performer.

JOHN S. WILSON



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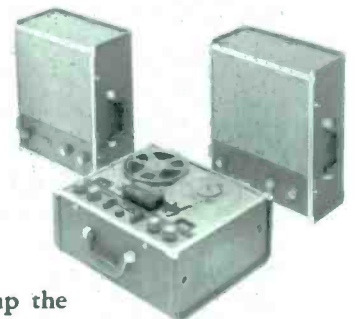
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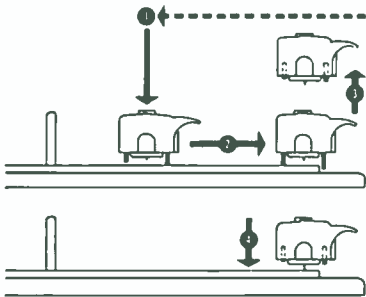
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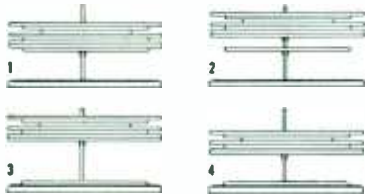
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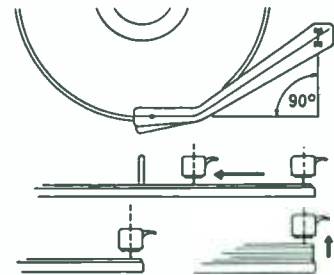
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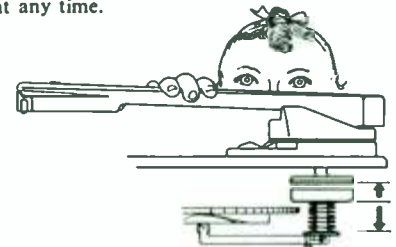
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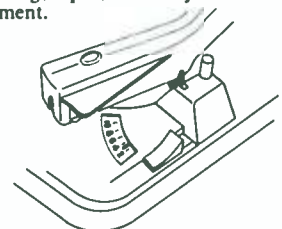
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- Berlioz . . . Rakoczy March

DETAILS OF THE OFFER

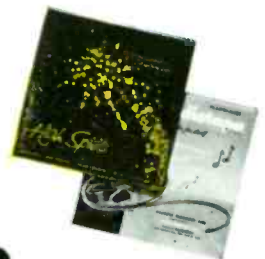
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the **Tape Deck**

Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL

The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5-ips tapes, on reels.

ANDERSON: "Music of Leroy Anderson, Vol. 2."

Belle of the Ball, Horse and Buggy, The Waltzing Cat, Blue Tango, Song of the Bells, The Typewriter, The Syncopated Clock, Girl in Satin, China Doll, Summer Skies, Fiddle-Fiddle.

Eastman-Rochester Pops Orchestra, Frederick Fennell, cond.
• • MERCURY STB 90043. 33 min. \$6.95.

I could greet the spirited performances and gleamingly transparent, natural stereo recording here with livelier enthusiasm if this were not a sequel to Vol. 1. Technically it is every bit as good as the earlier release, but unfortunately the music itself, except perhaps for the long-familiar *Syncopated Clock* and *Fiddle-Fiddle*, is just not as delectable. If, however, you haven't heard topnotch Anderson recordings before, you will relish this one; if you have, you'll join me in begging for a prompt four-track version of both Vol. 1 and the hitherto untaped *Irish Suite*.

SCHUBERT: *Quintet for Piano and Strings, in A, Op. 114 ("The Trout")*

Leonard Sorkin, violin; Irving Ilmer, viola; George Sopkin, cello; Harold Siegel, double bass; Frank Glazer, piano.
• • CONCERTAPES 4T 4004. 36 min. \$7.95.

We've already had one stereo taping of the *Trout* Quintet (Period, two-track, PST 8), a somewhat colorless, if pleasant version, which is outclassed by the notably clean, well-balanced, and natural recording here—from a technical point of view alone probably the most successful example of chamber music in stereo I have yet encountered. Besides this, the present performance is admirable, perhaps somewhat overserious and lacking in relaxed Schubertian *Gemühtlichkeit*, but planned and executed with high craftsmanship, and particularly notable for its lucidity, the unexaggerated weight of its double-bass passages, and the sparkling dexterity—and authentic tonal qualities—of its piano part.

LEONARD SORKIN: "Symphony of The Dance"

Glinka: *Ruslan and Ludmilla: Overture*. Borodin: *Prince Igor: Polovtsian Dances*. Rimsky-Korsakov: *Snow Maiden: Dance*

of the Tumblers. Sibelius: *Valse triste*. Bizet: *L'Arlésienne: Suite No. 1, Minuet*. Glière: *The Red Poppy: Russian Sailors' Dance*.

Musical Arts Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Sorkin, cond.
• • CONCERTAPES 4T 3003. 32 min. \$6.95.

It speaks well for this diverting "apotheosis of the dance" program that with each rehearing it reveals new charms. I've praised it often before (the "B" side smaller pieces formed part of Concertapes' "Stereo Starter" set; the Glinka and Borodin works were in a two-track tape; and the whole program appeared in a stereo disc version last year), but its bright sonics, marked stereoism, and Sorkin's own unflagging verve now seem even more relishable. Surely he gives us the most piquant and properly proportioned version of the often-recorded *Ruslan and Ludmilla Overture*; and while I am still conscious that the orchestra itself is scarcely large enough for the full weight and impact of the *Polovtsian Dances*, *Dance of the Tumblers*, and *Russian Sailors' Dance*, that lack is amply compensated by their vivacity and by the clarity with which their kaleidoscopic tonal coloring is reproduced.

SYMPHONY OF THE AIR: Orchestral Program

Tchaikovsky: *The Nutcracker: Ballet Suite, Op. 71a*. Berlioz: *Le Carnaval romain: Overture, Op. 9*. Wagner: *Die Meistersinger: Prelude*.

Symphony of the Air (conductorless).
• • CONCERTAPES 4T 4002. 39 min. \$7.95.

In its four-track version, the age of this pioneering stereo recording is more apparent than it was in the two-reel, two-track tape issued about a year ago, particularly in its relative lack of sheer tonal mass and weight. Happily, however, this does not detract from the program's special appeal, based primarily on its historical value both as a documentation of the memorable September 24, 1954 concert by the then newly established Symphony of the Air and as one of the closest possible approximations to stereo editions of Toscanini performances. The former NBC Symphony musicians, playing without a conductor, here reproduce Toscanini's interpretative ideas almost identically. And, just as they were under the Maestro himself, the Berlioz and Wagner works are more eloquent than the overimpersonal *Nutcracker*.

JOHANN STRAUSS, II: "Miscellany"

Die Fledermaus: Overture. Pizzicato-Polka, Op. 315. Perpetuum mobile, Op. 257. Waltzes: By the Beautiful Blue Danube, Op. 314; Emperor Waltz, Op. 437; Tales from the Vienna Woods, Op. 325.

Musical Arts Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Sorkin, cond.
• • CONCERTAPES 4T 3005. 32 min. \$6.95.

If this is simply a new processing, rather than a complete re-recording, of the same program issued more than three years ago on Concertapes two-track 101 A, it vividly demonstrates anew how magically improved recorded performances can sound when they are given good processing. The 1956 tape was not only poor technically, but made the Sorkin readings seem wholly ineffectual. Both they and the over-all sonics came off much better in the recent stereo disc version (CS 28) and are further improved here, particularly in the elimination of almost all traces of bass tubbiness. Unfortunately, however, not even processing magic can restore genuine acoustical warmth, expand the obviously too small orchestral forces, compensate for the lack of a zither in *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, or provide authentic inflections and pulse.

"And They Called It Dixieland." Matty Matlock and the Paducah Patrol. Warner Bros. BST 1263, 35 min., \$7.95.

This is a sequel to last year's *Dixieland Story* anthology by a Hollywood studio group, starring the leader on clarinet, Abe Lincoln's exuberant trombone, Stan Wrightsman's bouncy piano, George Van Eps's guitar, and Eddie Miller's baritone (and, in one piece, tenor) sax. Most characteristic are the zestfully free-for-all versions of *I'm Gonna Stomp, Mr. Henry Lee, China Boy*, and *Runnin' Wild*, but the band is surprisingly songful in the slower *Lazy River* and *Louisville Lou*, and the strongly stereoisitic recording is brilliantly if somewhat drily clear throughout.

"Autumn Leaves"; "Gigi." David Rose and His Orchestra. M-G-M ST 3592-3640, 63 min., \$11.95.

A bargain package of twelve autumnal-mood selections, unvariedly lush except for the suddenly lively final *Autumn Holiday*; with these are included ten

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TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

tunes from the Lerner & Loewe film score. Here Rose's ripely romantic, string-dominated treatments are more frequently alternated with piquant animations, and his dual styles are best reconciled in a gentle yet catchy version of *I'm Glad I'm Not Young Anymore*. The extremely smooth and rich stereoism makes the most of the big orchestra's suavities.

"Cha-Cha-Cha." Eduardo Fernandez and His Cha-Cha Kings. Tandberg/SMS S 7, 34 min., \$7.95.

At first the extreme stereoism and extremely dry recording here make one conscious only of the harsh tonal qualities of the insistent scratcher, squally brass, and mostly staccato electronic organ and/or accordion, but before long one realizes how appropriate these timbres are to the high-powered band's toe-tickling treatments of such usually bland pops favorites as *Blue Skies*, *Should I?, Why Do I Love You?*, and even such unlikelier choices as *The Stars and Stripes Forever* and Dvořák's *Humoresque*. A little cha-cha normally goes a long way with me, but I must admit that this is one of the most insidious invitations to dance to complete exhaustion, and sonically it is particularly interesting for the ingenious use of cross-channel antiphonal effects.

"Dance Along." Larry Clinton and His Orchestra. Kapp KT 41013, 33 min., \$7.95.

Middle-of-the-road big-band dance versions of *Tom Dooley*, *It's All in the Game*, *Everybody Loves a Lover*, *Volare*, *Bimbo*, and seven others, given more than ordinary ear-and-toe appeal by the always imaginative (and occasionally quite poetic) arrangements and performances. Sound locations are pinpointed by the marked stereoism; many delicate details and antiphonal responses emerge with remarkable clarity—yet the big curtain of sound is smoothly spread between the two channels.

"The Greatest." Joe Williams; Count Basic and His Orchestra. Verve VST4 204, 35 min., \$7.95.

With all due respect for Williams' often quite expressive singing, I'd much rather hear him in the blues he does so well than in the present pops ballads, where the real interest lies throughout in Basic's resilient accompaniments and orchestral interludes featuring his own sparkling pianism. Most attractive here are the quietly sonorous *Come Rain or Come Shine* and *Love Is Here To Stay*, and the brisk *I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me* and *Thou Swell*; but the open stereoism itself is excellent throughout, particularly so when Buddy Bregman's arrangements provide such ingenious cross-channel responses as those in the exuberant *This Can't Be Love*.

"Like Someone in Love." Ella Fitzgerald; Frank De Vol's Orchestra. Verve VST4 201, 54 min., \$7.95.

While Ella is most exciting in hotter material than the present fifteen almost unvariedly slow and torchy ballads, she has seldom been in better voice or sung more movingly than she does here in *How Long Has This Been Going On?*, *Hurry Home*, *More Than You Know*, *What Will I Tell My Heart?*, *I Never Had a Chance*, and *Night Wind*. De Vol's arrangements and accompaniments back her up discreetly in unexaggerated stereoism.

The following reviews are of the older type of 2-track 7.5-ips tapes, on reels.

COPLAND: Symphony No. 3

London Symphony Orchestra, Aaron Copland, cond.

• • EVEREST STBR 3018. 40 min. \$10.95.

The Third Symphony has been widely praised for its integration of Copland's "popular" and "abstract" styles—a judgment true enough insofar as this work does represent the best common meeting ground for listeners who have previously esteemed the composer for only one or the other facet of his talents. For me, however, it is more important for its simultaneous summing up and concentration of *all* aspects of his art—more tautly than in perhaps any of his film scores and ballets, yet at the same time with a greater wealth of immediate rhythmic and melodic attractions than in any other of his "abstract" compositions.

At any rate, the Copland Third has come to rank justly as a major American symphonic achievement—which we now can hear exactly as the composer wants it to be heard, perhaps less dramatically than in Dorati's still fine LP version, but with the attention to inner detail and over-all plasticity which only a composer-conductor—and stereo techniques at their best—can provide. For myself, I'd prefer just a shade more reverberance in the otherwise faultless recording, and I wish that Copland had let his uncommonly sonorous brass choir "go" a bit more uninhibitedly; but this would be asking for a superfluity of sheerly sonic thrills—of which there already are enough, particularly when the super-bass drum is detonated (rather than merely hit).

(Incidentally, a four-track tape edition should be available shortly: Everest is one of several companies which I've been happy to learn plan to issue their tapes in both the old and new media.)

"Ballads of the Bushland." Ted & Tom Le Garde; Bushland Bushwackers. Bel Canto STB/52, 23 min., \$9.95.

