high fidelity

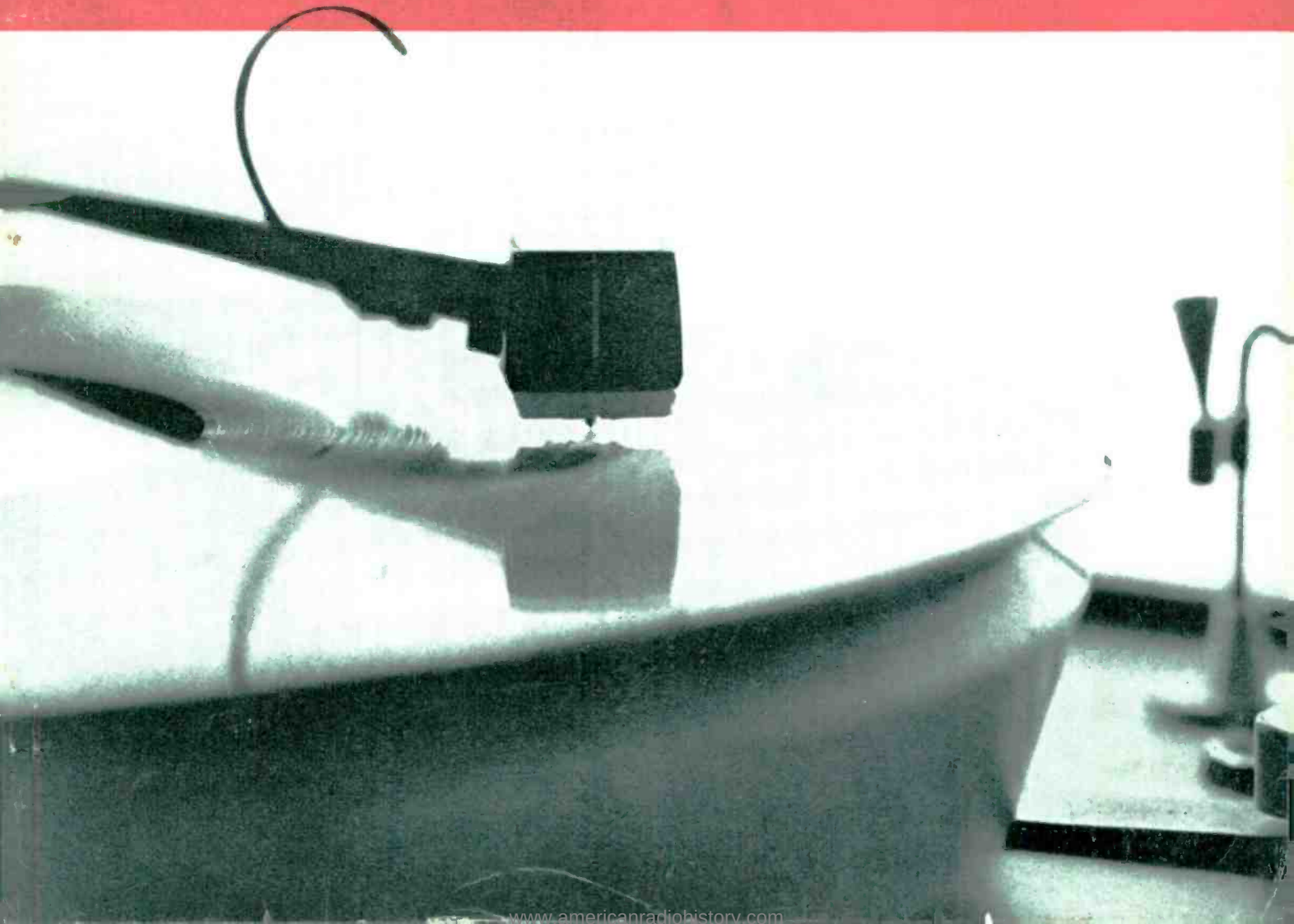
SEPTEMBER THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS 60 CENTS

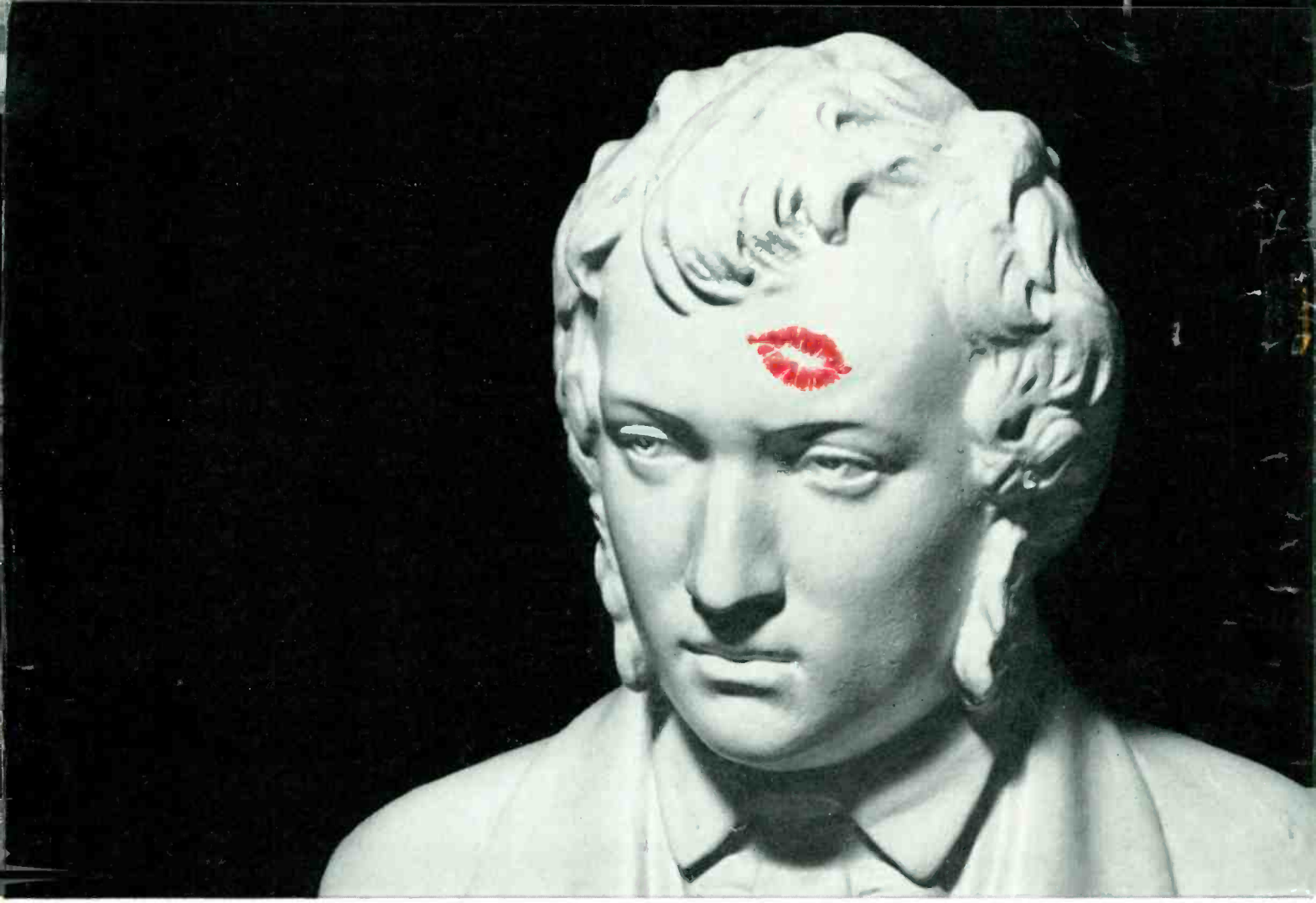
1960

NEW FALL RECORDINGS—A PREVIEW

AMPLIFIER RATINGS—FACT AND FANTASY

REPORTS ON NEW COMPONENTS





CLASSICS THAT MADE THE HIT PARADE

DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM

"Classics that Made the Hit Parade" includes these popular symphonic themes:

Borodin	Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor (Stranger in Paradise)
Tchaikovsky	Symphony No. 5 in E (Moon Love)
Waldteufel	Espana Waltz (Hot Diggity)
Chopin	Polonaise No. 6, in Ab Major (Till the End of Time)
Tchaikovsky	Symphony No. 6 in B (The Story of a Starry Night)
Rachmaninoff	Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor (Full Moon and Empty Arms)
Chopin	Fantasie Impromptu in C# Minor (I'm Always Chasing Rainbows)
Tchaikovsky	Romeo and Juliet Overture (Our Love)

DETAILS OF THE OFFER

This exciting recording is available in a special bonus package at all Audiotape dealers. The package contains one 7-inch reel of Audiotape (on 1½-mil acetate base) and the valuable "Classics that Made the Hit Parade" program (professionally recorded on Audiotape). For both items, you pay only the price of two reels of Audiotape, plus $1. And you have your choice of the half-hour two-track stereo program or the 55-minute monaural or four-track stereo versions.

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— *a new bonus reel from Audiotape*

Some of our greatest popular songs — hits like "Full Moon and Empty Arms," "Till the End of Time," "Stranger in Paradise" — took their melodies from the classics. Eight of these lovely themes—in their original classical setting — are the basis for "Classics that Made the Hit Parade," a program with strength, variety, and, of course, rich melodic beauty.

This unusual program, professionally recorded in sparkling full fidelity on Audiotape, is available RIGHT NOW from Audiotape dealers everywhere. (And only from Audiotape dealers.) Ask to hear a portion of the program, if you like. Then, take your choice of a half-hour of two-track stereo, or 55 minutes of four-track stereo or dual-track monaural sound — all at 7½ ips. Don't pass up this unique opportunity.

"Classics that Made the Hit Parade" makes an ideal addition to Audio's first two bonus reels, "Blood-and-Thunder Classics" and "High Spirits," still available at Audiotape dealers.

audiotape TRADE MARK *"it speaks for itself"*

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NEW "DECORATOR GROUP" LOUDSPEAKERS

a style for every wood...a wood for every mood

Dramatically new in styling and components. Totally improved in concept. Jensen presents the brilliant new Galaxy* III—a stereo system creatively designed with big speaker full-range stereophonic sound combined with the finest in furniture styling . . . all within a fraction of the space used by conventional stereo systems. As you see, one center speaker combines with two matching "Satellite" speakers to create brilliant panoramic stereo sound.

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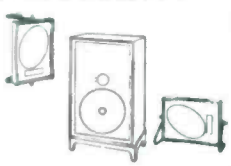
Featuring a new advanced-design 12" FLEXAIR* woofer with SYNTOX-6* magnet to reproduce the bass from 20 to 350 cycles from both channels and to add a touch of center fill for full sound scope. Two satellites placed on shelves or "pinned up" on walls from 8 to 20 ft. apart carry specially developed elliptical midrange speakers and compression supertweeters extending smoothly to the limits of audibility and produce the stereo spread.



Galaxy III furniture model—**$229.50** (without base)
unfinished model—**$195.50** consolette base—**$9.95**

(*) T. M.

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Here is responsible performance . . . in four superb models . . . **for all who can hear the difference.** From a gentle pianissimo to a resounding crescendo–every movement of the stylus reflects a **quality touch** possessed **only** by the Stereo Fluxvalve.

LISTEN! . . . and you will agree Pickering has **more** for the best of everything in record reproduction –mono or stereo. **More Output–More Channel Separation–More Response–More Record Life!** In short . . . **more to enjoy** . . . because, there's **more quality** for **more listening pleasure.**

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high fidelity

SEPTEMBER 1960
volume 10 *number 9*

including **AUDIOCRAFT** *and* **HI-FI MUSIC AT HOME**

MUSIC

EQUIPMENT

REVIEWS

Published monthly at Great Barrington, Mass. by The Billboard Publishing Co. Second-class postage paid at Great Barrington and at additional mailing offices. One-year subscription in U. S., Possessions and Canada $6.00. Elsewhere $7.00.

AUTHORitatively Speaking

Roland Gelatt—author (*Music Makers*, Knopf, 1953; *The Fabulous Phonograph*, Lippincott, 1955); working music critic (for *The Reporter*); Editor, most decidedly working, of HIGH FIDELITY Magazine—like most mortal men moves ordinarily on a terrestrial sphere. Occasionally, however, we suspect there may be celestial moments. One of these, we think, may have occurred back in 1947, when in Paris he was invited to listen to a recording of "a young Spanish girl who won a contest in Geneva." All Mr. Gelatt said to us is that at the time he made a note of the name on the record label—De los Angeles; but the episode clearly was the beginning of a long and devoted following of the singer's career. See "Victoria of the Angels," p. 36.

Rumors have recently reached us that **Charles Fowler,** former publisher of this magazine, has betrayed the good cause of audiophilia by indulging himself in traveling about the country (in the latest-model trailer), reading books on political science, and restoring his garden. We hereby publicly denounce this canard. For proof of Mr. Fowler's fidelity, turn to p. 40 and read "Are You Cheating Yourself on Speakers?"

We knew, of course, that **David Fidelman,** author of our article on amplifier ratings (p. 47), was a well-known audio expert (*Guide to Audio Reproduction* and *Repairing Hi-Fi Systems*, both published by John F. Rider) and an electronics engineer who received his formal education in physics. We shouldn't have been surprised, therefore, to learn that his interest in educating the public in the art of sound reproduction has extended even unto the second generation. It seems that the junior Fidelman, aged six, has been heard to set his young friends absolutely straight when they refer to neighborhood radio-phonographs as "the hi-fi." We're all for catching them young, too.

The possibility of travel in outer space being not too remote these days, we thought it appropriate to prepare the music listener for eventualities that might arise—therefore, **Robert Silverberg's** "Music for People Marooned on Mars," p. 49. Mr. Silverberg, a free-lance writer and science fiction specialist, shares a sprawling apartment with a highly pampered cat, an extensive and ever increasing record collection, and an electronics engineer who does research in radar and optics. It's the last-named who repairs and maintains the hi-fi rig—gratis, too; the engineer is Mrs. Silverberg.

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Soundcraft Tape with the new FA-4 frequency adjusted formulation. Designed to meet the unlimited challenge of the most exciting new era in recording history!

Only years of research . . . and the most modern and advanced tape manufacturing facilities in the world . . . could have perfected this tape! Soundcraft's new **FA-4 FORMULATION** is *frequency adjusted* to provide the superlative sound reproduction *demanded* in this exciting era of new discoveries and innovations in tape recording. You'll hear "highs" as never before . . . *the full frequency spectrum* for perhaps the very first time!

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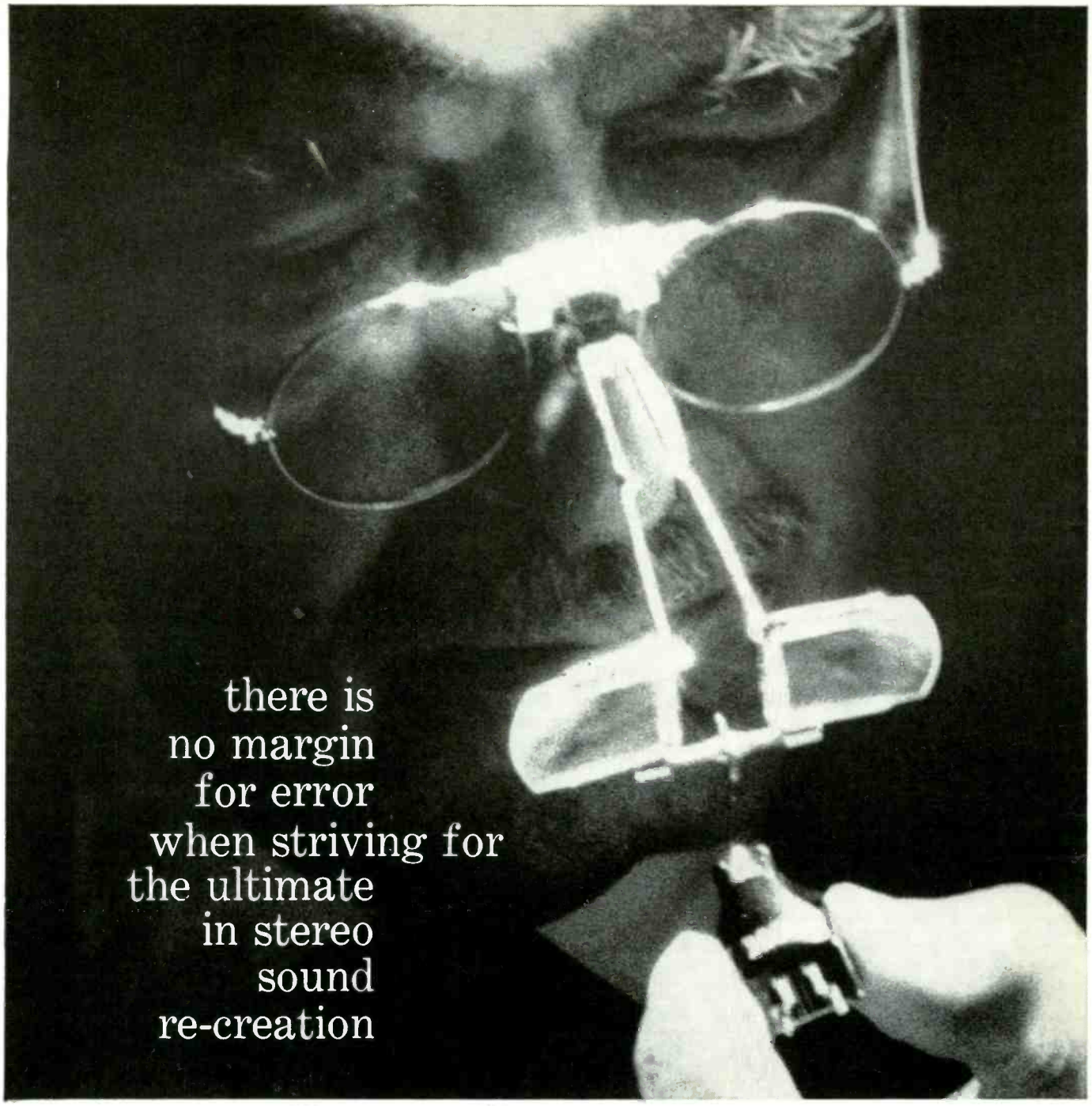

incomparable Stereo Dynetic ...*by* **SHURE**

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Tiny though it is, the cartridge can make or break a stereo system. For this breath-takingly precise miniaturized electric generator (that's really what it is) carries the full burden of translating the miles-long undulating stereo record groove into usable electrical impulses...without adding or subtracting a whit from what the recording engineer created. Knowing this keeps Shure quality standards inflexible.
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Integrated arm and cartridge. $89.50
Cannot scratch records.

PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENT TONE ARM
For any quality cartridge ...stereo or mono. $29.95

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WITH SENSATIONAL AUTOTUNE

■ *New* and *exclusive* with FISHER! For the first time—FISHER AutoTune makes precise tuning *automatic!* Complete with front-panel indicator light.

■ It took Fisher to improve on Fisher! Our twenty-three years of leadership in high fidelity research are reflected in this most superlative of all tuners —the *new FISHER 202-R!* With new AutoTune, *plus*—IF muting, a Fisher *exclusive,* for automatic interstation noise suppression. *6* IF stages! Golden Cascode front-end. Sensitivity, 1 microvolt for 20 db of quieting. Capture ratio of only 1.5 db, by far *the lowest ever achieved!* Assures optimum FM reception in *all* locations. Eight front panel controls, including a four-position AM switch, for maximum flexibility and convenience of operation!

$329.50

FISHER 100-R

OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF THE 100-R

■ Cascode front-end. Remarkably high sensitivity. Three IF stages on FM. Completely independent FM and AM circuits for stereo or monophonic reception. Dual-display Micro-Ray Tuning Indicator. Highly sensitive AM ferrite antenna. Multiplex and recorder facilities.

■ Within its price range, the new FISHER 100-R has no equal. Delivering the same high-quality performance that distinguishes all FISHER tuners, the 100-R will meet the requirements of the most exacting audio enthusiast! Sensitivity, 1.6 microvolts for 20 db of quieting. Separate FM and AM Level Controls. Amazing AM section delivers signal comparable to FM quality. Two-position AM Bandwidth Switch. Precision-aligned AM ferrite antenna. Five outputs: two amplifier, two recorder, and one multiplex. To judge this outstanding value —see it, *play it,* at your dealer's today!

$199.50

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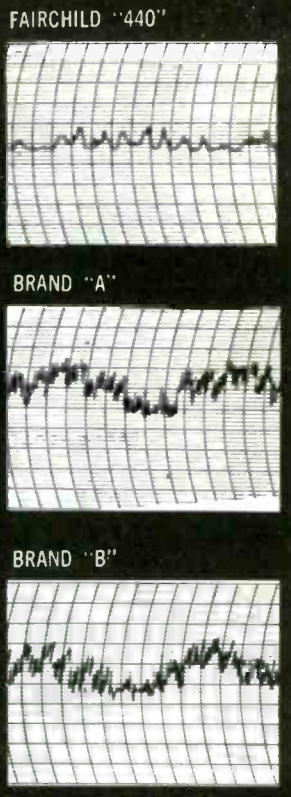
NOW...A NEW FAIRCHILD PRECISION TURNTABLE AT ONLY $69.95



EVERY MODEL 440 COMES WITH INDIVIDUAL WOW AND FLUTTER GRAPHS AS INDICATED ABOVE.

Fairchild Recording is proud to introduce the 440 ...a new precision turntable that is certain to set new standards for the serious record collector.

Based on the proven principles of the widely known Fairchild professional model 530G ($629.50) and the current 412-1 ($87.50), the 440 is truly a masterpiece. It combines famous Fairchild "know-how" in the field of superior electro-mechanical audio equipment with a design that is clean, modern and functional.

Note these exclusive features found in no other turntable *even at much higher prices:*

- ***Two speeds...33⅓ and 45 RPM. Speed selected by automatic Push-Pull Selector; no belts to adjust, no "digging" under the chassis.***
- ***Speed Sentinel Control permits speed variation of ±1½% of specially selected Fairchild motor. Strobe disc supplied.***
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- ***Turntable platter is solid cast aluminum contoured for easy record handling. Main bearing is babbitt, rifle drilled for trouble free, noiseless operation.***
- ***Handsome shock mounted walnut mounting board and matching walnut wrap-around...only $19.95.***

Performance speaks for itself. Compare the graphic recordings made under identical test conditions of the Fairchild 440 and two competitively priced units. Note that wow and flutter of the Fairchild turntable is remarkably low—in fact, it exceeds professional NARTB standards by over 100%! Rumble, both vertical and lateral, is an impressive 56db below 7 cm/sec at 500 cycles. Unquestionably the new Fairchild 440 sets performance goals that make it the finest turntable in its class. See it, operate it. Your dealer will be pleased to demonstrate the precision Fairchild 440.

FAIRCHILD RECORDING EQUIPMENT CORPORATION
10-40 45th Avenue, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

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Announcing a

Major Breakthrough

In High Fidelity Reproduction

THE FISHER

DYNAMIC

SPACEXPANDER

MODEL K-10

TRADE MARK

■ It is well established that one's perception of the size of the room or hall in which music is being played is based on the amount of reverberation in the signal reaching one's ears. With the revolutionary new FISHER Dynamic Spacexpander, Model K-10, you can now literally create living concert hall acoustics *in your own home,* and on *any* type of signal—whether from records, radio or tape—at the turn of *one simple control!* The results are astonishing.

The patented design of the FISHER K-10 permits the blending of any desired degree of reverberation with the input signal to create a result that is truly the living music itself. Listen to any of your favorite programs or records with the FISHER K-10 in operation and you will find that, without it, the program actually sounds 'dead'—the most dramatic proof of what the FISHER Spacexpander does!

Best of all, there are *no* moving parts to get out of adjustment—*no* motors, *no* continuous tape belts, *no* complicated drive mechanisms. The FISHER K-10 is a marvel of simplicity and superb electronics, designed to give years of trouble-free, thrilling service.

Complete assembly, **$59.50**

FOR USE WITH MOST HI-FI SYSTEMS! EASY INSTALLATION!

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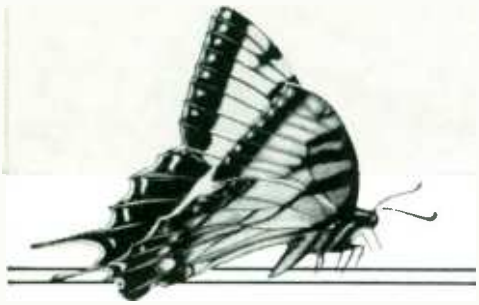
endowed with uncanny intelligence



GENTLY AUTOMATIC

GLASER ★ STEERS

GS ★ 77

You can entrust your treasured records to the Glaser-Steers GS-77, secure that they will be treated with all the care you would want them to receive. Handling your records manually, you may not even do as well, for the automatic GS-77 has no human frailties — is not inclined to fumble, and can't leave fingerprints.

The GS-77 is seemingly endowed with an uncanny intelligence. It seems to know better than to let one record drop on another that's moving. It seems to sense that the momentary grinding between the two record surfaces will damage the delicate grooves, and irreparably deteriorate the quality of reproduction.

And so, the GS-77 behaves in this manner: when one record has been played, the turntable immediately stops turning; the next record drops gently onto the stationary disc; and the turntable does not resume its motion until the stylus is in the lead-in groove, ready for play. And, it does this all in only 9 seconds.

"Turntable Pause" protects and preserves the quality in your stereo and mono records. Everything else about the GS-77 works to preserve that quality so that it can be faithfully reproduced through your high fidelity music system. Priced at $59.50, the GS-77 is the world's only record changer with "Turntable Pause". Its modestly priced companion, endowed with many of the quality features found in the GS-77 is priced at $47.50. See them and hear them at your high fidelity dealer today, or write: DEPT. HF-9

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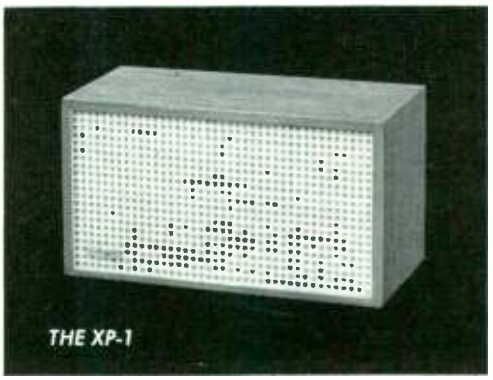
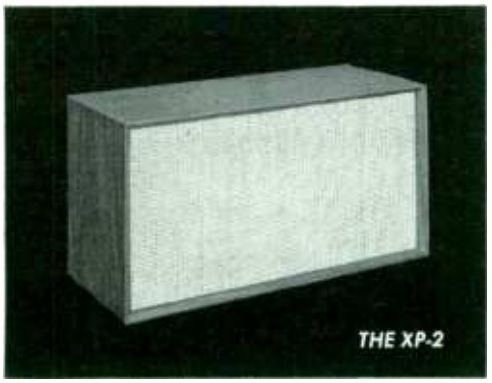
Now! You Can Choose the Stereo System That Meets Your Requirements EXACTLY!

THE 800





THE 600

THE FISHER

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THE FISHER 800

■ *Twice as sensitive* as any competitive stereo receiver in the world—and at least *50% more powerful!* Includes the identical Golden Cascode FM front-end used by broadcast stations, AM signal of FM calibre. 24 controls and switches for *unlimited flexibility!* 60 watts of distortion-free music power! **$429.50**

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■ The world's *best-selling* stereo receiver! *Says HF Reports:* "The performance of each portion of the 600 is of top calibre." Has extreme-sensitivity tuners. Music power: 40 watts, free of distortion. 22 controls and 15 connections for every application, including center channel! 22 tubes, two matched diodes. **$369.50**

THE FISHER XP-1

■ The revolutionary XP-1 offers big-speaker performance—high compliance *plus* high efficiency—in a bookshelf enclosure! The XP-1 is *92% more efficient* than the best conventional ring magnet speakers! Response: 30 to 18,000 cps. *In Unstained Birch.* **$124.50**
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■ The new XP-2 utilizes the revolutionary design principles of the XP-1, but in an even *more* compact enclosure! Gives top-quality performance even with amplifiers rated as low as *10 watts!* Frequency response: 35 to 15,000 cps. *In Unstained Birch.* **$79.50**
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Further Thoughts on Trumpets

SIR:

I should like to take issue with Jerome J. Pastene's history of the trumpet (July HIGH FIDELITY, p. 8) in which he discusses the cause for the difference in brass sound between American and Central-European orchestras.

Mr. Pastene tells us that Beethoven wrote for the "valve B trumpet," a statement that requires a double refutation. (1) The valve used on brass instruments was not invented until 1815, after eight of Beethoven's nine symphonies were written, and was not generally used in the orchestra until at least a decade after Beethoven died. (2) The trumpet of the classical orchestra, having no valves, depended entirely on the notes of the overtone series through the twelfth partial. Since these notes outline a major key, it was customary for a composer to specify trumpets pitched in the key of the composition in hand so he could write for the limited number of notes when the orchestra was playing in the tonic or some closely related key. The common pitches for the trumpet were C, D, E flat, and F—never B, a key that does not appear for trumpet until the third movement of Brahms's First Symphony, in 1876.

Now that all trumpets are valved, orchestra players both here and in Europe play one or two instruments, usually B flat or C (the valve C trumpet having only half the length of tubing that the valveless C trumpet had), and transpose onto these instruments all of the parts written in other keys. Therefore, the difference in sound between trumpets of various countries lies *not* in the keys used, but in the methods of tone production used by the players and in constructional features of the instruments. There would be little point in using a B trumpet instead of a B flat, since the difference in sound between them would be slight, and the fingerings on the B trumpet would be impossibly awkward in many common keys.

The immediate availability of recordings that give us a chance to make comparisons of the aesthetic effects of various national tendencies in musical performance is certainly one of high fidelity's great contributions to the art of listening.

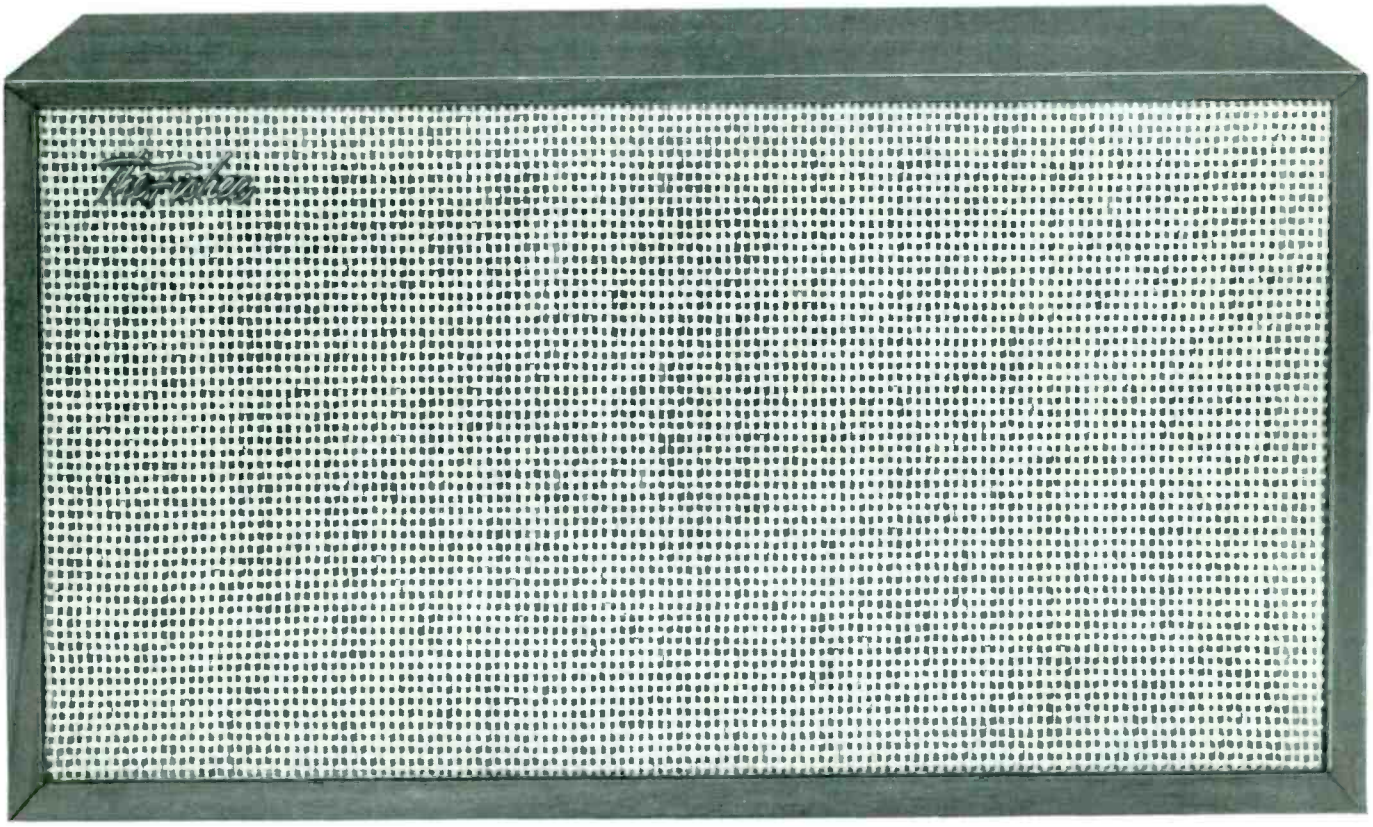
George Sargent
Bloomington, Ind.

SIR:

While perusing the July issue of your magazine, I ran across a letter from a Mr. Jerome

Continued on page 14

HIGH QUALITY! LOW COST!



The New

FISHER XP-2

Free-Piston Three-Speaker System

■ The highest-quality compact speaker available *at moderate cost* is the new FISHER XP-2! Beautiful to *see*—a wonder to *hear*, the XP-2 performs magnificently in any size room. And it is also ideal where space is at a premium. Utilizing the unsurpassed design of the revolutionary XP-1 speaker system, the new XP-2 boasts an even *more* compact bookshelf-type enclosure! Featuring high compliance *plus* high efficiency, the XP-2 can be used with amplifiers rated as low as *10 watts!* Each unit has two eight-inch free-piston woofers and one five-inch tweeter. The overall frequency response is 35 to 15,000 cps. The hermetically-sealed enclosure is constructed with interlocking joints, completely free of nails and screws, and is entirely filled with high-density Acousti-Glas for complete freedom from panel resonance. Size: 22" wide, 12" high, 11¼" deep. *Unstained Birch*, **$79.50**
Mahogany, Walnut and Cherry, **$84.50**

THE FISHER XP-1

Free-Piston Three-Way Speaker System

■ If you are ready for the *best*, you are ready for the FISHER XP-1, world's *most efficient* compact speaker system! For *any* amplifier from ten to sixty watts! Frequency response: 30 to 18,000 cps. *Unstained Birch*, **$124.50**;
Mahogany, Walnut or Cherry, **$129.50**

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LETTERS

Continued from page 12

J. Pastene describing the "differences" between American and European trumpets. First of all let's get one thing out of the way. In Germany it has long been the custom to refer to the pitch B flat as "B." Our pitch of B natural is called "H"—a designation which has caused no small degree of consternation to brass players who see it for the first time. To the best of my knowledge the standard trumpets in use both here and abroad are the B flat and C natural trumpets.

Second, I am compelled to take issue with the remark that the valve B trumpet was the instrument Beethoven scored for. Unfortunately there were no valve trumpets as we know them in use during Beethoven's lifetime. The valve had been invented, true, but its use was not widespread. To pick up a Beethoven score at random, the *Eroica* for example, we see that in movements one, three, and four the trumpet specified is pitched in E flat (Es) and in the second movement, in C natural. Brahms, in his Second Symphony, *did* score for a B natural trumpet ("Trombo in H") in the second movement; the other movements call for D natural instruments.