These Australian twin balladeers give us relatively little Down-Under twang in their rather sophisticated and popularized arrangements, too many of which feature the same key changing and other clichés. Nevertheless, they sing attractively, are deftly accompanied by an appropriate accordion, banjo, and harmonica ensemble, and are brilliantly recorded in strongly channel-differentiated stereoism. Many

Continued on page 148

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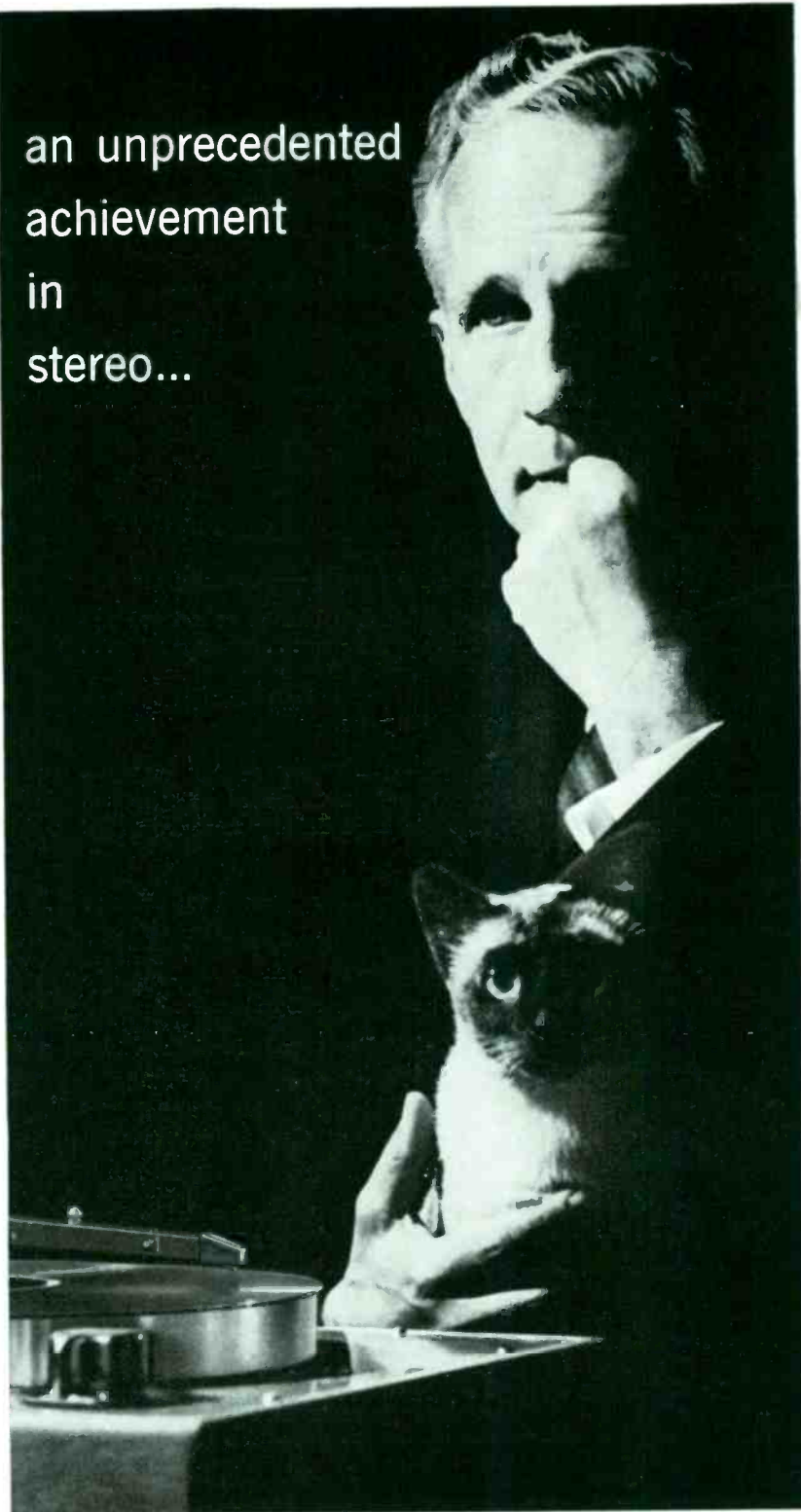
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Continued from page 146

of their songs are delightful in themselves, besides being refreshingly unfamiliar—particularly the lilting *Click Go the Shears*, bouncy *Shearers' Jamboree*, the effectively echo-chambered and atmospheric *Cooee Call*, and the hillbillyish *Across the Western Plains*.

"Broadway in Rhythm." Ray Coniff and His Orchestra and Chorus. Columbia FCB 39, 18 min., \$5.95.

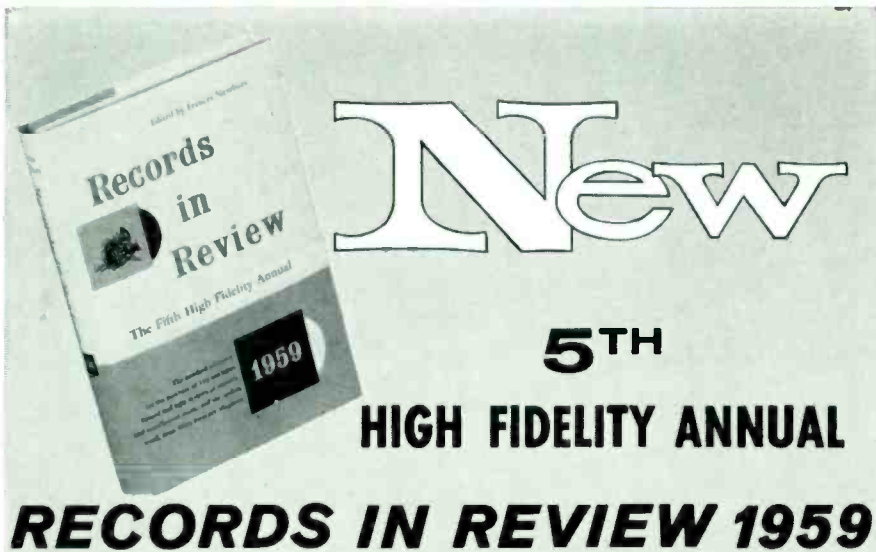
More hit tunes (here from *Okahoma!* and *The King and I*) in Coniff's now familiar style featuring wordless choral glosses on already fancy orchestral arrangements. The markedly stereoisitic, brilliant, and reverberant recording is extremely effective, and although some of the performances are decidedly slapdash, *Okahoma!* and *Oh! What a Beautiful Morning* (the latter in a novel fox-trot arrangement) have considerable catchiness for all their occasional rhythmic jerkiness and sonic raucousness.

"Larry Elgart and His Orchestra"; "New Sounds at the Roosevelt." RCA Victor CPS 246, 26 min., \$8.95; EPS 244, 35 min., \$11.95.

The big, open, strongly stereoisitic recording of the second program here sounds even more natural and attractive than it did in the discs issued some months ago. And while I still relish best the bouncier, more staccato performances (*Walkin', Let My People Swing, Cool-Aid*, etc.), I now appreciate better the songfulness and lilting pulse of such quieter pieces as *Yearning* and *April*. The shorter program, too, is scarcely less appealing, if somewhat less strongly contrasted; top honors go to a poetic *Dream Boat*, the easygoing *Once in Love with Amy* and *Are You Living, Old Man?*, and the brisk versions of *Beyond the Blue Horizon* and *Heartaches*.

"An Evening with Lerner & Loewe." Robert Merrill, Jan Peerce, Jane Powell, Phil Harris; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra and Chorale, Johnny Green, cond. RCA Victor GPS 242, 46 min., \$15.95.

Despite the title and substantial price tag, this reel contains only half—the *Brigadoon* and *My Fair Lady* selections—of the original two-disc LP and SD release, omitting the extensive selections from *Paint Your Wagon* and *Gigi*. What we do have here is, however, extremely good—far better indeed than most similar ventures featuring operatic stars in musical comedy materials. Peerce doesn't quite have the appropriate style, yet he sings magnificently and—for a miracle—is not too closely miked; Merrill and a surprisingly inspired Jane Powell are just right, especially in their duets and the former's solos; only Harris is relatively ineffectual here, and that is probably less the result of his own mannerisms than of the ineradicable memory of Stanley Holloway's incomparable way with the same songs. Two major assets are the really big and skillful orchestral overtures and ac-



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"Exploring New Sounds in Stereo";
"Strings Aflame." Esquivel and His Orchestra. RCA Victor APS 226, 15 min.; APS 227, 18 min.; \$4.95 each.

For those who relish the young Mexican's fascinating, if often extravagantly uninhibited, sonic explorations, the only complaint with these two reels must be that they include only the "A"-side selections from the original SD and LP versions of these programs. Otherwise the unusual sound effects and intricate details of Esquivel's elaborate arrangements come off even more clearly and brilliantly on tape, with preference going to the "Strings Aflame" reel for its greater musical effectiveness, especially in *Guadalajara*, *Scheherazade* (with its fine chromatic timpani), and the stereo-movement effects in *Sun Valley Ski Run*.

"Here Is Phineas." Phineas Newborn, piano; rhythm trio. Atlantic 3D 5, 28 min., \$11.95.

Although this is—in part at least—the "Fabulous" Phineas' debut program, originally released in LP over two years ago, it remains much more interesting (particularly from a jazz, rather than a pops-entertainment, point of view) than any he has done since. The present moderate-level, extremely pure stereoism transparently reveals both the soloist's imaginative dexterity and his unusually fine accompaniments (by Oscar Pettiford, bass; Calvin Newborn, guitar; and Kenny Clarke, drums). I am most impressed by the excitingly fast *Celia*, vivacious *Barbados*, scampering *Dahoud*, and easy-going *Afternoon in Paris*, but even in the frantic *I'm Beginning To See the Light* and somewhat disorganized soliloquizing on *All the Things You Are* there is extraordinary virtuosity.

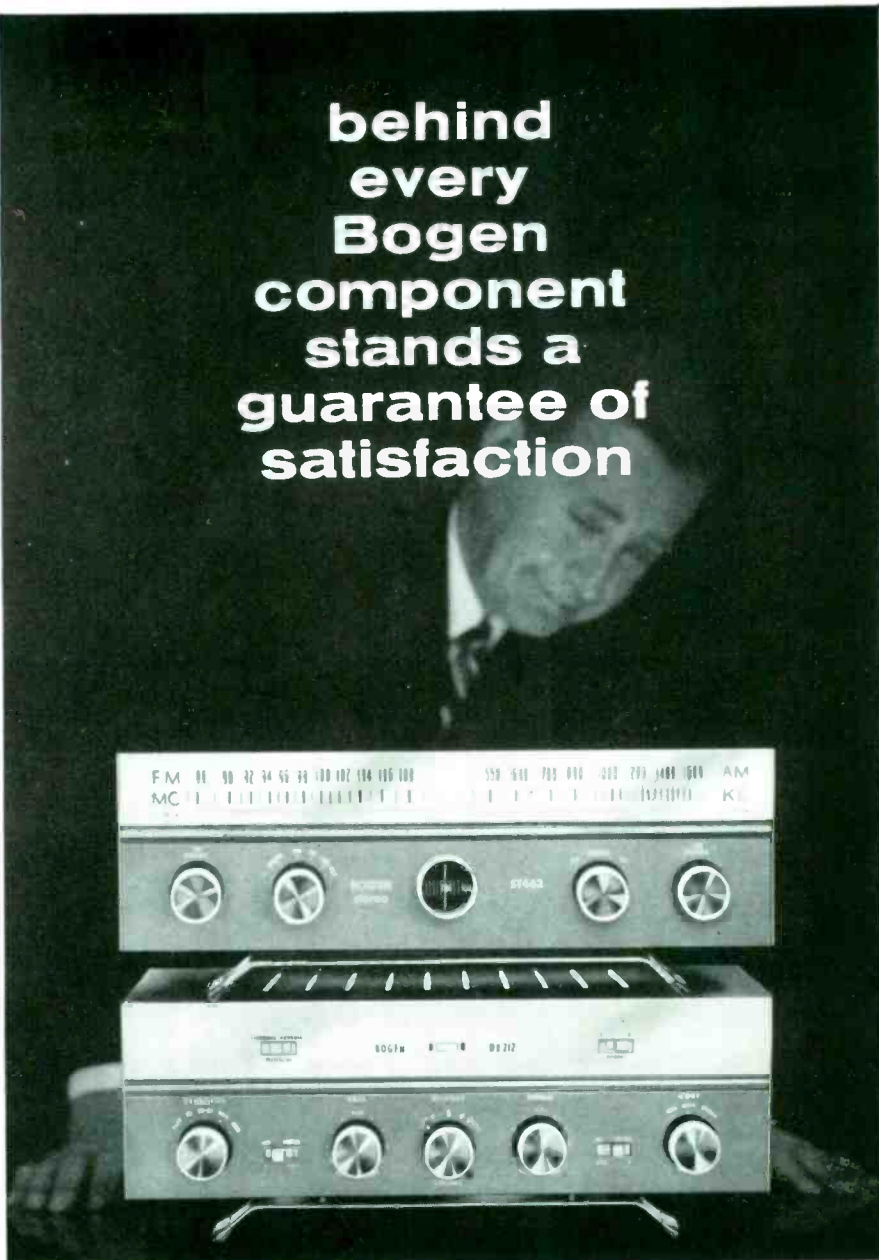
"Mood Jazz." Joe Castro, piano; small orchestra and chorus. Atlantic 3D 3, 29 min., \$11.95.

Relaxed and casual, but somewhat tentative and colorless piano playing, which I'd enjoy a lot more if Castro could be heard on his own, or with rhythm group only, instead of having been saddled (as he often is here) by a suave string ensemble and an incongruously Hollywoodian wordless chorus.

"Wailin' With Winnie." Winnie Gould; Larry Fotine and His Orchestra. Bel Canto STB/53, 23 min., \$9.95.

Miss Gould's debut program reveals that she has mastered by rote every stylistic trick of the great blues shouters, but for all her exuberance she still lacks the sharply profiled personality and conviction of her models. Yet her singing (happily not too closely miked, although the bright recording still seems acoustically dry) does have considerable verve and brassy effectiveness, well emphasized by Fotin's driving honky-tonk small-band accompaniments.

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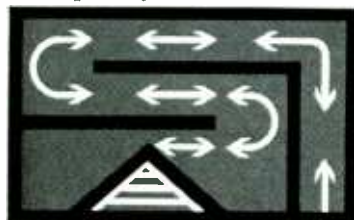
HOW TO BUILD A CONSOLE THAT ELIMINATES FEEDBACK NOISES

As we analyzed the problem, we realized there were seven projects that we had to accomplish before

we could bring you this new kind of console.

PROJECT #1 The first consideration was given to our components. They had to have high quality reproduction. The standards we set for them can be most simply described by the phrase “Integrity in Music Reproduction.” If you are familiar with Stromberg-Carlson stereo tuners, amplifiers, turntables and speakers, we believe you will agree they earn this description.