As far as the tone quality of the instruments in question goes, it is nearly axiomatic that the higher the pitch of a brass instrument (or virtually any other instrument for that matter) the more brilliant and piercing the sound. Besides, if Toscanini wanted a more "mellow" sound, he would have gotten it, even if it were necessary to use a D flat instrument. While it is true that European orchestras do tune a bit lower than we do, the primary difference still rests in the type of sound demanded by the conductor. Witness the difference in sound the NBC Symphony produced under Stokowski, for instance, and the sound under Toscanini. It sounds like a different group altogether.

I realize I may seem a bit pedantic, but so much misinformation has been written about brass instruments that I couldn't resist the chance to help clear up the confusion. In any case, I enjoyed the July issue very much. Being a horn player, and a Mahler fan, I was delighted with the "Mr. Mahler in Manhattan" article.

John R. McCrory, Jr.
Roslyn Heights, N. Y.

We Eat Humble Pie

SIR:

Your July issue carries a review of the Herb Pilhofer trio, Argo record 657. I note from this review that we are out of business. In fact, it is also interesting to note that we went "almost immediately out of business" after recording Herb Pilhofer. . . .

As a matter of fact, we are not out of business—but we plead guilty to being "a small label."

E. D. Nunn
Audiophile Records Inc.
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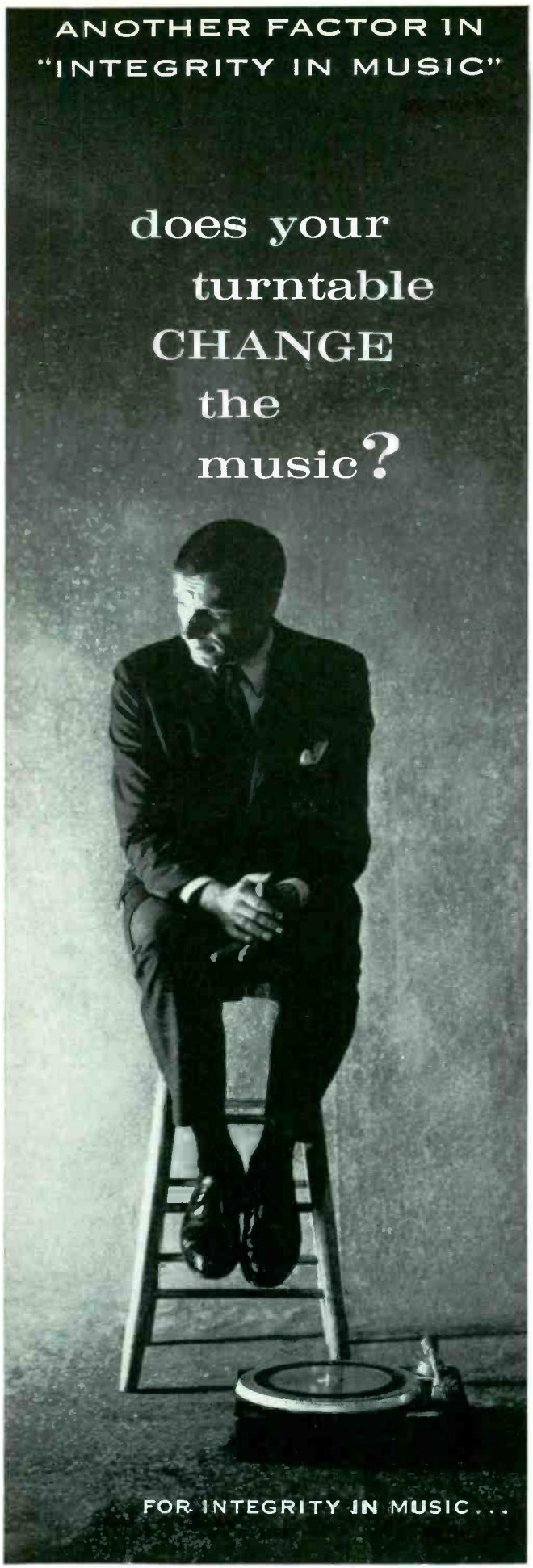

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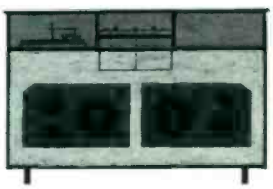

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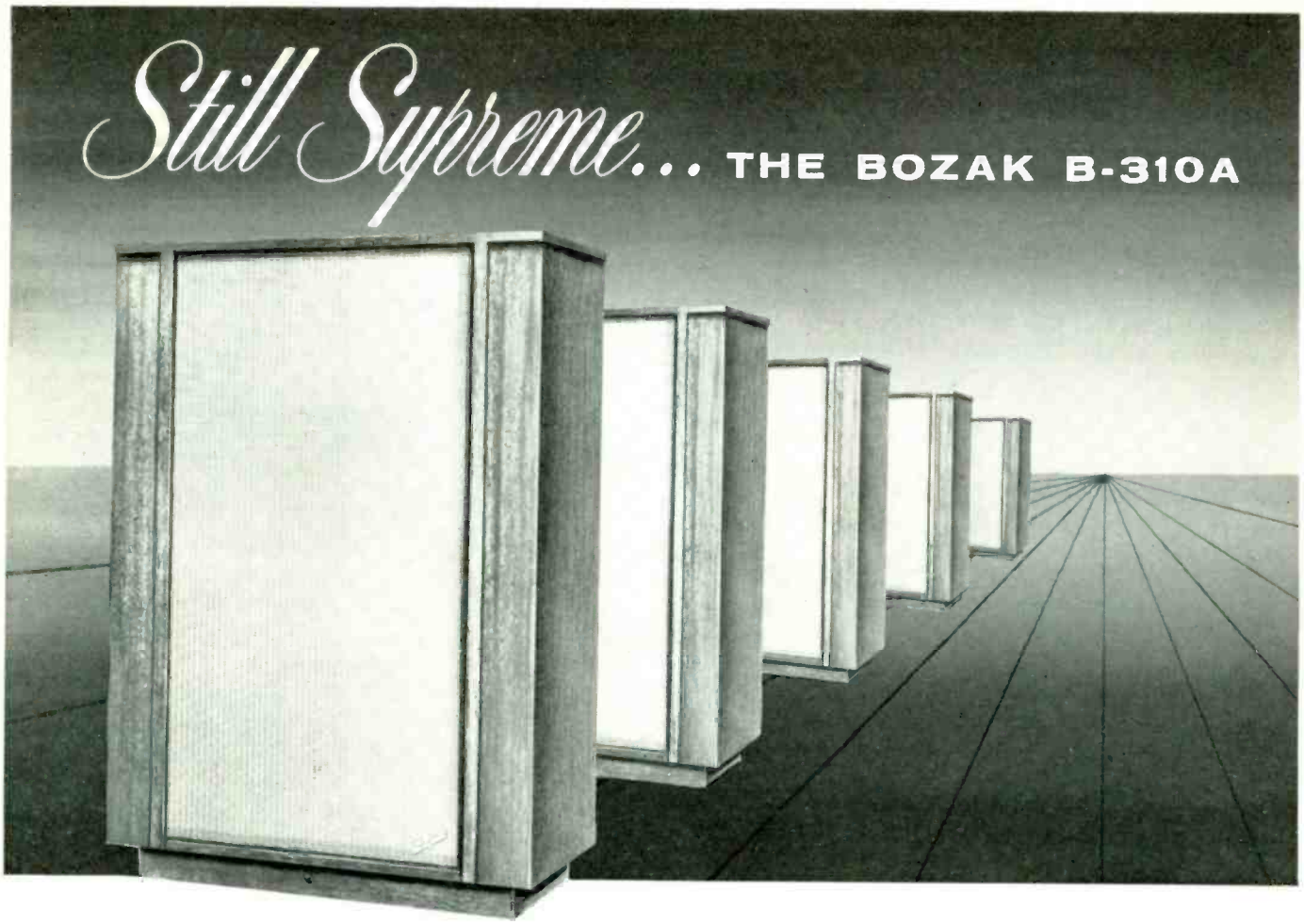

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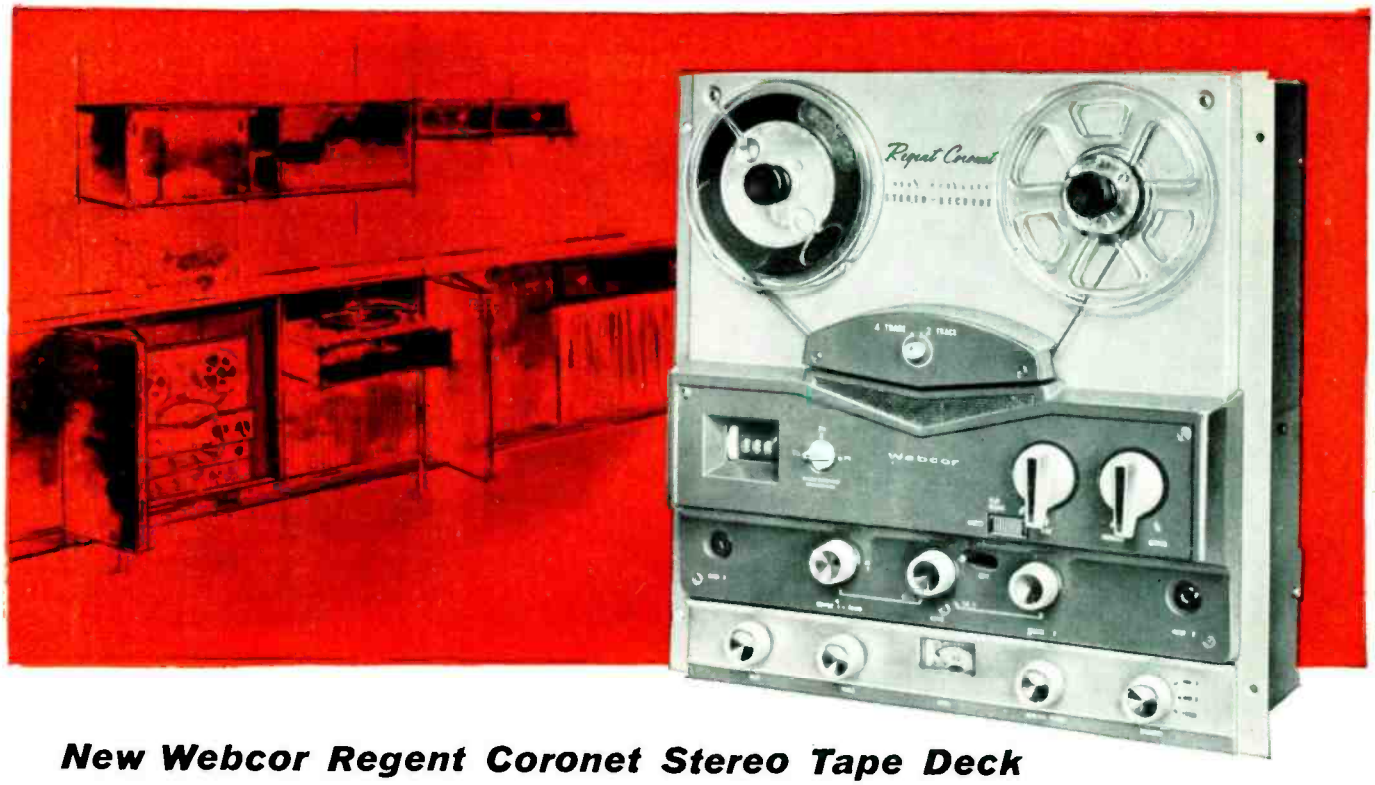

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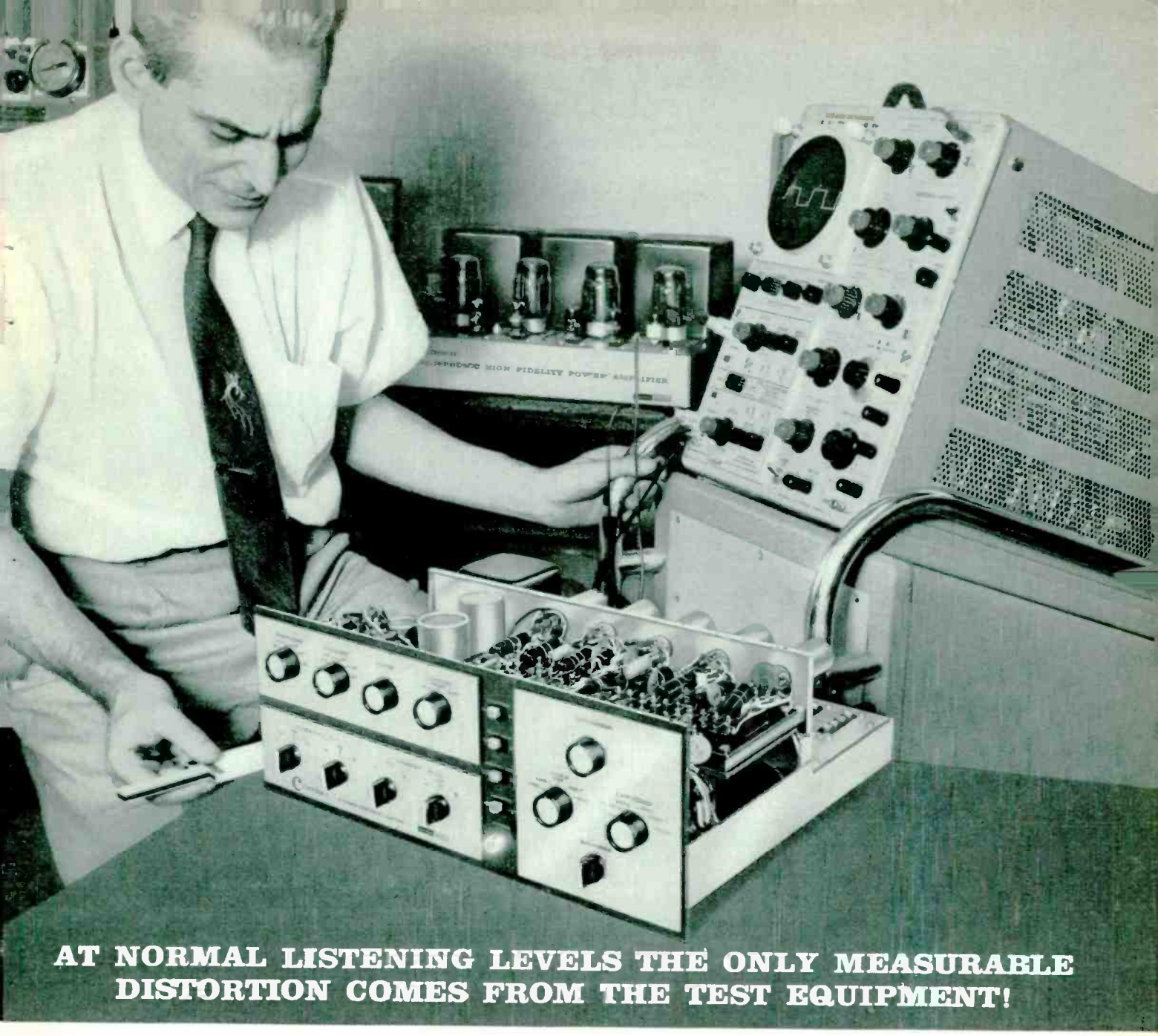

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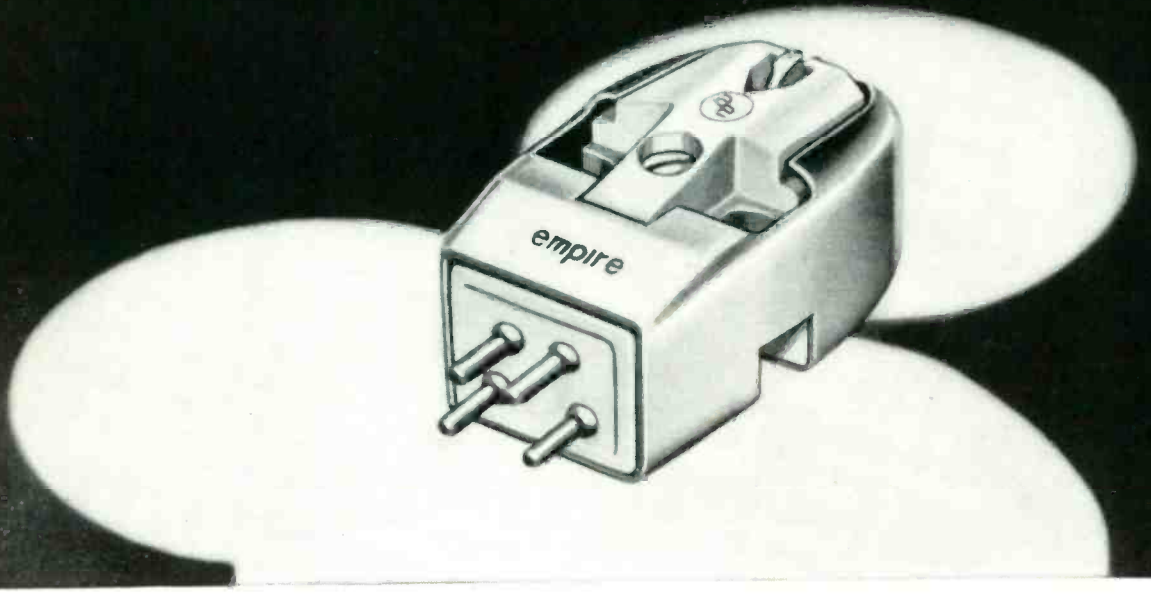

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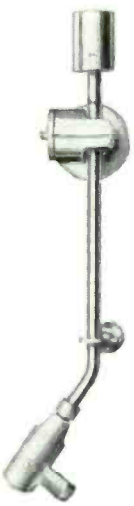

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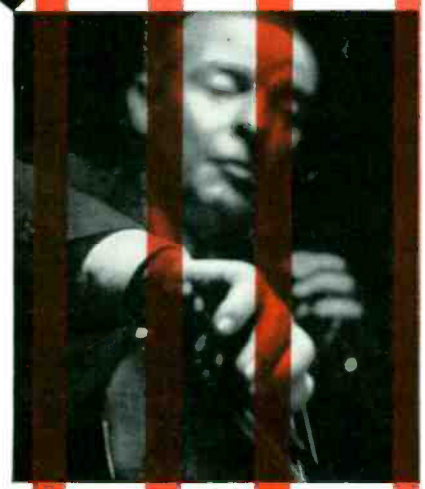

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Notes from Abroad

LONDON—At breakfast time one day recently I was convoked to Decca's studio in Broadhurst Gardens by a mysterious telephone call. "Can't tell you anything," said the caller. "We want it to be a surprise."

Broadhurst Gardens is in itself a perpetual surprise. One always notices something odd. Arthur Haddy, chief recording engineer for the firm (which is, of course, London Records in the States), keeps a pair of marksman's rifles in the corner of his office. He brought them from home as an act of prudence when his son reached the age of nine. But that, I reflect in bewilderment, was eleven years ago. . . .

Old hands remember when this studio was West Hampstead's town hall. The staircase wells are fey with ancestral memories of municipal drainage wrangles and street lighting contracts. For a while, town hall doubled as banqueting hall. It was during this phase that Decca moved in. Mr. Haddy recalls, "We always recorded during the day before the evening revels began. We rigged our equipment in a corridor between kitchens and banquet hall proper. The artists sang into trumpets fitted through holes in the corridor door. At the end of the day we had to clear and stow away all our gear so that the caterer's men could move in and start setting up the tables. . . . Oh yes, those rifles. One day I expect I'll get round to taking them home."

Stereo Miracle. Now to the surprise that the telephone voice had promised.

James Walker, a Decca recording technician ("best pair of ears in Europe," avers Ernest Ansermet) dived into the Master Tape Store—"The stuff in there is insured for £1,500,000," somebody murmurs—and brought out Something concealed under his coat. Two minutes later he switched the Something on.

Ferrier

I do not say I didn't believe my ears. Ears are not meant to be disbelieved. But certainly they startled me. It is seven years since Kathleen Ferrier died. She never recorded stereophonically. But here was Ferrier's matchless voice singing Bach and Handel in three dimensions, fuller and more detached than I ever heard it before, flanked and backed by the most stereophonic orchestra imaginable. It was as though a great singer whose career we thought rounded with a sleep had awakened radiant in the light of day.

Miracle Explained. The technical explanation was simple enough. A stereo orchestral accompaniment had been dubbed on to a monophonic recording of Ferrier's voice. The Ferrier Bach-Handel stereo reissue should be in your shops as well as ours sometime this month. My impression after hearing the master tape is that it will cause some excitement. The album comprises, from Bach, "Grief for sin" (*St. Matthew Passion*), "All is fulfilled" (*St. John Passion*), "*Qui sedes*" and Agnus Dei (B minor Mass); from Handel, "Return, return" (*Samson*), "Father of Heaven" (*Judas Maccabeus*), "O Thou that tellest" and "He was despised" (*Messiah*).

The tapes of the monophonic version, which has had an enormous vogue, are dated April 1952. The orchestra on that occasion was the London Philharmonic, the conductor Sir Adrian Boult. For the stereo dubbing, Boult and the LPO were again present at Kingsway Hall. In eight years the orchestra's personnel has been largely renewed; there are few survivors from the first recording. The first thing James Walker did, therefore, was to play back the 1952 version for the orchestra. Prompted by Boult, the players noted tempo and dynamic idiosyncrasies on their parts as the performance went along. Then the re-recording started. Boult took his beat from Ferrier's voice as relayed through a small speaker at his elbow but inaudible to the orchestra at large. Practically all the bass line and string tone generally, as well as flutes and bassoons, were filtered out of the mono recording and substituted by the LPO's 1960 players with an exactitude which I find uncanny.

A puzzled Boult later asked Walker: "How on earth did you do it?" The answer: extraordinarily tricky interweavings and matchings, including a new harpsichord and a new oboe d'amore for postludes and preludes, which had to (and in fact do) sound identical with the original instruments as retained in the body of various arias.

Britten's Latest. In Aldeburgh's festival opera house (seating capacity 316)—near-neighbor of lifeboat station, coast guard tower, and the original of the *Peter Grimes* moot-hall—I sat through the dress rehearsal and premiere of Benjamin Britten's first full-length opera since *The Turn of the Screw*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After these two hearings I spent a lot of time with the vocal score. By now the music is pretty well in my brain and blood.

Wisdom of Heart. Like the music of all Britten's outstanding theatre works since *Grimes* but more especially like *Billy Budd*, *Gloriana*, and the *Screw*, the new opera has strengths and enchantments which, while

Continued on page 26

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 24

going straight to the nerve of this dramatic situation and that, are utterly satisfying in their own right. The four lovers; Bottom and his fellow rustics; Oberon, Titania, and their court of sprites; Theseus and his ducal court—each group is deftly defined and separated from the rest by its own musical tints, shapes, and harmonic procedures. Britten is still the Great Eclectic, yet in the arsenals of style he never loses his heart or his feeling for simple issues.

And Strangeness of Taste. My last note must be anticlimax. Abridged Shakespeare, even done as skillfully as this has been, does not cohere and concentrate as a libretto should. (Full-length Shakespeare would probably be even woollier.) Unlike most of Britten's previous pieces, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* lacks central characters and a trenchant dramatic issue. And I began to find the composer's taste for odd vocal timbres tiresome. The sprites are small or smallish boys. Their tone, as one might expect, was piping, harsh, and pert. Oberon was sung with marvelous art by Alfred Deller. Mr. Deller is undoubtedly England's most noted countertenor. But the countertenor voice is not merely something that some people are indifferent to; it's something that quite a number actively dislike.

Yet this is a score to cherish. The present orchestral specification is for ten winds and, as it were, sample strings. Already there is talk of an expanded version for Covent Garden, where the visual side would benefit greatly. But, for my taste, *no* boys' voices in that august house. CHARLES REID

PARIS—The Salle Wagram, an ornate, peeling relic of the Third Republic, has good acoustics and an affinity for combat. In the last couple of years it has echoed discreetly to Gaullist political debate, heavyweight wrestling, and Sir Thomas Beecham's recording sessions for *Carmen*. One Thursday evening in midsummer the hall was occupied by four jazz bands plus an assortment of Left-Bank characters, and by dawn it seemed that a high in combativeness had been reached. But the dust had scarcely settled when a recording crew moved in, and that Friday afternoon a struggle of remarkable intensity and pathos got under way.

Battle Scene. The principals were David Oistrakh, Otto Klemperer—over from London, and the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française. EMI's Walter Legge, assisted by young Jacques Leiser of Pathé-Marconi, acted as recording supervisor, translator, and referee. The matter in dispute was the Brahms Violin Concerto. The weather was the hottest for the date Paris had experienced since 1873.

Continued on page 28

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 26

Klemperer seemed to have put on weight since I had last seen him. Seated on his high chair in front of the orchestra, he looked surprisingly young and leonine. It was only when his daughter Lotte came forward to help him down from the podium that I recalled that this heroic figure was seventy-five years old—and a quite recent victor over an incredible combination of disasters. He said that he guessed he had conducted this concerto more than a thousand times.

Someone mentioned the late Polish violinist Bronislaw Huberman, famous for having remarked that Brahms's work was "a concerto for violin against orchestra—and the violin wins." "Huberman," Klemperer said, "took forty-five minutes to tune up." Oistrakh did not miss his cue. "My sense of pitch," he said, "is not that good." Then everyone went to work. When I left they were still trying the first movement, and I had a feeling things were not going very well. Klemperer was chain-smoking, and the orchestra men looked warm and unhappy.

Impasse. On Saturday morning I found them in the middle of the second movement, and it was clear that things were not going well at all. Klemperer had put aside his cigarettes for a pipe, and was concentrating on the bassoon arpeggio. Oistrakh, in a short-sleeved sport shirt, was perspiring very visibly. I sat down back of the second violins, and soon had an earful of complaints. Klemperer, the orchestra men maintained, was so used to working with his beloved Philharmonia in London that he was assuming that the Orchestre National knew exactly what he wanted. They didn't—and they understood neither his words nor his gestures.

Klemperer

Yet Klemperer would not compromise, they felt, and so the only thing to do was to go over and over the same troublesome passages. "At this rate," one man said, "they will have to pull us together on tape."

Over and over they went, all through the long, hot morning and the longer and hotter afternoon. From time to time Klemperer would walk painfully into a dingy little side room and drink a lemonade while he listened to the stereo tape of his latest attempt. His entourage was becoming more defensively loyal by the minute. "The next time you come to Paris," a woman said, "you should bring the Philharmonia with you." The old man's reply was to climb back up to his chair, light his pipe, and tell the orchestra to start over again. Oistrakh, who is fluent only in Russian and German, glanced at me and managed a French word: "*Difficile.*"

Continued on page 30

SENSITIVE

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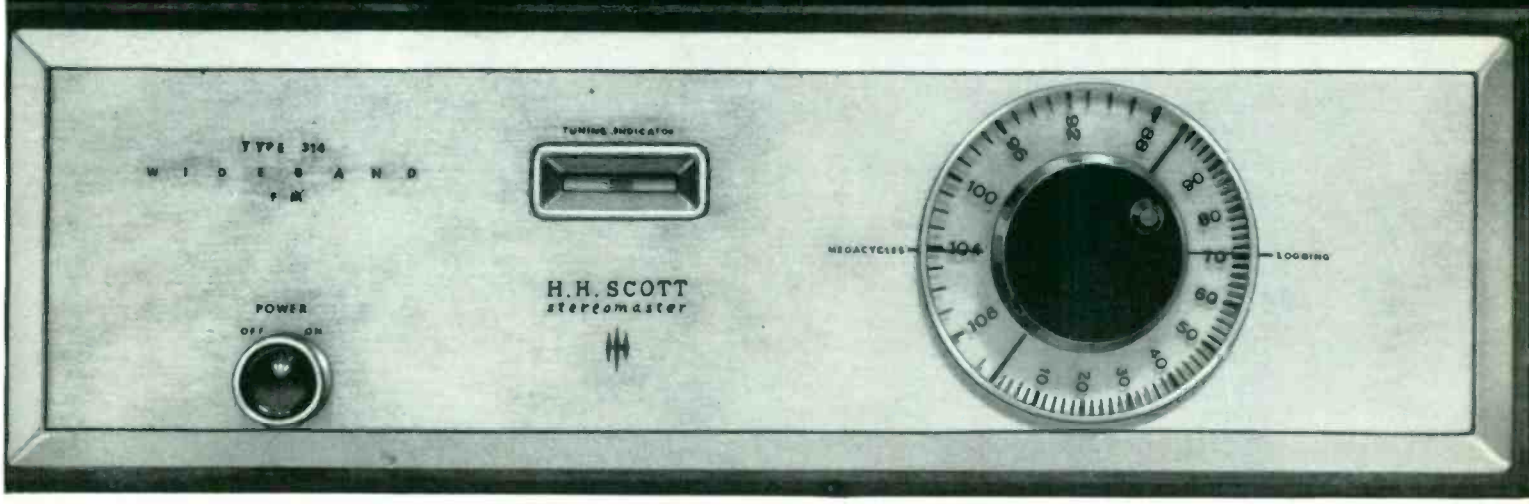

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 28

Recognition and Reversal. A rapport was finally established early Sunday morning. The orchestra suddenly fused all the fragments it had been rehearsing for two days, and the music began to pulse in a way characteristic of both Klemperer and Brahms.

Oistrakh

Oistrakh played the second movement with such authoritative delicacy that Klemperer stopped conducting, put down his pipe, and simply listened. At the end, the orchestra proudly banged the music stands in approval—forgetting that the gods are jealous. A technician appeared: *malheureusement*, some one had rattled a sheet of music during the last movement.

As I tiptoed toward the door the sounds of dismay were gradually dominated by Klemperer's instructions to begin at such and such a measure. You will have to wait for the disc (to be released by Angel) to hear the end of this story.

ROY MCMULLEN

AMSTERDAM—The interpretations of the Concertgebouw Orchestra's late Willem Mengelberg are little known to younger listeners, since he left to posterity very few recordings. We have had on LP transfers only a smattering of his genius, the Bach "*St. Matthew Passion*" on Columbia being the only album now generally available. Most unexpectedly, however, present-day connoisseurs will soon be able to familiarize themselves directly with the work of this revered conductor.

Mengelberg Reissues. Just recently, Philips discovered the existence of a series of transcriptions of Mengelberg's radio concerts from the Concertgebouw in the 1939–40 season. These discs had been rescued from the oncoming Germans in May 1940 by the station's recording director, who had a hunch their contents might be irreplaceable. They were secretly passed from cupboard to cupboard during the war years and then strangely forgotten. Philips has salvaged with great pains enough material for twelve documentary LPs, including Mahler's Fourth Symphony, the César Franck Symphony, and all nine symphonies of Beethoven. The Ninth Symphony performance, incidentally, dates from May 2, 1940, just eight days before the German invasion.

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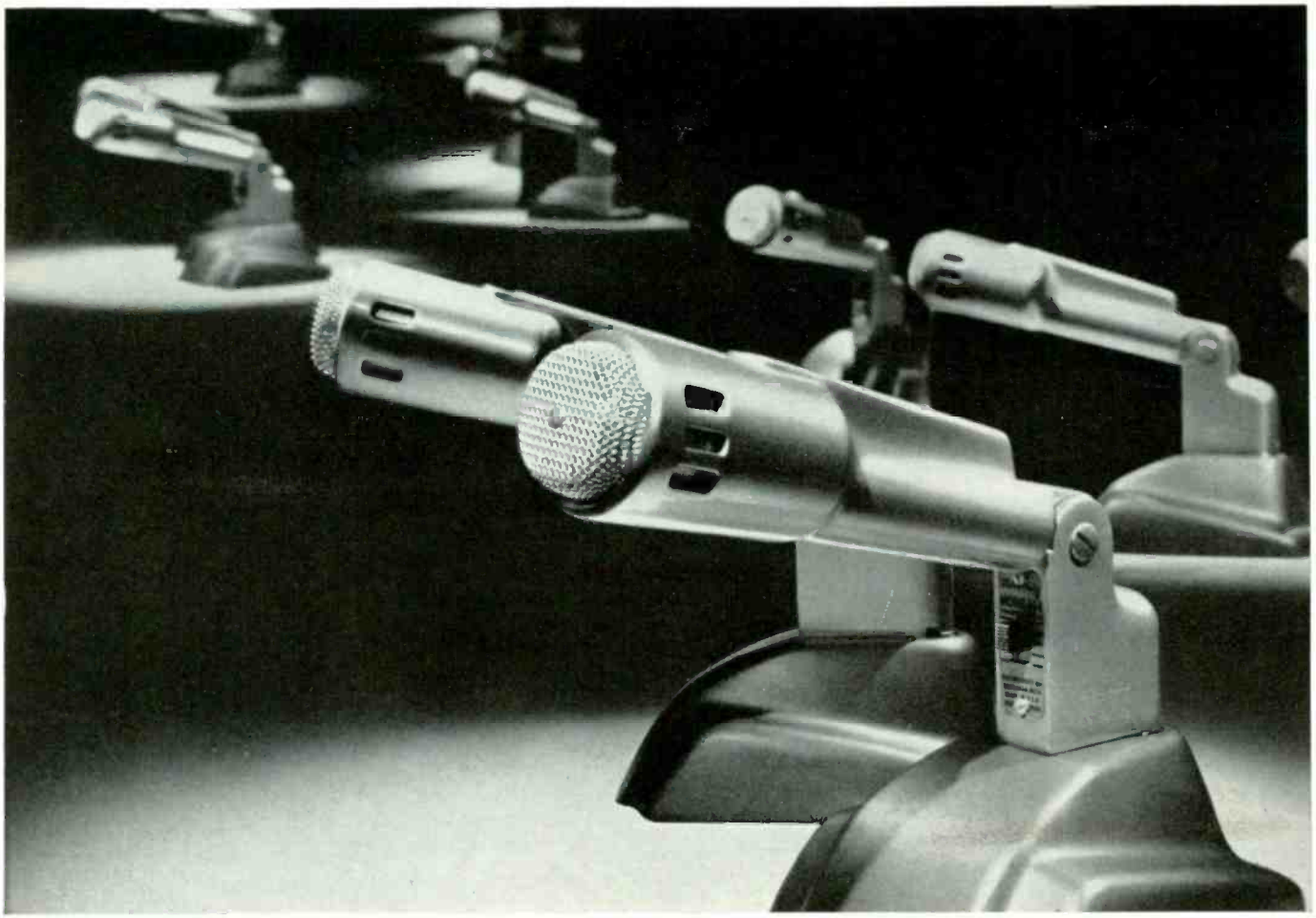

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CIRCLE 84 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

How Many Revolutions Can We Afford?

ONE DAY FOLLOWS ANOTHER and each brings a torrent of mail with the same inevitability. There are press releases (a daily deluge), manufacturers' comments (a monthly surge), and letters from readers (a virtual tidal wave). Sometimes we are looked upon with approval, sometimes chided. And remarkably often we are given a tonic thought, one that persistently tugs at the mind.

Just recently there came a letter—call it rather, a jeremiad—from a subscriber in Florida. He had read our published comments about a new tape cartridge. This development, he lamented, apparently will involve "further changes in equipment." In tones of mingled pain and impatience he asked, "What joy is there left for the audiophile?" He spoke darkly of his own imminent abandonment of high fidelity for photography.

Our correspondent's bewilderment is understandable, when we consider that little more than a decade has seen the introduction of microgroove discs, two- and four-track tapes and tape cartridges, stereo records and equipment—and other changes are soon to come (FM stereo multiplexing and a new tape cartridge system, for instance). With the advent of stereo the last two years in particular have been, for all but the most fervent audio hobbyist, a period of doubt and debate. The music listener has had to ask himself very seriously: Should I duplicate my present system? Should I have big speakers or small? Is stereo really worth its added cost? For many, these questions have still to be resolved.

Industry no doubt thrives on the new and revolutionary; obsolescence becomes the order of the day. But there is undoubtedly a saturation point of innovation. How many revolutions can we afford? When people begin to ponder this question, the wheels of progress and the ever whirling wheel of change can suddenly be thrown into reverse.

The gentleman in Florida is no newcomer to high fidelity. He has, he tells it, been reading this journal for years and has been waiting for stereo to "settle down" to a point where he can, with confidence, spend—rather let us say, invest—perhaps a thousand dollars. He wants, justifiably, the assurance that his investment will bring a fair return.

The high-fidelity industry, like any other, seeks to broaden and grow. Some segments of it might well consider, then, how totally confusing their product must seem to the public at large when even the longtime high fidelitarian approaches the purchase of a stereo system with trepidation. Some manufacturers apparently have not yet realized that for a great many listeners the very principle of using two loudspeakers is still foreign.

Plainly, the approach that would best serve both the public and the industry would be towards the consolidation and refinement of what we now have. Rather than promote new wrinkles of relatively modest value, the manufacturer would do well to concentrate on the genuine benefits stereo can confer—on the very real benefits that many of us already enjoy. While it is true that the manufacturer's press clippings might suffer if he ceased to emphasize his own particular innovation, his over-all business assuredly would not.

Fortunately, the major innovations in the offing should hold no great terror for present owners of component high fidelity. FM stereo multiplexing can be assimilated painlessly—which is to say, at lowest possible cost—for most owners of stereo tuners. Thousands of homes already have units readily adaptable to the multiplex system which the Federal Communications Commission will decide upon (and an early decision is much to be hoped for).

As for a stereo tape cartridge system, we still do not know all about it. This we do know: it is not ready for marketing. A prototype has been shown, but—as some manufacturers have learned with sorrow—the distance between a prototype and a market-ready system can be unbelievably long. When and if the stereo tape cartridge system does appear, a relatively inexpensive deck or handler will unquestionably be made available. The owner of a complete stereo component system can readily incorporate the new unit—if he feels its benefits to be sufficiently desirable.

Stereophonic component high fidelity has come of age, and the music listener does not have to—in Tennyson's oddly appropriate phrase—"spin forever down the ringing grooves of change." The manufacturers of high-fidelity equipment can do much to offset any fear that he will.

RALPH FREAS

as HIGH FIDELITY sees it

VICTORIA OF THE ANGELS

Only one singer of our day can do equal justice to Handel, Puccini, Schumann, and Falla. Her name is Victoria de los Angeles, and a good many people consider her queen of them all.

by ROLAND GELATT

AT THE HEIGHT of that turbulent controversy which raged some years back between the partisans of Maria Callas and Renata Tebaldi, I was accosted by a rabid opera fan during an intermission at the Met and pressed to declare my allegiance. Which of the two, he demanded, was the world's greatest soprano? I replied, not at all illogically, "Victoria de los Angeles."

The question might have been parried with a short sermon on the futility of superlatives. One is not supposed to speak in terms of "the greatest" when dealing with anything so intangible and subjective as musical accomplishment. But the world of opera dotes on superlatives, and in its ambience they come to tongue willy-nilly. Victoria de los Angeles seemed to me then the greatest of contemporary sopranos—and so she does still.

A bill of particulars? She has, first and foremost, a unique, instantly recognizable vocal timbre, a quality of tone and production that marks her off from all others. Her sense of pitch and rhythm, of phrasing and tempo is unerring. The repertoire at her command includes not only an astonishing variety of operatic parts—the staccato gaiety of Rosina, the fragility of Mélisande, the frank *volupté* of Carmen—but also realms of music unknown to the usual habitué of the operatic stage. She ranges from the chaste purity of medieval canticles to the melismatic wailings of Andalusian flamenco, from the florid baroque roulades of Handel and Carissimi to

the introspective Lieder of Hugo Wolf and Robert Schumann. Schubert's *An die Musik* and Valverde's *Clavelitos* will inhabit the same program and receive equal devotion from their unsnobbish interpreter. Last, and not least, she has the kind of exultant charm that immediately wins an audience.

What Victoria de los Angeles lacks—and this not entirely to her discredit—is the talent for self-advertisement and the gusto for operatic scrimmage. As a result, though she has long been a favorite of musicians (Wanda Landowska, for example, was one of her great admirers), the rank-and-file operagoer inclined for a while to take her somewhat for granted. I am glad to report that he takes her for granted no longer. The Callas-Tebaldi rivalry has subsided, and Victoria is emerging queen.

She is not, to be sure, everything that the publicist looks for in an operatic queen. The *New York Daily Mirror* has never put her on page one. She adores her husband and adored her parents. She has the habit of keeping her engagements. She hates posh parties and loves the movies. She believes in hard work, in self-improvement, in consideration for other people, in all the homely virtues.

She believes too in herself. Victoria de los Angeles has that inner security, very rare in singers, which permits her to be a genuinely unaffected person off stage. She even has the ability to laugh at herself and at the whole complex of absurdities that attends life in the opera house. The playful twinkle of her large black eyes and the winsome jollity of her smile are not reserved for curtain calls. She has been known to disagree with other musicians but not to engage in public feuds. Never, in the waspish milieu of music, have I heard anyone say an unkind word about her.

Victoria de los Angeles was born in Barcelona thirty-six years ago and spent her childhood in the surroundings of the University, where her father worked as caretaker. When she began to sing as a young girl, no one thought it at all extraordinary; fine untrained voices were common in her family. "Often," she recalls, "my father took me along for company when he made the rounds of the university buildings at night. I loved to sing in the big, empty stone-walled classrooms and lecture halls. They had marvelous acoustics. It was even better than singing in the bathtub. These experiences made me sensitive to good acoustics at an early age, and today I find it very trying to sing in a hall which is dead or unfocused." In daytime, when the classrooms were filled with students, the sound of Victoria's voice from her father's nearby apartment would often float through the open windows. Enrique Magrina, a young law student, heard the young lady who was to become his wife long before he ever set eyes on her.

At length the question of schooling arose. It was the father's dream that his children should attend the university which he had faithfully served all his life. It was the daughter's wish that she should attend the conservatory. They agreed to compromise. In 1939, at the age of sixteen, Victoria enrolled for studies in both the university and the conservatory.

"I had no thoughts of a musical career when I started at the conservatory," she says. "I really just wanted to learn to sing correctly. From the very beginning I made good progress. But it soon became clear that I couldn't do a good job there and at the university both. After a year, my father agreed to let me leave the university and concentrate on the conservatory." She remained at Barcelona's Conservatorio del Liceo for three years, studying not only voice production, but piano, harmony, dramatics, and languages. Her principal vocal coach was Dolores Frau. "She was a great help," De los Angeles acknowledges, "as long as we stuck to the standard vocal method books—you know, Marchesi and that sort of thing. But when we started working on repertoire we quickly ran into disagreement. My teacher wanted me to do things exactly her way. And I didn't see things her way at all. So we parted company. I've had no formal instruction since then."

Another and more sympathetic influence entered her life at the time of her graduation from the conservatory. She became the protégée of seven amateur musicians who called themselves the Ars Musica and who devoted their spare time to uncovering and performing neglected Spanish music of the past. They were mostly professional people of comfortable means, and together they agreed to pay Victoria's expenses until her career was

A singer who has a "kind of exultant charm."

On holiday, with Hans von Benda and Yehudi Menuhin.

successfully launched. "With their help," she says, "I avoided having to tour with small zarzuela companies—the only way that most young singers in Spain are able to earn a living."

But the Ars Musica contributed more than money. They broadened the young soprano's musical horizons at a time (this was midway in World War II) when Spain was almost completely isolated from the rest of the world. Victoria de los Angeles performed regularly at the Ars Musica's concerts, and for her the group widened its repertoire so that she could sing Handel and Schubert and Debussy as well as antique Spanish music. Were it not for them, she might never have become so versatile an artist. The album "Five Centuries of Spanish Song" (EMI-Capitol G 7155), in which the soprano can be heard in a rich miscellany of music dating back to a thirteenth-century "*Mariam matrem*," is a direct result of the Ars Musica influence.

With the backing of her seven benevolent mentors, Victoria could afford to develop slowly. She gave concerts in the principal cities of Spain and Portugal and undertook a few roles at the Teatro Liceo, Barcelona's opera house. By 1945 her reputation at home had reached the point where the Barcelona branch of His Master's Voice was emboldened to make a De los Angeles record—a ten-inch 78 rpm of two songs by Turina. Two years later a friend showed her the prospectus of the Concours International in Geneva. She went to Switzerland and defeated 120 contestants to win first prize. On her return, the family concluded that she was ready for marriage to Enrique Magrina. The pair had been engaged for seven years and—being good Spanish children—had never in all that time been seen together unchaperoned.

The Geneva contest brought the young Spanish soprano to international attention. Her first important engagement outside Spain took her to London for a BBC broadcast of Falla's opera *La Vida breve* in 1948. His Master's Voice signed her to an exclusive contract at that time and made the dazzling recording of two arias from *La Vida breve* which first established her in the affection of vocal connoisseurs the world over. Europe's opera directors and concert managers then began to woo her. By the fall of 1950 she had appeared at La Scala (curiously, in Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*), the Paris Opéra, Covent Garden, and the Holland and Edinburgh Festivals. She had by then also attracted the canny interest of the American impresario Sol Hurok, who brought her to New York in November 1950 for a debut recital in Carnegie Hall.

It was an occasion one does not easily forget. The hall was jammed with listeners at once expectant and fearful. New York audiences had experienced some sad letdowns in those immediate postwar years and had learned that a voice impressive on records could turn out to be disappointingly paltry in person. De los Angeles, very young and sure of herself, trotted out on stage in a brilliant and not very becoming gown, acknowledged a warm ovation, and launched into the rippling cadenzas of Handel's "Oh! had I Jubal's lyre." That did it. Pandemonium broke out at its conclusion, and the audience relaxed, content that the art of great singing had not entirely disappeared. "Here is vocal delight unique in our time," wrote Virgil Thomson in the next morning's *Herald Tribune*.

At that first Carnegie Hall recital, Victoria de los Angeles sang several German Lieder. Although her performances had the hint of genius, they were too dutiful, too tentative. Shortly afterwards she gave a recital in London and again included some Lieder in the program. "When the concert was over," she recalls, "an elderly lady—very distinguished in appearance and with a slight German accent—introduced herself to me. 'I am Elena Gerhardt,' she said, 'and I want to tell you how much your recital moved me.' Now, I probably shouldn't admit this to you, but the name Elena Gerhardt meant nothing to me. However, she seemed like an interesting person, and we arranged to have tea a couple of days later. I found out in the meantime that Elena Gerhardt had been the most celebrated Lieder singer of her day. When we met again, she said to me: 'I don't want to teach you anything. You don't need to be taught. But would you mind if we just went over some songs together and discussed them?' "

During the next several years Victoria had many "lessons" with Mme. Gerhardt. They would each sing the same song in their different ways and then talk it over. The older woman, who had studied at the Leipzig Conservatory at the turn of the century and had toured Germany with the great Arthur Nikisch as accompanist, urged her not to worry unduly about the so-called German tradition. The tradition, after all, was made by good singers—and Victoria, Elena Gerhardt insisted, was as good as any of them. The experience gave De los Angeles new confidence and served to instill a welcome note of intensity and communicativeness in her singing of Lieder. "Of course," she says, "I don't sing German

Lieder the way a German would. How could I? I'm not German. But I sing it the way I feel and with my own expression." Today, the Lieder in her recitals are no longer an obeisance to a respected art form; they are an act of musical and poetic re-creation.

Except for her encounter with Gerhardt, Victoria de los Angeles has fought shy of any contact with teachers, coaches, or would-be mentors. Because she is an accomplished pianist and a rapid sight reader, she needs no help in preparing a new role. She begins by playing the entire opera several times through on the piano. Then, while committing her own part to memory, she starts work on the characterization and reads whatever literature—Maeterlinck for *Pelléas*, Merimée for *Carmen*—seems relevant. She has mastered some thirty roles in this way since leaving off formal instruction at the Barcelona Conservatory. De los Angeles makes almost a fetish of independence. Recordings by famous singers of the past play no part in molding her interpretations ("I do not believe in tradition"). Neither do present-day performances ("I never go to the opera house"). Strange to relate, she has witnessed very few operas from the spectator's side of the footlights. She can, indeed, count such performances on the fingers of both hands.

The truth of the matter is that though Victoria de los Angeles loves opera she is not fond of the operatic environment. Its atmosphere of petty rivalry, of gladiatorism, of egotistical childishness dismays and upsets her. "I find a strong similarity," she admits, "between the opera house and the *corrida*. And I must explain that I hate bullfights. At times when I'm on the stage of an opera house I think I know what it's like to be a bull in the bullring." Her horror of yelling crowds has kept her safely from the clutches of the claque. And her determination to avoid opera house intrigue has kept her from pursuing an active career in the theatres of Italy. She prefers the somewhat more rational milieu of the Metropolitan Opera House and Covent Garden. In Italy, to her amusement, "all the singers speak well of me. 'Ah, Victoria,' they will say. 'That is a singer I like. She is such a fine *concert* artist.' You see, I am no competition. And I prefer it this way."

Despite rumors to the contrary, De los Angeles has no intention of retiring from opera in the foreseeable future. But it is reasonable to assume that she will give an increasing proportion of her time to concert tours. As an opera singer she works under certain limitations—not musical, or even histrionic, but temperamental. There is an aloof quality to her characterizations, and one can point to no role with which she has completely identified herself (though her Carmen may, when and if she adds it to her active repertoire, prove an exception). As a recitalist, however, she is without contemporary peer. The concert hall engages her sympathies most securely, allows her versatility fullest rein, puts her in closest contact with an audience.

At a time when a good many of her contemporaries are already showing signs of vocal decline, De los Angeles is singing as radiantly and securely as ever. This is due in part to the sheer quality of her vocal equipment, but in part also to the care with which she has ordered her career. She will seldom sing more than two engagements a week and insists on spending a total of three months a year in Barcelona, where the Magrinas are now building a new home complete with penthouse swimming pool and a small private theatre. The enduring splendor of the De los Angeles voice is a source of considerable satisfaction to His Master's Voice and its affiliated companies throughout the world (in the United States, Angel-Capitol). The Spanish soprano has already committed a large repertoire to records and is scheduled to do much, much more. The complete *Traviata* and *Butterfly* due for release this fall are symptomatic of the extensive recording program in which she is presently engaged.

Victoria de los Angeles tries to view the march of phonographic progress with calm understanding, but in this she is not always successful. "Personally, I preferred high fidelity to stereo, and the old 78s to high fidelity. But what can you do? I thought I was getting along so nicely. A few years ago almost my entire operatic repertoire had been recorded and I was beginning to make some headway with my concert repertoire. Then they invented stereo, and I found I had to do all the operas over again. Of course, I know what will happen when I finally finish remaking the operas for stereo. They'll invent something else."

She hates posh parties, prefers her Barcelona home.

ARE YOU CHEATING YOURSELF ON SPEAKERS?

The last stage of high-fidelity reproduction has been made doubly difficult by the existence of your two ears.

BY CHARLES FOWLER

LET'S FACE IT. Loudspeakers are a problem.

Selection of the correct unit for a particular installation often seems to present all kinds of difficulties, but these difficulties are not insuperable and pains are well worth taking. Of all elements in a high-fidelity system, the loudspeaker is the most critical. Some people will argue with that statement, but the fact remains that no matter how much money is spent on other components, it will be wasted if the speaker system is inadequate.

The care that buying a speaker demands results from several factors. In the first place, loudspeakers are the least perfected link in the high-fidelity chain and all are simply conglomerations of compromises. Designers have different ideas about where and how these compromises should be made. The result is an almost appalling variety of sizes, shapes, types, and prices. A quick count in the high-fidelity section of an electronics distributor's 1960 catalogue shows listings for 126 loudspeakers, forty-six loudspeaker systems, and twenty-five enclosures. In addition, still more speakers are to be found in the outdoor and public address categories, and in the back of the catalogue under "replacement and new equipment speakers" more than eighty different models are listed! By comparison, the choice of other components is somewhat restricted. To pick at random, the catalogue offers thirty tuners, thirty control amplifiers, seventeen cartridges, and only fourteen types of record changers.

In the second place, loudspeaker advertisements are favored with fewer specifications than just about any other category. As Norman Crowhurst pointed out in the April issue of HIGH FIDELITY, routine laboratory tests are of limited value in assessing the performance of a loudspeaker. Other tests, perhaps more indicative of merit, cannot be expressed easily in numerical terms.

In the third place, the only "best way" to choose a speaker is by listening critically to it in its eventual location. While a competent dealer can be of great help in the weeding-out process of preliminary selection, the

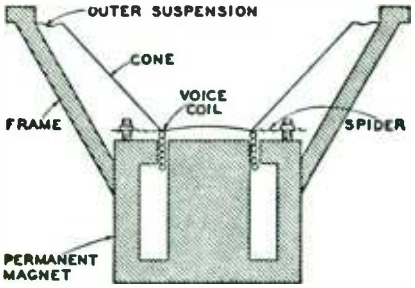


Fig. 1. This drawing shows a cross-sectional view of the essential elements that go to make up a typical cone loudspeaker.

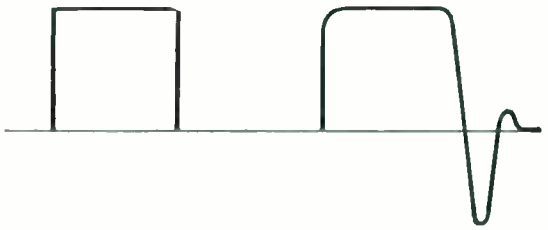


Fig. 2. An idealized version of electrical pattern applied to voice coil (left)—and what the speaker did with it (right).

average demonstration room is a far cry from home acoustic conditions.

These are some of the principal impediments to quick and easy buying of loudspeakers. To understand how this situation has come about, and to clarify the problem as a whole, we will review briefly what speakers are intended to do and how they succeed (or fail) in fulfilling these objectives.

What is the purpose of a loudspeaker? It converts electrical energy into sound, as purely as possible. How does it do this? The speaker itself makes no sound. It stirs up the air in front of, and around it; this air commotion eventually reaches listening ears, and the ear drums commote[1] correspondingly.

What's a speaker made of? Nearly all consist of a coil of wire glued to the apex of a cone of paper or paper substitute. The coil of wire operates within a magnet; the edge of the paper cone is attached to a sturdy frame. Electricity, applied to the coil of wire in proportion to the type of sound desired, interacts with the magnet and the cone moves in and out.[2] Which stirs up air, which stirs up eardrums, which stirs up nerves. See Fig. 1.

And enclosures, what are they for? Just looks? This depends on the frequency. Above about 500 cycles, the enclosure is 99% for looks. Below that, the enclosure is designed to help overcome the shortcomings of the speaker. For an octave or so, the box can be simple and relatively small, serving primarily to keep sound radiated by the back of the speaker from filtering around the edges and confusing the sound radiated by the front. Below 250 cycles or so . . . that's where the fun starts. The danger of intermixing back and front radiation becomes serious; since low frequencies are hard to produce in volume, designers try to utilize the back radiation to reinforce that from the front. Speakers become resonant, and so do enclosures. For adequate bass reproduction, either large speakers in large enclosures are required, or extraordinary care in the design and production of small speakers in small enclosures. Anyone can cut a hole in a wall or closet door to make an infinite baffle, but very few indeed can make a bookshelf-size box that will fulfill the same function equally well.

For practical purposes, the prospective buyer can disregard speaker design problems insofar as sounds above middle C on the piano are concerned. This statement does not intend to imply, by any means, that some speakers are not much better than others in the reproduction of middle and high frequencies. But the designer who wants to produce good fidelity in these frequency ranges has available to him the know-how, and the manufacturer should have no production problems. Hence in this respect price becomes a good yardstick of performance. A $100 JansZen electrostatic, for example, is a finer instrument than a single-ended electrostatic costing a quarter as much. And there's no confusion about the sonic difference between an $80 Bozak and an $8.00 replacement speaker of the same size.

At low frequencies, however, the loudspeaker design engineer runs into real problems. The most important one is starting and stopping the cone.

At the output terminals of a power amplifier, the electrical image of the original sound can be amazingly accurate. Distortion can be kept to quite inaudible levels. The voice coil, riding within the magnet structure, tries to follow the pattern of electricity applied to it. If the electricity starts and stops abruptly, the voice coil —which must move not only its own mass but also that of the cone—will start a little slowly and stop sluggishly. Fig. 2 is a simplified version of what might happen.

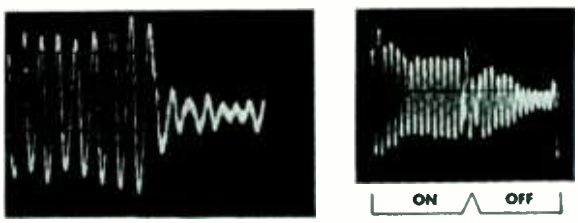


Fig. 3. Tone-burst tests reveal cone action. Burst at left shows cone stopped promptly, that at right shows a sluggish cone.

[1] New word, recently added to the science of high fidelity if not to the English language.

[2] To stave off a flood of mail, let me say that this description applies to nearly all speakers. Electrostatics are an exception; so is Electro-Voice's Ionovac; possibly a couple of others. Also, some small cones are not attached at the outside edge . . . and there are ribbon speakers such as the Kelly.

One of the tests discussed by Mr. Crowhurst in the article cited above uses a burst of tone, applied and stopped abruptly. The illustrations in Fig. 3 show precisely how a cone coped with what is, admittedly, a rugged test. One speaker cone stopped quite well, the other bobbled around. From this point of view, at least, the first speaker has lower distortion than the second. To go from the laboratory to the home, this type of distortion can be readily discerned in percussive sounds.

Directly related to this problem is the fact that the lower the frequency or the louder the sound to be created, the greater the volume of air that must be moved. Therefore it is necessary to make a small cone move a long way or to use a large cone which can move only a short way. But the large cone doesn't function very well at high frequencies; there is too much of it. Conversely, if the excursion of the small cone is allowed to become too great, severe distortion will result.

For example, it would be ridiculous to expect the small 8-inch speaker in Fig. 4 to handle a 32-cycle organ pedal note. It would be equally foolish to hope that the 30-inch monster next to it could produce a flutelike trill.

Incidentally, while the magnet is the primary control factor in the starting-and-stopping process, braking is also applied by the supports at the apex and the edges of the cone. Often this force is a liability rather than an asset, but the cone has to be held in place. Thus the start-and-stop difficulty is compounded by the need for big cones and by the fact that most speakers are mounted vertically. To keep the cone from sagging, its outside edge has to be hitched to a frame. Various materials, from corrugated and flexible paper to foam rubber, are used between cone edge and frame. They must be strong enough to hold the cone in place; pliable enough not to impede the cone when it starts; stiff enough to help brake it when it should stop. (How would *you* go about designing a loudspeaker?)

Two more major problems face the speaker designer. One is that every mass has a frequency at which it resonates. Speaker cones are no exception; depending on size, design, and material of construction, they resonate somewhere between 25 and perhaps 150 cycles. At this frequency they produce more sound for a given electrical input than at other frequencies. This is obviously undesirable.

The other problem is the directionality of sound. A cone or diaphragm sprays out the sound in an uneven pattern, and the pattern changes with frequency. It is much more noticeable at high than at low frequencies. Fig. 5 shows a typical 3,000-cycle pattern.

In seeking solutions to these design problems, two basic approaches are used. Since it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a single speaker to handle the entire frequency range satisfactorily,[3] it makes sense to divide up the range and use two or more speakers, each handling those frequencies for which it is specifically designed. The improvement that can be achieved by using two speakers instead of one is very real. As many as five and six are used in some systems.

The standard approach to resonance problems is to rely on the enclosure to counterbalance the effect of the cone resonance. Another way is to design the speaker with a soft cone, so that its resonant frequency falls below the majority of musical sounds—25 to 35 cycles.

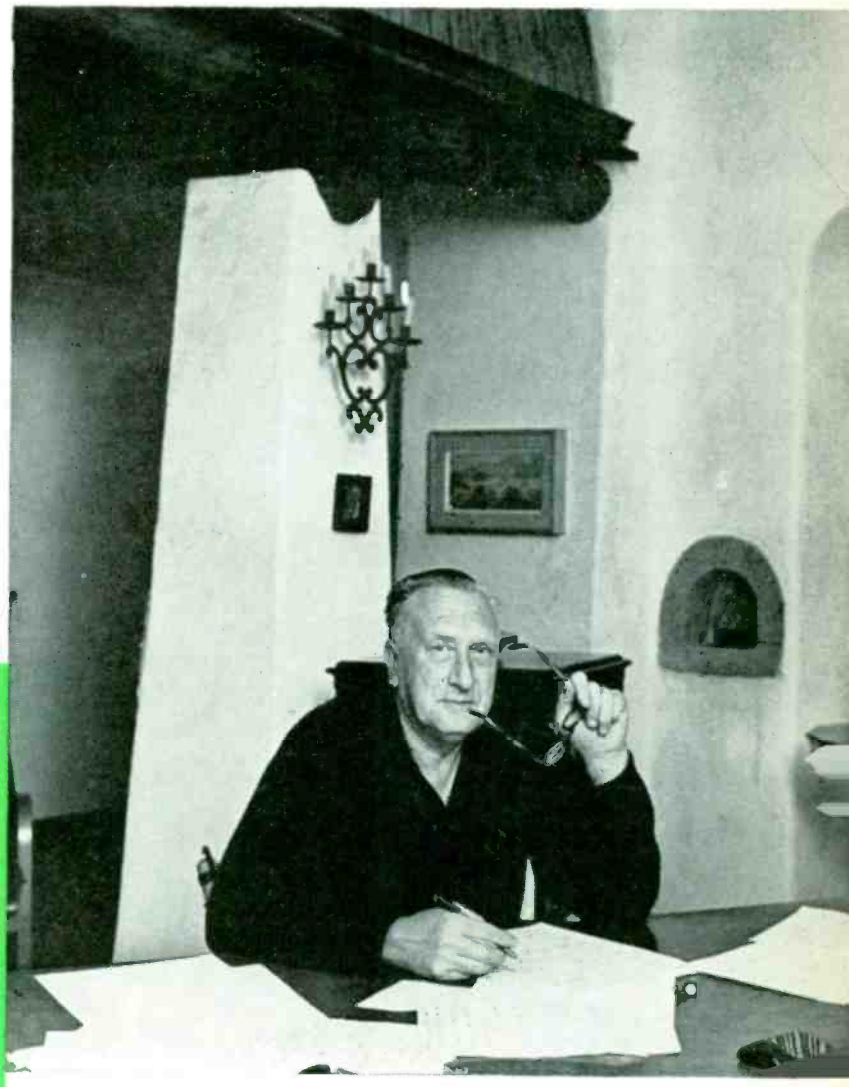
Enclosures serve not only to balance out the effect of cone resonance and to improve low frequency response in general; they also keep sound from the back of the speaker from passing around to the front and canceling out that from the front. The required length of this sound path, from back to front of speaker, becomes practically prodigious as the frequency is lowered. A baffle 24 feet in diameter would be about right for reproduction of 30-cycle tones! Few homes *Continued on page 118*

[3] Specifications for loudspeakers commonly give a frequency range or frequency response figure. Unless such a specification includes a statement referring to "within so many decibels" it is totally meaningless. The cone of almost any speaker will move at almost any frequency. Whether or not it will produce any sound is another matter, frequently and deliberately overlooked.

Fig. 4. David and Goliath—or Electro-Voice's 8-inch wide-range speaker seen alongside its tremendous 30-inch woofer.

Fig. 5. Diagram above shows pattern of sound distribution from a typical loudspeaker at 3,000 cycles per second.

by Patrick Cairn Hughes



Nobody Calls Him Willie Now

Sir William Walton has been England's youngest, kindliest, and most ribald musical knight. He is also the man who made movie music respectable in the Western World. Read an old acquaintance's affectionate report on him.

THE BIGGEST OVATION he ever received, Sir William Walton will tell you, had nothing to do with music. It came from a crowd of twenty thousand people waiting to see a horse race. The twenty thousand had taken their places in the Piazza to watch the Palio, the famous inter-commune, bareback horse race which has taken place in the old Tuscan hill town of Siena every year for the past five or six hundred years. The course round the square was cleared; trumpeters in medieval costume played fanfares; the expectant crowds turned their eyes towards a side street from which the traditional procession preceding the race was to emerge. As the final flourish came to an end, there appeared in the Piazza not the blaze and pomp of the *folkloristico* procession, but the frail and rather unsteady figures of William Walton and Constant Lambert, who had stopped off at a dark little wine shop and, emerging into dazzling sunlight, had lost their way to their seats.

"I must say" (William Walton has a habit of starting his sentences with "I must say"), "I've never had an ovation like it since."

That was in 1928. A couple of years earlier, just as a performance of Elgar's Second Symphony was about to begin at Queen's Hall, a young man with a pale face and fair hair had taken the empty seat beside me in the topmost balcony and asked if he could look over my miniature score. In the intermission we went to the bar and discovered we had a mutual friend, the late Hubert Foss, who, as head of the music side of the Oxford University Press published my new companion's music. (Though he refused to publish any of mine, Foss was then optimistically hoping that I would eventually deliver the translation of an abnormally long and abstruse German study of Wagner.) This first encounter with the young man I now learned to be William Turner Walton was in its way very typical, for it immediately revealed two pronounced aspects of his character, still strongly marked more than thirty years later: his intense curiosity about other people's music and his natural friendliness.

When we first met, Walton was twenty-four years old, tall, thin, and all elbows and knees when seated; and it was not surprising that he was universally addressed by those who knew him—and referred to by those who did not—as "Willie." He obviously *looked* like "Willie," much more, for instance, than Mr. Somerset Maugham has ever looked like "Willie." But while Mr. Maugham is still known by the diminutive, William Walton has been allowed to grow out of his except by overfamiliar acquaintances, who get a reproachful look if they fail to call him "William." The owner's preference for his baptismal name is not due to any sense of self-importance; he just prefers the sound of it, and has always signed even his most intimate letters that way. Pomposity is something entirely foreign to his nature; today he is as cheerfully irreverent about his own music, as even-tempered about adverse criticism and failure, as modest about success, as confident and determined in his ways as he was as a young man.

The young Walton had an almost romantic air of frailty about him, but nothing could have more strongly belied the psychologically and physically vigorous nature that lay beneath it. Walton's frail appearance in his twenties was perhaps exaggerated in one's mind by the fact that this sensitive, pale young man seemed to be constantly in trouble—trouble caused by his music in general and particularly, if one believed the popular press of the time, by the disastrous failure of the work which first introduced his name to the public: *Façade*.

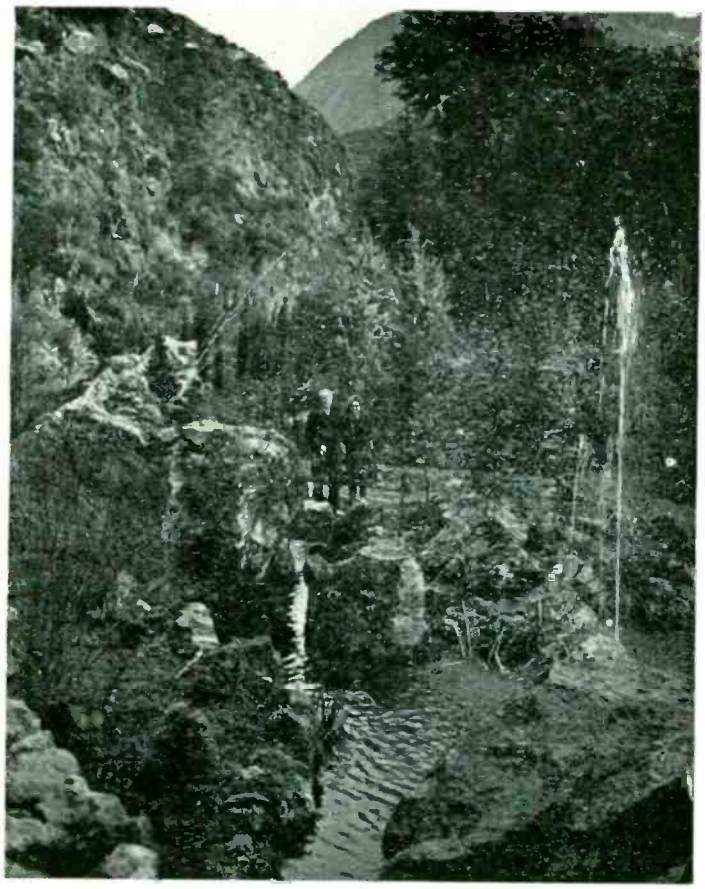
This Edith Sitwell-William Walton "entertainment" was first publicly performed in 1923 at London's Aeolian Hall, a chamber-music-size arena in New Bond Street which has since been taken over by the BBC as a broadcasting studio for radio comedians; it caused a first-rate literary and musical *scandale*. There were shouting and whistling and indignant patriotic demonstrations against such "ultramodern"—and therefore un-English—goings-on. The Aeolian's fireman was asked his views by the press ("I've never known anything like it in twenty years' experience of recitals at this hall"); Mr. Noel Coward "was strong enough to walk out"; and the outraged columnist who chronicled these events ended his dispatch with: "Surely it is time this sort of thing were stopped"—though whether by "this sort of thing" he meant *Façade*, the fireman's solicited testimonial, or Mr. Coward's departure has never been ascertained.

Although Ernest Newman, hearing *Façade* for the first time three years later, anticipated the verdict of a less hysterical posterity by welcoming "a humorous musical talent of the first order," the work's reception in those early days was never entirely predictable from one performance to another. In fact it was a performance of *Façade*, put on as part of the International Festival of Contemporary Music, that brought William Walton to Siena in 1928. The "entertainment" was performed in the local theatre, the composer conducting and the verses spoken by the young and versatile twenty-three-year-old Constant Lambert, who was to die untimely in 1951.

The performance went along smoothly and successfully for quite a time. The "Tango-Pasodoble" was a great hit with the local audience, who cheered so wildly that the number had to be played three times and conductor and speaker had to come from behind the Severini drop curtain to take a couple of calls in their shirtsleeves. Very shortly afterwards, however, came the "Tarantella"—and all hell broke loose. The enthusiastic audience of a moment before now became an angry mob, infuriated by this irreverent treatment of a

Sir William, Lady Walton—and ubiquitous dachshund.

Photographs by Hans Wild



Fountains play in the secluded garden in the hills near Forio d'Ischia.

White walls, a Pulcinella figure.

The Waltons have two villas—one for living, one for working. Here they relax in the former.

national dance. There were shouts, whistles, and catcalls; hats, shoes, and newspapers were thrown at the stage; there developed the kind of uproar that only Latins (and some English intellectuals in Bond Street) know how to create.

"I must say," recalls Sir William, "it was a puzzling change of attitude, and I wasn't very surprised next day when an imaginative Sienese printer referred to me as 'William Wanton'." The performance of *Façade* took place in a theatre called—with inspired aptness—the Teatro dei Rozzi. In Italian *rozzo* means "rough," "raw," or "uncouth." Just to add to the general bewilderment of composer and performers, the work was repeated the next evening without disturbance of any kind and amid enthusiastic applause.

DESPITE the original *Façade* uproar and a similar riot during the quite inaudible performance of a typically *sempre ppp* trio by Webern, there is today in Siena a marble plaque commemorating the International Music Festival of 1928. The inscription honors the presence in the city on that occasion of those "musicians from all over the world whose art contributed to the greater understanding of mankind"—and continues with other words to the same effect.

The Siena interlude did not perturb William Walton any more than the Aeolian Hall debacle had done. The main effect was to provide the young composer with an anecdote or two to retell with his infectious, incisive, and slightly malicious laugh. Anything else would not have been in character, for he has never felt any sense of frustration in his relationship with the outside world. Today he is a comparatively rich man with an annual income of around $28,000 from the performing fees of his works alone. His inner frustration may have limited his output in quantity, but it has ensured a remarkably consistent quality. At Walton's present age, fifty-eight, Richard Strauss had reached his Opus 72—a list which included his most successful operas and all his symphonic poems. Walton's total, on the other hand (he does not use opus numbers), is barely half Strauss's, and consists mainly of one example in each major musical form: one opera; one symphony; one original ballet; one concerto each for violin, viola, violoncello; a sinfonia concertante for piano; one published string quartet; one oratorio; one violin sonata; the uncategorizable *Façade*. But whereas Strauss at fifty-eight could point to no more than a sixth of his works with a regular place in the repertoire of the time, a very high proportion of what Walton has written since *Façade* is regularly and widely performed.