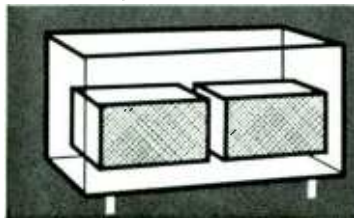
PROJECT #2 Speaker systems were the next important project. For our new kind of stereo console we needed two speaker systems of unquestionable quality. We were fortunate here, because we



had already developed a system that met the quality requirements, the well-regarded Acoustical Labyrinth® Speaker System. Its quarter

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PROJECT #3 To reduce the size of high quality speaker systems so that they would fit into a stereo console of reasonable dimensions. We were certain that component-quality sound in a console could only be achieved with speaker systems that



did not depend on the console cabinet for their enclosure. This meant that we had to reduce the size of the Acoustical Labyrinth enclosure.

sure so that we could fit two separate speaker enclosures within a cabinet that had reasonable dimensions. It was not easy, but we did it. After many, many trials and tests we achieved the correct size without sacrificing one iota of the extremely linear and extended response of the system.

NOW THE MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEM HAD TO BE FACED

PROJECT #4 To effectively eliminate feedback by effectively eliminating the mechanical coupling that allows it to occur. Instead of treating the symptoms, we treated the cause. We developed a method of effectively isolating the speaker systems from the sensitive components. (As a result, Stromberg-Carlson Integrity Series Ensembles are the first successful uncompromised ensembles.)

The key development is what we call ISO-COUSTIC SPEAKER SYSTEM MOUNTING. This mounting, in which the resistance and compliance to vertical and horizontal pressures have been carefully engineered, has solved the problem. It allows Stromberg-Carlson to create a cabinet-within-cabinet suspension system which prevents transmission of speaker vibrations to the sensitive components. If you component owners could put your equipment into a cabinet whose speaker systems have our ISO-COUSTIC Mounting, the quality of the sound you'd hear would be as good as your component system is now. In fact, the components we use are the same ones you would choose for your separately mounted component system. They are interchangeable.



INTEGRITY SERIES WILL NEVER BECOME OBSOLETE

PROJECT #5 To assure the purchaser of an Integrity Ensemble that his choice would never be obsolete, we designed the units in accordance with a modular concept. All of the components are completely interchangeable. You can replace any component in the ensemble to keep pace with new developments—without ever replacing your fine cabinetry.



CABINETRY HAD TO BE EXCEPTIONAL, TOO

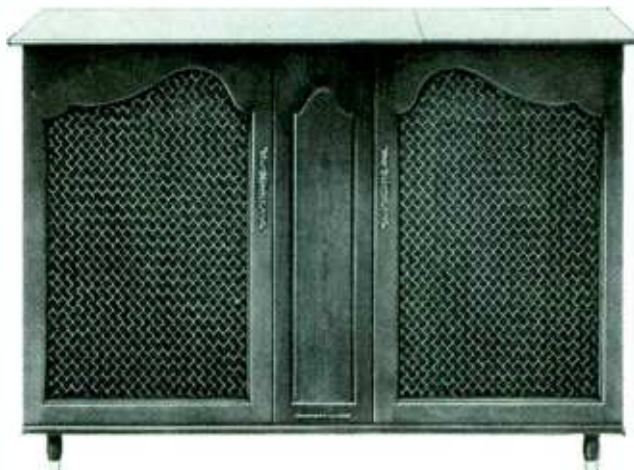
PROJECT #6 To design cabinets with the permanent beauty of fine furniture. Federico responded to the challenge by creating cabinetry in Traditional, Contemporary, Early American, Italian Provincial, French Provincial and Oriental

styling. You choose from 16 basic models in these styles, in a choice of finishes. These cabinets, like a fine painting, best describe themselves. They must be seen.

PROJECT #7 To give you maximum flexibility in your enjoyment of an Integrity Series Ensemble. Every ensemble provides for your listening tastes and room acoustics by including the Stereo Choice Switch for precise regulation of stereo separation, with or without separate matching speaker systems. All ensembles provide space for adding a tape deck.

You may select your own Stromberg-Carlson stereo components or choose a recommended component complement—in any case Stromberg-Carlson components are always interchangeable.

If you now own a console or components, we invite you to exercise your critical judgment by listening to an Integrity Series Ensemble. (You will find that the better component shops—as well as the better department and music stores—have chosen to feature this new kind of stereo console.) Listen carefully. Look closely. Ask questions. Then accept not our judgment, but your own.



INTEGRITY SERIES COMPONENT ENSEMBLES

—three hundred and fifty dollars to about six thousand dollars. You may choose from 16 models in Traditional, Contemporary and Period stylings, each tastefully designed by Federico. You may select your own Stromberg-Carlson components or choose a recommended Stromberg-Carlson component complement—in any case Stromberg-Carlson components are always interchangeable.

For a complete color catalog of Integrity Series Component Ensembles and components write STROMBERG-CARLSON, Special Products Division, 1419 N. Goodman St., Rochester 3, New York.

“There is nothing finer than a Stromberg-Carlson”

STROMBERG-CARLSON
A DIVISION OF **GENERAL DYNAMICS**

For integrity in music...

A NEW STROMBERG-CARLSON SINGLE-SPEED TURNTABLE

...in component systems

...in Integrity Series Ensembles



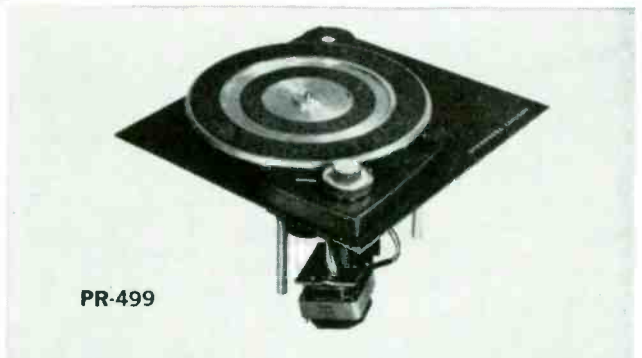
PR-500

PR-500 SINGLE SPEED Here is a revolutionary concept in turntable design: a dual-drive system consisting of two hysteresis-synchronous motors operating one belt drive.

The motors are spaced exactly 180° apart. Any variation of speed is automatically corrected by the interaction of the motors and the impregnated belt. Rumble and noise are virtually eliminated by the belt drive and a unique suspension system in which the tone arm and table, as a unit, are isolated from the mounting board.

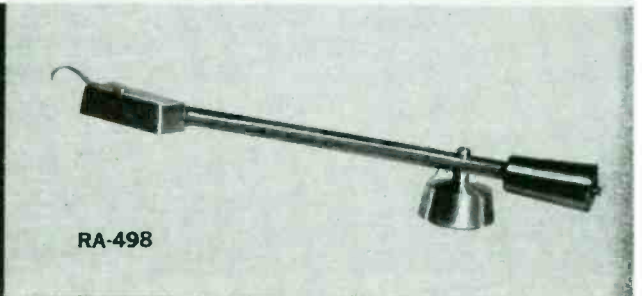
Single, 33 1/3 speed. Includes tone arm. PR-500, black and brushed chrome \$69.95*

PR-499 "PERFECTEMPO" ALL SPEEDS The "Perfectempo" incorporates every valid, time-proven design principle: belt drive; continuously variable cone drive (14 to 80 rpm); stroboscopic speed indicator; dynamically balanced, weighted table; precision motor; plus Stromberg-Carlson's original double-acting motor and table suspension system that effectively eliminates unwanted noise. Performance proves it: Wow 0.14% rms; Flutter 0.09% rms; Rumble - 55 db re 20 cm/sec at 1 kc. PR-499, morocco red with aluminum trim \$99.95*



PR-499

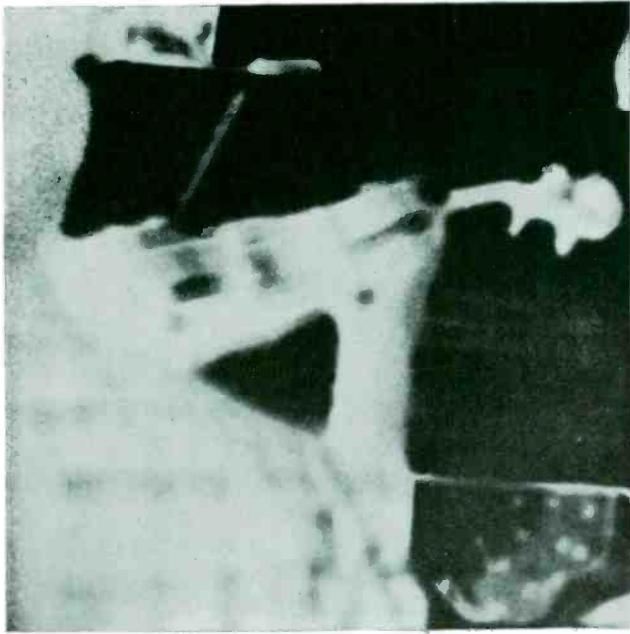
RA-498 TONE ARM The Stromberg-Carlson Tone Arm uses the most valid engineering concepts of tone arm design. Single pivot point suspension, true viscous damping and high moment of inertia result in extremely low resonance and consequently yield flat response below the limits of audibility. A calibrated counterweight is adjustable to provide any needle point force. For stereo operation, complete with mounting base, viscous fluid, rest, and cartridge clip. Fits all standard turntables. RA-498 \$24.95*



RA-498

*Prices audiophile net, turntables less bases.

"THERE IS NOTHING FINER THAN A STROMBERG-CARLSON"



For integrity in music...

THREE NEW STROMBERG-CARLSON TUNERS

...in component systems

...in Integrity Series Ensembles

SR-445 AM-FM STEREO TUNER The SR-445 is actually two separate and complete units which have been placed together for convenience of mounting and use. They have individual circuitry in which no duplicate use of tubes or circuits is involved. Operate as an AM tuner, an FM tuner or together as an AM-FM stereo tuner. The SR-445 combines the separate AM and FM tuners described below. The specifications are exactly the same as listed for these two units. SR-445 \$129.95*

All three tuners are available in gold and white or black and brushed chrome. Top cover in white, black, tan or red available at extra cost.



SR-445



FM-443

FM-443 FM TUNER Exceptionally sensitive, low noise reception due to the wide peak-to-peak separation (475 kc) and long, linear slope (350 kc) of the balanced ratio detector, and the grounded grid cascade front end. Sensitivity is 2 uv for 20 db quieting, 4 uv for 30 db quieting (300 ohm). Local-Distant Switch results in 2 uv for 40 db quieting on local stations. Dial station selector and "hair-trigger" tuning eye. Temperature controlled circuits eliminate drift. Includes switched AFC circuit. Tuning Range: 88-108 mc. Bandwidth: 200 kc. Frequency Response: 20-20,000 cps. Self-powered with auxiliary power for AM-441 tuner. Provision for multiplex adapter. FM-443 \$79.95*



AM-442/AM-441

AM-442 AM TUNER For exceptional AM reception, this tuner has a frequency response of 20-7,000 cps, down 7 db at 7,000 cps. It features a tuned RF stage and 3-gang variable tuning condenser. Its tuning range is 540 to 1,600 kc; Bandwidth is 9 kc. Local-Distant Switch adds 20 db quieting on local stations. Adjustable ferrite loop and external antenna. AM-442 \$59.95*

AM-441 AM TUNER Same as above, but without its own power supply \$49.95*

**Prices audiophile net, zone 1, less cover*

STROMBERG-CARLSON

A DIVISION OF **GENERAL DYNAMICS**

For integrity in music...

STROMBERG-CARLSON STEREO CONTROL AMPLIFIERS

...for component systems

...for Integrity Series Ensembles



ASR-433

ASR-433 STEREO "24" CONTROL AMPLIFIER A dual channel amplifier with excellent performance and control features. Each channel provides 12 watts of exceptionally clean, balanced power. The exclusive "Stereo Tone Balance" signal permits you to adjust the two channels by a single tone.

The deliberately conservative specifications include: frequency response 20-20,000 cps; harmonic distortion less than 1% at full output; IM distortion less than 1% at program level; hum and noise 63 db down. Inputs: magnetic and ceramic phono; tuner; tapehead; auxiliary/tape. Available in gold and white or black and brushed chrome. ASR-433 . . \$129.95*

ASR-444 STEREO "60" CONTROL AMPLIFIER offers all desirable controls, plus high power. Each channel provides 30 watts of balanced power. It features separate bass, treble and volume controls for each channel, a master gain and loudness control, and the "Stereo Tone Balance" signal. Specifications: frequency response 20-20,000 cps; harmonic distortion less than 0.7% at full output, IM distortion less than 1% at program level. Same inputs as ASR-433. In gold and white or black and brushed chrome. ASR-444 \$169.95*



ASR-444

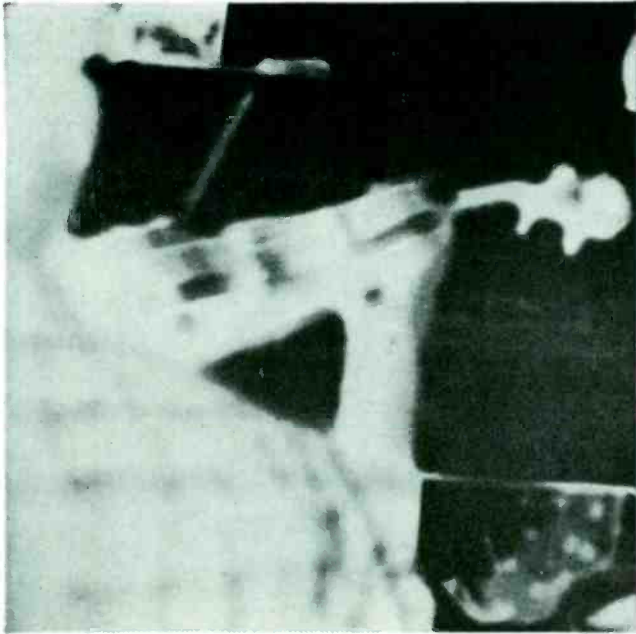
ASR-333 STEREO CONTROL AMPLIFIER, and a fine ceramic cartridge, give you quality performance at a low price. This amplifier—with 12 watts per channel—was designed for optimum reproduction with ceramic cartridges. It features tone and volume controls for each channel, plus a loudness control. Frequency response, noise level, distortion, same as ASR-433. Inputs: ceramic phono, tuner, tape/auxiliary. In black and brushed chrome. ASR-333 \$99.95*



ASR-333

*Prices Audiophile net, Zone 1, less top covers, which are available in white, black, tan or red.

"THERE IS NOTHING FINER THAN A STROMBERG-CARLSON"



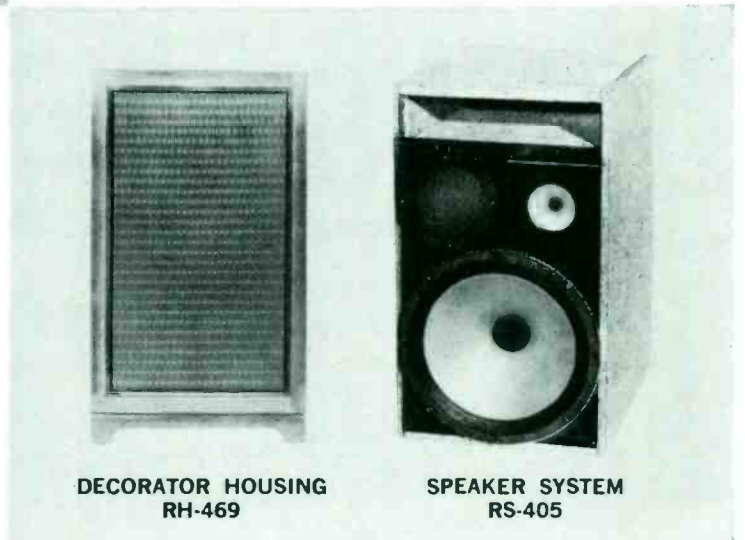
For integrity in music...

STROMBERG-CARLSON SPEAKERS AND SYSTEMS

...for component systems

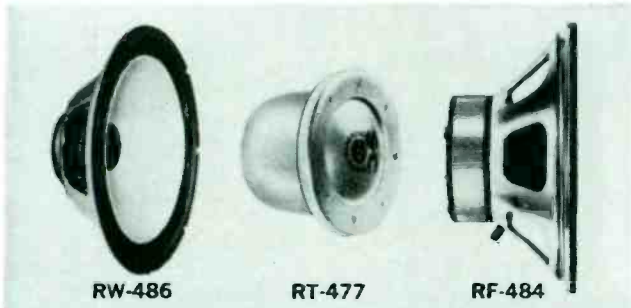
...for Integrity Series Ensembles

Stromberg-Carlson manufactures a full line of speakers and the famous Acoustical Labyrinth® Speaker System. This system enclosure achieves a system resonance that is lower than the un-baffled free air cone resonance of the low frequency radiator. It utilizes mass loading and frictional damping as acoustical devices to extend the low frequency range of the system with extreme flatness of response. Five new complete speaker systems with a variety of decorator housings are now available. We suggest that you compare the quality of their performance with similar equipment. You be the judge.



DECORATOR HOUSING
RH-469

SPEAKER SYSTEM
RS-405



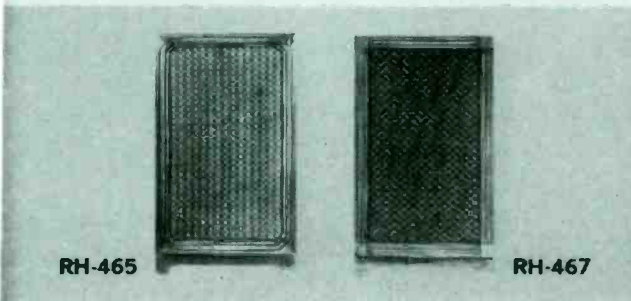
RW-486

RT-477

RF-484

SPEAKERS Stromberg-Carlson loudspeakers include tweeters, woofers, coaxials and mid-range transducers. They are available in all popular sizes and price ranges.

The unusual Stromberg-Carlson "Slimline" feature allows maximum versatility in installation, and is made possible by another feature: the new "Barite" ceramic magnet, which is used to insure excellent transient response over the full effective frequency range.



RH-465

RH-467

ENCLOSURE KITS Acoustical Labyrinth enclosures are now available as unassembled kits. All pieces are precision-cut to size, ready to assemble. Nails, glue, complete instructions—everything you need is included. Enclosures are available for 8", 12" and 15" systems. The same decorator housings available for factory assembled systems may be used. Write for full details on speakers and housings available.

For full details on Stromberg-Carlson components, write Stromberg-Carlson, a Division of General Dynamics, 1419 N. Goodman St., Rochester 3, N. Y.

STROMBERG-CARLSON

A DIVISION OF **GENERAL DYNAMICS**

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STEREO

and Mono Hi-Fi... the experts say
your best buy is

EICO

"The overall design of the HF-81 is conservative, honest and functional. It is a good value considered purely on its own merits, and a better one when its price is considered as well."

—Hirsch-Houck Labs (HIGH FIDELITY Magazine)

- Advanced engineering • Finest quality components
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Stereo Amplifier-Preamplifier HF81

HF81 Stereo Amplifier-Preamplifier selects, amplifies, controls any stereo source & feeds it thru self-contained dual 14W amplifiers to a pair of speakers. Provides 28W monophonically. Ganged level controls, separate balance control, independent bass & treble controls for each channel. Identical Williamson-type, push-pull EL84 power amplifiers. "Excellent" — SATURDAY REVIEW; HI-FI MUSIC AT HOME. "Outstanding quality... extremely versatile." — ELECTRONICS WORLD LAB-TESTED. Kit \$69.95. Wired \$109.95. Includes cover.

HF85 Stereo Preamplifier is a complete, master stereo preamplifier-control unit, self-powered for flexibility & to avoid power-supply problems. Distortion borders on unmeasurable even at high output levels. Level, bass, & treble controls independent for each channel or ganged for both channels. Inputs for phono, tape head, mike, AM, FM, & FM-multiplex. One each auxiliary A & B input in each channel. Switched-in loudness compensator. "Extreme flexibility... a bargain." — HI-FI REVIEW. Kit \$39.95. Wired \$64.95. Includes cover.

New HF87 70-Watt Stereo Power Amplifier: Dual 35W power amplifiers of the highest quality. Uses top-quality output transformers for undistorted response across the entire audio range at full power to provide utmost clarity on full orchestra & organ. IM distortion 1% at 70W, harmonic distortion less than 1% from 20 to 20,000 cps within 1 db of 70W. Ultra-linear connected EL34 output stages & surgistor-protected silicon diode rectifier power supply. Selector switch chooses mono or stereo service; 4, 8, 16, and 32 ohm speaker taps, input level controls; basic sensitivity 0.38 volts. Without exaggeration, one of the very finest stereo amplifiers available regardless of price. Use with self-powered stereo preamplifier-control unit (HF85 recommended). Kit \$74.95. Wired \$114.95.

HF86 28W Stereo Power Amplifier Kit \$43.95. Wired \$74.95.

FM Tuner HFT90: Prewired, prealigned, temperature-compensated "front end" is drift-free. Prewired exclusive precision eye-ironic® traveling tuning Indicator. Sensitivity: 1.5 uv for 20 db quieting; 2.5 uv for 30 db quieting, full limiting

from 25 uv. IF bandwidth 260 kc at 6 db points. Both cathode follower & FM-multiplex stereo outputs, prevent obsolescence. Very low distortion. "One of the best buys in high fidelity kits." — AUDIOCRAFT. Kit \$39.95. Wired \$65.95. Cover \$3.95. *Less cover, F.E.T. Incl.

New AM Tuner HFT94. Matches HFT90. Selects "hi-fi" wide (20c — 9kc @ —3 db) or weak-station narrow (20c — 5kc @ —3 db) bandpass. Tuned RF stage for high selectivity & sensitivity; precision eye-ironic® tuning. Kit \$39.95. Wired \$65.95. Incl. Cover & F.E.T.

New FM/AM Tuner HFT92 combines the renowned EICO HFT90 FM Tuner with excellent AM tuning facilities. Kit \$59.95. Wired \$94.95. Includes cover & F.E.T.

New AF-4 Stereo Amplifier provides clean 4W per channel or 8W total output. Inputs for ceramic/crystal stereo pick-ups. AM-FM stereo, FM-multiplex stereo. 6-position stereo/mono selector. Clutch-concentric level & tone controls. Use with a pair of HFS-5 Speaker Systems for good quality, low-cost stereo. Kit \$38.95. Wired \$64.95.

HF12 Mono Integrated Amplifier provides complete "front-end" facilities and true high fidelity performance. Inputs for phono, tape head, TV, tuner and crystal/ceramic cartridge. Preferred variable crossover, feedback type tone control circuit. Highly stable Williamson-type power amplifier circuit. Power output: 12W continuous, 25W peak. Kit \$34.95. Wired \$57.95. Includes cover.

New HFS3 3-Way Speaker System Semi-Kit complete with factory-built 3/4" veneered plywood (4 sides) cabinet. Bellows-suspension, full-inch excursion 12" woofer (22 cps res.), 8" mid-range speaker with high internal damping cone for smooth response, 3 1/2" cone tweeter. 2 1/4 cu. ft. ducted-port enclosure. System Q of 1/2 for smoothest frequency & best transient response. 32-14,000 cps clean, useful response. 16 ohms impedance. HWD: 26 1/2", 13 7/8", 14 3/8". Unfinished birch \$72.50. Walnut, mahogany or teak \$87.50.

New HFS5 2-Way Speaker System Semi-Kit complete with factory-built 3/4" veneered plywood (4 sides) cabinet. Bellows-suspension, 3/8" excursion,



Stereo Preamplifier HF85



70W Stereo Power Amplifier HF87
28W Stereo Power Amplifier HF86



FM Tuner HFT90 FM/AM Tuner HFT92



Stereo Integrated Amplifier AF4



12W Mono Integrated Amplifier HF12
Other Mono Integrated Amplifiers:
50, 30, & 20W (use 2 for stereo)



2-Way Bookshelf
Speaker System HFS1
3-Way Speaker System HFS3
2-Way Speaker System HFS5

tion, 8" woofer (45 cps res.), & 3 1/2" cone tweeter. 1 1/4 cu. ft. ducted-port enclosure. System Q of 1/2 for smoothest frequency & best transient response. 45-14,000 cps clean, useful response. HWD: 24", 12 1/2", 10 1/2". Unfinished birch \$47.50. Walnut, mahogany or teak \$59.50. HFS1 Bookshelf Speaker System complete with factory-built cabinet. Jensen 8" woofer, matching Jensen compression-driver exponential horn tweeter. Smooth clean bass; crisp extended highs. 70-12,000 cps range. 8 ohms. HWD: 23" x 11" x 9". Price \$39.95.

HFS2 Omni-Directional Speaker System (not illus.) HWD: 36", 15 1/2", 11 1/2". "Eminently musical" — HIGH FIDELITY. "Fine for stereo" — MODERN HI-FI. Completely factory-built. Mahogany or walnut \$139.95. Blond \$144.95.

EICO, 33-00 Northern Blvd., L.I.C. 1, N. Y.

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Hi-Fi Test Instruments

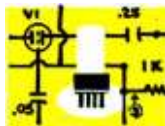
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From the High-Fidelity Newsfronts

EARLY IN OCTOBER, we once more successfully survived the audio show in New York and, in spite of aching feet, aching back, aching ears, we had the usual fine and challenging time. It's a fine time because we see all the new equipment and talk with most of the manufacturers; it is also challenging because so many HIGH FIDELITY readers stop at our exhibit rooms to discuss—politely or vigorously—the pros and cons of the Magazine.

Publishing deadlines are such that it is now too late, to say the least, to spend much time reviewing the new equipment. Most of it has long since appeared in our advertising pages and new-product listings. But let's wander around and pick up a few pieces of literature, representing the highlights of the show as we saw it. We don't claim to have caught every highlight; there were five floors . . . with about 120 companies exhibiting from one to twenty or more products each!

One of the most interesting products at the show was the all-transistor stereo control amplifier exhibited by Transis-Tronics of California. Though in operation all day, it gave off no heat and took its electric power from dry cells totaling only 12 volts. (It works also, of course, from the usual 117-volt AC source.) It provided complete selector, tone control, and function facilities, along with equalization, microphone and phono preamplification—and two 25-watt power output channels. The unit is guaranteed, by the way, for two years.

Sem-Con Electronics equipment also was transistorized, with a three-unit line including stereo and monophonic control amplifiers and an FM-only tuner.

Among tape recorders, there was the Movie from Den-

mark, an upper-middle-price professional job; the monophonic and stereophonic models by Harting, "packaged" units with built-in speaker and many interesting features; and two Uher models. One, at show time, was a prototype of a stereo unit; the other, which attracted a lot of attention, was small and portable with speeds of $3\frac{3}{4}$, $1\frac{7}{8}$ and $1\frac{5}{16}$ inches per second! Expecting nothing in the way of frequency range at the slowest speed, we were surprised at how much could be accomplished. Other features of the Uher—and there was a long list—included automatic reverse at the end of a reel and a tricky device which turned the recorder on and off by voice: speak, and it starts; stop talking, and the recorder stops.

Other show news: Harman-Kardon introduced two kits: power amplifier and stereo control units. Acro had new kits, a small but complete preamp being of special interest. Connoisseur (Ercona) had a new arm, which is positioned over the record, then lowered by turning a dial at the rear pivot point. Turn the knob the other way, and the arm rises off the record. Comes equipped with a diamond-tipped ceramic cartridge. Speaking of cartridges, Dynaco has a new one, by B & O of Denmark.

Beam-Echo (Avantic) products, of England, are again being imported to this country. And Lectronics of City Line Center is importing a beautiful tone arm from Canada, hand-made of walnut. — Madison Fielding came up with a new receiver (FM-AM stereo tuner, pre-amp-control unit, and power amplifier) which is reported on in this issue. — Scope Electronics is importing the EMI line from England . . . and Karg has a new continuous FM tuner. Their previous units (being continued) have "tuned" 10 or 12 preselected FM stations by crystal tuning control. — Finally, Cletron had a sofa stereo loudspeaker system. The woofer was mounted on a panel on the back of the sofa, facing to the rear. Two other units, carrying middle and high frequencies, faced forward, one in each corner of the sofa back.