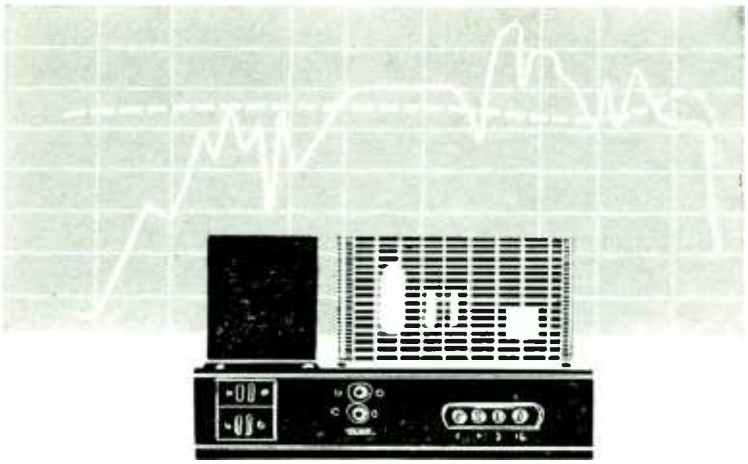
His comparatively meager productivity is not the outcome of laziness, lack of inclination or incentive; on the contrary, in all the years I have known him I can hardly remember a time when he was not composing, usually against a far too rapidly approaching deadline and very often with difficulty. While the deliberate tempo of Walton's production might be regarded as a typically English quality similar to the unhurried craftsmanship that goes into the making of a Savile Row suit or a Rolls-Royce engine, it is characteristic of any artist who is unwilling to let even the most unimportant detail get by on the grounds that nobody else will notice. It is the fact that the artist himself will notice that matters.

The most frequent hazard Walton encounters is the feeling at a certain stage of composition that the music is wrong, that it should move into another key instead of staying where it is. It is then that he turns to his friends for advice. They give it willingly, believing that Walton is in trouble and making some suggestion even without much conviction that it's any improvement. Usually the finished work appears exactly as it was when the composer called for counsel. It is not so much that he ignores advice, as that by the very tentativeness of the proposals offered he is reassured that he himself was right in the first place.

I can recall one occasion, however, when Walton was very wise to heed a friend's recommendation. In this case, far from being perplexed, the composer was proudly demonstrating for general admiration a tango he had just written for his first film score, Elisabeth Bergner's *Escape Me Never*. It was, said he, a natural hit. He was quite right: it most certainly was a natural hit and had been, in fact, for some months—as the theme song of a film starring Mr. Lawrence Tibbett. Accepting expert opinion, Walton scrubbed his world-beating pop from his score, but protested rather sadly that never in his life had he even heard tell of Mr. Tibbett's song. He had, however, long known and admired Isham Jones's classic of the 1920s called *Spain*. As also, it was clear, had the later composer who had liberally based his Lawrence Tibbett number on it.

Walton's realization of the possibilities of film music is something for which many of England's most Eminent Composers have reason to be grateful. The idea of having an authentic composer instead of a studio hack to supply the score caught on quickly; today the British film industry provides a handsome source of income to composers who, until Walton took his first pioneering step, regarded the films as being on the same intellectual level as the circus. Ironically, it took the rebel of *Façade* to make the movies safe and respectable for "serious" musicians, with scores such as those for Sir Laurence Olivier's *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, and *Richard III*.

England's youngest musical knight (he was knighted in 1951) is also the holder of six honorary musical doctorates, degrees conferred on him during ceremonies he has gone through wearing an admirable mask of dignity and earnest appreciation of the solemnity of the occasion. The mask, I'm afraid, is most certainly needed, for his impish spirit surely must have had to be kept under control when, say, he became Doctor of Music of Oxford—the university from *Continued on page 116*



Amplifier Ratings—*Fact & Fantasy*

by DAVID FIDELMAN

If you really want to know how an audio amplifier performs, read a laboratory report on it—or listen to it at work.

FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS you have debated the purchase of a stereo amplifier. You have followed stereo's progress with interest and have finally decided that stereo has come of age; the time to buy is now. Your justification for the outlay is that your trusty monophonic unit will be the basis for a second system in the playroom or perhaps in the summer cottage.

As a typical high-fidelity shopper, you follow the ads and make comparisons. You may stop at your audio dealer's and pick up a batch of manufacturers' literature. What you read in an ad or leaflet is a set of performance specifications more or less like the following:

Power Output: 50 watts (at one kc); 25 watts per channel.

Distortion: Under .25 per cent harmonic at one kc at normal listening level (one watt); less than 0.5 per cent intermodulation at normal listening level.

Frequency Response: 15 to 40,000 cps at ±0.5 db at normal listening levels (one watt).

Hum and Noise: 70 db below rated output.

Sensitivity: 0.5 volts for full output.

The specifications look impressive, but what is meaningful about them? What is fact and what is fantasy? The example suggested above is more detailed than some manufacturers may provide, but some information is still missing. What is it? If the specifications of the hypothetical amplifier we've described are exactly the same as those of another make of amplifier, will both sound the same in a given system? If not, how can the difference be determined? Are there areas in which manufacturers' specifications are not enough to judge by?

An important fact to note about specs is that it's the little things that count. Except for very, very poor and very cheap amplifiers, all have good frequency response, and sufficiently low distortion, and all meet their rated power outputs at midfrequencies. The qualities that determine the superiority of one amplifier over another show up around the edges of sound reproduction. These are transient response, phase distortion, noise level, power output at frequency extremes, and perhaps other factors still little understood.

Before examining the little things more closely, let's be sure we understand what they mean in relation to what the amplifier is called upon to do. Even newcomers to audiophilia know that the two basic functions of an amplifier are: 1) to amplify the signal fed into it and 2) to drive the loudspeaker(s) at a level adequate for a particular listening environment. A good amplifier will

do its job without adding to, distorting, or changing the character of the original signal in any way.

Here's where specifications, the *specific* performance requirements, enter the picture.

Power Output: Here we look to see if the amplifier has sufficient power output to drive whatever type of speakers are used (they vary in efficiency and require different power) at an adequate sound level. The 25 watts per channel cited in the specifications at the beginning of this article should be sufficient to drive even a loudspeaker of very low efficiency. That much the ratings do tell. They do not, however, indicate how the amplifier will perform at frequency extremes. This omission, incidentally, is a common failing of many published specs. Recent measurements indicate that there may be much more power in orchestral music at high and low frequency peaks than we thought, and the amplifier must be capable of handling them.

One manufacturer compares the action of an amplifier to that of a power lawn mower. When high level signals are fed, the amplifier's power supply must deliver more current. This makes the voltage of the output tubes drop off, just as the engine of a power mower slows down in high grass. More meaningful than either power rating or frequency response given separately would be a statement of the frequency response at high power. At low power levels, extremely good frequency response is possible, and the use of negative feedback in the circuit makes the frequency response data look terrific. Negative feedback is simply the insertion back close to the input of a small portion of the output signal. This subtracts from the signal but reduces distortion. While this may improve the frequency response and reduce some of the noise originally in the amplifier, no amount of feedback can correct overloading the amplifier at some frequencies (generally at the extremes).

Flat Frequency Response: In considering frequency response, the wise shopper should expect it to be wide and flat. In general it should be wide enough to include all frequencies in the original signal. The set of specs we are considering here shows the amplifier to be capable of delivering 15 to 40,000 cycles (that's plenty wide) at ±0.5 db (that's pretty flat) "at normal listening levels," which we assume to be a one-watt power level. How wide and flat the frequency response would be at full power is anyone's guess. The phrase "at normal listening levels" begs the question. The point at issue is the reproduction of transient passages, perhaps the most important work an amplifier has to do. Music is not a steady tone; it is a continuous series of minute bursts of sound at various frequencies. What we want to know, therefore, is how flat the amplifier will be for loud transient passages over the entire frequency range. Frequency response "at normal listening levels" does not tell us.

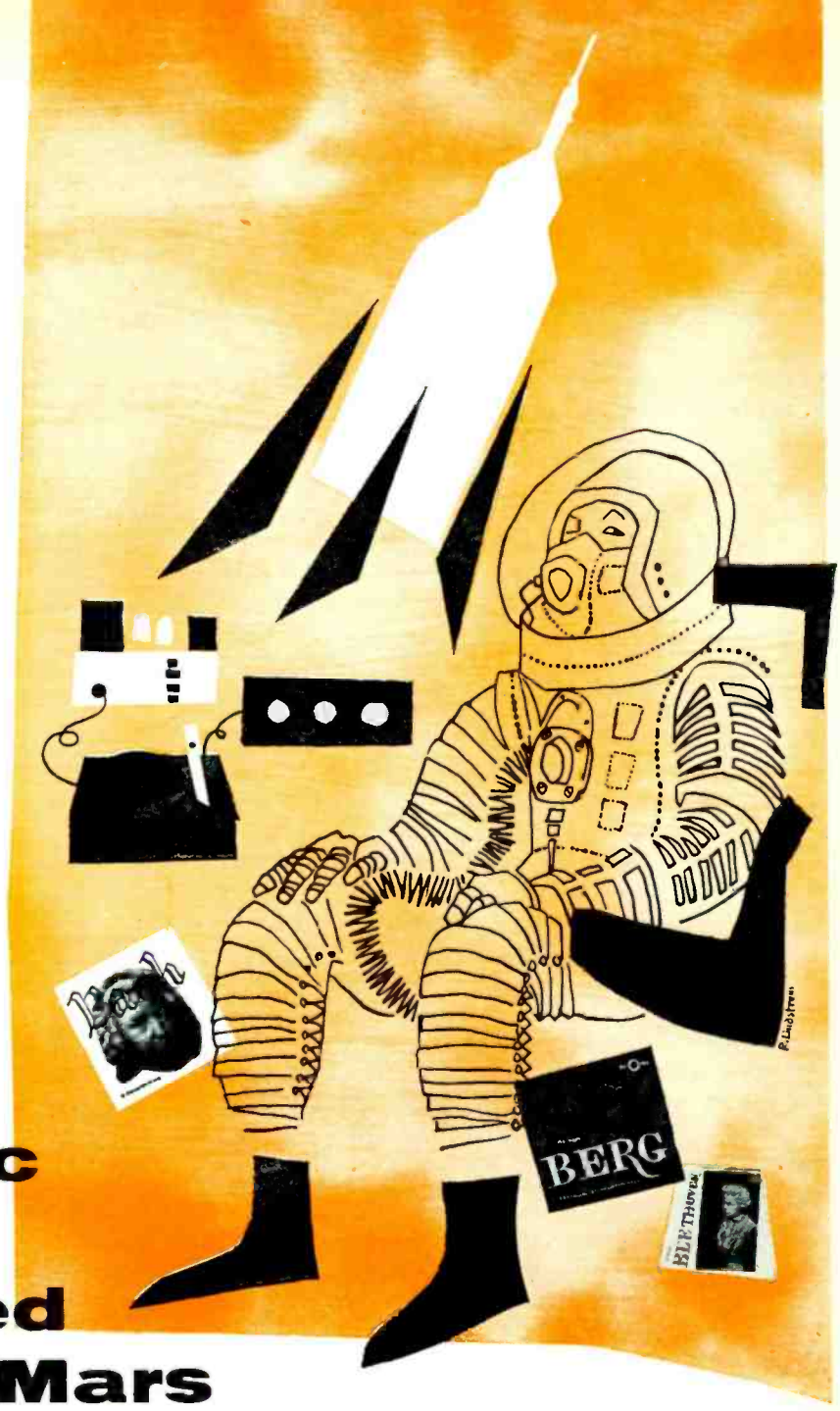
Low Distortion: Amplifiers can distort the sound fed into them by adding tones of their own. Our major concern is with two varieties: harmonic distortion (that is, tones that are harmonics of those in the original signal) and intermodulation distortion (tones resulting from interaction between different tones in the original). The latter is the nastiest because it is usually discordant with the original signal. An interesting sidelight is that 3 per cent harmonic distortion was considered a perfectly acceptable amount ten years ago. Harold Leak's "Point One" amplifier set a mark (.1, as the name indicates) that typical high-priced amplifiers achieve today. Yet some of the best early triode amplifiers still sound remarkably good.

In the set of specs we have been considering, we note that harmonic distortion is stated as "under .25 per cent" while intermodulation distortion is "less than 0.5 per cent," both at normal listening levels. Here again the figures are meaningless without some power reference point. How much distortion is present, we want to know, at a standard output level and at the full rated output of the amplifier? Knowing the level of distortion at low outputs is as important as knowing it at full rated output. In many installations, more than a moderate output level is not necessary. As a prospective purchaser, you will want to know how one amplifier will perform against another at a level of one watt. In order to have a point of reference we must assume that the "normal listening level" of the stated spec is one watt, and the performance at full rated output is not stated at all.

Another form of distortion that is rarely, if ever, stated is "ringing." Ringing relates to the ability of the amplifier to reproduce transients adequately. For example, the tone of a drum beat may not die as quickly as it does in the original signal. The amplifier hangs on to it momentarily. Again, a sharp attack from an instrument such as a piano may introduce a brief additional high frequency tone. The main reason for the omission of transient response data from specs is the lack of any generally accepted test or performance standard. It is true that square wave patterns on an oscilloscope screen tell the engineer something about how an amplifier performs in this respect and give h im general direction and guidance. But it is equally true that if you ask ten engineers to interpret a given square wave pattern, you are likely to get ten different answers.

Hum and Noise. The most common spurious sound produced by an amplifier is 60- or 120-cycle hum. This is due mainly to the power lines around us and to the use of 60-cycle alternating current in the amplifier. A good amplifier, when properly set up, will introduce no audible hum or other noise into the reproduced sound. For good listening, the noise level should be not less than 60 db below the maximum level at *Continued on page 108*

by Robert Silverberg



Music for People Marooned on Mars

The author here pursues a variant of the famous desert island game.

Much ink and mental energy have long been expended in concocting libraries for castaways on desert isles. By now the literary canon must be virtually closed: Homer, Shakespeare, Dante, *et al.* are no doubt found in survival kits aboard every well-stocked liner.

But what about music? The microgroove era has brought Bach and Beethoven out of the concert hall and made them the common property of musical amateurs everywhere. The modern castaway's kit, then, must surely include great music as well as Milton and Sophocles. And let's bring our traveler himself up to date. He'll journey by space ship, and his destination may be Mars. With room on board limited, only a handful of musical works can accompany him; and with the hazards of space travel being what they are, his collection must be chosen in the cold foreknowledge that it may have to last him for the rest of his lifetime. The designers of the ship provide our hero with a first-rate sound system—miniaturized, of course, and merely monophonic, since the luxury of duplicate speak-

ers and amplifiers has to be foregone. And they allow him to take along a dozen or so records.

We can now drop the pretense of objectivity. I am this hypothetical spaceman, and the music that accompanies him is of my choosing. And let it be known that picking out a mere handful of works from all of music's treasures is not an easy job; it calls for iron ruthlessness, staunch powers of decision. Herewith my list—unapologetically and exclusively personal.

As for my criteria of selection, they are three.

First, and most important: the work must be able to stand up to a near infinite number of playings. For me, this means music of iceberg proportions, with much of the meaning below the immediate surface. Each work must unfold new revelations every time it is heard; like a kaleidoscope, it must have infinite variety. The work of mere surface charm, however sparkling, is certain eventually to pall.

So—sadly—away with the *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* sort of divertimento, the operas of Rossini, the Chopin preludes, and most of the orchestral works of the nineteenth century. No doubt I've instantly alienated a sizable number of worthy readers. Unavoidable. I admit I've discarded much treasurable music, but of necessity. For me, the rejected works lack staying power. *Cenerentola* is a gay delight, agreed: but can the plight of Cinderella remain fascinating through boundless vastnesses of space? Out with *Finlandia*, the *1812* Overture, *Tosca*. Only the highest art can survive *this* winnowing.

The second criterion is that the performance must be definitive, or at least downright good. A wobbly Isolde can be tolerated at a single performance in the opera house, but to drift starward irrevocably condemned to a fifth-rate *Liebestod* would be torment indeed. Performing flaws tend to become less tolerable with repeated listening. I can imagine the gritting of the teeth every time the tenor approaches the bar where he fluffed that high one, the anticipatory grimace as the bobble in the horn section comes nigh. Consequently, the performance must reach the lofty level of the work itself.

Criterion number three, sonic quality, stems from the same principle: infinite repetition of the imperfect leads to madness. Tubby, distorted sound will pass in a library of historically important performances—the Glyndebourne *Don Giovanni*, for instance. But fuzzy fortissimos, muffled bass response, treacly treble—these can take on monstrous powers of irritation against the unsullied backdrop of the constellations.

Music of unending revelation, flawless performance, faithful recording—these are the spaceman's criteria, in descending order of importance. The music first, certainly. A competent performance, if no great one happens to exist. And adequate recorded sound, wherever the highest fidelity may be lacking.

With the countdown in its final stages, let's get to the selecting. I have broken the classical repertory into eight general fields, with the self-imposed proviso that no more than two works may be chosen from any one category, nor more than thirteen in all. Why the baker's dozen instead of the traditional ten best? I'm afraid it's because thirteen was the irreducible minimum at which I could arrive.

LET'S BEGIN with chamber music. A host of chamber works clamor for admission to the spaceship: all of the late Beethoven quartets and some of his earlier Rasumovsky ones too; the Mozart Viola Quintet, K. 515, and the E flat Divertimento, K. 563; Schubert's great String Quintet, Op. 163 and Quartet No. 15, Op. 161. Among modern compositions: the Alban Berg quartet; Schoenberg's four, Bloch's four, Bartók's towering six; the Elliot Carter quartet, in my opinion greatest of American chamber works.

The problem is extreme. Surgery is required. Mozart and Schubert, for all their beauty and wonder, are discarded. Beethoven is narrowed to two quartets; after long conflict, Op. 132 is regretfully left behind on Earth, and the choice falls on the fourteenth quartet, Op. 131, whose seven movements are dazzling in their structural richness and melodic wealth. From contemporary composers, the spaceman chooses Bartók's No. 5, nodding sadly to the Sixth and to Berg, Bloch, Schoenberg, and Carter. And so our two chamber music selections are made—and dissident opinions would be far from surprising.

As one turns to symphonies, Beethoven's Ninth leaps forth immediately. But, although I do not deny the grandeur of the choral movement or the haunting sweetness of the adagio, I'm forced to the possibly blasphemous remark that the Ninth (and the *Eroica* too, for that matter) will not stand up to the sort of repeated probing a music lover marooned in space can give it. Heresy? Perhaps. But I think that the patterns are too easily grasped; occasional exposure is sufficient to keep even the greatest of the Beethoven symphonies warm in the mind. So, too, for the other great symphonies—those of Haydn, Brahms, Mozart, Schubert.

What is called for in this space-going library is a more complex symphonic structure. What I have in mind is the Mahler-Bruckner sort of symphony: the rambling broad canvas, the vast inexhaustible landscape in which one can roam endlessly without discovering every detail. The choice falls, for me, between Mahler's Third and Bruckner's Seventh or Ninth—and after some anguish, the E major Bruckner, Number Seven, receives the nod as the sole representative of the symphony in the spacefarer's collection.

The repertoire of opera I find more circumscribed—a score of works of surpassing greatness, and a good deal of agreeable mediocrity. Mozart and Wagner vie for supremacy here: *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Zauberflöte*, *Tristan*, *Meistersinger*, *Parsifal*, *Walküre*. To omit either composer would be unthinkable, and yet between them they use up the entire quota: *Continued on page 111*

The consumer's guide to new and important high-fidelity equipment

high fidelity EQUIPMENT REPORTS

Rek-O-Kut N-33H Turntable

AT A GLANCE: The Rek-O-Kut N-33H is a single speed (33⅓-rpm) belt-drive turntable with a hysteresis-synchronous motor. Its speed is exact, wow and flutter are low, and the hum field above the turntable is very low. The N-33H sells for $69.95 (base and arm not included in price).

Measurements show a relatively high rumble level, but since the major part of this rumble is at 15 cps and inaudible it is no problem in normal listening.

IN DETAIL: The Rek-O-Kut N-33H is mounted on a large steel motor board. The metal plate is drilled for a Rek-O-Kut arm, but the spacing of the hole is such that many other good arms can be mounted on it. The synchronous motor is mounted on soft rubber vibration isolators. A rubberized fabric belt drives the heavy aluminum turntable from the motor shaft. Adjustments are provided for belt tension and for the position of the belt on the motor shaft.

A ribbed rubber mat on the turntable protects the record surface. Stroboscope markings are included at the center portion of the turntable, though they serve little practical purpose on this turntable with its single nonadjustable speed. Perhaps they are there simply to boost the user's morale, since they show the speed to be quite exact, as well as free from periodic variations.

This is confirmed by our measurements which show the wow to be approximately 0.1% and flutter to be 0.15%. These are more than acceptably low figures for a home turntable, and in fact are worthy of professional equipment.

In our test the turntable was mounted on a Rek-O-Kut Type BW base, designed to mount this and other Rek-O-Kut turntables. In the installation instructions accompanying the turntable, it is recommended that a motor board at least ¾-in. thick be used. A rigid, heavy board is important in any turntable installation in order to keep rumble down. However, the BW base is light and thin, seemingly at variance with Rek-O-Kut's own instructions.

We were disconcerted to find that the rumble measured −25 db referred to 7 cm/sec at 1,000 cps, and −20 db when vertical rumble components were included. We checked a second unit, mounted on a similar base but equipped with a different arm and cartridge (both types used were of good quality). Its rumble figures were −27 db and −23 db respectively. In listening tests, the rumble did not seem at all obtrusive; in fact, it was necessary to advance the gain to unreasonable levels to hear it at all. Further investigation revealed that the prime rumble frequency was 15 cps, corresponding to one half the motor revolution rate. The insensitivity of the

ear and deficiencies of loudspeakers make the 15-cycle rumble inaudible, leaving only the relatively small amount of 30 cps and higher harmonic components.

We have no explanation for the rumble being at this low frequency, but whatever the reason, the result is a satisfactorily low rumble level in spite of the rather alarming numerical values we obtained.

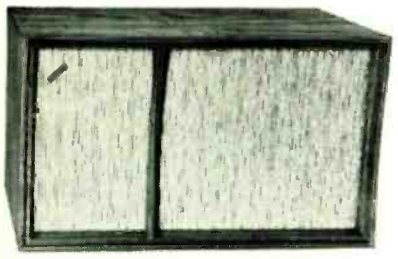
One may wonder why we comment on a rumble condition which is admittedly inaudible under most conditions. The chief reason is the possibility of the user inadvertently overloading an amplifier by excessive bass boost. Some amplifiers, particularly the less expensive ones, have very limited low frequency power-handling ability. If considerable bass boost is applied to such an amplifier, possibly to accentuate the response in the 50- to 100-cps region, the result may well be a boost of 15 db or more at 15 cps. If a turntable has a rumble level only 20 db below average recording level at 15 cps, the amplifier will be called upon to deliver only 5 db less power at 15 cps than at 100 cps, for example. If it is played loud, and delivers 3 watts of program power, the 15-cps rumble power will be 1 watt. Many amplifiers cannot deliver 1 watt at 15 cps without appreciable distortion. The result will be strong intermodulation of higher frequencies by the 15-cps rumble, which will manifest itself as a muddy sound.

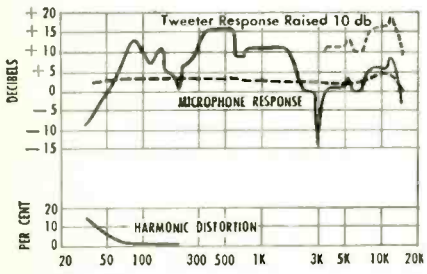
Since the Rek-O-Kut specification for the rumble level of this turntable is — 53 db (referred to an unspecified level), we can only assume that some sort of weighting was applied in order to give each frequency component an importance proportional to its audibility. Although this is a common and perfectly legitimate practice, our rumble figures are presented without weighting other than to take note of the predominant rumble frequency.

The external hum field above the turntable surface was unusually low, and even a relatively hum-sensitive cartridge should be satisfactory when used with this turntable.

H. H. Labs.

Wharfedale '60 Speaker System





AT A GLANCE: The Wharfedale '60 is an integrated speaker system (components not available separately) which is highly successful both aurally and visually. The 12-in. woofer and 3-in. cone tweeter are mounted on a sand-filled hollow board, in the manner long advocated by Mr. G. A. Briggs. The result is an unusually dead box, free from resonances and coloration, and a speaker whose balance and musical quality are the equal of any in its class.

The woofer is a high-compliance type, and (according to the advertised specifications) the cabinet is ported. Whatever the technique, the bass has a satisfying solidity and freedom from distortion.

The highs are clean and smooth, complementing the fine bass performance, and there is a tweeter level control which allows the balance to be set to one's own taste.

The Wharfedale '60 is available in a variety of finishes: walnut, mahogany, or lined oak—$105; ready-to-finish birch—$89.50.

IN DETAIL: The Wharfedale '60 is obviously meant to compete with a number of American compact speaker systems which have extended low frequency response and sell in the $100 bracket. Wharfedale has introduced a few original techniques, notably the sand-filled panel. This speaker is quite heavy (we would guess about forty pounds) and when the cabinet is rapped with the knuckles the sound is similar to that obtained by tapping a block of stone. That cabinet rigidity is vital to good sound from a speaker system is well known and the Wharfedale '60 takes second place to none in this respect.

The frequency response curve shows the long flat regions (representing fluctuations of less than 2 db) which immediately suggest smooth sound. The dip at 200 cps is probably an interference effect due to the manner of mounting the speaker for this measurement (on its back, on the ground). The tweeter level control was arbitrarily set at mid-rotation for these measurements. Obviously this is too low for flattest response. The hole at 3,000 cps is the crossover cancellation between tweeter and woofer, and, by the way, not a true response of the speaker.

The tweeter level control can increase the high frequency output by 12 db when fully advanced. The dotted curve shows the response above 3.5 kc, increased by 10 db, as an indication of the response available from this system. Note the manner in which the high frequency response follows the microphone calibration curve, which shows that it is actually much flatter than appears on the surface.

The over-all response, in this rather undesirable acoustical environment (from a

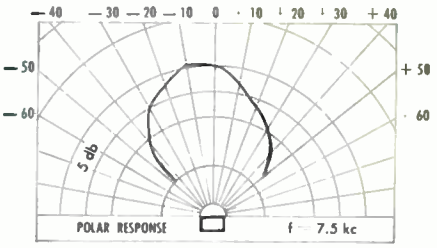
listening standpoint) is within plus or minus 6 db from 60 to over 15,000 cps, which is very good by any standards. As the low frequency distortion curve shows, and as confirmed by listening tests, the actual low frequency response of the Wharfedale '60 extends to below 40 cps, with the limit being decided by tolerable distortion.

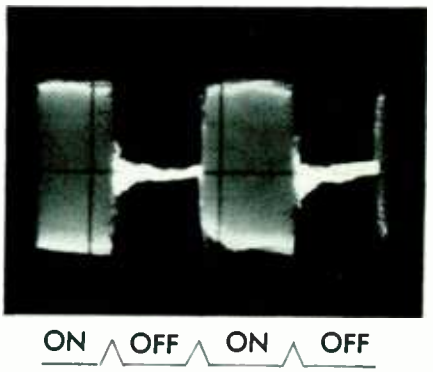
The polar response shows a rather sharply beamed high end, somewhat sharper than other similar-sized speaker systems we have tested. The beaming only seems excessive by such a comparison, since we did not experience adverse reaction to it in listening tests.

Having done some listening before testing the speaker, we were not too surprised to find that the tone burst response was excellent. The picture, taken at 5.3 kc, represents the worst response we could get from this speaker, and the tone burst result is quite a good one.

The over-all efficiency of the Wharfedale '60 is about 7 db greater than our reference speaker, but would probably be considered moderately low. No specially powerful amplifiers are needed, and any good 20-watt amplifier will be more than adequate for driving the speaker.

In listening tests, most listeners preferred to operate the tweeter level control about 80% on, which is slightly below the level corresponding to the dotted curve on the response curve. The high frequency sound was judged somewhat better than our reference, the middles definitely better, and the lows less good. All in all, the Wharfedale '60 delivers a smooth, clean, and musical sound which all listeners found to be highly satisfying. Although we do not attempt to rate components on visual aesthetic values, we must take note that the designers of the Wharfedale cabinet have made a substantial improvement over a plain rectangular box. H. H. LABS.





Harman-Kardon Citation I Stereo Preamplifier

AT A GLANCE: The Harman-Kardon Citation I is the companion to the Citation II power amplifier. It is one of the most flexible and complete control centers available and is of unsurpassed quality. Like the Citation II, the Citation I is available in kit form or factory-wired.

The Citation I shows many signs of the unusual design concepts which characterize its power amplifier companion unit. The frequency response is flat for octaves beyond the audio range, on both upper and lower ends. Its distortion is so low as to be quite literally unmeasurable. The caliber of its components and construction is professional. Used with the Citation II or any other good stereo power amplifier, it will enable any stereo system to sound its best. Kit: $159.95; factory-wired: $249.95.

Construction notes on this unit can be found on page 106.

IN DETAIL: In spite of having practically any conceivable control function available on its front panel, the Citation I is simple to operate due to the logical grouping of controls. The main operating controls are arranged in a group in the right-hand portion of the panel. These include the volume control, balance control, mode selector, and function selector. The mode selector has positions for stereo, stereo with blending of the two channels, the sum of the two input signals, and either input individually. In all cases the signals are fed to both outputs.

The function selector has positions for three high level inputs and three low level inputs. The latter include two sets of phono cartridge inputs and one for a tape head.

The upper left portion of the panel has phono equalization switches, the blend control, and the low frequency cutoff filter switch. Unlike most stereo preamplifiers, the Citation I has separate rolloff and turnover selectors, with six positions each. Almost any record of any vintage can be equalized, as well as prerecorded tapes.

The blend control is actually a dual control, with slightly different functions depending on the setting of the MODE switch. In normal stereo operation, it acts as a gain control for the center-channel output. This can be used to drive an external power amplifier for center fill or remote monophonic listening. When the MODE

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REPORT POLICY

switch is set to BLEND, this knob mixes the two stereo channels to overcome the hole-in-the-middle which is sometimes found.

The low frequency cutoff filter has three positions. In the FLAT position, the amplifier is just that—flat. We have never seen any preamplifier designed for home use which was so perfectly flat over such a wide range as the Citation I. One channel was perfectly flat from 20 cps to 20,000 cps, and the other rolled off 0.2 db at 20 kc. Although meters are not particularly reliable at subsonic frequencies, we checked the response as far down as we could, and found it to be down about 3 db at 4 cps. It is perfectly flat to well below 10 cps.

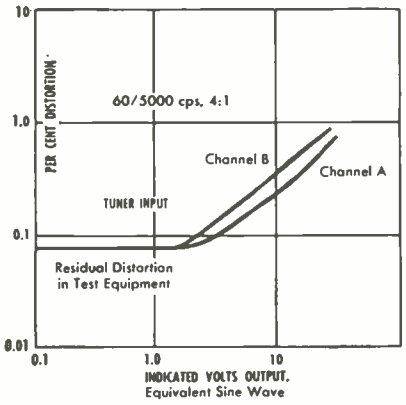
In the SUBSONIC position of the filter switch, the response is rolled off below 15 cps to prevent damage to speaker cones. In the RUMBLE FILTER position, the response cuts off sharply at 75 cps. It has a rise of slightly over 1 db in the 100- to 150-cps region, is down 0.8 db at 70 cps, and down 11.8 db at 30 cps. We found it to be very effective against rumble and acoustic feedback, yet it has no audible effect on 99% of the music one is likely to hear.

The tone controls are grouped in the lower left portion of the panel. These are unconventional in several respects. They are step-type controls. In the flat position they are completely out of the circuit, and can contribute no distortion or phase shift. The bass boost characteristics have a sliding inflection point, which means that considerable low frequency boost can be had without great effect on mid-frequencies. The same applies to the treble boost action. The treble cut characteristics are those of scratch filters, with 12 db per octave slopes and cutoff frequencies of 3, 5, 7, and 10 kc.

Finally, in a vertical row to the left of the main group of operating controls is a series of switches which are used infrequently. One adds Fletcher-Munson compensation to the low frequencies, converting the volume control to a loudness control. The next is a tape monitor switch for listening to the output of a three-head tape machine while making a recording. Below this are a stereo channel-reversing switch and a phase-reversing switch. Finally, on the bottom is a translucent plastic knob which rotates to turn on the unit and lights up to serve as a pilot light.

On the back of the Citation I, besides the multitude of input and output jacks (there are two sets of output jacks for each channel, plus the center-channel output), there are three switched AC outlets and one unswitched outlet. The switch is a heavy-duty type, which is important on equipment such as this where hundreds of watts may be switched. Each outlet is rated at 4 amperes, and a total of 10 amperes may be switched.

The basic approach to the design of the Citation I is a simple and logical one, but nevertheless uncommon. Every stage of amplification has negative feedback around it to reduce its distortion. None of the equalization or tone control networks is located in a feedback path, where the amount of feedback might be affected by the position of the control. All equalization is performed by purely passive networks (resistors and capacitors) located between the heavily fed-back amplifier stages.



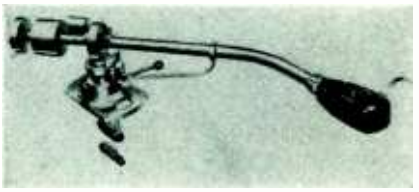
In each case where there is a coupling capacitor which might limit low frequency response, the feedback is taken from the output side of the capacitor. The result is remarkable low frequency response. The extensive use of feedback has reduced distortion to truly infinitesimal proportions. The output stages are not the usual cathode followers, but are feedback amplifiers capable of delivering astoundingly large output voltages without distortion. We are not using the term "astoundingly" lightly, as a glance at the measured distortion curve will show. The output can exceed 30 volts without reaching 1% IM distortion. Up to 1.5 volts output (which will drive a Citation II power amplifier to full output) the distortion was undetectable on our equipment, which has a residual distortion level of 0.07%.

Frequency response curves would be meaningless, since they would merely be straight lines. The RIAA phono equalization error was also very small, being less than 0.3 db from 700 cps to 20 kc and rising slowly to a positive error of about 2 db at 20 cps. In all cases the responses of the two channels were very closely matched. The tracking of the two sections of the ganged volume control was quite good, with the gains of the channels staying within a few tenths of a db of each other over most of the range of the control. The gains of the two channels were slightly different at the mid-position of the balance control (about 2 db difference). The balance control can cut off either side completely while raising the level of the other side a few db to maintain constant over-all volume.

On the high-level inputs the hum was 80 db below 1 volt output at any setting of the gain control. On the phono input it was —68 db at the reference gain setting (10 mv input at 1,000 cps yielding 1 volt output). Hum and noise are quite inaudible. Only 1.5 millivolts are needed at the phono input to produce 1 volt output at maximum gain.

Obviously, many superlatives could be applied to this amplifier with considerable justification. We will limit ourselves to saying that it is an ideal companion for the Citation II, and that it is unexcelled by any equipment we have ever seen. Comments on its listening quality would also be meaningless, since the only limitations on the sound one hears when using this amplifier are those imposed by the program source, the loudspeakers, and the listening environment. H. H. Labs.

SME 3009 Tone Arm



AT A GLANCE: The SME tone arm is quite unconventional in appearance. It incorporates a host of design features, most of which are found in various other arms. We know of no other arm, however, which combines so many refinements in its design.

Apart from design, the mechanical construction of the SME arm is a joy to behold. It is a precision instrument, quite different in detail work and caliber of finish from other arms designed for home use. Probably its most outstanding feature is the extremely low bearing friction. Combined with a balanced design, and a total freedom from resonance in the audio range, the result is an arm which enables the cartridge to deliver its full potential performance. The tracking force can be reduced to the minimum value required by the cartridge design, without any added safety factor to overcome arm friction. Prices are: $87 for the short arm and $99 for the long arm.

IN DETAIL: The unconventional appearance of the SME arm is due for the most part to the means provided for setting a longitudinal and lateral balance, regardless of the cartridge employed. A sliding cylindrical counterweight is used to balance the arm and cartridge longitudinally; that is, so that the stylus floats free of the record. This is done with the small outrigger sliding weight set at a zero reference line on the bar along which it slides. After the arm is balanced, the small weight is moved forward until the desired tracking force is obtained.

The bar is marked with a series of lines, each of which corresponds to 0.5 grams of tracking force. Moving the small weight forward three divisions thus produces a 1.5-gram force at the stylus. This force is adjustable between the limits of 0 and 5 grams. Comparisons with our stylus force gauge (a balance type) showed exact agreement.

Since the cartridge is offset from the axis of the arm for reduced tracking error, it is necessary to add a weight on the opposite side of the arm to achieve lateral balance. This is done with the aid of the stylus force adjustment weight and the bar on which it rides. This bar may be positioned at an adjustable distance from the arm proper, and parallel to it. When the arm is completely balanced, it is insensitive to turntable leveling, as well as to shock from floor vibration and other sources.

The lateral bearing appears to be a sleeve type, but with such a fine finish that friction is virtually undetectable. We do not have the facilities for measuring frictional forces of this magnitude, but other sources claim to have measured it as less than 25 milligrams. Judging by the "feel" of the arm, this sounds quite reasonable to us.

The vertical bearing is a knife edge, which rests in a grooved block. An ingenious means is employed to determine when correct lateral balance has been achieved. The arm is lifted just behind the bearings on a pencil or similar object, with the forward part of the arm being supported. If the arm is laterally balanced, both sides of the knife edge bearing will rise simultaneously. If not, only one side will rise. The position of the tracking force adjustment weight and bar is changed until both sides of the bearing lift together.

The arm itself is stainless steel, with a satin chrome finish. The hollow tube is filled with a wood insert, to damp arm resonances. Two plastic plug in heads, retained by a knurled nut, are provided. The heads are equipped with finger lifts, but the arm has a feature which makes them nearly unnecessary. A lever next to the pivot portion of the arm raises a small lifting track which lifts the arm so that the pickup clears the record surface. When the pickup has been positioned over the desired portion of the record, the lever is flipped down. A spring and dashpot system lowers the arm slowly and gently to the record surface. This is unquestionably far more gentle on both stylus and record than a manual handling of the pickup.

The offset of the arm is designed for low tracking error. To insure optimum positioning of the arm with cartridges of different dimensions, the entire arm can slide on a track in its base. Two thumbscrews lock it into position, and a calibrated scale on the edge of the base helps in returning to a previously selected position. An alignment protractor supplied with the arm is placed over the turntable spindle and the stylus is

placed in the indicated holes at a 2½ inch radius from the turntable center. The arm is slid in its base until the tracking error is zero, which is easily determined from the position of the plug-in head relative to the lines on the protractor. When the arm was positioned in this manner, we measured a maximum tracking error of 1 degree over the entire record surface. This represents the approximate limit of measurement by the technique we use, so we feel it safe to say that the tracking error of the SME arm is less than 1 degree, and is zero at the inner grooves of a record, where this is most important.

A built-in arm rest is attached to the base. The signal leads are brought out to a connector firmly mounted to the arm base, and a mating plug is supplied. As a final precaution against hum, a shield can slips over the connector and plug.

A special point is made in the installation instructions of the need for "dynamic leveling" of the turntable to eliminate the small frictional drag of the stylus on the record, which tends to carry the pickup to the center of the record. This technique, of course, is not unique to this arm, but presumably when all other frictional forces have been reduced to the extent that they have in this arm, further refinements become significant.

We used two types of cartridges in this arm: one with average compliance and one with very high compliance. In the first case we were able to obtain clean performance at 3 grams, where at least 4 grams had been needed in other arms. In the second case, the minimum tracking force could be reduced from 2½ grams to 1½ grams. There is no doubt that almost any cartridge can be successfully operated at lower tracking forces in the SME arm than in any other arm we have used.

In our testing and use of the SME arm, we found two points worthy of criticism, neither of them very serious. The dashpot arm-lowering system, smooth though it is, raises the arm so high from the record that it is difficult to cue in on a particular groove, or various bands on a record. Secondly, after taking such pains to shield the arm and its wiring, the designers of the arm use plastic cartridge shells. We found that hum could be picked up when one's hand came near the shell, with certain cartridges. Metal shells would make the shielding 100% complete.

Another point worth noting is that, although changing cartridges is a quick and simple operation, it may be that an extensive series of adjustments will be required after each change. If the two cartridges have different stylus-to-mounting hole dimensions, compliances, and weights, it will be necessary to readjust the arm position for zero tracking error, the outrigger arm for lateral balance, the sliding weight for longitudinal balance, and the sliding counterweight for tracking force.

For the listener who has the finest reproducing equipment, good records, and a critical ear, the expense of this superb arm can easily be justified. H. H. Labs

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Stromberg-Carlson ASR-8-80 Stereo Amplifier

AT A GLANCE: The Stromberg-Carlson ASR-8-80 is a compact integrated stereo amplifier rated at 32 watts per channel. Noteworthy is the fact that it exceeds its rated power substantially over most of the audio range, and has excellent power-handling capabilities at both ends of the spectrum.

The distortion of the ASR-8-80 is very low at usual listening levels when correctly operated (see later comments in this report). It has a rare combination of very high gain and very low hum. The amplifier has a number of special features, such as center channel output and a very effective channel-balancing system, as well as the usual stereo control functions found in all good amplifiers.

With a listening quality matching its laboratory response, the Stromberg-Carlson ASR-8-80 must be considered a very good value at its $199.95 price.

IN DETAIL: As the senior member of the firm's stereo amplifier line, the 8-80 has a strong family resemblance to the others in the line. For example, each channel has its own treble and bass tone controls and its own volume control. A master gain control operates on the mixed or selected outputs of the two channels. A loudness contour switch applies both low and high frequency boost to the frequency response as the master gain control setting is lowered.

The program selector is at the left side of the panel. A group of four lights above the selector knob serves as pilot light and program indicator. The light corresponding to the selected channel is illuminated. The choice of program sources is one of the few instances in which the ASR-8-80 lacks somewhat in flexibility. Only four sets of inputs

are provided: two low level and two high level. One of the low level inputs is for a tape head or microphone, with the appropriate equalization selected by a slide switch below the program selector knob. The second is for a magnetic phono cartridge, with RIAA equalization. One of the high level inputs is marked for stereo tuner or AUX (such as a television set or other high level program source). The other high level input is marked for tape preamplifier output or ceramic cartridge. Presumably this could be used for a TV signal if the tuner input was supplied with the output of an AM-FM tuner.

The lack of input flexibility we noted is largely by comparison with other stereo amplifiers. This unit has sufficient inputs for the vast majority of installations.

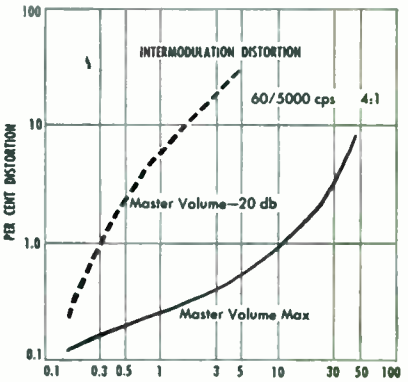
The channel selector has five positions: either left or right channel through its own loudspeaker only, one channel through both speakers for mono listening, normal stereo, and reversed channel stereo.

There is a row of seven slide switches along the bottom of the panel. From left to right, they choose either tape playback or flat (microphone) equalization, switch the center channel speaker on or off, cut in the scratch filter, cut in the rumble filter, reverse the phasing of one speaker, inject a balancing test signal, and introduce loudness compensation on the master gain control.

The center-channel output terminals carry the mixed A + B signal. No level control is provided for this output, but the instructions show how an external pad can be added to reduce its level.

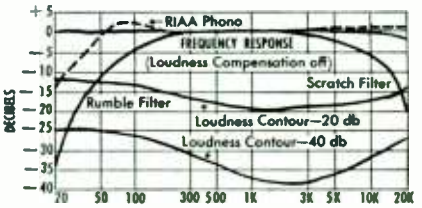
The channel-balancing system of the 8-80 is unique and by far the most effective we have seen. Unlike some methods which balance the electrical output of the amplifiers and ignore differences in speaker efficiency, or which use steady tones which are ambiguous in their interpretation, this amplifier has a pulse generator which produces a thump or click every second or two. The individual channel level controls are adjusted until this sound comes from between the two speakers, and the amplifier is balanced (except, of course, for variations in the balance of the input signals entering the amplifier). The transient nature of the test signal helps greatly to make this adjustment foolproof.

A pleasant surprise came in measuring the power output of the ASR-8-80. Each channel delivered 50 watts at 2% harmonic distortion, or 48 watts at 1% distortion. This is unusual in an amplifier rated at 32 watts per channel. The IHFM power bandwidth, measured at 24 watts and 1% distortion, was 40 cps to 20 kc. The power bandwidth referred to the rated power output rather than the measured value; that is, 16 watts and 1% distortion, extending from 33 cps to over 20 kc.



The intermodulation distortion, as might be expected, was a fraction of a per cent at a few watts, which is all the power one is likely to use in most situations. It climbs gradually, rather than clipping suddenly, and reaches 2% at 15 watts. At the rated 32 watts it is about 3.5%. In measuring IM distortion, a serious weakness of the ASR-8-80 was found. This is very inadequately covered in the instruction booklet.

Both the individual channel level controls and the master gain control are located at the output of the preamplifier section. The input stage of the preamplifier, which contains the tone controls, receives the full input signal. If the master gain control is operated well below its maximum setting, and the level of the input signal from a tuner or other source is increased to produce full volume, one is almost certain to overload the tone control stage. The IM curve taken with the master gain control at −20 db, corresponding to a 2 o'clock position of its knob, shows the hazards of this sort of operation. At levels of a few tenths of a watt the distortion becomes severe. The instructions, if read carefully (as they are by so few people) do state that the master gain should be operated at reasonably high settings, but even here they are rather optimistic. The tone control stage, according to Stromberg-Carlson, can handle up to 1 volt of signal, but we found that 1 volt produced 4.3% distortion. The 1% distortion point was reached at 0.25 volts, which we would consider a maximum allowable value.



The solution is found in starting with the master gain at maximum and adjusting the channel levels for the loudest volume desired. Overload is unlikely to occur under these conditions.

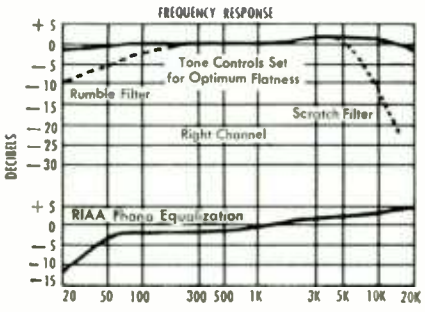
The frequency response and loudness contours are quite satisfactory. The rumble and scratch filters are too gradual and remove appreciable amounts of program material at both ends of the spectrum. The RIAA phono equalization is extremely accurate from 200 cps up, but peaks slightly and drops off below 70 cps. Fortunately the drop-off starts sufficiently low in frequency so that frequencies above 45 cps are not disturbed excessively, and the listening quality does not suffer.

Only 0.6 or 0.7 millivolts at the phono inputs will drive the amplifier to 10 watts output per channel. At normal gain settings of the unit, the hum level is better than 70 db below 10 watts even on phono input. This is completely inaudible. Crosstalk was not measurable and the amplifier was stable under a variety of capacitive loads.

A check on the center channel showed that some 18 watts output could be obtained there if both channels were driven to their limits.

In listening tests, the ASR-8-80 proved to be as fine as its measurements would indicate. It may be played at very high volume levels, with low efficiency speakers, and sound clean and unstrained. The small dimensions of this amplifier (4½- by 13½-inch panel, and 13½-inch over-all depth) do not give a clue to the real punch behind its output. It also runs quite cool for an amplifier capable of putting out about 100 watts. This may in part result from the use of silicon rectifiers for plate heater, and bias supplies. H. H. L.ABS.

EMI Stereoscope 555 Preamplifier-Amplifier



AT A GLANCE: The EMI Stereoscope Model 555 is a very compact and flexible integrated stereo amplifier. Its front panel, which measures only about 3½ by 13 inches, contains separate input selectors for the two preamplifier sections, separate bass and treble tone controls (concentrically mounted), separate level controls for balancing, a master level control, power output monitor control, and a function selector. In addition, there is a rumble filter switch, separate scratch filters for the two channels, loudness contour switch, speaker phase switch, and a switch for injecting a 60-cps test tone for balancing.

In addition to this array of controls there are signal lights to indicate signal flow between the two preamplifiers and two power amplifiers, and a one-inch cathode ray tube for monitoring the outputs of the two channels. The panel is amazingly uncluttered in spite of this seeming complexity.

Although the performance of the EMI 555 is basically quite good, its power output is only about 12 watts per channel. A more serious criticism is the fact that it is easily overloaded by even a moderately strong input signal, and some means of external signal level control is a necessity. This fact is not stressed, or indeed even mentioned, in the otherwise very thorough instruction manual. Price: $267.50.

IN DETAIL.: The specifications for this amplifier rate it at 20 "peak watts" per channel at 0.1% distortion at 1,000 cps. The term "peak watts" must be interpreted literally, since this corresponds to 10 watts output in the normal manner of expressing amplifier power. We found that the unit we tested came very close to meeting this specification, with our tests showing only 0.16% distortion at 10 watts. The output transformers are small, and it was not surprising to find that the low frequency distortion was appreciably greater. Nevertheless, the IHFM power bandwidth rating of the EMI amplifier was quite respectable, being 22 cps to 10 kc at 7 watts and 1% distortion (this is half the maximum power of 14 watts which could be developed at 1,000 cps with 1% distortion).

The intermodulation distortion, using frequencies of 60 cps and 5,000 cps, was much greater than the harmonic distortion but was only 2% at 10 watts. These distortion figures confirm the rating of the amplifier at 10 watts RMS per channel.

These figures were obtained with the gain controls set at maximum. The design of the amplifier is such that the preamplifier and tone controls are ahead of the gain controls, and when the gain is set to 20 db below maximum (a reasonable setting for normal listening) the early stages overload severely. Under these conditions the IM distortion is excessive at even the smallest output levels. When using a tuner or other high level input source, the tuner level should be set low enough so that the amplifier gain is set nearly at maximum for normal listening, *Continued on page 115*

NEXT MONTH'S REPORTS

Acoustic Research AR-3 Speaker System • Shure M 232 Tone Arm

McIntosh C 20 Preamp • Quad II Power Amplifier

. . . and others

Music Makers

by ROLAND GELATT

EACH SEPTEMBER this department undertakes a preview of the most important recordings scheduled for release between Labor Day and Christmas. This year, we also include some of the choice popular and show albums in the company-by-company listing. Almost all items mentioned will be issued in both monophonic and stereo versions.

ANGEL: The Philharmonia Orchestra is very much in evidence in four major releases for the fall: a *Don Giovanni* with Sutherland, Schwarzkopf, Alva, and Frick, conducted by Giulini; a *Das Lied von der Erde* under Kletzki, with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau singing the part customarily undertaken by a contralto; a program of Wagner selections led by Otto Klemperer (a two-disc set already released in England in honor of the conductor's seventy-fifth birthday last May); and a very German *Fledermaus* with Scheyrer, Lipp, Martini, and Ludwig, under Ackermann. Also in the vocal picture is Elisabeth Grümmer, recording "Great Scenes from *Tannhäuser* and *Götterdämmerung*" with Gottlob Frick and the chorus and orchestra of the German State Opera. The Great Recordings series continues with several enticing historical reissues: a Tchaikovsky-Furtwängler *Pathétique* with the Berlin Philharmonic, an opera recital by Lotte Lehmann, and, for chamber music fanciers, a Schnabel-Pro Arte performance of the Mozart Quintet, K. 516 and Quartet, K. 478, as well as a Serkin-Busch-Busch performance of Schubert's Trio No. 2, Op. 100.

ARTIA: Star billing here goes to Sviatoslav Richter, who will be heard in a Mussorgsky *Pictures*-Prokofiev Seventh Piano Sonata pairing, as well as in Beethoven's *Pathétique* Sonata and eight of the Bagatelles. Also from Russia comes a Prokofiev Fifth Symphony by the State Radio Orchestra under Stokowski. On the Czech front we will have two more Janáček operas, *Katya Kabanova* and *Cunning Little Vixen*, and Dvořák's *Rusalka*.

BOSTON: The abundant talent in this company's home town will be utilized in several pieces by Richard Strauss for woodwinds, and in Rimsky-Korsakov's Quintet in B flat, Op. 20, for piano and woodwinds, featuring Jesús María Sanromá. The Boston Woodwind Ensemble and members of the Boston Woodwind Quintet, respectively, are involved. Eric Simon conducts both groups. A Janáček *Capriccio* unites pianist Leonid Hambro with the Boston Brass Ensemble.

CAPITOL: Due early in the season is a *Traviata* with De los Angeles, Del Monte, Sereni (Serafin conducting at the Rome Opera House), to be followed shortly by Verdi's Requiem, the same conductor leading and soloists Vartenissian, Cossotto, Fernandi, and Christoff. Also in the offing are Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* (Stokowski), Vaughan Williams' Mass in G minor (Roger Wagner Chorale), and Poulenc's Concerto for Two Pianos with Whittemore and Lowe.

From the popular department comes "Ports of Paradise," with Alfred Newman and the Ken Darby Singers conducting a gala musical voyage around Tahiti, Samoa, and Fiji. Then back to Broadway for Capitol's recording of the musicals *Tenderloin* and *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, both due to open this fall.

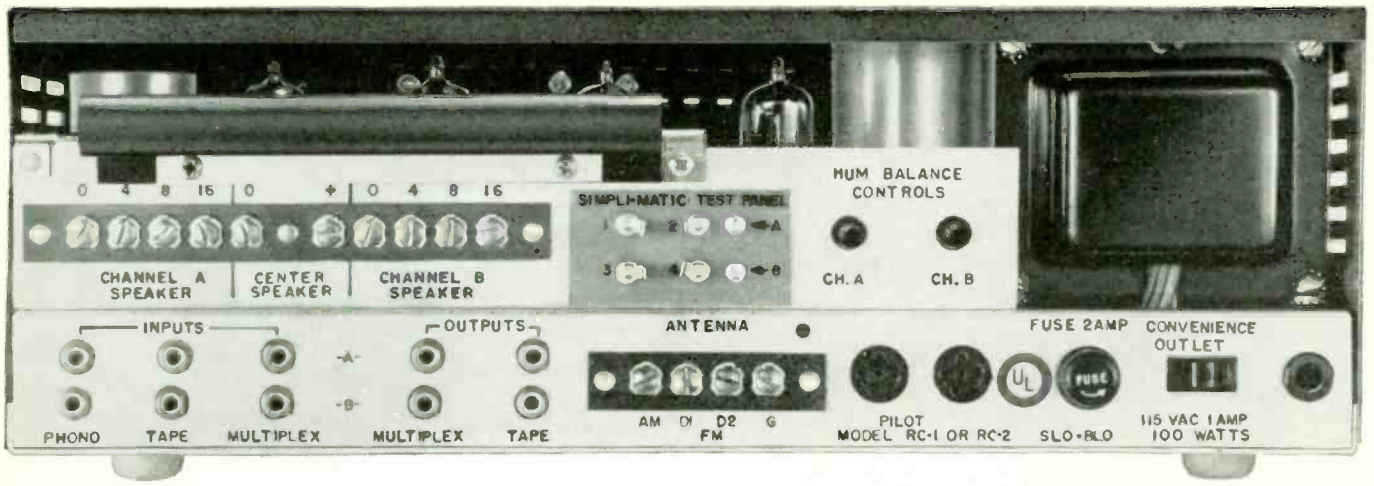
COLUMBIA: Igor Stravinsky is to conduct *Le Sacre du Printemps* and *Pétrouchka* with the Columbia Symphony, in a three-disc album which will include one record side of the composer himself discussing the whys and wherefores of *Sacre's* composition. Thomas Schippers makes his Columbia debut leading the house orchestra in music from opera (including *Wozzeck*, *Shylock*, and *Vanessa*), and another debut is marked by Glenn Gould's first recorded appearance as a composer—a work to be performed by the Symphonia String Quartet. Still another first is the recording of Copland's Fantasy for Piano by William Masselos. Bruno Walter will make a complete orchestral Brahms, along with Bruckner's Ninth (four records); Bernstein will turn to Ives's Second Symphony; and Ormandy will lead the Philadelphians in Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

On the pop side of the picture: Johnny Mathis in "Ballads of Broadway," Miles Davis in "Sketches of Spain." André Previn playing Gershwin with Kostelanetz conducting.

COMPOSERS RECORDINGS: Barber, Babbitt, and Bavicchi start off the list here. Compositions by Ulysses Kay and Gordon Binkard will be recorded by the Oslo Philharmonic, and the Portland Junior Symphony will play pieces by Harris, Diamond, Bergsma, and Lees, commissioned by the Symphony itself especially for orchestras of young people.

DECCA: A number of releases are scheduled for early in the season this year, and some may be in the stores by the time you read these pages. Among them: a Segovia recital, Handel's *L'Allegro and Il Penseroso* with Adele Addison, John McCollum, and John Reardon, and a program of Spanish music of the Renaissance played by the New York Pro Musica.

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON: In the chamber music department, the Amadeus Quartet continues its activity with a Brahms-Dvořák coupling and a Brahms Quartet, Op. 51. On the vocal scene, Fischer-Dieskau will be heard in a Debussy-Ravel recital as well as in Schubert's *Goethe-Lieder*, and Kim Borg presents a selection of Lieder. Organist Helmut Walcha will continue his series of Bach recitals, and Ferenc Fricsay will conduct Mozart's C minor Mass.



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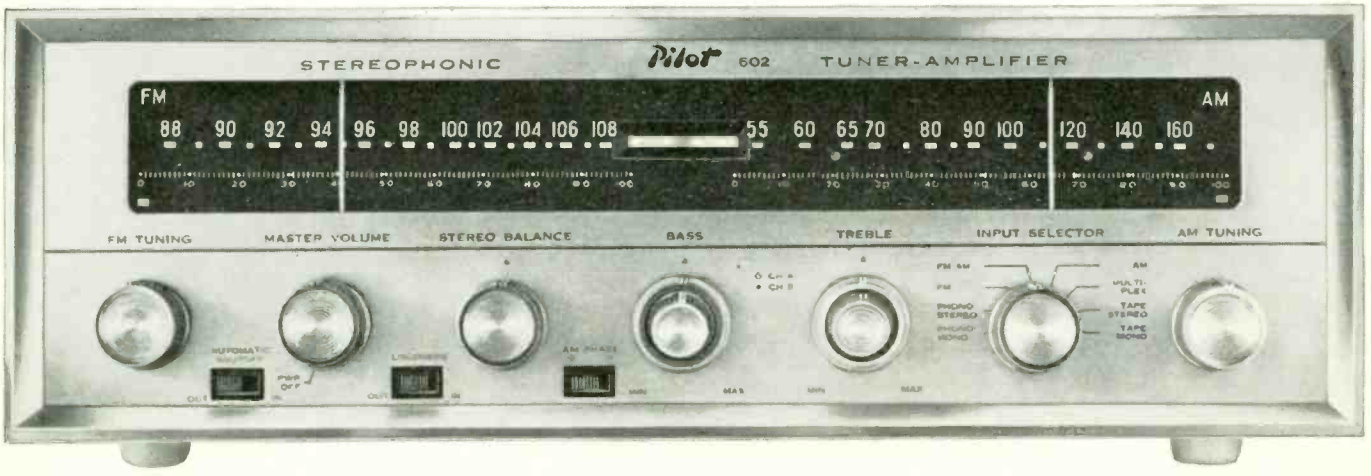

CIRCLE 74 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

ELEKTRA: There will be both new faces and old here. Among the new are folk singer Casey Anderson (his album is as yet untitled) and the British comedy-and-song team of Cass and Meyers, who will be introduced to American audiences via their Elektra record (still untitled). On the familiar side, Josh White will make his fifth disc for the company, and Oscar Brand will continue the Specialty Series.

EPIC: Clara Haskil is to be featured soloist this fall, in the Beethoven Third Concerto with Markevitch and the Lamoureux Orchestra. Epic will also release "The Great Symphonies of Dvořák" with Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra.

EVEREST: Pianist Sanromá will be the soloist in Grofé's D minor Concerto, with the composer conducting the Rochester Philharmonic, and a Gershwin disc with Steinberg and the Pittsburgh Symphony. Another prominent figure in the Everest line-up is Stokowski, who will lead the Houston Symphony in Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* as well as in Wagner-Chopin-Thomas Canning selections. The London Symphony is scheduled for several recordings under various conductors. A Sibelius Fifth and *Finlandia* (the Rochester under Bloomfield) and a Luboshutz-Nemenoff duo piano recital round out the picture.

On the lighter side, Robert Merrill and Vivian Della Chiesa sing Porter and Youmans. In addition: albums by Gloria Lynne, Jorie Remus, the Ray Ventura Singers, Russ Morgan, Jo Jones, and Ann Blyth, among others.

KAPP: A variety of instruments figure in Kapp's plans, by way of such albums as "Music for Trumpet and Orchestra," Vol. 3 (with Roger Voisin); "Music for Horn and Orchestra," a record of classical guitar studies from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries (Manuel Gayol); and the complete piano preludes of Debussy played by Daniel Ericourt.

LONDON: Heading the list here is a complete *Fledermaus* with the Vienna Philharmonic under Karajan, the principals including Gueden, Köth, Resnik, Kmentt, Kunz, and Wächter. And the set contains a surprise—a "Gala Entertainment" inserted into the second act, in which a great many big-name artists will perform, Tebaldi and Bjoerling among them. Ansermet will lead a Beethoven Ninth, on one record, with the Suisse Romande Orchestra and Joan Sutherland, Norma Procter, Anton Dermota, and Arnold van Mill as soloists. Miss Sutherland is also recording a two-disc set entitled "The Art of the Prima Donna." And Tebaldi will concentrate on music in a sacred vein in a recital called "Ave Maria."

MERCURY: Byron Janis turns to the Tchaikovsky First Piano Concerto with the London Philharmonic under Herbert Menges. The Londoners will also record a complete *Giselle* under Fistoulari.

M-G-M: From off-Broadway comes an original cast recording of *Fantasticks*, and from the screen, the sound track of *The Subterraneans*, featuring André Previn and Gerry Mulligan. Joni James stars on two separate records, and the "Spectacular" series continues. Chevalier, of course, sings of "girls, girls, girls."

MONITOR: Russian artists, among them Richter, Kogan, and Oistrakh (Igor), continue to dominate the company's classical department. In addition, the Bolshoi chorus and orchestra will be heard in choral music of Glinka. There will also be two releases coinciding with American tours: the Icelandic Singers, and the Branko Krsmanovic Chorus of Yugoslavia.

RCA VICTOR: A windfall for opera lovers: *Turandot* with Nilsson, Tebaldi, Bjoerling, and Tozzi, under Leinsdorf (Rome); *Il Trovatore* with Leontyne Price, Rosalind Elias, Tucker, Warren, and Tozzi, under Arturo Basile (Rome); *Don Giovanni* with Siepi, Price, Nilsson, and Valletti, led by Leinsdorf with the Vienna Philharmonic; same orchestra and conductor recording *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Rysanek, Peters, Jurinac, and Peerce. And several of the same singers —Price, Elias, Bjoerling, and Tozzi— will be heard in a Verdi Requiem with the Vienna Philharmonic under Reiner. Instrumental soloists include Malcolm Frager, winner of the Queen Elisabeth of Belgium competition (Prokofiev Second Piano Concerto, Orchestra de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire). The NBC Symphony with Toscanini will be heard in music from *Tristan*. The much anticipated recording of Landowska playing Haydn (on both harpsichord and piano) is also scheduled for fall appearance.

Popular releases will include albums by such reliables as Hugo Winterhalter, Jimmy Driftwood, Elvis Presley, Perry Como, Benny Goodman, Harry Belafonte, and the Melachrino Strings. The Esquivel Orchestra will also make an appearance, on a disc to be entitled "Infinity in Sound."

ROCOCO: Rescue work on ancient 78s continues, including recitals by such bygone greats as Giuseppe de Luca, Claire Dux, Fernand Ansseau, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Emma Eames, and Olympia Boronat.

20TH-CENTURY FOX: The Centennial of the Civil War accounts for three forthcoming albums: "Meet Mr. Lincoln" (a tie-in with the TV series); music from the movie *John Brown's Body;* and "Lincoln Devotionals," the President's own prayers set to music. Children should have fun with a special Li'l Abner record tailored for them by Al Capp.

UNITED ARTISTS: Some titles scheduled for early fall release: "Come Back to Sorrento" (Angelo and orchestra), "Drum Feast—Percussion" (Manny Albam), "Burl Ives Sings Irving Berlin," and "Ragtime Piano" (Bob Darch).

VOX: "Rossini—His Story and His Music" is to come out early in the fall. Two Bartók releases arrive later: the First Piano Concerto with Gyorgy Sandor, and the complete quartets by the Raimo Quartet. Violinist Aaron Rosand will play Lalo and Saint-Saëns, and the Telemann Society plays music for "A 17th-Century French Country Wedding." Two discs of the music of Josquin Des Pres are also planned.

WASHINGTON: An abridgment of the "F.D.R. Speaks" series is in process, and will yield two discs, *The Recovery Years* and *The War Years*. Artur Balsam continues the Haydn Piano Sonatas, and flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal and harpsichordist Robert Veyron-Lacroix will collaborate on Telemann sonatas.

WESTMINSTER: "High Fidelity Brass —Ancient and Modern" should provide fodder for anybody's speakers, and on the quieter side there are Beethoven quartets by both the Janáček and Smetana ensembles. Several works of Vaughan Williams will be directed by Sir Adrian Boult.

From other quarters: "A Dry Martini, Please," with Cy Walter at the piano; "Sounds from the Alps," complete with yodelers Inge and Rudi Meixner; two albums by Eric Johnson and His Orchestra.

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Records in Review

Leon Fleisher: playing of proportioned classicism

The Liszt Piano Sonata—

Perception Replaces Pyrotechnics

by Harris Goldsmith

Perhaps no other composition in the entire piano literature is as enigmatic as the Liszt Sonata. Beethoven's last writing for the instrument has lofty expression and uncompromising complexity: no one will deny that those works belong unmistakably to the category of musical sublimia, and performers whose main intent is merely to dazzle an audience with glittery fireworks generally avoid them. Liszt's Sonata, on the other hand, has been invested with a sort of Jekyll-Hyde duality. Written in 1853 and dedicated to Robert Schumann, the work drew extravagant praise from no less a musician than Richard Wagner, who wrote to the composer that the Sonata "is beautiful beyond any conception, great, pleasing, profound and noble—it is sublime, just as you are yourself." Others, however, have regarded the composition with no small degree of condescension, while a few have been really vituperous in their condemnation of it. Both views are, to a certain degree, valid. If the work is played with emphasis on its flashy virtuosity, it can sound saccharine, squalid, and empty. If, on the other hand, it is treated with simplicity and reverence, the piece will respond with spiritual grandeur. Unfortunately, interpretations in the latter vein are rare indeed.

Such a one is, however, now at hand in the exciting new Epic recording by Leon Fleisher. The pianist is presumably using the Ur text edition, and the rubatos (indeed, even some of the harmonies) often vary drastically from the conventional texts. Fleisher's version of the Sonata is so outstanding that one is impelled to compare it with the other two great recorded performances—by Vladimir Horowitz and by the late Simon Barere. The former, a long deleted 78-set, is one of that artist's earliest recordings. It has been transferred to LP in Paris, and Angel may eventually reissue it here. The Barere was recorded at an actual Carnegie Hall recital of unspecified date, and although this Remington LP is officially unavailable at present, some stores still have copies on their shelves.

Neither artist is, in this work, the musical purist that Fleisher is. Barere's playing is spacious, rhapsodic, and loosely knit. He draws huge masses of sonority from his instrument, and his rubatos are extremely indulgent. The interpretation has poetic integrity and towering strength. The Horowitz rendition is much more severe. In contrast to Barere's billowing rhetoric, his conception is built around a lean, ascetic skeletal base. (He resembles Fleisher in this respect, although the two artists differ in almost every other way.) The performance has tremendous direction and breath-taking authority. Horowitz restricts the emotional aspects of the music with despotic compression, and his contrived, almost throttled, rubato in lyrical passages sometimes causes me to squirm with discomfort. But his is magnificent playing with bronzelike conviction.

Fleisher's pianistic ability measures up to that of his formidable rivals. His runs are amazingly secure, and his chording has great richness and sheen. He is sparing in his use of the sustaining pedal, and because of this his impeccably played double-octave passages lack the expansiveness of Barere's. (Many of Barere's bosh shots are also missing.) In the fugue, Fleisher's tempo is faster than either Barere's or Horowitz's and his magnificent fleetness and rhythmic control are wonderful

to hear. (Horowitz sounds strangely labored and earthbound at this point.) In summation, Barere is the supreme thunderer, Horowitz sounds like Zeus hurling bolts of lightning, and Fleisher sheds radiant illumination on this much misunderstood music. I like the proportioned classicism and economy of his performance the best of all; and if the instrument on which he plays here had had more depth and richness, I would have said that his recording is the definitive version.

On the disc's overside, the pianist plays two Weber pieces. The most impressive aspect of Fleisher's art is his architectural grasp. It is widely accepted that a musical phrase is roughly equivalent to a sentence in speech. By a careful and perceptive harmonic scrutinization of the score, Fleisher is able to extend tension beyond the individual phrases, bracketing them into cohesive musical paragraphs. Then these units are partitioned from each other by perceptible breaks or divisions. Thus, the pianist conveys in living sound the elusive strength of outline, directness, and formal balance which every composer hopes for.

This power is remarkably evident in the *Invitation to the Dance*, which emerges with beguiling freshness and simplicity. Many listeners will be unaware of the formidable mental discipline that underlies the performance. The E minor Sonata, Weber's last, is an unjustly neglected work. One of Weber's pupils related that the composer envisioned in the piece a desperate struggle of sanity against madness. Although the musical portr[illegible] tions sounds ve[illegible] of programmat[illegible] tain the seeds o[illegible] The swirling figu[illegible] ment, in particular, *Kreisleriana*. Fleisher perfection and is well re[illegible]

In fact, I would not b[illegible] present recording turned out record of the year.

LISZT: *Sonata for Piano, in* †Weber: *Sonata for Piano, No minor, Op. 70; Invitation to t Op. 65*

Leon Fleisher, piano.
● Epic LC 3675. LP. $4.98.

Krips leads the London Symphony.

Collectors' Choices Widen:

A New Set of Beethoven's Nine

by Robert C. Marsh

Nearly fifty years ago, in the reign of that redoubtable monarch Francis Joseph I, two *Sängerknaben* of the celebrated Wiener Höfkapelle dreamed, as many of their fellows have before and since, of becoming great conductors. The difference is that they succeeded. Their names are Josef Krips and Lovro von Matacic, and as a senior generation of Central European musicians passes into history, they are figures to watch. Both acquired a knowledge of how to play Beethoven that reflects the finest musical traditions of the composer's adopted city. In Krips's complete edition of the nine symphonies, which Everest recorded in London, or the splendid *Eroica* which Von Matacic taped in Prague and Parliament has issued here, one hears the work of interpreters who have been over the ground from which this music springs as well as the scores in which it is preserved.

Everest has put the nine symphonies on eight records, one more than has been customary, thus gaining leeway so that all essential repeats can be made and wide-amplitude mastering used throughout the set. The extra disc is worth its price, musically and sonically. The conductor, not the stopwatch, is the final authority here, and the surfaces all contain enough "land" to hold up well in use. Since five of the symphonies break across records, Everest plans to remaster these performances for their appearance as singles. The complete set is planned as a unit and coupled for maximum convenience in that format. The *Leonore* Overture No. 3 comes as a bridge between the Second and the *Eroica*, and the *Egmont* Overture provides an appropriate transition from the Fifth to the *Pastoral*. Otherwise all bands follow consecutively, and one can begin on the first side and go through the sixteenth in sequence. (Incidentally, there are two more overtures, like these the product of sessions in the Everest Bayside, L. I., studio, to fill out the singles.)