All in all, the show was a great success from our point of view . . . and we have enough products lined up for HIGH FIDELITY's Test Report section to keep the Hirsch-Houck Labs. busy for months.

CHARLES FOWLER

prepared by
Hirsch-Houck Laboratories
 and the technical staff
 of High Fidelity

HF reports

REPORT POLICY

Most equipment reports appearing in this section are prepared for us by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, a completely independent organization whose staff was responsible for the original Audio League Reports. Their reports are signed: H. H. Labs. Reports are published exactly as they are received. Neither we nor the manufacturers of the equipment tested are permitted to delete information from or add to the reports, to amend them in any way, or to withhold them from publication. Manufacturers may add a short comment if they wish to do so.

On equipment that demands more subjective appraisals (such as loudspeakers), the reports may be prepared by members of our own staff. Such reports do not carry a signature. The policy concerning report publication and amendment by the manufacturer is the same as that for H. H. Reports.

Fisher Model 600 Stereo Tuner and Amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): This is a complete stereo receiver, providing FM-AM stereo tuning facilities, preamplifier-control functions, and two-channel power amplification, all on one compact chassis. Controls: AM tuning, FM tuning, bass and treble tone (concentric), tape monitor, high filter, low filter, AM broad-narrow, balance, loudness, volume, mono-stereo function, and selector. Full connections for FM multiplex accessory adapters. Record and tape head equalization. Speaker phase reverse switch. Center channel output jack. Built-in ferrite AM antenna. Provision for connection to third tape head, for monitoring during recording. Price: \$349.50. **MANUFACTURER:** Fisher Radio Corp., 21-21 Forty-fourth Drive, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

At a glance: The Fisher Model 600 is a complete stereo FM-AM receiver, including full stereo control facilities and a pair of power amplifiers on one chassis. Practically all system interconnections have been eliminated without sacrificing the performance obtainable from separate components of good quality. The performance of each portion of the Model 600 is of top caliber, and the complete unit requires only the addition of a pair of good speakers, a turntable, and a stereo pickup to form a truly high-fidelity stereo music system.

In detail: Since the Fisher Model 600 consists of an FM-AM stereo tuner and an integrated stereo amplifier,

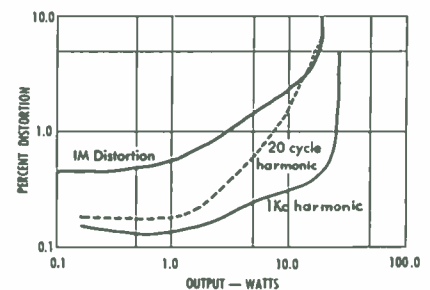
functionally separate though physically on one chassis, we will treat each portion of the unit separately.

Amplifier

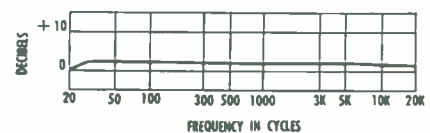
The amplifier is rated at 20 watts per channel, with a pair of 7189 tubes in each output stage. Function selection is by means of a MONO-STEREO switch, which has positions for Channel A (FM), Channel B (AM), Stereo Reverse, and a Mono-Phono position. In this position the two phono inputs are paralleled, enabling a stereo cartridge to be used for monophonic reproduction and achieving vertical rumble cancellation. An input SELECTOR switches the amplifier inputs to a high-level AUX input, FM Multiplex, FM-AM, Phono, and Tape Head. All inputs except FM-AM are located on the rear of the chassis. The FM-AM inputs are internally connected, with the choice of FM, AM, or both being made with the MONO-STEREO switch. A connector in the rear of the



The Fisher Model 600.



Distortion: IM and harmonic.



Power response, with Odb = 10 watts.

unit supplies an output for an external FM Multiplex adapter, whose audio outputs then go to a pair of input connectors on the Model 600.

Phono equalization is for the RIAA characteristic, used on practically all modern LPs including stereo discs. The tone controls have positions marked for modifying the RIAA characteristic to the older Columbia LP or 78-rpm characteristics. The tone controls for the two channels are concentric, with slip clutches so that they may be adjusted separately and then operated as single controls. A ganged volume control is combined with a

power switch. A stereo balance control provides some 7 db of boost on one channel while reducing the gain of the other channel by 9 db. Both channels have rumble and scratch filters that are effective on all inputs. A tape monitor switch permits monitoring a stereo or mono tape recording as it is being made, provided a three-head tape recorder is available.

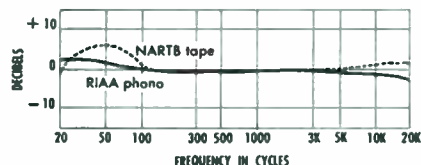
The controls on the rear of the chassis include level-set adjustments for the internal AM tuner, multiplex adapter, and phono and tape inputs. A switch reverses the phase of the signal to one speaker. Outputs are provided for 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speakers.

Test Results

The maximum power obtained from each channel in our tests was 17 watts. Power response over the audio spectrum was exceptionally uniform. Even at 20 cycles, harmonic distortion was very low at the usual listening levels. The amplifiers of the Fisher 600 showed less distortion at very low frequencies than any other integrated stereo or mono amplifier we have tested, whether rated at 20 watts output or less.

Tone control characteristics were entirely conventional. The loudness control suffers from one minor defect: since there is no independent adjustment of level when listening to FM programs, the user has no control over the degree of compensation except to turn it on or off. Fortunately, the contours are well chosen, with the bass boost starting at 300 cycles or lower, and a slight amount of treble boost occurring above 8 kc at low settings of the volume control. The result is a well-balanced sound, free from boominess at any volume setting.

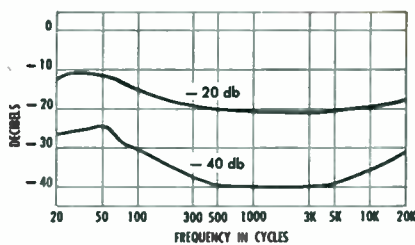
RIAA phono equalization is within 2 db of the ideal curve at all points. Setting the tone controls to the indicated points produced an LP equalization characteristic of similar accuracy. The NARTB tape playback characteristic is very accurate except for a 5-db bump in the 30- to 50-cycle region.



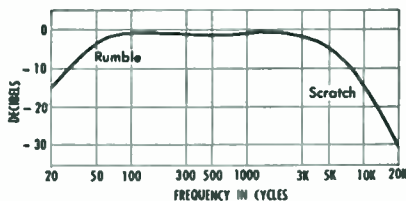
Equalization accuracy.

The rumble and scratch filters are nearly ideal, with negligible effect on middle frequencies, and sharp cutoff characteristics. These filters, which are most effective in their intended functions, hardly disturb musical content.

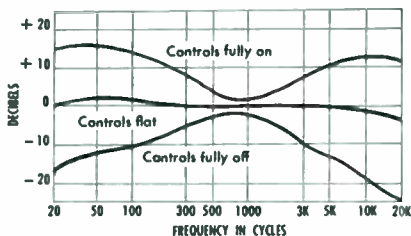
Effect on response...



... of loudness control.



... of filters.



... of tone controls.

The gain of the Fisher 600 amplifiers is very high. Less than 2 millivolts are required at the phono inputs to drive it to 10 watts output per channel. Hum levels, though not unusually low, are not audible at level settings encountered in actual use. Hum and noise under these conditions is typically 63 db to 70 db below 10 watts output. Crosstalk between inputs is not measurable, and stereo crosstalk between channels is better than -47 db at 1,000 cps.

The amplifiers are absolutely stable and free from ringing under any conditions of capacitive or resistive loading. Their damping factors are in the vicinity of 6 or 7. All tubes and filter capacitors in use are operated conservatively.

FM Tuner

The Fisher 600's FM tuner is simple and straightforward. It uses a ratio detector, and does not have AFC. The tuning eye presents a horizontal bar of light with a dark segment in the middle. The dark segment becomes smaller as the signal is tuned in.

The tuner's sensitivity was measured by the IHFM Tuner Standard. The total hum, noise, and distortion in the tuner output is plotted against signal strength, with a 100% modulated test signal. The noise and distortion is 30 db below 100% modulation with a 6-

microvolt signal, and this is considered the usable sensitivity of the tuner.

This sensitivity is exceeded only by some of the more expensive tuners. More important than mere sensitivity, however, is the fact that the Fisher 600 has adequate IF bandwidth to receive weak signals without clipping or distortion even at high-modulation levels. It is very easy to tune, and most of the negligible amount of warm-up drift occurs in the first three or four minutes. The tuning eye is remarkably sensitive, showing a definite indication for signals as weak as 2 microvolts.

AM Tuner

No laboratory measurements were made on the AM tuner. It is equipped with a ferrite rod antenna, which may be rotated for best reception. Its circuit could hardly be simpler: it has only three tubes, plus a tuning eye similar to the one used on the FM tuner. A front-panel switch allows either a sharp or a broad IF response.

The best test of an AM tuner is to make an A-B comparison of its sound with that of a good FM tuner, using a station employing both outlets. Most AM tuners are uninspiring in such a test. We were pleasantly surprised to find that the AM sound of the Fisher 600 did not suffer a bit by comparison with its FM sound. Its highs were very nearly as crisp, and if anything the over-all sound was better rounded on AM than on FM. With this receiver we were able to appreciate FM-AM stereo broadcasts fully, which is more than we can say for most FM-AM stereo tuners we have used.

Much of the Fisher AM tuner's outstanding sound was due to the silent background. Its freedom from hiss, birdies (it has an excellent 10-kc whistle filter), and other interference helped reduce to minor proportions the gap between AM and FM sound. The sensitivity proved to be more than adequate for the New York metropolitan area, and should be sufficient for any but fringe area reception. For that matter, no AM tuner is likely to prove very satisfactory for high-fidelity reception under those conditions.

H. H. Labs.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: 1. Although the FM sensitivity of the Fisher 600 is quite high, measured in accordance with IHFM standards, we are pleased to state that the sensitivity on regular production units has for some time been running 40% higher even than that attributed to it in the report. 2. The Fisher 600 is now equipped with a low-impedance, center-channel output jack. This makes it possible for the owner to use his old monophonic omniplier as a center-channel source, either for "curtain-of-sound" stereo in the same room with the 600, or to drive a remote speaker installation.

Permoflux HDB-16-16 Stereo Headset and AD-25-2 Adapter

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a high-quality headset wired for stereo listening, with control box. **Headphone impedance:** 16 ohms each (other models available). **Control box impedance:** 10,000 to 8 ohms. **Frequency response:** 50 to 15,000 cps, ± 10 db. **Price:** \$40. **MANUFACTURER:** Permoflux Products Co., 4101 San Fernando Rd., Glendale 4, Calif.

At a glance: Permoflux phones provide high-quality headphone listening or stereo monitoring from a conventional stereo power amplifier.

In detail: Permoflux manufactures a series of stereophonic (and of course, monophonic) headsets. The essential difference is in the impedance. In the stereo group, the following impedance ratings are available: 12, 16, 300, 600, and 10,000 ohms. The phones used for this report were of 16-ohm impedance—and that certainly makes a big difference.

To get best performance, earphones (headsets, headphones, what have you) should be of an impedance close to that of the equipment with which they are to be used. Thus the 12- and 16-ohm sets work best when connected to the output of regular stereo power amplifiers (either 8- or 16-ohm taps).

The two models with 300 and 600 ohms impedance are intended for connection to standard broadcast and recording studio lines. Some professional-model tape recorders have 600-ohm outputs. Most home-style recorders, however, have high-impedance outputs for monitoring; if they include loudspeakers, there may be an output connection marked "speaker" which would be at low impedance (4 to 16 ohms).

The headphones supplied to us



The Permoflux headset.

were tested under two conditions: connected to the 16-ohm terminals of a power amplifier, and to the high-impedance output of a home-style recorder, but one which did not have a power amplifier or loudspeaker. In the first arrangement the volume was ear-shattering; in the second, the mismatch was too severe.

When using the power amplifier, the volume could of course have been kept down by the preamplifier's volume control, but adequate control was difficult. A good solution was reached, however, by adding the impedance-matching device supplied us by Permoflux. With the impedance adapter set to provide a mismatch, the pre-amp's volume control could be rotated to its twelve-o'clock position and all was well.

In fact, we got the usual pleasant surprise that always seems to accompany listening with good earphones. It's pleasant, and more than just novel; stereo really sounds better—it must be because the second acoustical environment (the home living room) is excluded. The Permoflux phones seem

smooth and have fine highs, with a slight—and pleasant—droop at the very top, and good bass if one considers the fact that they are headphones. Distortion seemed to be extremely low.

When used with the tape recorder, the impedance adapter did not entirely cure the mismatch problem; at least, the volume remained insufficient. Though the recorder has never put out much wallop, with another pair of standard high-impedance phones the volume has been adequate (no more) for critical monitoring. We just could not bring it up to that level with the Permoflux pair.

The impedance-matching box has two wires, with plugs, and two jacks for the headphone plugs, and a switch for binaural-monophonic listening. Care should be exercised to get things connected properly. Given the wrong setup, particularly when listening to a monophonic source, no sound at all emerges, or only a faint whisper. And when the unit is connected to a high-impedance source (the tape recorder we were talking about) the setting of the five-position impedance-matching switch can change tonal response.

All in all, fine phones. Just be sure to get the right impedance for the job for which they are intended.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Permoflux High Fidelity Dynamic headphones are manufactured in both high and low impedance. A minimum of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a watt is required to drive the headphones in order to obtain a satisfactory listening level. We recommend, however, that low-impedance headphones be hooked up to the output of the power amplifier to obtain the fullest and most satisfactory performance. There is no need to use matching transformers when the headphones are hooked up to the power amplifier since they are of low impedance. Monophonic headphones are available in impedances of 8, 25, and 32 ohms. Stereophonic units are available with 12 and 16 ohms on each side.