Krips is able to challenge successfully the best of his stereo competition, while Everest's engineering produces a rich and spacious sound, outstanding for its open, natural quality. I was impressed by the excellence of the strings, the solid middle frequencies, and the absence of the quasi-metallic peaking effect that comes from undue stress on the harmonics of the brass and strings in proportion to their fundamental tones.

It is possible to protest from time to time about balances, when the strings, beautiful as they are, receive firmer registration than equally important lines in the wind. Happily such moments are no more common here than in the majority of recordings of these scores, and taken as a whole, this handsome album offers markedly better sound than the rival Bruno Walter version. Set against its competition on singles (the Klemperer series for Angel, the Solti and Ansermet editions on London), it has no difficulty in establishing a place for itself right up there with the best of them.

Krips has the wind band well forward in the First, which he offers in a manner that suggests the solid, four-square German style, yet is invariably lyrical. An attractive lilt of unbuttoned geniality runs through the

minuet, while the finale hesitates gracefully before plunging into its laughing theme. This is admirable playing, and the engineers have the microphones in close to capture it without loss. Much the same quality carries over to the Second, which swaggers lightheartedly to a close after delivering its content of drama and song. Krips keeps the *Eroica* sweepingly lyrical in a quick-paced, lightly inflected reading that projects better than most the significance of the scherzo in the scheme of the whole and the resolution of the design in the variations of the final movement. The other side of the Viennese tradition is developed by Von Matacic, whose performance has greater breadth and rhetorical power, supported by a strong sense of rhythmic continuity. The *Funeral March* provides the emotional peaks here, not the later movements. There is artistic justification for acquiring both these performances, especially since the Von Matacic is inexpensive. Krips, however, has the more brilliant sound.

The Fourth offers yet another type of hall resonance. It is a rich, round sound with just about all the overhang consistent with well-defined textures. The wind, however, is far enough back to give the strings an advantage in balance they hold throughout the Fifth and the Seventh. Krips takes both the Adagio sections of the Fourth rather on the fast side, but when the first of them gives way to the Allegro vivace of the opening movement he creates a wonderful sense of motion and continuity. The trio of the third movement closes with a wistful quality that is quite distinctive, and the final is full of high spirits.

In the Fifth Krips is relaxed, providing an expansively assertive performance that suggests Dr. Johnson rather than Jupiter. The second theme of the opening movement is given a lyric statement that makes it, for once, a foil to its principal rather than an intrusion. However, the registration of the wind is weak in relation to the strings, particularly in the scherzo and much of the final movement.

Krips's account of the *Pastoral* is consistent with his reputation as a specialist in the score. Since Everest was in the process of remastering part of this set at the time this review was being written, I was given the opportunity of hearing both the master tapes and the transfers intended for production. The master of the *Pastoral* is a phenomenally wide-range recording, with the full dynamic scale made possible by the use of 35 mm. film. This disc, the first of the series to be made available separately, ought to be a showpiece.

To Krips, the Seventh opens with broadly arching phrases, soaring—it seems—out of their own momentum. It is a grand effect, and well recorded. You may find his exceptionally fast account of the finale impressive, but I myself prefer the new Ansermet.

The Eighth, however, is notable for clean attacks and breaks. If you let the disc with the Seventh play to the end, the Eighth begins with the final band—offering a sudden change of intensity as Krips dances you off your feet.

The Ninth is the test. Krips provides a very strong account of the opening movement, followed by a quick reading of the scherzo that adheres to the usual number of repeats—that is, most but not all. The noble lyricism of the Adagio molto is projected very well, establishing a mood of heroic repose that survives the "terror fanfares" of the final movement to sing of human brotherhood. Krips makes use of a professional chorus, and it is a good one. His soloists are not Fricsay's stellar group but they sing with conviction and are well recorded.

The results are better all-round than the Walter or Munch editions, superior to the Fricsay on most counts, except vocal prowess, and more convincingly stereophonic in effect than the Klemperer. In short, a Ninth with as favorable a balance of merits and flaws as any in the catalogue these days.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies* (complete)

No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 2, in D, Op. 36; No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"); No. 4, in B flat Op. 60; No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 6, in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"); No. 7, in A, Op. 92; No. 8, in F, Op. 93; No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral").

Jennifer Vyvyan, soprano; Shirley Carter, mezzo; Rudolf Petrak, tenor; Donald Bell, bass baritone; BBC Chorus; (in the Ninth). London Symphony Orchestra, Josef Krips, cond.

● EVEREST LPBR 6065/68. Eight LP. $39.84

● ● EVEREST SDBR 3065/68. Eight SD. $39.84.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica")*

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Lovro von Matacic, cond.

● PARLIAMENT PLP 129. LP. $1.98.

● ● PARLIAMENT PLPS 129. SD. $2.98.

Conductor Zdenek Chalabala.

by Conrad L. Osborne

A Complete *Bartered Bride*, Sung in Czech and with Charm

THERE is a class of comic opera—usually incorporating rustic elements—that exists just below the level of the true masterpieces of the form, such as *Falstaff*, *Meistersinger*, *Nozze* and *Così*. Operas of this class invariably build to moments of nostalgia and tenderness somewhere early in the third act; the best of them are funny, touching, and satisfying because they do not ask to be taken very seriously. The ones that allow solemnity to intrude are most often ruined by it, as witness *Linda di Chamounix*. Among the successful representatives of this genre are *Martha*, *L'Elisir d'amore*, and *The Bartered Bride*.

The Bartered Bride is the most remarkable of them all, for it is at once the most cosmopolitan and the most nationalistic. Its melodies proclaim its nationality on every page, but the working of them betrays the influence of Italian opera. Were it not for some rather uncharacteristic touches in the accompaniment, much of the recitative could be straight from Donizetti or early Verdi, and the ensemble writing bears traces of Rossini and, in at least one case, Mozart.

The characters are enormously appealing.

One of the weaknesses of many rustic comedies—to my taste, at least—is the insistence on depicting the hero as an abysmally stupid rustic who is bailed out of his self-made difficulties only by merry Fortune or the scheming of a worldly-wise coquette who has found it in her heart to pity him. A genius of Donizetti's caliber can, of course, save the situation in the theatre by composing "*Una furtiva lagrima*"; otherwise, I should be forced to pity Nemorino his coming life with Adina, and to suppose he would have been far better off in the army. In *The Bartered Bride*, matters stand differently. While Marenka is a girl of unmistakable determination and cleverness, it is Jenik who confidently and gleefully outploys the unholy entente of marriage broker and parents-in-law-to-be, and the opera is stronger for it. *Bartered Bride* does have its simpleton (Vasek—a tenor, of course), but he remains a simpleton and a victim throughout, and is sadly amusing. The marriage broker himself, Kecal, is a magnetic rascal, the traveling comedians are engagingly tawdry, and the villagers have simplicity and strength of utterance. The score never lets down, but among its high points we must count the magnificent overture, the choruses and dances for the villagers, the melting duet for Jenik and Marenka in Act I, Kecal's entrance song, and Vasek's little "aria."

When *Bartered Bride* is sung in America (and it has not been performed at the Metropolitan for many years, though San Francisco staged it a season back) it is generally in German, as *Die Verkaufte Braut*, or English. Consequently, we are fortunate that in filling this gap in the recorded repertoire, Artia has been able to bring us a production in the original Czech. It's a vast improvement on the German, for the accents really fall very differently, and the melody flows more freely and smoothly in the original than in translation. The performance has charm and zest. Orchestra and chorus perform with bounce under Chalabala, and the soloists suit their roles to a T. The Marenka, Drahomira Tikalova, has a flexible and wide-ranging soprano, with a finely controlled pianissimo. Ivo Zidek sings with fresh, free tone, and Eduard Haken brings a splendid dark bass, plus a flair for characterization, to Kecal. Oldrich Kovar has a fine time stuttering his way through Vasek's music, and the smaller parts are all in excellent hands. Special mention should be made of the comedians: Jarmila Pechova, as Esmeralda, reveals a limpid, soaring high soprano which should be welcome in leading roles, while Rudolf Vonasek is fine as the harried Principal.

With such a good performance of such a neglected opera, it is a genuine shame that Artia (or, actually, Supraphone, which did the recording) could not have done better in the matter of sound, the monophonic version being particularly poor. It is muddy and dull throughout, with a prominent bleat in the higher registers that all but wrecks some of the recording's best moments; moreover, Side 6 of the review set is badly processed, with the result that the last half hour of the opera is accompanied by a relentless munching noise. The stereo edition is much clearer and livelier, and decently processed, but the bleat is still there, compensated for only slightly by changes in dial setting or stylus pressure. Many opera lovers will want the set for the excellent performance, but those who regard sound as a major factor should proceed cautiously.

Artia's packaging is, as usual, unimpressive, but the booklet does contain the complete libretto with a competent translation, in addition to some notes.

SMETANA: *The Bartered Bride*

Drahomira Tikalova (s), Marenka; Jarmila Pechova (s), Esmeralda; Jaromira Dobra (s), Ludmila; Stepanka Stepanova (ms), Hata; Ivo Zidek (t), Jenik; Oldrich Kovar (t), Vasek; Rudolf Vonasek (t), Principal Comedian; Vaclav Bednar (b), Krusina; Eduard Haken (bs), Kecal; Jaroslav Horacek (bs), Micha; Jiro Joran (bs), Indian. Chorus and Orchestra of the Prague National Theatre, Zdenek Chalabala, cond.

● ARTIA ALPO 82 C/L. Three LP. $14.94.

● ● ARTIA ALPOS 82 C/L. Three SD. $17.94.

CLASSICAL

BACH: *Arias*

Bach Aria Group, William H. Scheide, cond.

● DECCA DL 9408. LP. $4.98.

● ● DECCA DL 79408. SD. $5.98.

To perform a program of Bach arias with obbligato instruments when the instrumental solos are to be played by first-rate artists takes singers with a great deal of courage. For nothing shows up a shaky vocal technique or inaccurate intonation as much as a player performing similar material with smoothness and apparent ease and bull's-eye pitch. The present collection consists exclusively of eight such arias, two for soprano (from Cantatas 205 and 115), two for alto (from Cantatas 102 and 94), one for tenor (from Cantata 205), and three for bass (from Cantatas 56 and 97, and the Mass in A).

The playing—by Maurice Wilk, violin; Julius Baker, flute; Robert Bloom, oboe; and Bernard Greenhouse, cello—is very fine throughout. The singing is somewhat less consistently exciting. Eileen Farrell, the soprano, is not at her best here: there is in fact nothing distinguished about her performance of her arias. Carol Smith, the alto, copes well with her difficult pieces, spinning long phrases with a soft voice of appealing quality. Of the three arias allotted to Norman Farrow, bass, two go rather well, but in the third, from Cantata 56, his voice seems less well focused. Most tenors croon Bach, but not Jan Peerce, who sings at full voice, with power as well as flexibility. As is customary with this group, modern instruments are used: in the tenor aria from Cantata 205 violin instead of viola d'amore and cello instead of gamba, and a piano instead of a harpsichord or organ throughout. N.B.

BACH: *Brandenburg Concertos* (complete)

Bath Festival Chamber Orchestra, Yehudi Menuhin, cond.

● CAPITOL GBR 7217. Two LP. $9.96.

● ● CAPITOL SGBR 7217. Two SD. $11.96.

Menuhin not only conducts but he plays in all six works—the violino piccolo in No. 1, the solo violin parts in Nos. 2, 4, and 5, first violin in No. 3, and first viola in No. 6. Let no one suppose, however, that this set is made a virtuoso's holiday. On the contrary, Menuhin has surrounded himself with such excellent players, and there is such a fine spirit of teamwork, that there is no question of one performer's outshining the rest. The general approach stresses vitality in the rhythm and musicality in the phrasing. Menuhin chooses very convincing tempos, especially in the slow movements; the finale of No. 5 seems a bit fast, and in the middle Allegro of No. 1 the pace is so rapid that some important detail is lost. A small group is used (in Nos. 3 and 6 there is only one player on a part), but there is plenty of energy and the sound is full-bodied. In No. 3 the slow movement of an organ trio sonata (S. 530), reverently arranged by Benjamin Britten for violin, viola, and continuo, is interpolated as an effective substitution for the two chords in the printed score.

In addition to the violino piccolo in No. 1, recorders are used in Nos. 2 and 4, and gambas in No. 6. This is of course just as Bach ordered it, but I am not sure it is necessary to be all that faithful to the score, at least as far as Nos. 1 and 2 are concerned. The violino piccolo is very nicely played here, but triple stops on it are scratchy; and the recorder in No. 2 has even less chance than a flute would of being heard in combination with a violin, an oboe, and especially a trumpet. For the last-named part a small B flat trumpet is played by Denis Clift with great agility and remarkable accuracy; its sharp, brassy tone, however, sometimes overwhelms its fellow soloists. Nevertheless, much care has been taken in matters of balance, as may be seen particularly in No. 4, where the recorders are clearly heard, and No. 5, where the harpsichord is plainly audible.

All in all, one of the better complete *Brandenburgs*. N.B.

BACH: *Cantata No. 169, Gott soll allein mein Herze haben*

†Ritter: *Cantata, O amantissime sponse Jesu*

Aafje Heynis, contralto; Chorus of the Netherlands Bach Society; Netherlands

Chamber Orchestra, Anthon van der Horst, cond.
● EPIC LC 3683. LP. $4.98.
● ● EPIC BC 1077. SD. $5.98.

Cantata 169 is, so far as I can tell, new to microgroove. Except for the final chorale, which is for chorus, it is for alto and orchestra. Its two best movements, the elaborate Sinfonia and *Stirb in mir*, a beautiful, brooding aria with unexpected harmonic progressions, are based on music from Bach's Harpsichord Concerto No. 2, in E. Miss Heynis sings accurately and with appealing quality, her voice having a bright, mezzo-ish color. Christian Ritter, court organist at Dresden in 1683, may be the first German to have written a keyboard sonata. His cantata for alto, strings, and continuo is gravely sweet and expressive, reminding one of the solo cantatas of Johann Rosenmüller, though less florid in style. The recording was apparently made in a large hall; although unusually resonant, the sound is clear and attractive. N.B.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in C, Op. 15*

Claudio Arrau, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond.
● ANGEL 35723. LP. $4.98.
● ● ANGEL S 35723. SD. $5.98.

This is a mate to Arrau's version of No. 3, released earlier this year, and like it stresses solidity rather than sparkle. When conveyed in artistry such as this, solidity is no fatal flaw, and Arrau's performance gives us a young Beethoven with more of an introspective and lyric cast than one might suppose from the Backhaus London recording. In stereo, however, the latter disc provides more vivid engineering as well as a livelier performance—and a bonus sonata on the B side. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73, ("Emperor")*

Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond.
● ● LONDON CS 6156. SD. $4.98.

Robert Riefling, piano; Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Odd Grüner-Hegge, cond.
● RCA CAMDEN CAL 566. LP. $1 98.
● ● RCA CAMDEN CAS 566. SD. $2.98.

Although stereo *Emperors* are hardly in short supply, none of the available two-channel versions of this popular score is strong enough to dominate the field. The Riefling, for example, is on the whole well recorded, but it falls short of being a great performance by a substantial margin On the other hand, the Backhaus is not a great performance either—although somewhat closer to that mark than any of its current competition. London's engineering is outstanding, however, and gives you a very rich, vivid, and lifelike sound that has to be respected. With the technical side of the record so beautifully done, Backhaus' playing and the fine accompaniment he receives are projected forcefully. But slower pacing at times and a cumulative rhythmic groundswell, such as one fails to discover here, are needed to carry the *Emperor* to its highest effect.

***Menuhin: in Bach, he conducts* and *plays*.**

It comes down to this. If you are interested in performances of outstanding interpretative achievement, none of the stereo versions of this concerto is able to surpass the best of the monophonic—such as the superb old Schnabel edition. If you will settle for an extremely effective performance conveyed in outstanding stereo sonics, the new Backhaus is a wise investment. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 3, in A, Op. 69*
†Brahms: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 2, in F, Op. 99*

Maurice Gendron, cello; Philippe Entremont, piano.
● COLUMBIA ML 5465. LP. $4.98.
● ● COLUMBIA MS 6135. SD. $5.98.

Both of these young Frenchmen are gifted, and possessed of the skills needed to make distinguished contributions to chamber music. They have been appearing in concert together for two years, long enough, it would seem, to establish the sense of rapport one finds here. The Brahms is the finer performance, since it is one of his most pretentiously contrived works and this quality is minimized in the presentation. The Beethoven, a bona fide masterpiece, as played here bears traces of a broad, Brahmsian style that are really not in order, although the over-all performance is most agreeable.

In stereo one hears a big piano sound with the cello slightly off center and equally vivid, but the monophonic version is entirely satisfactory. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica")*

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Lovro von Matacic, cond.
● PARLIAMENT PLP 129. LP. $1.98.
● ● PARLIAMENT PLPS 129. SD. $2.98.

For a feature review including this disc, see page 64.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies* (complete)

No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 2, in D, Op. 36; No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"); No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 6, in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"); No. 7, in A, Op. 92; No. 8, in F, Op. 93; No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral").

Jennifer Vyvyan, soprano; Shirley Carter, mezzo; Rudolf Petrak, tenor; Donald Bell, bass baritone; BBC Chorus (in the Ninth). London Symphony Orchestra, Josef Krips, cond.
● EVEREST LPBR 6065/68. Eight LP. $39.84.
● ● EVEREST SDBR 3065/68. Eight SD. $39.84.

For a feature review of this album, see page 64.

BERLIOZ: *Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14*

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Carlo Zecchi, cond.
● ● PARLIAMENT PLPS 131. SD. $2.98.

Although this is a well-played *Fantastique*, most of the conductor's tempos are too slow to make the work dramatically convincing. What may have held him back, perhaps, is the hall (or was it an airplane hangar?) in which the recording was made. There is an overhang of at least five seconds' duration, especially objectionable after heavy chords.

For me, the principal interest of this disc lay in the fact that it afforded my first encounter with stereo recording from the other side of the Iron Curtain. Aside from the aforementioned echo, I must admit to pleasant surprise at the generally high quality of the two-channel sound. The separation is excellent, the instrumental definition very good, and there is a fine feeling of spatial depth. Only the lower strings, located on the right, could have been boosted slightly. The first LPs to come from the Soviet countries were pretty crude affairs compared to what we were used to. This stereo disc appears to compare quite favorably with our own. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Quartet for Piano and Strings, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 25*

Ralph Berkowitz, piano; Bel Arte Trio.
● BOSTON B 215. LP. $4.98.
● ● BOSTON BST 1015. SD. $5.95.

This is one of the most successful of the recent chamber music discs to come from Boston. Ralph Berkowitz and the Bel Arte Trio—Ruth Posselt, violin; Joseph de Pasquale, viola; Samuel Mayes, cello—give a finely integrated performance. Perhaps it is too gentle in parts of the scherzo and finale, where greater incisiveness would be in order; otherwise, it is a reading marked by refinement and loving care. The four instruments, excellently balanced and reproduced, have a sonic spread in stereo that adds a bit to the pleasing effect. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 2, in F, Op. 99*—See Beethoven: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 3, in A, Op. 69.*

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

Yehudi Menuhin, violin; Hephzibah Menuhin, piano.
● EMI-CAPITOL G 7215. LP. $4.98.

● ● EMI-CAPITOL SG 7215. SD. $5.98.

This brother-and-sister team has played sonatas together for a long time, a fact made evident by the rapport with which they deliver these two popular works. But can one agree with their conception of this music? Everything is phrased so preciously that the music often loses all continuity. Then there is the matter of the violinist's bowing and fingering, both of which are quite uneven. There are far too many slides, and the intonation isn't always what it should be.

The Brahms comes off best, especially the slow movement, which is interpreted with great depth of feeling. But this work has already been recorded for the same company by Yehudi Menuhin and Louis Kentner in their album of the complete Brahms violin sonatas. In the Franck, only the last movement is at all satisfactory; it is given a bright, even reading. Elsewhere, phrases are stretched out of shape, bowing is unsteady, and the violin tone is without color. While the sound is fine in the monophonic edition, stereo separates the two instruments just enough to suggest a live performance on a not too distant stage. P.A.

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

Virtuoso Symphony of London, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.
● ● AUDIO FIDELITY FCS 50001. SD. $6.95.

The Fourth Symphony has already been well served in stereo. The sound on this disc surely matches—perhaps even surpasses—that on some of its competitors; it is clear, natural, and well distributed. Wallenstein's interpretation of the symphony, on the other hand, contributes little. It is absolutely correct in every detail. In fact, he is one of the few conductors who maintain a steady tempo throughout the whole of the final chaconne. But correctness is not enough. What is missing is the inspirational spark that makes a competent performance good and a good performance great. If sound is all you are after, this record will do nicely; if the music comes first, then try the recent recordings by Klemperer, Kubelik, or Walter. P.A.

BRITTEN: ***Nocturne for Tenor Solo, Seven Obbligato Instruments, and String Orchestra; Peter Grimes: Four Sea Interludes, Op. 33a***

Peter Pears, tenor; London Symphony Orchestra (in the *Nocturne*), Covent Garden Orchestra (in the *Interludes*), Benjamin Britten, cond.
● ● LONDON CS 6179. SD. $5.98.

The *Nocturne*, which has not previously been recorded, is an elegantly atmospheric and at times quite dramatic work the recording of which has been utterly ruined by someone's foolish penny-pinching. The text, we are told, is drawn from eight different English poets, but the text is not provided, with the result that no one poem is completely intelligible (and most are totally incomprehensible) despite Pears's careful English enunciation. It's too bad. A skilled composer does his best to set important verse and a skilled singer does his best to interpret the setting, but the singer's best is not quite good enough to project the words across the barrier of mechanical reproduction. A leaflet containing the text was, of course, the answer.

The gorgeous *Sea Interludes* from *Peter Grimes* are presented on the other side as they were recorded by the composer himself in his complete discographic version of the opera. This is by far the best of the many recordings given this popular suite. A.F.

BUXTEHUDE: ***Organ Works, Vol. III***

Finn Viderø, organ.
● WASHINGTON WR 423. LP. $4.98.

Continuing his excellent series of organ works by Buxtehude, Mr. Viderø, again playing on the new Danish instrument he used in the other volumes (the Frobenius organ of St. John's at Vejle), here offers four Preludes and Fugues (in G minor, Hedar Vol. II, No. 22; F major, II, No. 15; E minor, II, No. 10; F sharp minor, II, No. 13), *Variations on "Vater unser im Himmelreich"* (Viderø adds a fifth variation to the four printed in Hedar), the Chorale Prelude *Nun bitten wir dem heil'gen Geist* (two versions), and the joyful and energetic Magnificat Primi Toni. In the brilliant Prelude in F sharp minor and its toccatalike Fugue and in most of the other pieces the organist's tempos are plausible, his rhythms forward-moving, and his registrations varied and pleasing. In the F major and E minor Preludes rapid figures in the pedal are blurred and dim, but elsewhere the sound is clear and resonant. N.B.

CHOPIN: ***"Chopin for Orchestra"***

Eric Johnson and His Orchestra.
● WESTMINSTER XWN 18920. LP. $4.98.
● ● WESTMINSTER WST 14105. SD. $5.98.

These orchestrations are, on the whole, tasteful settings of the best-known Chopin piano pieces. Occasionally a piano assumes the solo role, giving a quasi-concerto effect and reminding us of the original timbres of the music. If this disc is to be played to set a mood, or provide background sonorities, it ought to do the job pleasingly enough, particularly in the attractive stereo version, but anyone whose primary interest is the composer will of course want his works in the form he gave them. R.C.M.

CHOPIN: ***Etudes: in A flat, Op. 10, No. 10; in C, Op. 10, No. 7. Mazurkas: in A minor, Op. 59, No. 1; in A flat, Op. 59, No. 2; in B, Op. 56, No. 1. Ballade, No. 3, in A flat, Op. 47. Barcarolle, Op. 60. Preludes, Op. 28: Nos. 18, 2, 14, 4, 5, 8, 19, 20, 23, 24***

André Tchaikowsky, piano.
● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2360. SD. $5.98.

André Tchaikowsky is obviously a sensitive young pianist, but his playing on this disc is lumpy and undisciplined. He is apparently trying to simulate "originality" with capricious salon mannerisms and phlegmatic sentimentality, and the result here bears sad testimony to his present musical immaturity. The player's tonal palette is limited but RCA has reproduced it adequately. H.G.

DEBUSSY: ***Nocturnes***
†Ravel: ***Rapsodie espagnole***

BBC Women's Chorus (in the Debussy); London Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond.
● CAPITOL P 8520. LP. $4.98.
● ● CAPITOL SP 8520. SD. $5.98.

Wherever Stokowski conducts, he shapes and colors any orchestra to his own inimitable ideal. His first appearance with the London Symphony is no exception and that famous orchestra not only has never sounded better, but is here seduced into a glowing sensuousness that is far more Stokowskian than British. Yet not even the Old Sorcerer can quite succeed in transforming English girls into Mediterranean sirens: they sing enchantingly, indeed, but with a healthy freshness that scarcely suggests the sultriness that Debussy surely intended.

For that matter, Stokowski's somewhat nervously tense languors and vehement excitements in both the *Nocturnes* and the Spanish Rhapsody depart considerably from Gallic orthodoxy, if not from their composers' intentions. But such a deviation is hardly likely to make these exquisitely transparent recordings any less magnetically appealing to nonpurist listeners. The monophonic edition is tonally more intense, if no less brilliant, than the more suitably airy and luminous stereo version, but in both the wide dynamic range extends so low at times that the pianissimos are well-nigh lost in disc surface noise—a processing flaw in the

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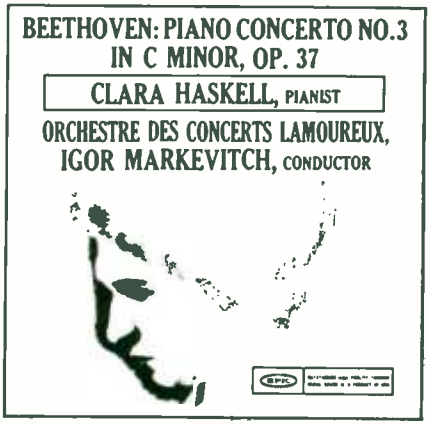

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LC 3709/BC 1090 CHOPIN RECITAL—Ballade No. 4 in F Minor; Scherzo No. 3 in C Sharp Minor; Polonaise No. 6 in A-flat Major; Mazurka Nos. 2, 31 and 32; Nocturnes Nos. 5, 8, 17—CHARLES ROSEN, Pianist.
LC 3723 BERLIOZ: LOVE SCENE from ROMEO AND JULIET, Op. 17; MINUET OF THE WILL O' THE WISPS; DANCE OF THE SYLPHS; RAKOCZY MARCH from THE DAMNATION OF FAUST, Op. 24/ MENDELSSOHN: CALM SEA AND PROSPEROUS VOYAGE—Overture, Op. 27 ANTAL DORATI conducting the CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA OF AMSTERDAM.
LC 3724/BC 1095 HANDEL: ACIS AND GALATEA (Serenade) (Abridged)—Soloists, Oberlin Choir and CAMERATA ACADEMICA DES SALZBURGER MOZARTEUMS, BERNHARD PAUMGARTNER, Conductor.
LF 18000 MALE CHORUSES FROM GERMANY—Volume I, Various Artists
LF 18001 EDELWEISS (Bits of Bavaria) Die Kollmannsberger, Alois Mosbacher and his Orch., The German Band of Munich
LF 18002/BF 19002 TOPS IN POPS (D'ITALIA), Willy Alberti Sings
LN 3717/BN 578 SOFT 'N' WARM, Roy Hamilton
LN 3727/BN 579 DANCING AT THE HOP, Bobby Vinton (A Young Man with a Big Band)
LN 3728 A TRIBUTE TO CHUCK WILLIS
LN 3730 ANYONE CAN PLAY THE HARMONICA, Alan Schackner

Isaac Stern: new truths in Debussy.

otherwise admirable technology which of course may not be as evident in other or all pressings. R.D.D.

DEBUSSY: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in G minor*
†Franck: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A*

Isaac Stern, violin; Alexander Zakin, piano.
● Columbia ML 5470. LP. $4.98.
● ● Columbia MS 6139. SD. $5.98.

Those who think they know these two French masterpieces may have a shock in store when they hear this disc. Stern and Zakin take an entirely new approach to both sonatas. In their hands the Debussy becomes more meaty than ethereal, the Franck more rhapsodical and improvisatory in character. In lesser hands, such departures from the norm might sound like distortions; here they sound like new truths. Each of these fine artists has his own ideas and each is allowed to express them, but the two performers must and do complement each other well.

In both sonatas Stern's exquisitely rich tone has been reproduced with the utmost fidelity and has been carefully balanced with Zakin's piano. The advantages of stereo are not overapparent, though the two channels do separate the instruments, placing the piano on the left, the violin in the center. Many may prefer the old but still unchallenged Columbia recording of these two sonatas by Francescatti and Casadesus, but the present disc offers these works in such an interesting light and in such superb performances that it should be heard. P.A.

DUBOIS: *The Seven Last Words of Christ*

Dorothy Dunne, soprano; Madeline Lynar, contralto; William Dunn, tenor; Arthur Burrows, bass-baritone; Allen J. Sever, organ; The Welch Chorale, James B. Welch, cond.
● Lyrichord LL 90. LP. $4.98.

Dubois's *Les Sept Paroles du Christ*, a reverent though not highly imaginative work, seems to remain a favorite of church choirs. Its performance in English on this record is undistinguished. The soloists, of rather poor vocal caliber, sing their lines without expression; the organist maintains a steady but almost equally expressionless line throughout, and usually succeeds in partially drowning out the chorus, so that its passages seldom come through clearly. Perhaps some of the blame lies with the placement of the microphones in what must have been the acoustically difficult West End Collegiate Church in New York City. Solo passages come through well, however; and many will find the richly reproduced pedal tones of the organ an ideal means for testing the bass response of their loudspeakers. P.A.

DVORAK: *The Devil and Kate*

Jaroslava Vymazalove (s), Chambermaid; Ludmila Komancova (ms), Kate; Marie Steinerova (c), The Princess; Vera Krilova (c), Kate's Mother; Lubomir Havlak (t), Jirka; Premsyl Koci (b), Marbuel; Karel Berman (b), The Gate-Keeper; Jaroslav Horacek (b), The Marshall; Rudolf Vonasek (b), A Musician; Rudolf Asmus (bs), Lucifer. Chorus and Orchestra of the Prague National Theatre, Zdenek Chalabala, cond.
● Artia ALPO 81 C/L. Three LP. $14.94.

According to Artia's published schedule of releases, this autumn will bring us a complete recording of Dvořák's most popular opera, *Rusalka*. Meanwhile, we have what the notes describe as his second most popular opera, *The Devil and Kate*, written in 1898–99, and first produced at Prague in 1899. Adolf Wenig's libretto concerns the fortunes of a rather dislikable young lady named Kate, whose continuous prattling is such that no one will so much as dance with her, even on fair day. She is approached and abducted by a handsome stranger Marbuel. Marbuel is a devil, and carries Kate directly to Hell, where she soon proves as much an annoyance to the residents as she had been to the villagers topside. One of the villagers, Jirka, who has just lost his job and has no pressing business, finds his way to Hell and demands the return of Kate, to which the devils readily assent. In fact, Kate has so frightened Marbuel that, with her help, Jirka is later able to save a princess from damnation, and in return to win freedom for the serfs and the Prime Ministership for himself. Kate is awarded a large estate, and can now select a choice husband from among the courtiers.

It will be noted that there is no love plot at all in the libretto. This may seem a blessing, until we consider that it means there is no song of lonely pining for the soprano, or of protestation for the tenor, or of passionate assent for the two of them. In short, there is no opportunity for lyrical expansion by the composer, and the best Dvořák can do is to invent music that is reasonably alive and gay; it is all pleasant, but none of it really catches hold.

I must assume that the performance is correct in style and general approach—certainly it is spirited. The singing, though, is far from captivating. Chorus and orchestra are good enough, and Artia's sound, though a bit on the dry side, is more than acceptable. The booklet contains the complete libretto with translation, as well as photos of the Janáček Festival production at Brno. The packaging, unfortunately, is unappealing in design and flimsy in construction. C.L.O.

FALLA: *El Sombrero de tres picos*

Barbara Howitt, soprano; London Symphony Orchestra, Enrique Jordá, cond.
● Everest LPBR 6057. LP. $4.98.
● ● Everest SDBR 3057. SD. $4.98.

FALLA: *El Sombrero de tres picos: Suites: No. 1; No. 2*
†Ravel: *Miroirs: No. 4, Alborada del gracioso. Daphnis et Chloë: Suite No. 2*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond.
● Angel 35820. LP. $4.98.
● ● Angel S 35820. SD. $5.98.

This monumental Falla-Diaghilev collaboration was discovered for high-fidelity recording by Ansermet, whose superb version was later rivaled by another wonderful realization of the music under Arambarri. Jordá has the advantage of stereo, and with that technical assist his disc is thoroughly competitive with its predecessors. (In monophonic terms the Everest release remains excellent, but I would choose the Arambarri version, simply because the Madrid orchestra has the Spanish idiom under its skin.)

Giulini plays the two suites from the ballet, about half the score, and although he plays them very well I see no reason to buy only half of this music when the whole is so enjoyable. Furthermore, while the well-engineered mono version of this set conveys a reasonable scale of values from *ppp* to *fff*, the stereo is severely compressed above *mf*. The Falla survives this better than the Ravel works, which, although beautifully played, simply cannot undergo this curtailment. Remastered, Giulini's *Daphnis* probably would be the best stereo version of the suite, although here too we have excellent accounts of the entire ballet. R.C.M.

FAURE: *Elégie for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 24*—See Lalo: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in D minor.*

FINNEY: *Quintet for Piano*—See Seeger: *Quartet for Strings, 1931.*

FRANCK: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A*—See Brahms: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 108.*

FRANCK: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A*—See Debussy: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in G minor.*

GABRIELI, ANDREA: *Aria della battaglia*
†Gabrieli, Giovanni: *Symphoniae sacrae: Canzon quarti toni; Canzone septemi toni, Nos. 1 & 2; Canzon duodecimi toni; Sonata pian' e forte; Sonata octavi toni*

Brass Ensemble of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Sayard Stone, cond.
● ● Westminster WST 14081. SD. $5.98.

There have been several earlier collections of Giovanni Gabrieli's antiphonal works for brasses, but only one of them in the well-nigh obligatory stereo medium, and none

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has been as openly and ringingly recorded. Savard Stone, a young American conductor making his disc debut with this album entitled "Brass Counter Brass," leads an expert Viennese ensemble in now zestfully brilliant, now gravely eloquent performances of six works from Part I of the *Symphoniae sacrae* of 1597—including not only the best known of them, the hauntingly solemn *Sonata pian' e forte*, and several previously recorded *Canzone*, but also the sprightly bouncing *Canzon septimi toni* No. 2 and richly songful *Sonata octavi toni* (both for double choir), which I believe are phonographic premieres.

Fine as these works are, however, they are almost overshadowed by the larger-scaled composition by Giovanni's uncle, Andrea, which, despite its vital place in the history of programmatic music, is likely to be as new as it is impressive to American listeners. This is the *Aria della battaglia*, supposedly modeled on Jannequin's *La Guerre*, which was first written as a madrigal in 1587, and in 1590 published in the composer's rescoring *per sonar d'instrumenti da fiato à 8*—i.e., for eight unspecified wind instruments. Played here by mixed woodwinds and brasses (including a superb tuba player), it is enchantingly lyrical in its contemplative first section, more naïvely depictive in its scherzoish "battle," but building up to a stirring triumphal conclusion.

There is only one qualification to my hearty recommendation of this whole program: a purist's reminder that the sonorities here are far different from, if probably more brilliant than, those planned by the composers, who wrote for trombones and cornetti (*Zinken*) rather than trombones and trumpets. R.D.D.

GABRIELI, GIOVANNI: ***Symphoniae sacrae*—See Gabrieli, Andrea: *Aria della battaglia*.**

GRIEG: ***Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16***
†Liszt: ***Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat***

Artur Rubinstein, piano; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.
● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2429. SD. $5.98.

Since Rubinstein's art is so highly subjective, its effectiveness is largely dependent upon his warm, personal rapport with an audience. Although I have enjoyed innumerable recitals by the pianist, I find it hard to work up much enthusiasm for the present recording. Both of these performances are overphrased, overpedaled, and, for me, offensively flamboyant. On this disc, Rubinstein seems to take perverse delight in flaunting his disregard for the composer's printed instructions. The Grieg fares better than the Liszt in every way and there is, in fact, considerable poetry in the first two movements. Nevertheless, I feel that it would be dishonest to pretend that it can compare with the superb Lipatti edition for Columbia. Moreover, in dividing this twenty-six-minute work between sides, RCA Victor has spoiled the effect of Grieg's linking of the last two movements. The stereophony is excellent; Rubinstein's plummy tone is well recorded, but the orchestra is rather raucous. H.G.

HANDEL: ***Concerto for Oboe, No. 3, in G minor; Largo for Two Horns and Strings; Arias for Winds Nos. 1 and 2*—See Telemann: *Don Quixote: Suite*.**

HANDEL: ***Concerti Grossi, Op. 3: No. 1, in B flat; No. 2, in B flat; No. 3, in G; No. 4 a and b, in F; No. 5, in D minor; No. 6, in D; Concerto grosso in C {"Alexander's Feast"}***

Chamber Orchestra of the West German Radio, August Wenzinger, cond.
● ARCHIVE ARC 3139/40. Two LP. $11.96.
● ● ARCHIVE ARC 73139/40. Two SD. $13.96.

There have been two previous complete editions of the Op. 3 concertos (as opposed to the somewhat more liberal issue of complete sets of the Op. 6 series), but this Archive release is the first new account of this music in some five years and restores it to the catalogue after an absence since 1958.

Written near London in 1717–20, while Handel was director of music at Cannons, the Italianate palace of the Duke of Chandos, the Op. 3 concerti grossi are the work of a man in his early thirties to whom the "big bow-wow" style of the middle-aged Handel might well have seemed grandiose. Harmonically they are simple tonic-dominant exercises for the greater part, although this is one of many cases in which orthodoxy is no attempt to disguise lack of imagination. Good tunes and high spirits are the prevailing elements, and the performers, although seeking to realize "interpretation . . . as perfect

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as could be achieved, in accordance with the latest theories of musicological research" have the wisdom to know the pitfalls of dreary dedication.

From the standpoint of the listener whose interest in scholarly matters can be presumed to be of less importance than his pleasure in what he hears, the search here for the correct instrumental forces has succeeded in producing the most effective use of Handel's color contrasts. The well-balanced and carefully blended sonorities in such moments as the opening of the Largo of the first concerto, for instance, convey especially well the delight so many find in eighteenth-century writing for winds. There are many such moments in these works, and every one of them strikes me as being particularly well realized in terms of its own problems of voicing and timbre. It should therefore suffice to say that this set is among the most rewarding we have had given us in quite some time.

The engineering is outstanding in both the stereo and mono versions, but the clarity and brilliance of the stereo, taken with its forthright projection of the instrumentalists, seems to add an even fuller measure of vitality and satisfaction to this playing. R.C.M.

HAYDN: ***Stabat Mater***

Anny Felbermayer, soprano; Sieglinde Wagner, contralto; Waldemar Kmentt, tenor; Otto Wiener, bass; Akademie Kammerchor; Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna Symphony, Hans Gillesberger, cond.
● Lyrichord LL 89. Two LP. $9.96.

This relatively early work (it was written in 1767) was very successful in its day and still offers much of interest. I was particularly struck by the moving orchestral introductions to some of the movements, which have something of the same tone and mood as the orchestral version of the *Seven Last Words*, and by one or two movements like the eloquent *Vidit suum dulcem natum*, in which the great master of the late Masses and oratorios is clearly foreshadowed. The performance is carefully done, if not distinguished in any aspect, and the sound is good enough. N.B.

LALO: ***Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in D minor***
†Saint-Saëns: ***Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 1, in A minor, Op. 33***
†Fauré: ***Elégie for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 24***

Gaspar Cassado, cello; Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Jonel Perlea, cond.
● Vox PL 10920. LP. $4.98.

The works on this attractive record, all composed between 1873 and 1883, represent the cream of French music for cello and orchestra. Cassado, the noted Spanish cellist, is in better form than I have heard him on records in many years. His tone and technique are exceptionally firm and even, while his interpretations are at once sensitive and virtuosic. He is at his artistic best in the Saint-Saëns, to which he imparts new stature. Only in the last movement of the Lalo do I find his conception a trifle slow and heavy. Perlea and the orchestra give him admirable support, and the recording maintains a good balance between the rich-sounding solo instrument and the accompaniment. P.A.

LISZT: ***Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat*—See Grieg:** ***Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16.***

LISZT: ***Etudes d'exécution transcendante d'après Paganini*** **(complete);** ***Liebestraum, No. 3; Consolation, No. 3; Un Sospiro; Il Penseroso; Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 11, in A minor***

Gary Graffman, piano.
● RCA Victor LM 2443. LP. $4.98.
● ● RCA Victor LSC 2443. SD. $5.98.

Graffman's instrumental command borders on the phenomenal and that is an important asset in literature of this kind. In addition, he is an admirably schooled pianist and his is wholly sincere and tasteful playing. Nevertheless, a sort of "John Doe" impersonality pervades these performances. One has only to compare Graffman's tonally white, rhythmically tepid playing in the second Paganini étude with Vásáry's impetuous, biting inflection in the same piece. There *is* no comparison, even though Graffman's interlocking octaves are even more effortless than the young Hungarian's.

In fact, here lies the whole crux of the situation. Since Graffman's technique is so facile, he can encompass with almost casual ease virtuosic feats that would exert most of his colleagues. The unfortunate thing is that the pianist appears to have thrown out the baby with the bath, and he doesn't convey the bravura possibilities of the colorful music. Perhaps in time he will, and certainly, there is precious little else wrong with his playing on this disc. H.G.

LISZT: ***Sonata for Piano, in B minor***
†Weber: ***Sonata for Piano, No. 4, in E minor, Op. 70; Invitation to the Dance, Op. 65***

Leon Fleisher, piano.
● Epic LC 3675. LP. $4.98.

For a feature review of this recording, see p. 63.

MONIUSZKO: ***Halka*** **(excerpts)**

Alina Bolechowska (s), Halka; Bogdan Paprocki (t), Jontek; Andrzej Hiolski (b), Janusz; Edmund Kossowski (bs), Stolnik. Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Mieczyslaw Mierzejewski, cond.
● Deutsche Grammophon DGM 12024. LP. $4.98.
● ● Deutsche Grammophon DGS 712024. SD. $5.98.

Stanislav Moniuszko's *Halka* is an opera which, along with *Schwanda*, *Tiefland*, and other similar works, has seldom been performed in the larger international houses, but has found a place in the repertoire in Central European countries. First staged in its present form in 1858, it is generally regarded as the Polish "national" opera, just as *Bartered Bride* is the Czech "national" opera. It concerns a young peasant maiden, an orphan named Halka, who submits to the advances of Janusz, the owner of the mountain village where she lives, and conceives a child by him. Despite the warnings of her former fiancé, Jontek, she persists in the notion that Janusz will take her in marriage. When, on the contrary, Janusz becomes engaged to the highborn Zofia, attempting to placate Halka by an offer of support, the distracted girl (after beating back an impulse to raze the church where the wedding is taking place) flings herself into a rushing stream. Such an unsophisticated, melodramatic tale may not appeal to some, but it obviously suited Moniuszko, for his music is passionate and varicolored. Particularly interesting are Halka's two solos and Jontek's Dumka, "As the Mountain Winds Are Sighing." The orchestral selections are invigorating, and in fact the only ordinary piece on this disc is the aria for Stolnik, Zofia's father.

The singers, all soloists of the Warsaw State Opera, are excellent. Alina Bolechowska has a strong, clear soprano with an impressive top, and phrases with sensitivity; Andrzej Hiolski reveals a rolling, firm baritone; and tenor Paprocki sings with healthy tone and much feeling. The orchestra under Mierzejewski plays with a crisp zest, and DGG's sound is outstanding in both versions, though stereo has a definite advantage here. With such splendid forces, it's a shame that DGG didn't go ahead and record the entire opera (a complete recording, which I have not heard, does exist on the Period label); but what is here is most enjoyable, and I recommend it. C.L.O.

MOZART: ***Quintets for Strings: in G minor, K. 516; in C minor, K. 406; in E flat, K. 614; in D, K. 593; in C, K. 515; Adagio and Fugue, in C minor, K. 546***

William Primrose, viola; Griller String Quartet.
● Vanguard VRS 1052/54. Three LP. $4.98 each.
● ● Vanguard VSD 2060/62. Three SD. $5.95 each.

These are on the whole fine performances. The C major and E flat major Quintets are played in first-class fashion throughout. The less well-known member of this pair, K. 614, is seldom done at concerts, but what a beauty it is! In each movement a familiar type of material, starting out on what promises to be a familiar path, is turned by the magic of genius into something thrilling and unique. Take the slow movement, for example. It begins with a perfectly conventional theme, but soon wonderful things happen to it, and towards the end there are accented dissonances that send chills down the spine. In K. 593 the crisp, precise ensemble in the first movement, and the lovely, singing tone of the first violin in the second, are especially admirable. The flaw here, it seems to me, is in the finale; it is taken so fast that everything is swallowed up.

The performances of the G minor and C minor Quintets do not seem as good as the version of the same works recorded by the same players a couple of years ago. In the C minor the first violin turns a bit schmalzy for a moment. In the G minor there is a lack of intensity in the first movement, and the pace at which the finale is taken sometimes makes it impossible for the players to articulate sixteenth-note figures clearly. K. 546 is played by a string quartet here, a medium that to me sounds inadequate for the powerful fugue (Mozart seems to have had a string orchestra in mind).

From the musical point of view, I would

rate this set the equal of the Budapest (Columbia) as far as K. 515 and 614 are concerned but not with respect to the other three quintets. From the standpoint of sound, however, the stereo version here is superior, in clarity and warmth and spaciousness, to the Vanguard mono and to the Columbia. N.B.

MOZART: ***Serenades: No. 8, in D, K. 286 ("Notturno"); No. 6, in D, K. 239 ("Serenata notturna"). Lucio Silla, K. 135: Overture. King Thamos, K. 345: Interludes***

London Symphony Orchestra, Peter Maag, cond.
• • LONDON CS 6133. SD. $5.98.

The two delightful Serenades would seem to be especially suited for stereo, since K. 286 is for four small orchestras and K. 239 for a quartet of strings pitted against a string orchestra with kettledrums. Surprisingly, stereo does not do much for K. 286 here. The conductor, an excellent musician, seems to have taken the "echo" indications in the score perhaps more seriously than they deserve. He has made the difference in orchestras not so much a spatial one as a matter of dynamics, having Orchestra II play softer than Orchestra I, Orchestra III still softer, and so on. There is nothing wrong with this procedure in principle (it worked very well on a recent Telefunken mono disc), but here the drop from one dynamic level to the next is so steep that Orchestra IV can scarcely be heard at all. All the performances, including that of the varied and expressive interludes from Mozart's incidental music to a German play, have vitality, and the sound is good. N.B.

MUSSORGSKY: ***Pictures from an Exhibition*** (trans. Ravel)

Virtuoso Symphony of London, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.
• • AUDIO FIDELITY FCS 50004. SD. $6.95.

This orchestral—and stereo—showpiece gets here the full treatment from conductor, orchestra, and engineers. The results are most gratifying. Wallenstein's interpretation is the model of clarity and sanity. He makes his points without exaggerating, yet his climaxes are amply impressive. I might have liked a bit more rhythmic incisiveness in *Bydlo* and a slightly broader tempo at the very end of *The Great Gate at Kiev*, but these are purely personal tastes. The orchestra plays magnificently, and the sound, while duly impressive, never gets out of bounds. The stereo spread is pleasing, the directionalism naturalistic, the surfaces absolutely noiseless. All in all, this is one of the best *Pictures* on discs. P.A.

NARDINI: ***Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor***—See Tartini: ***Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D minor.***

RACHMANINOFF: ***Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 18; Preludes for Piano: Op. 23, No. 6; Op. 3, No. 2***

Byron Janis, piano; Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.

● MERCURY MG 50260. LP. $4.98.
● ● MERCURY SR 90260. SD. $5.98.

Mr. Janis' first recording for Mercury turns out to be a good one. The pianist has made something of a specialty of this music, and his is a sure-handed, orthodox performance. He has patterned his conception on the composer's own (not at all a bad thing to do), and as a result the reading has a refreshing briskness and steadiness instead of the capricious rubatos, rhythmic distortions, and lethargic tempos of some renditions. Janis does not, however, command the nuance and silken flexibility that Richter exhibited in his recent recording of the work and occasionally, particularly in the slow movement, there is a trace of stiffness in his phrasing. Dorati's accompaniment is precise, virtuosic, and tonally a little threadbare. Mercury's engineering, in both versions, has sonorous piano sound, full-bodied orchestral tone, and balance that favors the soloist ever so slightly. H.G.

RACHMANINOFF: *Symphony No. 2, in E minor, Op. 27*

Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.
● CAPITOL P 8386. LP. $4.98.
● ● CAPITOL SP 8386. SD. $5.98.

Wallenstein leads this symphony with restraint and conviction. His is a dynamic reading with proportion, clarity, and objectivity, giving the emotional elements their due but never allowing the lush tone of the ensemble to halt the forward thrust of the music. The orchestra plays well, the reproduction is spacious, and the result a recorded performance that is thoroughly recommendable. H.G.

RAVEL: *Daphnis et Chloë*

New England Conservatory Chorus and Alumni Chorus; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.
● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 1893. SD. $5.98.

The belated stereo release of a disc enthusiastically received in monophony demonstrates anew both the impassioned sweep of Munch's reading and the hitherto only partially disclosed merits of the original recording. There is, to be sure, considerably more channel separation and probably more solo-instrument spotlighting than would be expected nowadays in a work of this kind, but these serve all the better to sharpen the contrasts between this version and the more recent one by Monteux for London.

The latter is even more richly recorded in more closely blended stereoism, but the most distinctive differences are in the performance qualities. To my ears the Bostonian orchestra and chorus have a slight advantage over Monteux's British forces, while Munch's perhaps less closely integrated but definitely more propulsive and dramatic reading must be balanced against Monteux's more magical lyricism and less intense drive. Individual taste preferences alone can determine the choice here, but at least one of these versions belongs in every permanent library and most particularly in those of listeners who have previously known *Daphnis et Chloë* only in its concert-suite highlights which, magnificent as they are, do not convey the grandeur of the work as a whole. R.D.D.

RAVEL: *Miroirs: No. 4, Alborada del gracioso. Dahpnis et Chloë: Suite No. 2*—See Falla: *El Sombrero de tres picos: Suites: No. 1; No. 2.*

RAVEL: *Rapsodie espagnole*—See Debussy: *La Mer; Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune.*

RAVEL: *Rapsodie espagnole*—See Debussy: *Nocturnes.*

RITTER: *Cantata, O amantissime sponse Jesu*—See Bach: *Cantata No. 169.*

SAINT-SAENS: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 1, in A minor, Op. 33*—See Lalo: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in D minor.*

SCARLATTI, ALESSANDRO: *Stabat Mater*

Rosanna Giancola, soprano; Miti Truccato-Pace, contralto; Orchestra of Scuola Veneziana, Angelo Ephrikian, cond.
● LYRICHORD LL 88. LP. $4.98.

A fine work by this famous but little-known baroque master. It is similar in layout and style to the later and much more celebrated setting of the same text by Pergolesi. It is thoroughly Italian: the voice is absolute master, there are no obbligato instruments, and the orchestra of strings is confined to accompanying chords and figures except for occasional, and expressive, preludes and interludes. Melody is featured, counterpoint subordinated except in the duets. The general atmosphere is one of grave and deep devotion. Only seldom does a line break into floridity, and then only to point up a particular word. Miss Giancola sings nicely, Miss Truccato-Pace somewhat less steadily and with rather spread tones, and the orchestra seems competent.

Surprisingly, in view of Mr. Ephrikian's experience in this field, there is no keyboard continuo instrument. Sound is good, but faint thuds were heard at the beginning of each side on the review disc. N.B.

SCHUBERT: *Fantasia in C, Op. 15 ("Wanderer")*
†Schubert-Liszt: *Wanderer Fantasy in C, for Piano and Orchestra*

Alfred Brendel, piano; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Michael Gielen, cond.
● Vox PL 11610. LP. $4.98.
● ● Vox STPL 511610. SD. $5.95.

It was an excellent idea to couple the great *Wanderer* Fantasy with Liszt's expanded transcription of it, and Brendel was just the man for the job. His ardor, musical integrity, and fastidious musicianship are everywhere in evidence (in his informative annotations as well as in his powerful but compassionate playing). All the more reason to lament the frankly dreadful sonics here. In stereo, the solo side in particular sounds as if it were recorded at the Idlewild International Airport and both performances are hopelessly marred by blur, clatter, and end-of-side distortion. The mono version is cleaner, but unpleasantly sharp, and it is afflicted with heavy surface hiss. Vox should

withdraw this unfortunate disc and let Mr. Brendel and Co. have another go at it. H.G.

SCHUBERT-LISZT: ***Wanderer Fantasy in C, for Piano and Orchestra*—See Schubert:** ***Fantasia in C, Op. 15 ("Wanderer").***

SEEGER: ***Quartet for Strings 2, 1931***
†Finney: ***Quintet for Piano***

Amati Quartet (in the Seeger); Beveridge Webster, piano; Stanley Quartet (in the Finney).
• COLUMBIA ML 5477. LP. $4.98.

The late Ruth Crawford Seeger wrote comparatively little, but that little was always brilliantly contrived, if in a harshly atonal idiom. She was one of the most inventive American *avant-gardistes* of her period, as is well shown in this quartet, nearly thirty years old, which sounds as if it might have been composed yesterday. Of particular interest is the third movement, an adagio with long-drawn resonances prophetic of the sounds tape-recorder composers were ultimately to discover.

This excellent recording is the first to be given to any of Mrs. Seeger's works. Rather ironically, it comes seven years after her death. And it serves, or should serve, to remind the record makers that her husband, Charles Seeger, is still waiting to be given his due as a major figure in American composition.

The quintet by Ross Lee Finney on the other side is a twelve-tone piece but twelve-tone in an innocuously conservative way; it sounds as if Finney aimed to be the Vincent d'Indy of the serial era. The recording is very good. A.F.

SMETANA: ***The Bartered Bride***

Drahomira Tikalova (s), Marenka; Jarmila Pechova (s), Esmeralda; Jaromira Dobra (s), Ludmila; Stepanka Stepanova (mis), Hata; Ivo Zidek (t), Jenik; Oldrich Kovar (t), Vasek; Rudolf Vonasek (t), Principal Comedian; Vaclav Bednar (b), Krusina; Eduard Haken (bs), Kecal; Jaroslav Horacek (bs), Micha; Jiro Joran (bs), Indian. Chorus and Orchestra of the Prague National Theatre, Zdenek Chalabala, cond.
• ARTIA ALPO 82 C/L. Three LP. $14.94.
•• ARTIA ALPOS 82 C/L. Three SD. $17.94.

For a feature review of this album, see page 65.

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

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.
•• RCA VICTOR LSC 1806. SD. $5.98.

In the RCA studios on Chicago's North Pier Terminal, outwardly drab in a scratched and chipped coat of tan paint, is an old RCA tape deck that made engineering history. First designed to make full-track masters at 30 ips on quarter-inch tape, it was converted to two-track stereo operation in the days when the company was still experimenting with the possibilities of this new medium. The practice then was to use duplicate microphones, taping a stereo master from a pair of channels independent of the monophonic product. RCA Victor made in this way quite a bit of stereo that never has reached the public, including a few items from the last appearances of Arturo Toscanini.

Reiner's masterful reading of *Zarathustra* came as part of a series of Strauss sessions begun March 6, 1954. Apparently there was a shortage of engineers, and the stereo machine was placed in the hands of the studio maintenance man, who sat down with a pair of headphones to guide him, spun the dials, and proceeded to make one of the finest of the early stereo productions. Released on 7½-ips stereo tape as RCA Victor ECS-1, it proved a demonstration item that brought home the potential of the medium to the recording industry as well as to the home music audience.

Except for a change in equalization to meet the requirements of the slower speed, the tape in ECS-1 was a direct, channel-for-channel copy of the master. This gave it a richness and power that is almost, but not fully, duplicated in the present disc, which now joins the already celebrated mono version. The tape, however, is out of print and 7½-ips stereo is apparently dead. If you don't already have Reiner's *Zarathustra* on tape, this record is the answer.

It deserves your attention for two of the best reasons. First, it is a historic document in the advancement of recording techniques, one of the true classics of the repertory de-

spite the passage of six years. Second, it is decidedly the most powerful account of the score available. The only rival is the Karajan set for London, an extremely interesting performance, but a personal rather than an orthodox one, and—on comparison—less satisfying. *Zarathustra* has traditionally been one of the great achievements of the Chicago Symphony, which recorded it brilliantly with Frederick Stock and Artur Rodzinski prior to this session. Short of a new, three-channel Reiner set, its triumph of 1954 stands firm. R.C.M.

STRAVINSKY: *Pétrouchka*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond.
● RCA Victor LM 2376. LP. $4.98.
● ● RCA Victor LSV 2376. SD. $5.98.

Monteux was the first interpreter of *Pétrouchka*, and according to Stravinsky's own testimony, the finest interpreter it ever had. The great French maestro's tempos are a trifle slower than they used to be, but the vividness of his playing remains unimpaired and the recording is incomparably fine. *Pétrouchka* is the kind of piece that is especially well suited to stereo, and Victor's engineers take full advantage of that fact. A.F.

TARTINI: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D minor; Sinfonia pastorale, for Violin and Strings*
†Nardini: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor*

Jan Tomasow, violin; Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Jan Tomasow, cond.
● Vanguard BG 599. LP. $4.98.
● ● Vanguard BGS 5027. SD. $5.95.

The D minor Violin Concerto of Tartini is already available on microgroove, but the new version of this expressive work is not only the equal of the others as a performance but superior to them in sound. Tartini's *Sinfonia pastorale* seems not to be otherwise available. It is another in the long line of Italian baroque "Christmas concertos," pleasant enough, but less distinguished than the Corelli. The concerto by Nardini, long familiar to violinists, deserves a larger audience. In this lovely work the soloist as virtuoso is ignored; instead, the violin constantly sings, pouring out a stream of flowing melody. Tomasow, with his pervasive musicality and live tone, does full justice to the solo parts; as conductor he has one or two ragged moments in the first movement of the Nardini. The violin tone seems less resonant and pure in the mono than in the stereo. N.B.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Romeo and Juliet, Fantasy Overture; The Nutcracker: Suite, Op. 71*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond.
● Angel 35680. LP. $4.98.
● ● Angel S 35680. SD. $5.98.

Markevitch's earlier editions of these works were both distinguished. These new ones are tremendous! Both of these pieces have been often recorded, but this conductor's sophisticated artistry quickly establishes a select place for the present coupling. Markevitch's approach is an individual one, utilizing expressive changes of pace to emphasize the dramatic elements of the music. For instance, in the overture the sudden acceleration at the conclusion of the introduction suggests the feuding families, and the slight retardation just before the first appearance of the love theme (i.e., second subject) points up the harmonic instability of the music here. These liberties, however, are always of a conservative nature, and both performances have subtlety, delicacy, and evocative atmosphere. The crackling vitality and whiplash attack of the Philharmonia's playing here rivals that heard on the old Toscanini versions, and Angel has reproduced it, in both mono and stereo, with devastating impact. H.G.

TELEMANN: *Don Quixote: Suite*
†Handel: *Concerto for Oboe, No. 3, in G minor; Largo for Two Horns and Strings; Arias for Winds: Nos. 1 and 2*

Harry Shulman, oboe; Richard Dunn, James Buffington, horns; Saidenberg Little Symphony, Daniel Saidenberg, cond.
● American Society Concerts-in-the-Home AS 1002. LP. $4.98.
● ● American Society Concerts-in-the-Home SAS 1002. SD. $5.98.

In Mr. Saidenberg's version of the Telemann, the Don's attack on the windmills is a furious one, his sighs of love for the Princess Aline very tender indeed. The conductor evidently sees no point in underplaying the programmatic aspects of this

gently amusing piece, an approach that seems unexceptionable to me.

The Handel Oboe Concerto is available in other good recordings, but the other pieces by that composer are interesting and curious novelties. There are not many baroque instrumental works that feature horns, as the present Largo does, and the two "arias" are jolly, unpretentious pieces for two oboes, two horns, and a bassoon. As in the other discs in this series, performances and recording are good. N.B.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: ***Folk Song Album***

Alfred Deller, countertenor; Desmond Dupré, lute; Deller Consort.
● VANGUARD VRS 1055. LP. $4.98.
● ● VANGUARD VSD 2058. SD. $5.98.

Nineteen English folk songs, each more beautiful than the last, thanks to their inherent substance and to the masterly arrangements of Vaughan Williams. Some are transcribed in madrigal style, others in the manner of an extended fantasia; five times, however, Deller interrupts the flow of the ensemble to sing solo arrangements with lute accompaniment. This I find affected and arty, but the work of the two women and four men who make up the Deller Consort is superlatively fine, and so is the recording. Included are *Greensleeves* (which is practically a new national anthem for the British these days), *The Turtle Dove*, *Ca' the Yowes*, *Just As the Tide Was Flowing*, and many other Vaughan Williams folk song arrangements made popular by the English Singers. Those who treasure remembrance of the English Singers will most certainly want this record. A.F.

VIVALDI: ***Concertos for Violin and Strings, Op. 8: Nos. 1–4 ("Le quattro Stagioni")***

Vittorio Emanuele, violin; Società Corelli.
● RCA VICTOR LM 2424. LP. $4.98.
● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2424. SD. $5.98.

Emanuele plays more freely than many of the other soloists who have recorded these works. The lack of rigidity in his part is praiseworthy, though sometimes he turns liberty into license, as when he changes note values in the finale of *Autumn*. The ensemble is its usual competent self, choosing generally good tempos (an especially convincing one, slightly faster than usual, for the Largo of *Spring*) and playing with verve and precision. It does a particularly fine job in its soft and atmospheric picture of the sleeping inebriates in *Autumn*. Some of its interpretative ideas seem questionable. Why introduce echo effects into a passage representing strong winds (first movement of *Summer*) or into another that is intended to depict slipping on the ice (finale of *Winter*)? The harpsichord cannot be heard most of the time, resulting in occasional yawning gaps between top and bottom, and there is faulty balance in some passages (solo cello too weak in first movement of *Summer*, second violins and later violas too dim in its finale). Otherwise, performance and recording are good. N.B.

WAGNER: ***Lohengrin: Prelude to Act III. Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Finale. Tannhäuser: Overture and Venusberg Music***

London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.
● MERCURY MG 50234. LP. $4.98.
● ● MERCURY SR 90234. SD. $5.98.

Dorati approaches these Wagnerian excerpts with a good deal of freshness and spirit. For example, he maintains a fine transparency in the *Tristan* music without sacrificing very much of its inherent sensuality. The *Tannhäuser* Overture is big and brilliant, as is the *Lohengrin* Prelude to Act III. My only objection to the performance of the latter is its ending, which trails off into the opening bars of the Bridal Chorus, then quits in midair. Wagner requires large-scale reproduction, and Mercury provides it, though without any blasting, rasping sound. In this respect, mono and stereo are about on a par, though with a greater spread in the two-channel edition. P.A.

WALTON: ***Belshazzar's Feast; Partita for Orchestra***

Donald Bell, baritone (in *Belshazzar's Feast*); Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Sir William Walton, cond.
● ANGEL 35681. LP. $4.98.
● ● ANGEL S 35681. SD. $5.98.

The opening lament of *Belshazzar's Feast*, employing the text of Psalm 137, is one of the most magnificent passages in modern choral literature. Thereafter—in its dramatic

dealings with the incident of the Handwriting on the Wall, Daniel's interpretation thereof, and the final chorus of rejoicing—the work is not quite able to disguise the fact that it is an old-fashioned English oratorio in the finest Crystal Palace tradition. But it makes an effective try.

The Partita for Orchestra, which fills out the second side, is one of those breezy comedy-pieces which Sir William writes every now and then. Its former titles are *Scapino*, *Portsmouth Point*, etc.

Performances are extremely vital and authoritative throughout, and the recording is excellent in both versions. Omission of the text of *Belshazzar's Feast* is a serious oversight, however, and it will not do merely to point out the Biblical sources from which it comes, as Noël Goodwin does in his notes, for considerable stretches of the Scripture have been rewritten for this work by Sir Osbert Sitwell. A.F.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

INGE BORKH: *Recital*

R. Strauss: *Salome: Closing Scene: Ah! Du wolltest mich nicht deinen Mund kussen lassen, Jokanaan!* Beethoven: *Ah, perfido! Op. 65.* Weber: *Oberon: Ozean! Du Ungeheuer!*

Inge Borkh, soprano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Josef Krips, cond.
● ● LONDON OS 25102. SD. $5.98.

This soprano, scheduled to return to the Metropolitan for next season's *Elektra*, has a clear, round voice, which she uses intelligently and easily. It is not especially large or colorful, though, and fades into nothingness at the bottom. The decision on purchase of this record will depend on just how badly the collector wants a solid performance of the *Salome* scene, for though Borkh sings the Beethoven and Weber arias conscientiously and feelingly, she is no match for Nilsson or Farrell in this music. She is no match for the Welitch of the early Fifties, either, and Krips's leadership of the *Salome* finale has nowhere near the tension and drive of Reiner's. But the Reiner/Welitch performance is absent from the list, and the present release offers a good rendition, enhanced by lush stereo sound. Since Borkh is probably the best of the current Salomes, the record would seem to be a smart buy—we are unlikely to hear the equal of Welitch before the century is out. Notes, and smidgens of text. C.L.O.

HOLLYWOOD BOWL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: *"This Is the Hollywood Bowl!"*

Addinsell: *Warsaw Concerto.* Benjamin: *Jamaican Rhumba.* Bizet: *Carmen, Act. IV: Chorus.* Brahms: *Hungarian Dance, No. 6.* Chopin: *Polonaise militaire.* Debussy: *Rêverie.* Khachaturian: *Sabre Dance.* Planquette: *Sambre et Meuse.* Prokofiev: *Love for Three Oranges: March.* Puccini: *Bohème: Musetta's Waltz.* Rimsky-Korsakov: *Dance of the Buffoons; Flight of the Bumble Bee.* Rozsa: *Spellbound Concerto.* Strauss, Johann: *On the Beautiful Blue Danube.* Strauss, Richard: *Rosenkavalier Waltzes.* Tchaikovsky: *1812 Overture; Waltz of the Flowers.*

Michael Rabin, violin; Leonard Pennario, piano; Roger Wagner Chorale; Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, Alfred Newman, Miklos Rozsa, and Felix Slatkin, conds.
● CAPITOL ABO 8496. Two LP. $7.98.
● ● CAPITOL SABO 8496. Two SD. $9.98.

When the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra made its first recordings many years ago for RCA Victor, it was directed by Leopold Stokowski in such durable, classical fare as the *Pathétique* and Brahms First. Under Capitol the orchestra has been treated rather like a West Coast reply to the Boston Pops, and a series of thirty albums, from which the present set is excerpted, have reinforced that image.

This set is a bargain-priced introduction to the Bowl as symbolically seen from the nearby Capitol Tower, handsomely packaged and illustrated, with an introductory essay by Los Angeles columnist Gene Sherman. The music is well varied, attractively recorded, and played in a manner that the public has accepted and applauded. If you're a Hollywood Bowl buff, actual or potential, it's a good buy. R.C.M.

HUBERT JELINEK: *"The Virtuoso Harp"*

Hubert Jelinek, harp.
● VANGUARD VRS 1043. LP. $4.98.
● ● VANGUARD VSD 2038. SD. $5.98.

Hubert Jelinek, first harpist of the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera, proves to be a virtuoso technician of the first rank. His finger work in the familiar Solfeggietto of Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach, for example, is rapid and fluent enough to put the best pianists to shame. In the *Schubert Fantasie* of Hans Trneček, based on several Schubert songs, and in Trneček's fantasylike transcription of Smetana's *Moldau* he achieves some wonderful ethereal effects. On the whole, however, his playing lacks real color and brilliance, and much of the music he has selected is of minor value. Vanguard's close-to recording is clear and faithful, but there is no discernible difference between the monophonic and stereo editions. P.A.

FRITZ KREISLER: ***"The Art of Fritz Kreisler"***

Fritz Kreisler, violin; Carl Lamson, piano.
● RCA CAMDEN CAL 518. LP. $1.98.

Much has been made over the reissue of Kreisler recordings of several concertos. But the inimitable Kreisler style was just as much in evidence—perhaps was afforded even freer rein—in the shorter encore-type pieces. Here he employed a considerable amount of rubato but, as this record indicates, he used it correctly, "robbing" from one part of a phrase but "paying back" in another part. There was a general feeling of relaxation in these performances, as if the violinist were taking time to enjoy what he was playing and to let the listener enjoy it, too. As a result, there may have been departures from generally accepted tempos and phrasing, even changes in notes. Still, it all added up to honest music making, greatly enhanced by Kreisler's big, rich tone.

All these qualities have been well preserved in this collection of short pieces by Falla, Debussy, Dvořák, and others (many of them transcribed by Kreisler himself). All of the original recordings must be more than thirty years old, yet the reproduction, at least of the violin tone, is more than acceptable. Those who want a completely rounded aural portrait of Kreisler would do well to consider this inexpensive disc as a complement to their collections of concertos and sonatas. P.A.

CONSTANTIN SILVESTRI: ***"Romantic Overtures"***

Glinka: *Ruslan and Ludmilla*. Borodin: *Prince Igor*. Rimsky-Korsakov: *May Night*. Humperdinck: *Hansel und Gretel*. Mendelssohn: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Philharmonia Orchestra, Constantin Silvestri, cond.
● ANGEL 35744. LP. $4.98.
● ● ANGEL S 35744. SD. $5.98.

Recalling the distortions which many listeners felt that this conductor inflicted on some of the Tchaikovsky symphonies, I placed this record on my turntable with great apprehension. Happily, Silvestri's eccentricity is here confined to one slightly halting "Hee-Haw" in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture, and all the performances on this disc have vitality, abandon, and temperament. A lesser ensemble could get out of hand under this freely generative leadership, but the Philharmonia comes through pretty well. (Even *they* get boisterous and sloppy in a few places, though.) The mono sound in this instance is far superior to the stereo, which is lower in volume and coarser in detail. H.G.

LEO SLEZAK: ***French and Italian Arias***

Meyerbeer: *L'Africaine: O Paradis. Le Prophète: Roi du ciel. Les Huguenots: Plus blanche*. Halévy: *La Juive: Rachel, quand du Seigneur*. Delibes: *Lakmé: Fantaisie*. Bizet: *Carmen: Air de la fleur*. Massenet: *Manon: Ah, fuyez douce image*. Verdi: *Aida: Celeste Aida. Il Trovatore: Deserto sulla terra. Otello: Niun mi tema*. Puccini: *La Bohème: Che gelida manina*. Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci: Vesti la giubba*. Giordano: *Fedora: Amor ti vieta*. Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana: Siciliana; Addio alla madre*.

Leo Slezak, tenor; Orchestra.
● ETERNA 733. LP. $5.95.

Most of these recordings are not quite of Slezak's magnificent best, being afflicted with some heaviness of voice and with the slow throb that marks many of his performances. Just the same, Slezak at his second-best is superior to nearly any other tenor in peak form, and the vocal enthusiast can hardly go wrong with a collection of the tenor's discs. His ability to sing a melting legato is well demonstrated in the *Siciliana* and "*Celeste Aida*," while for contrast there is his clarion voicing of the strenuous selection from *Le Prophète*. This versatility was probably Slezak's outstanding characteristic—he was the only post-De Reszke tenor to challenge the highest standards in any repertoire, from Tamino to Faust to Tristan. The sound is quite good by acoustical standards, and serious devotees will find this release worthwhile. C.L.O.