Dynakit Stereo 70 Dual Power Amplifier Kit

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): The Stereo 70 is a dual power amplifier conservatively rated at 35 watts per channel. **Frequency response:** ± 0.5 db from 10 to 40,000 cycles. **IM distortion:** less than 1% at 35 watts. **Output impedances:** 4, 8, and 16 ohms. **Special features:** two separate power supply sockets for preamplifiers. Front-panel switch to parallel outputs for operation as a 70-watt monophonic amplifier. **Price,** including cover: \$99.95. **MANUFACTURER:** Dynaco, Inc., 617 North Forty-first St., Philadelphia 4, Pa.

At a glance: The Stereo 70 is a dual 35-watt power amplifier, featuring the high quality and moderate price which has characterized earlier Dynakit amplifiers. Its electrical performance is matched only by manufac-

tured amplifiers that cost far more. The Stereo 70 can be used as a pair of 35-watt amplifiers for stereo, or as a 70-watt mono amplifier. Its power and distortion ratings are completely conservative. Its listening quality is unsurpassed.



The Dynakit Stereo 70.

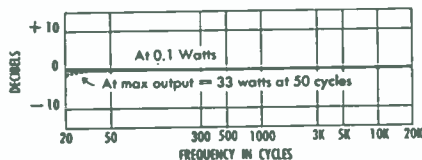
In detail: Each channel of the Dynakit Stereo 70 employs a 7199 triode-pentode and a pair of EL-34 output tubes. The lower plate voltage used in the Stereo 70 assures long life for tubes and filter capacitors. In fact this amplifier's components are operated more conservatively than those in any other commercial amplifier we have tested.

The circuitry of the Stereo 70 is very similar to that of the older Mark II and Mark III amplifiers, except for the smaller output transformers. Somehow, the two amplifiers and their power supply have been packaged in a space not much greater than that of the older mono amplifiers, without crowding and apparently without running at a higher temperature.

The Stereo 70's frequency response

is so flat that it almost seems pointless to plot it. The power response, in either mono or stereo modes, is nearly as good. The apparent discrepancy between the maximum power outputs shown in these curves and those suggested by the distortion curves is simply due to the different method of measurement. The power response shows the maximum power obtainable before some distortion of the output waveform can be seen on an oscilloscope. Very small amounts of distortion can be detected in this way. Acceptably low numerical distortion values can be obtained at much higher power levels.

As the curves show, the distortion in each channel of the Stereo 70 is immeasurably low or approaching the limitations of the test equipment at powers of 10 watts or less. At 1,000 cy-



Frequency response at low and maximum levels.

cles each channel is capable of some 43 watts before distortion becomes appreciable. By paralleling the two channels with the switch provided on the amplifier, one has a superb 85-watt amplifier (though Dyna calls it a 70-watt amplifier).

The hum level when driven from a low-impedance source (such as any

preamplifier) is better than 90 db below 10 watts. Less than 0.7 volts is needed to drive each channel to 10 watts, or both channels to 20 watts. The damping factor is approximately 9 (Dyna says 15). Outputs are provided for 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speakers. The Stereo 70 will develop the equivalent of 18 watts per channel into a 3-mfd capacitive load at 10 kc, which

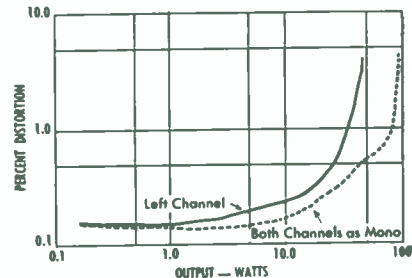


The Stereo 70 in its protective casing.

makes it quite suitable for driving electrostatic speakers at high volume levels. It is absolutely stable and free from ringing under any conditions of capacitive loading.

Two power take-off sockets are provided to operate a pair of Dynakit preamplifiers. Each has its own heater winding to prevent interaction between channels.

A comparison of the performance of the Stereo 70 against the Dynakit Mark III shows the Stereo 70 to be definitely superior in all respects. Its distortion at all power levels is lower



Intermodulation distortion vs. output.

than that of the Mark III, and strikingly so near maximum power output. Its frequency and power response are better at the extremes of the audio range. Its sensitivity is about 15% higher. Of course, this improvement in flexibility and performance costs money which, in many cases, might not be warranted. But for the person who wants a very compact, superior quality stereo amplifier, or an extremely powerful mono amplifier at a remarkably low price, the Dynakit Stereo 70 is a natural.—H. H. Labs.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: There seems to be only one important point which the Hirsch-Houck Labs. did not include—the fact that the Stereo 70 which they analyzed was a kit (although it is also available wired). We attribute the excellent performance which can be obtained from our kit to the use of a factory-assembled printed circuit board containing the critical parts of the circuit, the quality of the parts used, and the factory testing and matching of tubes. The conservative operation of the components permits us to offer a one-year guarantee on all parts—a guarantee which we believe is unique in the kit field.

KIT NOTES

The Dynakit 70 was received as a kit. Before it was sent for test by the Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, it had to be assembled and wired. The task was assigned to John Diegel of our office staff. His notes and comments follow.

The Stereo 70 is a complete dual 35-watt power amplifier kit offering the highest possible fidelity at a low cost and in a most compact arrangement. It uses patented circuits of outstanding performance characteristics along with the new Dynaco A-470 transformers. Two noninteracting 35-watt channels provide adequate power in a stereophonic or two-channel system. The two channels can be paralleled for a full 70 watts of power suitable for practically any monophonic use.

Construction Notes

As its forerunners have done, the Stereo 70 sets a standard for simplicity of construction. The 52-odd components require about five hours for assembly into the

finished product. Plans are very clear and a large set of pictorials simplify identification and placement of parts. All wiring is done step by step and layer by layer.

The instructions are divided into two sections. First, mechanical assembly: having to do with the attaching of tube sockets, inputs plugs, power and output transformers, chokes and other bolted-down parts. There are fifteen steps in this section. Second, the wiring procedure: there are seventy steps in this stage. In the mechanical assembly be very careful to orient properly the keyways of tube sockets and power take-off sockets for the preamp. Also in Step 6 of the mechanical assembly you should take care to see that the selenium rectifier for the bias voltage is properly mounted. The lug marked + K must go closest to the chassis. The rectifier is quite small and it is very easy to mistake the plus and minus sides.

The power supply is the first section to be wired. Then follows the output stage and 1 choke. After the first forty steps have been completed, you are ready to wire the printed circuit board. Connec-

tions are made to the board at numbered eyelets. These eyelets already have solder in them, making soldering easy and lessening the danger of damaging the printed wiring. This work should be done with a small iron. Use no more heat on the eyelet than is required to make the solder flow. All eyelets are clearly marked and instructions in this phase are very detailed.

When you finish wiring the printed circuit board and insert the line cord, the amplifier is complete.

It is wise at this point to go back over the wiring and check all joints and connections for good mechanical and electrical bonding. Also check to make sure that the solder didn't run to another connection or ground out a component accidentally.

The last step is the setting of the bias voltage. This is where the Dyna Biaset comes into use and greatly simplifies the initial adjustment of the amplifier. The bias is checked at pin No. 8 of each preamplifier power take-off socket. The reading should be 1.56 volts DC. Once this step is complete you are ready to use your new amplifier.

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Stereo equipment is identified thus: ●●

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RECEIVERS

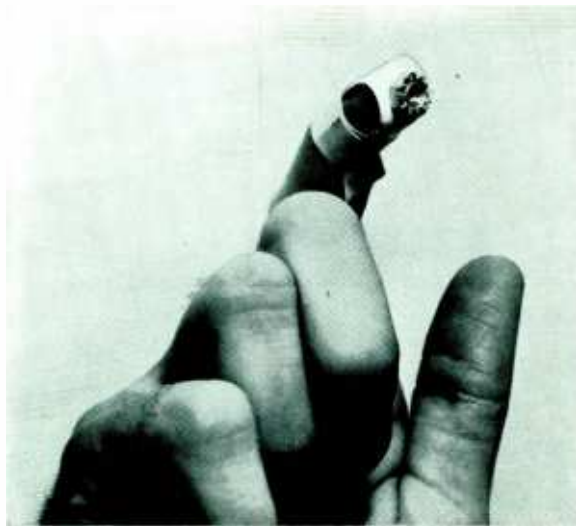
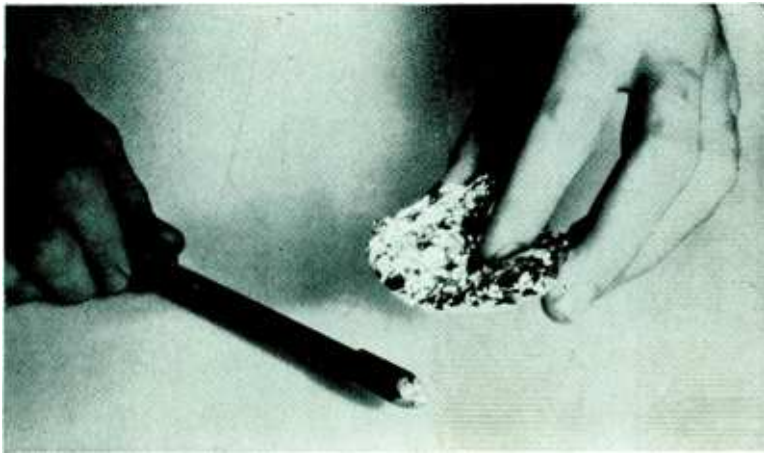
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MISCELLANY

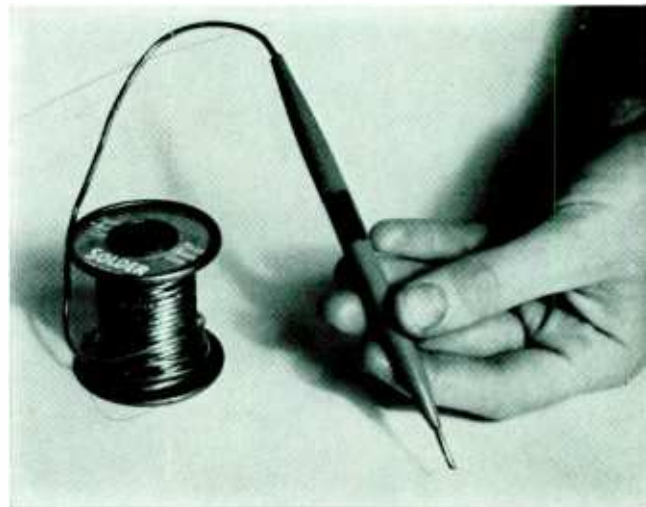
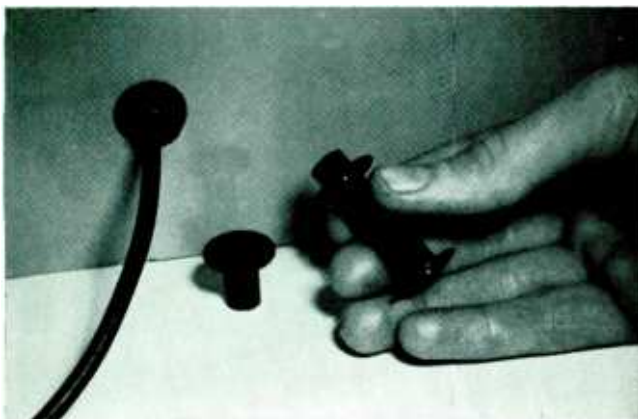
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Kit builders, try out these four suggestions when working on your next project. Left: To clean the tip of your soldering iron, use aluminum foil: won't burn (like cloth), won't eat up metal (like a file), won't get into electric gear (like steel wool). Center: To fix a nut on a screw on the underside of a chassis, seat the nut on a strip of tape attached sticky-side out to your finger. Bottom left: To make an electric wire or cable feed-through insulator, cut a plastic 35-mm film spool in half, drill out the inside, and insert one half into the chassis as shown. A touch of household cement will hold it firmly in place. Below: You can make a shock-proof solder holder very easily from an old ball-point pen: take out the cartridge, clip off the top of the pen, and insert solder as shown. You can use this gadget to solder in "hot" electric circuits without the slightest fear of getting a shock, since the pen will insulate your hand from the solder.

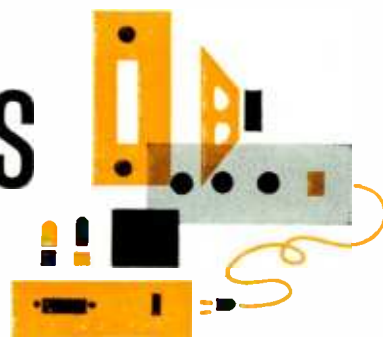
H★I★N★T★S

for the audio kit builder



A U D I O N E W S

A Preview of New Equipment



Stereo Tape for Home Recording

"Scotch" brand has now put out Tartan Series quality stereo tapes, especially developed for home recordists; they combine acetate (plastic) backing with extra-high-potency oxide coating. Built-in silicone lubrication helps smoothen operation and protect recording head against wear. In 5- and 7-inch reels; lengths and suggested prices: 600-ft., \$1.75; 900-ft., \$2.50; 1,200-ft., \$2.95; 1,800-ft., \$4.25.

Fane High-Frequency Speaker

British pressure-type unit, used with crossover network or condenser, handles high-note portion of 15 watts of music. Level response from 2,000 to 14,000 cps, gradual rolloff thereafter. Useful range, 1,500 to 18,000 cps. Hardened aluminum diaphragm has special loading system. May be used with or without baffle. Imported by Moe Swedgal Electronics, New York.



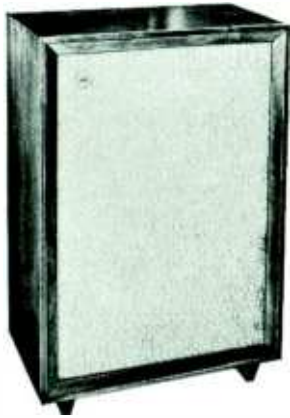
New Monophonic Amplifier

A new 15-watt monophonic amplifier, with a frequency response of 15-30,000 cps \pm 1 db (at normal listening level), has been introduced by Lafayette Radio. Power output 15 watts (speech and music rating). Five inputs: Aux, Tuner, Mag. Phono, Crystal Phono, Tape Head. Outputs: Tape out, 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speaker terminals. Bass, treble controls, other features. Price: \$39.50.

Lafayette FM Tuner

Model LT-80, Lafayette Radio's new FM tuner, is hand-wired and individually tested in the laboratory. As a result, say the makers, it has a sensitivity of 1.5 uv for 20 db quieting. An Armstrong grounded-grid low-noise front end, triode mixer, tuned dual limiters, Foster-Seeley discriminator, and 3-gang tuning condenser form part of the circuitry. Frequency response: 20-20,000 cps \pm 1/2 db. Price: \$49.50.



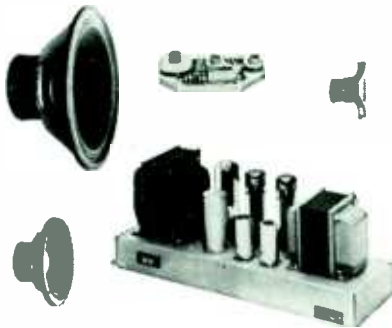


Low-cost 4-Speaker System

A low-cost four-speaker combination system that has both monophonic and stereophonic application has been put out by Europe's largest speaker manufacturer, Isophon. Available in 20 and 25 watts; hand-crafted cabinets designed on distributed-port principle. Can be bought complete, or without enclosure for wall or custom installation; sold in kit form, too. Prices: \$83 to \$125.

Grundig Recorder Weighs 5 Pounds

Powered by ordinary flashlight batteries, this unit offers "almost an hour of high-fidelity sound reproduction," says Grundig. Matchbook-sized microphone weighs less than an ounce, yet can pick up sound 25 feet away while tucked in shirt or vest pocket. Carrying case in charcoal and office gray. Size 7" x 3" x 11". Price: \$79.95.



Ampex Amplifier-Speaker Systems

New model 303 makes available—in component form—the power amplifier and speaker units used in the Ampex Signature Home Music System console. (One difference: the console costs \$2,600; model 303 costs \$285.50.) "The units are identical with those of the famed console," Ampex insists, "and within a comparable enclosure will produce sound of identical quality." Two model 303s are needed for stereo. Model 302, somewhat smaller, sells for \$174.50.

Finish These Yourself

Two Jensen bookshelf speaker systems—the new Duette 2-way and the Tri-ette 3-way (illustrated)—now come in unfinished cabinets of light, smooth, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch gum hardwood. Cabinet front edges are banded. Extra grille-former comes with each system; you can match any décor by installing grille fabric of your choice. Tube vented, bass-superflex enclosures. Prices: \$59.95, \$89.50.



Portable Tape Recorder

Hosho's Model 105, now available, weighs only 18 pounds, includes power amplifier, twin speakers. Speeds: $3\frac{3}{4}$, $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips; remote control; magic-eye record level indicator; precision mechanism with dynamically balanced flywheel assembly; ear-phone; high-frequency erasure; extension speaker jack and audio cable; input for recording direct from radio, phonograph, TV; table stand. Price: \$129.95.

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STEREO DISCS

Continued from page 78

in F, K. 413, and No. 20 in D minor, K. 466, and the results are well worth your attention, for the pianist is in absolutely top form in both works (Columbia MS 6049). The new D minor is infinitely more attractive than Serkin's earlier version.

If you have been waiting for a good up-to-date recording of Sibelius' immensely difficult Violin Concerto in D minor, I think you will discover it in a performance by Ruggiero Ricci and the London Symphony (London CS 6067). It may not equal the prewar Heifetz-Beecham version but it is an effective and musicianly reading.

Opera

Stereo has unquestionably proved its worth in the domain of opera, for it is capable of conjuring up the illusion of stage movement, of atmosphere, and of theatre excitement. Almost every score yet recorded in the new medium has benefited greatly. Nowhere have stereo techniques been more fantastically successful than in the first complete recording of Wagner's *Das Rheingold* (London OSA 1309). This is a memorable achievement in every way—from Solti's magnificent grasp of the score and the sustained eloquence of a superb cast, particularly Flagstad's radiant Fricka, to the recording itself, which literally transports you to your seat in the opera house.

If you find Wagnerian opera heavy and prefer the effervescent brio of Italian opera, listen to a new and brilliant recording of Rossini's *Barber of Seville* under Erich Leinsdorf's direction (RCA Victor LSC 6143). This is the most complete version of the opera ever recorded, and it is sung to perfection by a cast that includes Robert Merrill, Cesare Valletti, and Roberta Peters.

The operetta buff, tired of the more standard items in the repertoire, should certainly sample Franz Lehár's seldom heard *Giuditta*. The score is full of luscious melodies, which Hilde Gueden and a cast of Viennese artists sing with distinction in as animated a performance as you could wish to hear (London OSA 1301). And almost any Gilbert and Sullivan devotee (even the confirmed D'Oyly Carte Company enthusiast) will be delighted by a stylish performance of *H.M.S. Pinafore* led by Sir Malcolm Sargent (Angel S3589 B/L).

Choral

Moving on to choral music, Handel's

Continued on page 172

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STEREO DISCS

Continued from page 170

Messiah comes first to mind, for it has long been considered THE ideal Christmas gift. Alas, the new recordings of it by Beecham, Ormandy, Sargent, and Scherchen were not yet released when this article was written. [But see Nathan Broder's review of them on P. 79. Ed.] However, the Stereo Fidelity recording of *Messiah* issued earlier in the year is attractive for more reasons than its low price of \$11.95. Conductor Walter Susskind, the London Philharmonic, and the little-known soloists and chorus acquit themselves very well, and the stereo sound is quite overwhelming (SFCC 201).

Four new recordings of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* are due for release this season, but I wonder whether any will surpass the intensely musical and devoted performance led by Karl Richter for Decca's Archive series (ARC 73125/8). On a smaller scale, but just as magical, is a lovely concert of Monteverdi madrigals sung by the Deller Consort with great purity of style and impeccable taste (Vanguard BG 5007).

Chamber Music

Successful stereo recordings of chamber music have been comparatively rare to date. Among the happier efforts is a Vanguard album in which the Griller Quartet excels in grateful performances of Haydn's Quartets Opus 71 and Opus 74 complete (VSD 2033/34). Equally successful is London's disc containing a poignant performance of Schubert's marvelous Oc-



tet, Op. 166. The Viennese musicians catch every gleam of color in this beautiful work, and London's well-spread sound further illuminates their performance (CS 6051).

In more modern vein, Hindemith's often recorded *Kleine Kammermusik*, Op. 24, No. 2, is to be had in a splendid stereo recording by the New York Woodwind Quintet (Concert-Disc CS 205). The Eulenspiegelish character of this lively music is conveyed with persuasive conviction, and the sound is splendid.

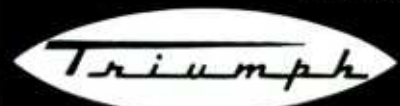
Possibly the most successful of all stereo recordings of chamber music is to be found in a pairing of two modern but easily assimilated works, the Villa

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Popular

Broadway show albums are sure-fire gifts at Christmas or any other season. Although no new original-cast albums were available at press time, two holdovers from last season, *Destry Rides Again* and *Flower Drum Song*, still seem worthy of mention. The former, a big, brassy, fast-moving musical, a little short on melody but packed with action, has been recorded with startling fidelity and wonderful theatrical atmosphere (Decca DL 79075). *Flower Drum Song*, a more leisurely paced show with a bevy of charming

songs by Richard Rodgers, is offered by Columbia (OS 2009).

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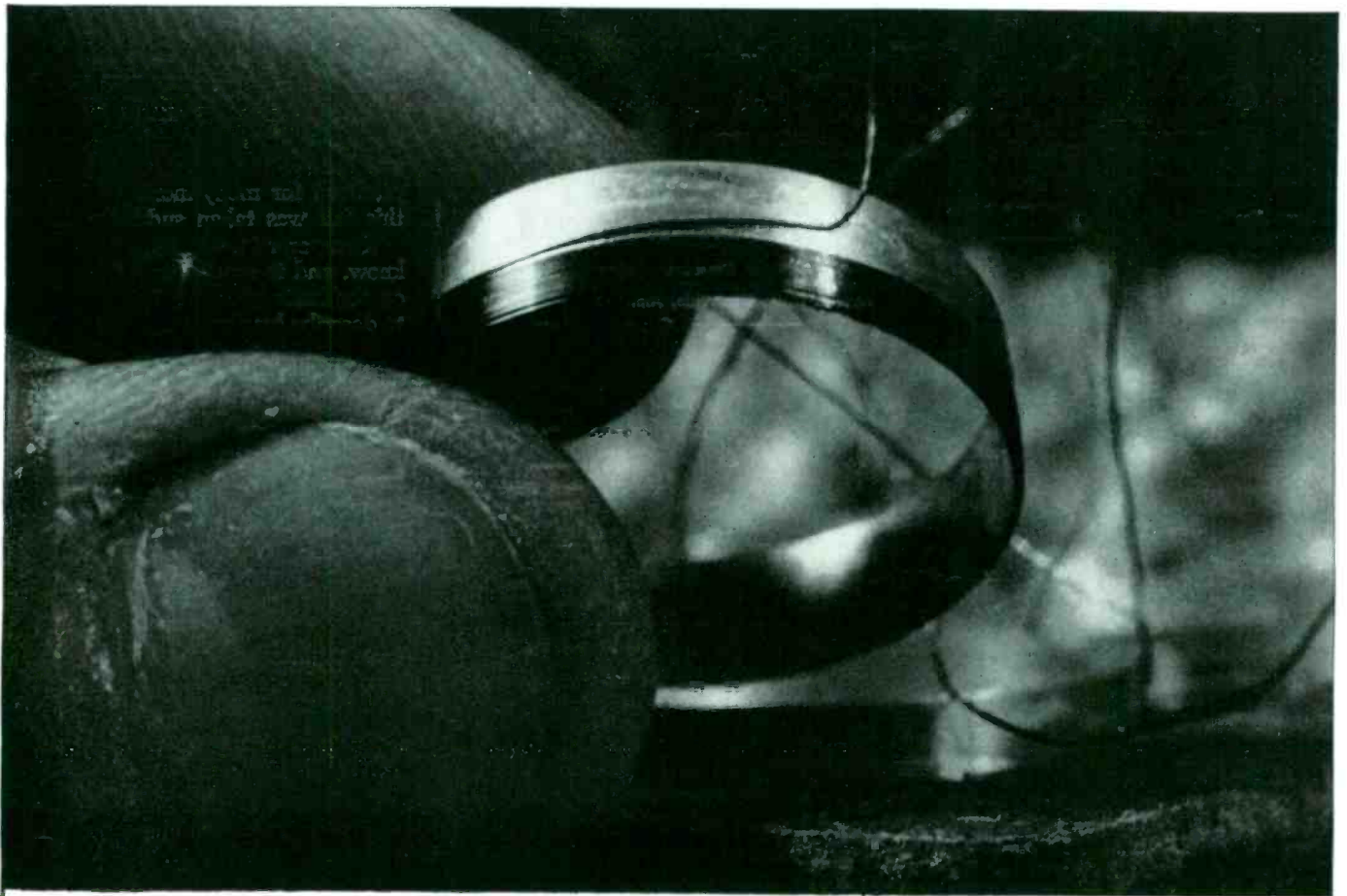


Bizet, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, *et al.* to your heart's content (RCA Victor LSC 2235).

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you can easily add to the general weal and pleasure by proffering one or two stereo discs by the best dance band in the business today, the Lester Lanin Orchestra. I'd suggest either "Have Band, Will Travel" (Epic BN 517) for those whose tastes run to large bands, or "Cocktail Dancing" (Epic BN 516) for those who like a more intimate style.

Plays, poetry, and speech have thus far received little attention from stereo engineers, so this gives me a chance to sneak in one monophonic disc that should by no means be overlooked. This is "Ages of Man," magnificent readings by Sir John Gielgud of scenes from Shakespeare's plays plus five of the sonnets (Columbia OL 5390). It's a thrilling and memorable listening experience.



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OTTO KLEMPERER

Continued from page 71

bottomless sockets, the hands, able to stretch an octave and a half, hang from fleshless wrists, and the mouth is tight and strained. Paralyzed down one side, speaking with a heavy slur, Klemperer seemed, when he appeared in London in 1947, like some ghostly reincarnation of King Lear. When, four years later in Canada, he broke his femur on the unparalyzed side of his body, it seemed as though he could hardly continue the arduous existence of a traveling conductor. Then came two internal operations, one of them a major affair. Yet he struggled on, shuffling painfully on and off concert platforms, and sitting to conduct without a baton.

Around 1954 his health started to improve. Audiences noticed that he was moving rather more easily and that his skeletonlike frame seemed less frail. Orchestral players started to report a genial side to a character that had once seemed completely unbend-

ing. "Good," said Klemperer to a flutist at a rehearsal. Astounded at this lavish praise, the whole orchestra burst into applause. "It was not all *that* good," snapped Klemperer, with the poker face he likes to assume when he makes a joke. Gradually the crutches grew less elaborate, then he moved with two canes, then with one. Finally, in the spring of 1955 when he was conducting a radio performance of *Don Giovanni* at Cologne, in the excitement of those tremendous trombone chords that announce the arrival of the statue at Don Giovanni's supper, Klemperer stood again.

There is something intensely moving in the way that this unworldly man has fought his way through persecution and exile, through terrible physical and mental suffering into a golden Indian summer. And there is a certain compensation that this Indian summer should have brought him acknowledgment as perhaps the day's outstanding exponent of the classics. I wish that I could end on that happy note. But in the autumn of 1958 Klemperer set fire to his bed with a pipe and was burned so badly that he was hospitalized for many months and again this fall was taken suddenly ill.

Klemperer is not an easy man to know, and it would be presumptuous, on the basis of a few meetings, to try to describe his character. He is, at first, extremely difficult to talk to, being quite without capacity for small talk. Anything in the nature of an interview clearly disconcerts him, if only because—unlike almost every other artist I have ever met—he genuinely finds it embarrassing to talk about himself. In consequence he submits to journalists' questionings rather like a tame bear suffering children's pats and caresses. At a chance meeting he is liable to bellow in his curious hollow voice some controversial observation. Klemperer is an imposing and even alarming figure, and I must confess that it was some time before I discovered that what he really wanted was to be talked back to. It is real discussion of some issue that unlocks his capacity for conversation. During the 1958 Edinburgh Festival the dining room of the George Hotel echoed to a voluble discussion between Klemperer and Ansermet on the question of tonality. Characteristically, Klemperer, who today tends to regard dodecaphonic technique with suspicion, took an opposing view to Ansermet's firm rejection of atonal practices.

As a conductor, it is, I think, Klemperer's total lack of any sort of vanity that so endears him to orchestral players. (Certainly the relationship between himself and the Philharmonia Orchestra—not, I can assure you, a

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body that takes kindly to all conductors—is positively affectionate.) And it is this complete absence of vanity and of striving for effect that gives his performances an almost startling directness. It is also perhaps this very directness, together with the measured tempo at which he takes allegros, that causes some critics to find him pedestrian. The whole key to Klemperer's approach to a symphonic movement lies in the extraordinary sense of momentum and continuity he imparts. He can afford to dispense with mere speed as a unifying force because of his unflagging sense of rhythm, the extraordinary onward-pressing quality this gives to his phrasing. And because, however much he may allow himself to stray from the main tempo, he always returns, not like many conductors to something near it, but to it exactly. Thus even the most extended movements are given a strong underlying pulse, while his measured tempo yield both an impression of size that dwarfs most other performances and a spaciousness in which every detail can be perfectly articulated. Sometimes this feeling of sheer size is, it seems to me, overdone, as in Beethoven's gay Eighth Symphony. Sometimes I think there is a trace of pedantry which, for instance, causes him to take the scherzo of the *Pastoral* Symphony at an excessively slow pace, merely because it is a Ländler. But even here, Klemperer's performance comes near persuading one that, if his tempo is too slow, those of other conductors are equally too fast.

Most particularly in Klemperer's interpretations of Beethoven there seems to exist what I can only call some profound spiritual affinity between composer and conductor. Victor Gollancz put the same point in a different way. After a memorable performance of the Ninth Symphony at the Festival Hall he said to me: "It's curious to think that one hundred and fifty years ago a composer went deaf and yet overcame this crippling disability to write some of the greatest music there is; and that today a conductor should be smitten with appalling physical and mental tribulation, should survive it, and grow into a supreme interpreter of the music of the deaf man."

Orchestral players are not usually given to emotionalism about their work. But when I once asked one to tell me what he thought of Klemperer as a conductor, he shuffled with embarrassment and then said: "Well, you see, it's as though Beethoven himself were standing there." I cannot think of a greater tribute.

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MESSIAH

Continued from page 81

made a shrewd guess as to what Beecham meant by "today," for he produced an orchestration in the style of—*Die Meistersinger!* There are solo passages for flute, melting sallies by a horn or a clarinet, rich brass chords, harp arpeggios, ecstatic trills on the triangle, cymbal crashes, and other paraphernalia of the late romantic orchestra. A harpsichord would be a shocking anachronism here. It would be hard to imagine anything less suited to Handel.

The performance is a fine one. Each of the soloists does a highly competent job, even though none is especially outstanding. Jennifer Vyvyan sings both "He shall feed His flock" and "How beautiful are the feet" with a lovely, tender quality of tone, and in the coloratura of "Rejoice greatly," which is taken quite fast, she is most of the time accurate. Monica Sinclair's "He was despised" is pleasing in sound though not as stirring as it can be. Jon Vickers effectively conveys both the pathos of "Thy rebuke hath broken his heart" and its succeeding arioso and the strength of "Thou shalt break them." The ubiquitous Giorgio Tozzi is particularly impressive in "But who may abide" and he even manages to negotiate the cruelly difficult "Why do the nations" without becoming a casualty. The chorus is excellent, except for occasional weakness in the alto section; and, save for a couple of ragged moments, Beecham conducts with a zeal and skill worthy of a better cause. It must be said that he does not, as in his last previous *Messiah* recording, chop off arias after their middle section. He presents the work on seven sides with the conventional cuts, and then, apparently in a sudden access of concern for the purist, offers the deleted portions bunched together as an appendix on the eighth side. It would seem that anyone desiring to hear the work complete in its proper order is expected to switch back and forth between whatever side he is listening to and Side 8. A word should be said about the booklet, which includes nine prints in magnificent color, detachable and suitable for framing, of great paintings on appropriate subjects from the New Testament. And the whole production, an item in RCA Victor's new "Soria Series," is encased in an album that is not only strikingly handsome but eminently practical.

Sargent's performance employs pretty much the same forces as his earlier Angel recording of *Messiah*. He uses a large orchestra and chorus, makes the customary cuts in Parts II and III, and plays Mozart's orchestration with

his own modifications. He accents the drama of the work, which is all to the good, but the singing of his soloists is not very distinguished, and the chorus sounds less good in this version than in its previous appearance. Elsie Morison is much better in sustained passages (like her portion, beautifully sung, of "He shall feed His flock") than in those that require agility (the sixteenth-note figures in "Rejoice greatly," for example, are fluttery). Marjorie Thomas seems to lack the true contralto timbre and sounds here more like a not very expressive mezzo-soprano. The singing of Richard Lewis is nuanced and sometimes eloquent, as in "Comfort ye," but once or twice, as in "All they that see Him," it is a bit unsteady. If Norman Walker's triplets in "Why do the nations" are bleaty, his work elsewhere is acceptable. The chorus is lightfooted and flexible in "For unto us" (was a smaller group used here?), though rather thick-sounding in "And He shall purify." Its size and a fast tempo militate against clarity in "He trusted in God," and on several occasions the tenors are shouty. All in all, this performance seems to lack the warmth and polish that redeemed the shortcomings of Sargent's earlier version.

Ormandy's is a traditional version, apparently based on Mozart's, but more drastically cut than is customary, perhaps to keep within four sides. Lopped off, in addition to the usual numbers, are "The people that walked in darkness" with its preceding arioso, "Rejoice greatly," "How beautiful are the feet" and "His sound is gone out," and several other items. What is left, both musically and textually, is a mere torso. There is some excellent work here by Davis Cunningham and William Warfield, as well as what seems to me the finest performance of an individual number in all four sets—Eileen Farrell's confident and utterly beautiful singing of "I know that my Redeemer liveth." But the choral sopranos sound thin on top, and in general this performance seldom strikes fire.

The Scherchen recording is complete, and in its orchestration almost painfully "pure"—oboes are used only in a few places and I could not hear bassoons anywhere. Like Scherchen's previous version, this is an imaginative job, paying no attention to tradition. In some respects the results are very fine. With the aid of a chorus that seems to be small but has a firm, round tone, the conductor brings out the luminous transparency of "And the glory of the Lord," and effectively presents the contrasts immanent in "Glory to God." Some of his unorthodox tempos are not convincing. "For unto us" seems too fast; at one point it develops into a bit of a

scramble. Too many of the slow movements (among others "And with His stripes," "Thou are gone up on high," "If God be for us," the *Grave* sections of "Since by man came death") drag, and the final Amen is played so broadly (Andante, instead of Allegro moderato) that it sounds like a solemn choral étude rather than an animated affirmation of faith in the Eternal. Léopold Simoneau's rather light-sounding tenor skips happily through "Ev'ry valley." "But who may abide" is sung by the alto here, instead of the bass; after a trembling start Nan Merriman brings it off nicely, and she also provides a moving performance of "O thou that tellest good tidings." Richard Standen sings "The people that walked in darkness" with fine tone quality throughout its wide-ranging part; elsewhere, too, he is a decided asset to the performance. Less valuable, unfortunately, is Pierrette Alarie's contribution. She seems to be addicted to crooning. This type of *sotto voce* singing may be all right in "How beautiful are the feet" but it seems out of place in an expression of confidence like "If God be for us." Incidentally, Miss Alarie sings "justiffee-eth" and the chorus has a tendency to pronounce the definite article "theh," but otherwise the English pronunciation by these mostly foreign singers is excellent.

In a work of this kind stereo adds enormously in depth and clarity. In all four recordings it accomplishes its now-familiar miracle of arraying the performers across as wide a platform as one's living room can provide.

From the standpoint of performance, however, I am not strongly tempted to swap my copy of the Boulton set for any of these. The aggregate of musical qualities in that recording (London A 4403)—Sir Adrian's conducting, the first-class chorus, the singing especially of Miss Vyvyan and George Maran (the tenor)—makes it to me still the most satisfying version of *Messiah* now available.



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BACK TO BRITAIN

Continued from page 76

Reid: Did it strike the Japs that way?

Britten: The Japanese people in London made no difficulty. They accepted the outline at once. I completed the score and sent it off to Tokyo. Then all hell broke loose. I was summoned to the Japanese Consulate in New York and had an absolutely furious letter from somebody in Tokyo. The letter said, among other things, that it was an insult to Japan to submit a work of Christian character. I replied formally, by letter, that, as I was a Christian, that was only to have been expected. [The *Sinfonia* had its first performance in March 1941 by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under Barbirolli.]

Reid: It was through the *Sinfonia*, was it not, that you met Serge Koussevitzky?

Britten: Koussevitzky must have heard about Barbirolli's performance of it. He did two performances of the *Sinfonia* himself in Boston before taking it on tour. One of them I attended. Wonderful conductor. He took infinite pains. He told me how impressed he was by the dramatic qualities of my score. Then he said, "Why don't you write an opera?" I told him I was so busy writing incidental music and shorter works that I simply couldn't afford to take the time off. I saw him next about a week later. He said, "Well, I've got some money for you [viz., \$1,000 from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation]. Will you write an

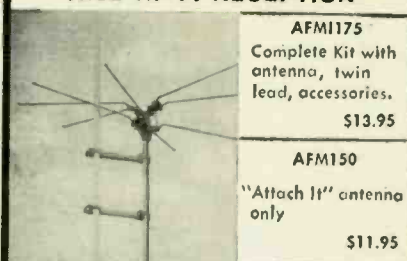


opera now?" I said "Of course." Peter Grimes was the result.

Reid: By that time you were home-bound?

Britten: I had decided in August 1941 that I must get home at all costs. Peter and I stayed for six months with our trunks packed awaiting passage, always ready to leave at twenty-four hours' notice. I hadn't much money. I did all kinds of odd jobs, including proof correcting. We came back on a

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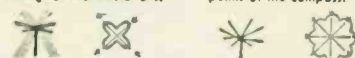
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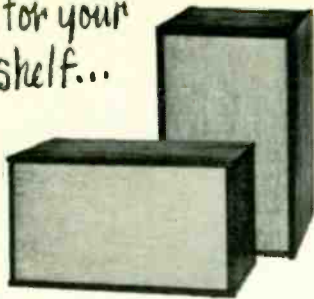
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Swedish ship, New York to Belfast, originally in convoy, but the funnel caught fire and for a while we steamed alone. The voyage lasted a month and was frightening at times. But I had started composing again. On shipboard I wrote the *Hymn to Saint Cecilia*, *A Ceremony of Carols*, and several things I didn't finally use. Scars apart, that month at sea was one of the most enjoyable of my life.

Seventeen years have passed since Britten's memorable ocean crossing. In this time his opus roll has grown from No. 27 to No. 60. (There is a swarm of unnumbered pieces, too.) The peaks include, as well as works already cited: *The Turn of the Screw*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, and *Albert Herring* (chamber operas); the *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*; the *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*; the *Second String Quartet*; the glittering *Spring Symphony*; *The Little Sweep* (children's opera); *Noye's Fludde*, a setting (for child actors and musicians mainly) of the Chester miracle play; and, most recent of all at this writing, the *Nocturne for tenor and orchestra*, with obligato interludes. Frustration has been mentioned. Along with frustrations there have been bursts of unmatched success. Britten is probably the only living composer who has been obliged to stock autographed photographs of himself for handing out at stage doors; who has had the number of his operas produced multiply in great theatres of Europe and of other continents; who has scored with genius for tin tea mugs, handbells, and boys' bugles. (These oddities figure in *Noye's Fludde*, which at its first production in an ancient parish church outside Aldeburgh in 1958 moved case-hardened critics to tears, this writer among them.)

I wrote earlier of a personal mellowing. We do not hear so many curt and cutting appraisals as formerly. His dismissal of Puccini as mere "musical journalism" still provokes a *moue* of impatience. So does his remark, reported by the Earl of Harewood in 1952, that once in a while he plays through Brahms just to see whether his music is as bad as he thought, only to find it worse, if anything. Seven years later, when I challenge him about this judgment, he trims his sails a bit.

"I still stand by George Harewood's 'quote,'" he says, "although I hate anything that is too much black and white. One's feelings are in black and white, I admit, but they don't necessarily represent a final and absolute truth. I have no great sympathy for either Brahms or Beethoven, although I ad-

Continued on next page

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BACK TO BRITAIN

Continued from preceding page

mit that both are very great masters. Both of them have influenced me enormously. They were my favorite composers as a child. But I moved off them. They have failed me. Or I have failed them. . . . Perhaps it is a little oversimplified to say how 'bad' they are. It would be truer to say that I am not now sympathetic to certain points of view their music represents. In any case it is dangerous to hold a viewpoint and never rethink it. I may return to Beethoven and Brahms."

At Aldeburgh, Britten plays with his dachshunds, thinks out music while trudging across the salt marshes, composes in a loft over his garage, and times himself at his work desk as rigorously as foremen time factory hands. He has certainly made himself what he set out to be, a *professional* composer. As is clear from his latest score, the *Nortume*, professionalism is only a fringe quality. Britten's music is still shot with marvel, touched with dawn and dew.



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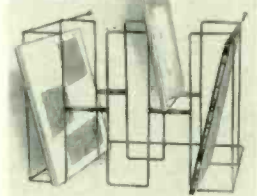
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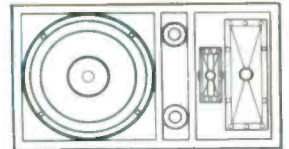
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