ZIMBLER SINFONIETTA: ***"Concert of Modern Music"***

Ives: *The Unanswered Question*. Milhaud: *Symphony No. 4*. Skalkottas: *Little Suite for Strings*. Bartók: *Divertimento for Strings*.

Zimbler Sinfonietta, Lukas Foss, cond.
● SIENA S 100-2. LP. $4.98.

A reissue of a superb disc which originally appeared under the Unicorn label. It is worth calling attention to again especially because of the magnificent work of Ives which it contains. *The Unanswered Question* is not the naïve Ives or the folklore Ives, but Ives the mystic and transcendentalist. The "unanswered question" is the riddle of existence. A solo trumpet propounds it. Strings reply with mysterious, Nirvana-like sounds reflecting a serenity beyond the comprehension of those who ask the unanswered —and unanswerable—question; four flutes mediate between the trumpet and the gods. It's all over in five minutes—but what a five minutes they are!

The vigorous, very early symphony by Milhaud, the electrical twelve-tone suite by Skalkottas, and the colossal Divertimento of Bartók are all works of great value in themselves and all contrast beautifully with the Ives and with each other. In sum, a beautifully selected collection of modern pieces, splendidly performed and recorded. A.F.

A reproduction of this photograph on fine quality paper is available on request.

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Since the Dual-1006 was introduced early in 1959, its remarkable performance capabilities have been acclaimed throughout the audio, music and high fidelity industries.* Among the many exclusive features of the Dual-1006 that have received particular attention are these: unlimited versatility as *both* a fully automatic changer and as an automatic or manual single play turntable . . . completely free-floating tonearm that tracks and trips at as low as 1½ grams . . . unusually powerful precision motor that brings the heavy turntable to full speed in less than ¼ turn . . . freedom from rumble in both lateral and vertical planes . . . phenomenally low flutter and wow . . . unique record-preserving indexing principle and elevator-action changer spindle . . . and push-button simplicity of operation. But most important of all . . . especially with regard to the stereophonic record . . . is this fact: Of all automatic record playing equipment, the Dual-1006 *alone* has been acknowledged as the peer of the separately mounted tonearm and turntable. As such, it is most distinctly *in a class by itself.*

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POPULAR • THEATRE • FOLK

Frederik and Nina

Happy Debut of a Duo from Scandinavia

"Introducing the Fabulous Nina and Frederik."
Atco 33-119, $3.98 (L.P.).

"FABULOUS" is a much overworked adjective today, and nowhere more so than in the entertainment world where adjective-happy ad men use it indiscriminately to describe each new comedian, vocalist, instrumentalist, or orchestra arriving on the scene. Yet however suspect the word may have become, I do not find it misapplied to Nina and Frederik, the talented duo from Scandinavia who make a very auspicious American debut on this really first-rate disc.

Just how to classify these performers is something of a problem, and I'd be inclined to place them between the sophisticated folk style of the Kingston Trio and the jazz stylings of the Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross Trio. But, in a way, such a description would be unfair since their way with the songs on this program is not as carefully commercially contrived as is that of the Kingston Trio, and they do not have quite the jazz feeling of the other trio. Nina is Danish, Frederik is Dutch, and it is not easy to imagine that numbers so alien to their culture (calypsos and spirituals in particular) could be so hauntingly projected. Yet the accents and the diction are quite impossible to fault, and their singing, both solo and as a team, is beautifully sensitive. In fact, they seem far more at home in these numbers than in American songs like *Let's Put Out the Lights* (with some very up-dated lyrics) or *Bei Mir Bist du Schön*, which many people who recall the Andrews Sisters' rousing prewar recording may consider tame. The calypsos are outstanding, particularly *I Would Amour Her*, which I find vastly superior to the mannered Belafonte version, and a superbly atmospheric *Mango Vendor*.

But it's not necessary to go on. This is a record to buy and enjoy. Aside from the unfailing artistry of Nina and Frederik themselves, I can't conclude without mentioning the invariably excellent support given the team by a small group of Danish musicians, and the sound is always excellent. All in all, a topnotch offering. J.F.I.

Stordahl

A Musical Safari To Dance Along With

"Jasmine and Jade." *Axel Stordahl and His Orchestra. Dot DLP 25282, $4.98 (SD).*

FROM Liza Lehmann's *In a Persian Garden* and Ketelbey's *In a Chinese Temple Garden* or—to drop down a little in the musical world—from Harold Weeks's *Hindustan* to Jean Schwarz's *Chinatown, My Chinatown,* quasi-Oriental music has maintained an irresistible appeal for Occidental ears. Small wonder, then, that in making this musical safari to the Orient and Near East, Axel Stordahl relies on eleven numbers with exotic musical overtones that are now familiar standards. The twelfth selection, the alliterative title song, is one of his own compositions, and a very attractive one too.

In these vivid musical paintings are none of the keening birds, tolling buoys, or surf sounds of similar recordings; the brush work is done solely with orchestral instruments. Strings, reeds, brass, and percussion carry the load throughout, with boo-bams in *Japanese Sandman* and Chinese bells in *Baubles, Bangles, and Beads* to heighten the atmospheric portrait. Stordahl's well-known fondness for strings (remember his arrangements for Sinatra?) is still very much in evidence, but it's not overdone. In particular, two lesser-known items seem to me to be treated with unusual imagination: the lovely *Lotus Land* of Cyril Scott, and *Neiani,* a onetime Tommy Dorsey standard.

Stordahl has not designed this disc as a mood music album exclusively, for several numbers are presented in quite danceable arrangements: the armchair traveler can dance comfortably to *Moonlight on the Ganges* or take a musical stroll *On a Little Street in Singapore,* as well as sit back comfortably and dream of *Bali Ha'i.* Whatever your choice, you will certainly not be disappointed. Dot has endowed this tapestry of kaleidoscopic musical patterns with opulent stereo sound, well distributed and of unusual clarity. J.F.I.

Village artists

Cowell

All the Way from the Volga to Vladivostok

"Folk Music of the U.S.S.R." *Henry Cowell, compiler and annotator. Ethnic Folkways Library. Folkways FE 4535, $11.90 (LP).*

THE SOVIET UNION is a geographic and ethnographic immensity. From above the Arctic Circle it stretches 2,000 miles south to the soft subtropical valleys of Georgia: a crack train requires nine days to speed from the western frontier across 6,000 miles of forest, steppe, mountain, and desert to Vladivostok. Eskimos, Tatars, Mongols—Soviet citizens all—jostle each other on the streets of the capital, and an incredible 149 officially recognized languages are spoken within the borders of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

It is primarily this dazzling variegation—as reflected in traditional song and dance—that composer and musicologist Henry Cowell investigates in Folkways' two-disc "Folk Music of the U.S.S.R." This is no simple task. By official fiat, along with wholehearted public concurrence, folk song is the wellspring of Soviet music. Performers are encouraged, subsidized, and coddled by the state. But this government support—which culminates in the polished perfection of a Moiseyev or Beryozka troupe—has the ironic side effect of muddying

the source of *authentic* folk music. In the face of impending rubles, any performer of promise soon adulterates his art with cosmopolitan "improvements."

Cowell, therefore, has taken his authenticity where he could find it. Often—perhaps too often—he has had to use vintage 78-rpm recordings and inferior tapes. While in most cases the ancient sound has been cleaned up considerably, this remains a low-fi album throughout.

The songs and dances themselves—from Moldavia, the Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and points east—are the pure folk product. At times they are rough, primitive, almost amusical in their harshness: in other instances there are echoes of the style of choral singing practiced in the Orthodox Church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. High points of the set are a brilliant virtuoso performance on the balalaika by a young man from the Smolensk district, a banjolike *tar* of Persian origin played by a Georgian, a solo bagpipe from Azerbaijan, and a jew's-harp played by a Tatar. Due to sonic shortcomings, most of the choral efforts are swallowed up in distortion.

For the first time in my experience, Folkways' accompanying leaflet strikes me as grossly inadequate. The titles of individual selections are given along with descriptions of chords, keys, modes, etc., but not a word of text or translation. Still, serious students of folk song, ethnology, and Soviet folkways in particular will find a treasure in this album. O.B.B.

● ●

"Young at Heart." Ray Conniff Singers. Columbia CL 1489, $3.98 (LP); CS 8281, $4.98 (SD).

The Ray Conniff Singers are suddenly articulate again. That is to say, they actually sing the lyrics instead of indulging in that form of musical mummery heard on their recordings since the early *Talk of the Town*. Personally, I hope they have permanently abandoned their wordless vocal style. Except for one syrupy college ballad, *It's Dark on Observatory Hill*, this is a better than fair assortment of numbers, with enough diversity of style and rhythm to show off the group's abilities. There is a good deal of youthful exuberance and bounce to these performances, and I think you'll find it one of this group's best discs. J.F.I.

"The Music of Victor Herbert." George Melachrino and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2129, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2129, $4.98 (SD).

Any recording that swells the abysmally small representation of Victor Herbert's music in the current catalogue is welcome, and doubly so when it is as fine as this new Melachrino disc. I can't even cavil at the fact that its contents duplicate many items already on records, mainly because these versions have a more truly Herbertian style and are free from the sort of musical elephantiasis found on some of the earlier discs. The Melachrino orchestra, with its huge complement of strings, is an ideal instrument for a proper presentation of the Herbert ballads that predominate in this program, and it is a real pleasure to hear their melodies sing out so sweetly and prettily. My only complaint is against the vocal outbursts that punctuate the closing moments of *Romany Life*, which to my ears sound suspiciously like some very British Roms leaving a pub. Both versions feature a wondrous sound, and either version offers a musical treat. J.F.I.

"Ballet for Band." Eastman Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fennell, cond. Mercury MG 50256, $4.98 (LP); SR 90256, $5.98 (SD).

Before any purist castigates Fennell for admitting transcriptions to his repertory (previously confined in some fifteen releases to original wind band scorings), he should first read the conductor's disarming "personal note" on the record jacket and then listen to the convincing justification of the present performances themselves. The arrangements of the complete Gounod *Faust* ballet music, and excerpts from the Rossini-Respighi *Boutique fantasque* and Sullivan-Mackerras *Pineapple Poll* ballets are of course primarily intended as models for school bands, but they fill their function so well that they warrant hearing for their own sake—and still more for the precision and color of the recorded performances. If there is any concert band which plays better than Fennell's Eastman ensemble, I have yet to hear it, and the recording here also ranks with the best previously given the Fennell Mercury series, ultrabrilliant in monophony, even more gleaming and expansive in stereo. R.D.D.

"Los Indios Taba-Jaras." Herundy and Mussapere, vocalists; guitar. Vox STVX 425990, $4.98 (SD).

A release of unusual interest in that both of *los Indios*—baritone Mussapere and tenor Herundy—are members of the savage Taba-Jaras tribe, discovered in Northern Brazil a scant thirty years ago. Dispatched to schools in Rio and São Paulo by the tribe's discoverer, both boys showed musical proclivities. Now, as interpreters of the folk and popular music of Latin America, they have scored a notable international success. There is freshness to their repertory and a pleasant blending of Indian-Portuguese-Spanish elements in their style that offers a happy contrast to the usual frenetic South American groups that come our way. Excellent, cleanly separated stereo sound. O.B.B.

"Summer Set." Monty Kelly and His Orchestra. Carlton LP 12/123, $3.98 (LP); STLP 12/123, $4.98 (SD).

Kelly whips up quite a heat wave of his own in these torrid arrangements of music having something to do with summer. The title number was a hit for Kelly a short while ago, and it wouldn't be surprising to find one or two more items from this program finding their way into the charmed circle. The stereo version is particularly impressive for the way in which it presents the Kelly strings as a perfect background for the soaring solos of name instrumentalists Phil Bodner, "Toot" Mondello, Al Caiola, and Jimmy Nottingham. This is a great set, but be sure to keep something cool handy; you'll need it after this hot spell. J.F.I.

"Sweet and Lovely." A Lawrence Welk Stereo Special. Dot DLP 25296, $4.98 (SD).

After copious drafts of "champagne music," Lawrence Welk fans may well be astonished by the sophisticated stylings adopted by the band on this occasion. Responsible for this unexpected musical metamorphosis is Bob Ballard, who provided the excellent arrangements and also conducts an augmented Welk orchestra that includes such well-known instrumentalists as Shorty Sherock, Si Zentner, Champ Webb, and others. The outcome is a splendid listenable or danceable program, served up in big-band style, with outstanding work from the featured soloists. J.F.I.

"The Chaplin Revue." Music from the sound track of the film. Decca DL 4040, $3.98 (LP).

For three of his early silent movies—*A*

Continued on page 88

new fall releases

The Sound of the Sixties!

MARTIN DENNY
Exotic Sounds Visit Broadway

A gallery of showtunes framed in unusual Denny arrangements: Love For Sale, Hernando's Hideaway, September Song, etc. LRP 3163/LST 7163

JULIE LONDON
Around Midnight

Julie roams romantically through twelve tantalizing love ballads: Misty, Lush Life, Black Coffee, etc. LRP 3164/LST 7164

SPIKE JONES
60 Years of Music America Hates Best

Grand old tunes fliply satirized by the jolly Jones boys: Hut Sut Song, Mairzy Doats, Three Little Fishies, etc. LRP 3154/LST 7154

DAVE BARRY
Laughs for Losers

Dave quips through ten hilarious monologues recorded live in Las Vegas: Dishonesty Is The Best Policy, The Unfair Sex, etc. *LRP 3176

JOHNNY MANN SINGERS
Swing Along with the Singin' 30's

Mann oh Mann! Vocal harmony with big band sound—smooth as honey—in a dozen of the best: East of the Sun, Moonglow, I Got Rhythm, etc. LRP 3156/LST 7156

JOHNNY BURNETTE
Dreamin'—Live wire lyrics by Liberty's smashing young Rock 'n Roller: Why Don't You Haul Off and Love Me, I Want To Be With You Always, Dreamin', etc. LRP 3179/LST 7179

SI ZENTNER and Orchestra
The Swingin' Eye—Brilliant big band sound...standards like: Lonesome Road, Melancholy Serenade, There's No You, etc. LRP 3166/LST 7166

ORIGINAL HITS—PAST & PRESENT
A rockin', rollin' baker's dozen of teen hits: Mr. Blue, Tequila, Look For A Star, etc. *LRP 3178

JACK COSTANZO
Learn—Play Bongos—Step by step instruction . . . "Sit in" practice sessions with the Costanzo band. Extra instructions on LP sleeve. *LRP 3177

BOB WILLS/TOMMY DUNCAN
Together Again—All-time Wills' hits by the originator of Western Swing: San Antonio Rose, Spanish Two-Step, Stay A Little Longer, etc. LRP 3173/LST 7173

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II-9

CIRCLE 63 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Dog's Life, *Shoulder Arms*, and *The Pilgrim*—currently making the rounds as *The Chaplin Revue*, the comedian has composed, apparently quite recently, some wonderfully appropriate background music. Chaplin's proficiency as a writer of film music is well established, and this is just another example of how aptly his musical ideas complement his visual antics. The recorded sound skillfully suggests movie theatre music of about thirty years ago. J.F.I.

"Blue Smoke." Johnny Desmond; Tony Mottola, guitar; Bob Haggart, bass. Columbia CL 1477, $3.98 (LP); CS 8268, $4.98 (SD).

Johnny Desmond emerges from this bout with the blues in triumph, both as vocalist per se and as a perceptive interpreter. Singing these songs of loneliness, disillusion, and regret with tremendous sensitivity and a sort of smoldering intensity, he extracts every last ounce of poignancy. It is an impressive performance. The accomplished team of Mottola and Haggart, with their inventive accompaniments, create a wonderful atmosphere for the vocals. J.F.I.

"Bongos, Bongos, Bongos." Los Admiradores, Enoch Light, cond. Command RS 33-809, $4.98 (LP); RS 809, $5.98 (SD).

Still more percussion *divertissements*, but since these star a seven-man bongo group, headed by Willie Rodriguez with Stanley Webb's versatile woodwind solos, there is a refreshingly different sonic slant to the strongly stereogenic arrangements of the mostly pop tunes—topped by a romantic *Greensleeves* and *Unchained Melody*. Particularly effective are the tunable bongos featured in *Blue Moon*, the flutter-lipped tromboning in *You and the Night and the Music*, and the tonal and antiphonal contrasts between varied types of bongos throughout. As usual in the Command series, there are elaborately detailed descriptive notes, and the quite closely miked recording is ultraclean and ultrastereoistic. R.D.D.

"It's Been a Long, Long Time." Terri Stevens; Leroy Holmes and His Orchestra. Everest LPBR 5088, $3.98 (LP); SDBR 1088, $3.98 (SD).

With the passage of years, a good deal of luster has worn off some of these World War II songs. *The White Cliffs of Dover*, Berlin's *I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen*, and Loesser's *Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition* are all now well dated, but Terri Stevens sings them with sincerity and warmth, over the expert backing of the Leroy Holmes band. J.F.I.

"We Sing of the Sea." The Seafarers Chorus, Milt Okun, cond. Elektra EKL 182, $4.98 (LP).

A robust voyage athwart the chanteys of the age of sail. Soloist Eugene Brice's vibrant bass booms above a well-drilled chorus in the old, nostalgic exhortations to "haul on the bowline" and "shake her, Johnny." Conductor Milt Okun's arrangements are uniformly lithe, uniformly appealing. The thick-textured sound, however, is a cut beneath Elektra's best efforts. O.B.B.

"The Science of Sound." Bell Telephone Laboratories, Inc. Folkways FX 6007, $11.90 (Two LP).

The explanation of basic acoustical and musical ambiguities (Frequency/Pitch, Intensity/Loudness, Echo/Reverberation, etc.), which has been attempted in so many books with such obvious difficulty, should of course be relatively simple to *demonstrate*—yet even the best of the numerous recorded introductions to hearing and high-fidelity sound have been only partially successful in the past. Never before, however, has the job been tackled as straightforwardly and comprehensively as in the present album, sponsored by the Bell Labs, and authoritatively written and directed by Bruce E. Strasser of its publication department. Nothing could be more readily comprehensible than the present script, read with complete naturalness and clarity by an unidentified, Murrow-like narrator (and for good measure printed in full in the accompanying leaflet), but it is the sonic examples themselves, each chosen to make a specific point and often repeated to drive that point unmistakably home, that make this lecture-demonstration an absolutely essential contribution to every intelligent listener's education. And even those audiophiles who have thought themselves well versed in acoustics will find new illuminations here. R.D.D.

"The Best of the Broadway Musical Hits." Torroba and His String Orchestra. Seeco CELP 461, $3.98 (LP).

The great virtue of this pleasant interlude of theatre music is its complete lack of pretentiousness. The twelve songs from musicals of the past are presented in neat and tasteful settings that roughly approximate those in vogue when the songs were new. Over the appropriate arrangements the lovely melodies emerge clearly, instead of being smothered by a welter of orchestral sounds as is too often the case in recordings today. The orchestral performances are hardly the ultimate in musical finesse, and Seeco has not contrived a very seductive sound (it is often very edgy), but those who can overlook these deficiencies will find this disc enjoyable listening. J.F.I.

"A Collection of Czech Folk Songs." Pizen Folk Music Ensemble; Czech Song and Dance Ensemble; Prague Symphony Orchestra. Artia ALP 139, $4.98 (LP).

Dvořák, Janáček, and a host of other Middle European composers have profitably mined the melodic riches of Bohemian folk song. Here, a coterie of fresh-voiced singers combine with the Prague Symphony to offer the pristine—or almost pristine—product itself. The twenty-one songs are sheer loveliness, abounding in clean-cut emotions and time-polished tunes. Unfortunately, the singers are not free of the odd wobble nor the sound of the odd echo, but on balance this remains a delightful disc. O.B.B.

"Color Contrasts." The Horn Club of Los Angeles. Capitol P 8525, $4.98 (LP); SP 8525, $5.98 (SD).

A prize catch for French horn *aficionados*, for while there have been several good solo recordings in the past, this is the first I know to draw on an ensemble of some twenty-one men, some of whom double on Wagner tubas. Most effective are the richly sonorous transcriptions for sixteen horns of the Palestrina *Stabat Mater* and Lassus *Echo Song*, but a Mendelssohn Tarantella provides some

good staccato contrasts to their smooth dark flow. The original works (here conducted by their composers) are much more varied in their technical executant "effects," which in George Hyde's title piece are carried to an extreme likely to be of interest only to specialists, but which lend considerable spice to others of the original compositions. The recording is admirably transparent and reverberant even in monophony, but of course the characteristic expansive "windiness" of horn sonorities is best captured in the airiness of stereo. R.D.D.

"The Magic Sounds of Frank Sorrell." Frank Sorrell, and his four guitars. Coral 57324, $3.98 (LP); 757324, $4.98 (SD).

One man, four guitars (one steel, three electric)—you know that some sort of electronic hocus-pocus has been used to achieve the astonishing effects heard on this recording. Certainly it is one of the most skillful jobs of its kind to which I have listened, and sometimes I wonder who deserves the credit . . . the performer or the engineer. Although these are mainly standard numbers, one or two Sorrell originals have been included. Of these I particularly liked the bluesy overtones of his *Blue Shuffle* and *Larry's Lullaby*, the latter with its fascinating interplay between steel and electric guitars. J.F.I.

"Echoes of Russia." Peter Howard, piano; rhythm accompaniment. Vox STVX 426000, $4.98 (SD).

Any attempt to compress the sprawling panorama of Russian music into the scope of a lone piano with rhythm backing is, to say the least, audacious. But Peter Howard—a lyric pianist of skill—pulls off a coup of sorts with this *ratatoui* of traditional melodies laced with themes from Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Khachaturian, *et al.* The result is a cameo-sized, cocktail lounge profile that, thanks to the taste and caliber of the players, is far more finely drawn than the cocktail lounge norm: this is pleasant listening with a bite. Rather small-scale stereo sound and brittle piano reproduction detract somewhat from the total effect. O.B.B.

"Mandolino Italiano." Dick Dia; His Mandolin and His Orchestra. Audio Fidelity AFLP 1923, $5.95 (LP).

This very closely miked recording is obviously designed to show off the virtuosity of the soloist, Dick Dia. It achieves its purpose admirably, particularly in the more spectacular showpieces, *Carnival of Venice* and *La Napoletana*, which Dia tosses off with great abandon. Personally, I prefer him in the more seductive Mediterranean favorites, *Santa Lucia*, *Tango Delle Rose*, and the recent song hit *Non Dimenticar*. In these, all the romantic languor of the songs is well realized. The occasional use of the accordion, an instrument often used in Italy in conjunction with the mandolin, is quite agreeable, but how did those xylophones creep in? J.F.I.

"Music from Spain." Gran Orquesta Sinfonica, Ataulfo Argenta, cond. London CS 6152, $5.98 (SD).

These poetic readings by Ataulfo Argenta are fresh cause to mourn the fate that snatched him from the threshold of greatness. In this program of *zarzuela*, or operetta, music, his supple command of an idiom that

is Spanish to the core elicits all the sparkle of melodic champagne. While London's stereo is no great shakes as to separation, no admirer of Argenta or of melody *per se* can afford to be without this truly superlative disc. O.B.B.

"Wienerwalzer Paprika." Philharmonia Hungarica, Antal Dorati, cond. Mercury MG 50190, $4.98 (LP); SR 90190, $5.98 (SD).

The title here is apter than most, for this is not only an all-waltz program, recorded in the Grosse Saal of the Wiener Konzerthaus, but it is spiced in Hungarian style by the already famous refugee orchestra which recently toured the United States. The familiar selections by Lehár, Kálmán, Josef Strauss, *et al.* scarcely provide adequate materials for evaluating the orchestra's characteristic qualities (other than its abounding verve), however. If it often seems overemphatic and even somewhat coarse, the fault may be less the players' than that of a Dorati in his most hard-driving mood. The recording is extremely vivid, but painfully sharp in monophony, and only slightly less intense in the more broadspread and open stereo edition. R.D.D.

"Pietro Deiro Presents the Accordion Orchestra." Sixteen accordions, Joe Biviano, dir. Coral CRL 57323, $3.98 (LP); CRL 757323, $4.98 (SD).

Pietro Deiro and Joe Biviano, accordionists par excellence, have gathered sixteen of their colleagues into an all-accordion approximation of a full-throated symphony orchestra. Modifications to individual instruments alter their tonal colors to those of, say, an oboe, a trombone, a piccolo. Maestro Biviano's catholic program—stretching from Tchaikovsky to cha-cha-cha—displays the limitations as well as the potentialities of his assemblage, however. While the orchestral verisimilitude is sometimes striking, one waits in vain for the blazing trumpets or the poetic violins. Admirers of the accordion, nonetheless, should be enchanted by this near *tour de force*. Excellent in mono, even better in stereo. O.B.B.

"Sounds of Sebring, 1960." Riverside RLP 1173, $5.95 (SD).

For the first time, the craze for racing-car documentaries strikes me as having some persuasiveness, for while I still find the razzing sounds of revving-up and the whooshing sounds of cars zipping by definitely limited in their sonic appeal, the present disc is much more interesting and effective in its cross-channel presentations of driver interviews and race progress reports than any of the Sebring recordings I have heard before. This is a real triumph of production too, since the 1960 endurance contest, in which the favored Sterling Moss was forced to drop out and a couple of the sturdy but usually also-ran Porsches triumphed, was not in itself the most memorable of this long series. R.D.D.

"Connie Stevens As 'Cricket' in the Warner Bros. Series "Hawaiian Eye." Connie Stevens; Orchestra. Warner Bros. WS 1382, $4.98 (SD).

Connie Stevens has come a long way as a singer since I last heard her on records, two years ago. She still retains her pert, breathless teen-age manner, but with experience and public exposure, via TV, she has acquired poise and a suggestion of sexiness. Slow ballads, which were not exactly her forte previously, are now handled with comparative ease. I'm sure she now feels more at home in songs like *Apollo* and *Sixteen Reasons*, though I find these the least attractive numbers in an otherwise quite attractive record. J.F.I.

"Zither in ¾ Time." Ruth Welcome, zither. Capitol ST 1318, $4.98 (SD).

Neither Miss Welcome nor her discreet accompanists (on marimba, celeste, guitar, and string bass) spare us any heartthrobs in their mostly languidly stilted arrangements of *When I Grow Too Old to Dream*, *Always*, *Diane*, *Three O'Clock in the Morning*, *Beautiful Ohio*, etc. But what almost redeems the pervading saccharinity is the glowing purity with which the considerable range of zither tone coloring is recorded. Stereo may enlarge the instrument to overlifesize, but it also differentiates the zither's subtlest nuances and floats every tone with wellnigh celestial magic. If one can ignore the music and performances themselves, this disc is a quite incomparable demonstration-documentation of its featured instrument's sonic capabilities. R.D.D.

"Bye Bye Birdie." Original Cast Recording. Columbia KOL 5510, $5.98 (LP); KOS 2025, $6.98 (SD).

This saga of a hip-swiveling rock and roll singer about to be inducted into the Armed Forces (an obvious satire on the career of you-know-who) is a loud, breezy musical that is probably more fun to see than listen to. The Charles Strouse score, while neither better nor worse than most going, is longer on noise than on melody. There are one or two minor inspirations—*Kids*, with its catchy Charleston rhythm and satirical lyric; and *The Telephone Hour*, a hilarious re-creation of a situation all too familiar to today's parents—but the remainder of the score is run of the modern musical mill. Apart from Chita Rivera, who walks off with all the honors, the cast is pretty much of a muchness. The stereo recording quite outshines the mono version, being particularly effective in the telephone number. J.F.I.

"Songs of the American Land." Salli Terri; Jack Halloran Quartet. Capitol P 8522 $4.98 (LP); SP 8522, $5.98 (SD).

Salli Terri, late of the Roger Wagner Chorale, is a lustrous mezzo who specializes in refining traditional songs with due regard for their integrity. The ballads she has selected for this recital—*On Springfield Mountain*, *Shenandoah*, *Erie Canal*, etc.—are deep in the American grain. Each in its way is history redivivus or a past emotional climate crystallized. While Miss Terri has previously shown an affinity for somewhat precious arrangements, she hews to a simpler line in this album. Occasionally she is interpretatively mannered—as in the opening of *Colorado Trail*—but at her best she is a winsome, convincing artist. The full-blown Terri treatment is not for those who prefer their ballads neat, but everyone else will find here a full measure of entertainment. Superb engi-

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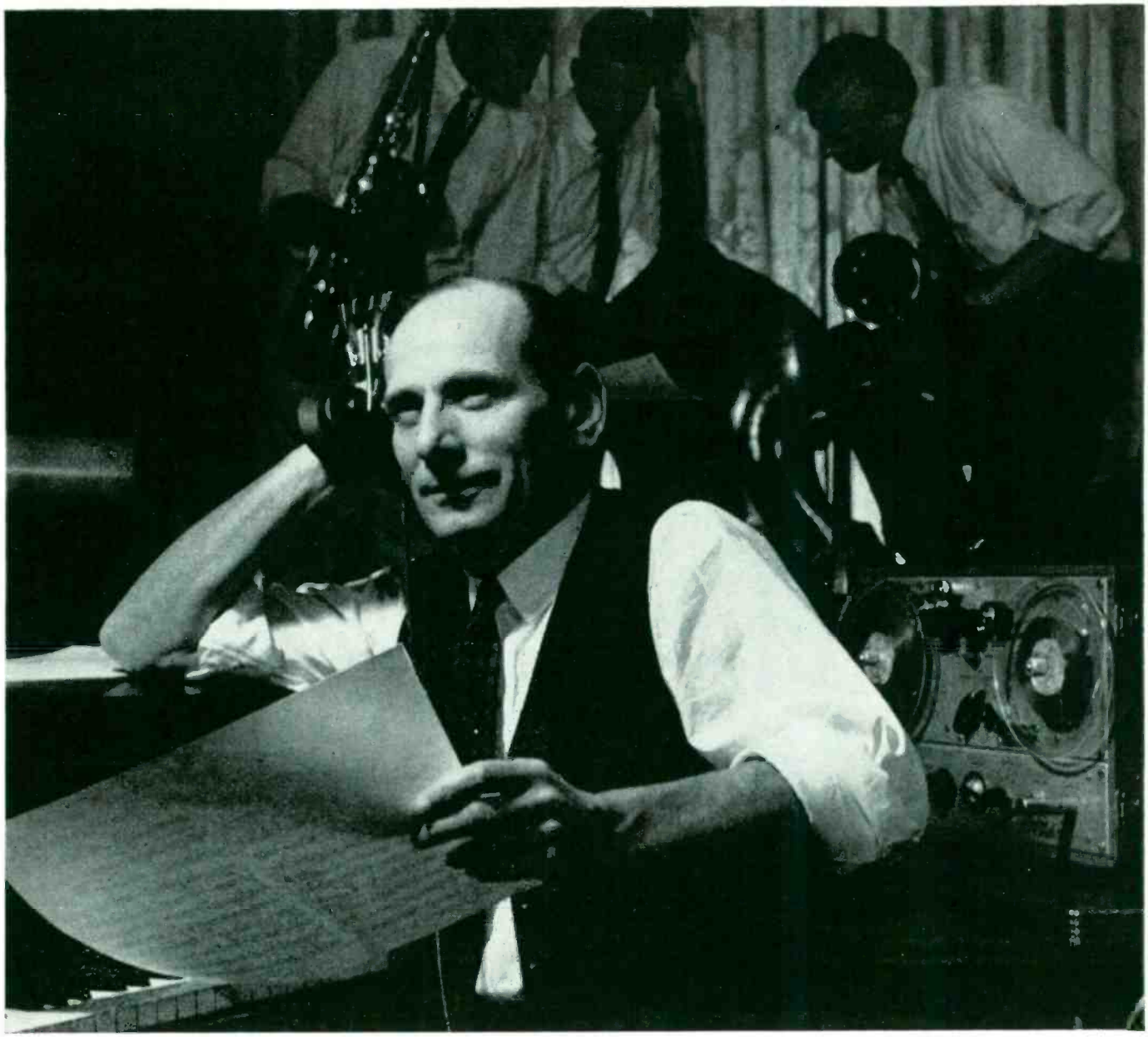

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neering, with stereo winning the laurel by a clear margin. O.B.B.

"Movin' on Broadway." Kay Starr; Van Alexander and His Orchestra. Capitol ST 1374, $4.98 (LP).
When Kay Starr turns her raucous, rocking style loose on these songs from Broadway musicals, you can be sure that her interpretations deserve to be called "unique." Some numbers stand up to the assault quite nobly, others simply wilt under the vocal onslaught. Miss Starr is one of the most strident singers around, a fact that Van Alexander is aware of, since his accompaniments are properly geared to her powerful stylings. J.F.I.

"Have Organ, Will Travel." George Wright, organ. HiFi Record R 721, $4.95 (LP).

"More Theater Organ in Hi-Fi." Leonard MacClain, organ. Epic LN 3655, $3.98 (LP).
The ebullient George Wright's latest release is typical both for his eccentric registrations and the clean power with which his San Francisco Fox Theatre Wurlitzer is recorded, but it's really distinctive only for his amusingly brash, bagpipe-y *divertissement* on the *Londonderry Air*. MacClain's alternately expressive and vivacious program is played much more straightforwardly and with far fewer novelty and synthetic-percussion effects. His otherwise unspecified Tower Theatre instrument boasts more attractive and legitimate stops and sonorities than most theatre organs on record, and these are skillfully exploited here with only a modicum of throbbing sentiment and with a maximum of atmospheric effectiveness in powerfully broad, open, and reverberant recording. The latter also picks up a good deal of blower noise, but is none the less authentic-sounding for that. R.D.D.

"The Eloise Trio." Decca DL 8983, $3.98 (LP); DL 78983, $4.98 (SD).
As a calypsonian, the veteran Bahaman performer Eloise Lewis is effective enough, although she seems to be playing a role rather than living it. Despite this enthusiasm once-removed, her array of songs—*Goombay*, *Island Woman*, *Zombie Jamboree*—is first-rate and receives polished performances from the star and her two male cohorts. Due to meticulous miking and balancing, stereo *does* make a difference here: the mono version—though fine in its own right—seems pallid by contrast. O.B.B.

"A Guitar To Remember." Bill Faith with Ensemble. Chancellor CHL 5007, $3.98 (LP).
The soloist, using a specially tuned guitar, plays beautifully in an expert variety of styles, and is particularly interesting in his own intricate *Drizzle*. But except in *Getting To Know You*, where he is deftly accompanied by a rhythm section only, his performances tend to be submerged in overfancy and tasteless orchestrations (and even more deadly wordless vocalizations) perpetrated by Frank Hunter. R.D.D.

"The River Boat Five on a Swinging Date." Mercury MG 20509, $3.98 (LP).
This free-swinging session of Dixieland is quite obviously designed to catch the ears, and titillate the feet, of the current campus set rather than the traditional Dixieland fan. Fast steppers will appreciate the band's work, though the job of trying to keep pace with its tempos might prove to be a most exhausting one. This is particularly true of the fiendishly fast version of *Lover*, featuring a tremendous banjo solo. During this number, I should imagine everyone would take a breather. J.F.I.

"Sixty French Girls Can't Be Wrong." Les Djinns Singers; Orchestra, Paul Bonneau, cond. ABC-Paramount ABC 327, $3.98 (LP).
The sixty girls of Les Djinns sing with beguiling effect, and their voices fall fresh and sweet on the ear. But when they strive for choral climaxes that same ear almost aches for the gruff explosion of a bass section or a sturdy baritone underpinning. Despite a sameness of sound from song to song, the tidily engineered record is rather attractive—particularly if you dote on massed sopranos. O.B.B.

"Clap Hands, Here Comes Rosie." Rosemary Clooney; Bob Thompson and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2212, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2212, $4.98 (SD).
My imagination may be working overtime, but it seems to me that Miss Clooney, usually the most relaxed of vocalists, occasionally is ill at ease here. The ballads are handled in her usual suave and knowing manner, but in the up-tempo numbers I sense a feeling of tension in the vocalist's work. Possibly she is made uncomfortable by the Bob Thompson arrangements and by the support, both vocal and fistic, she receives from the vocal group around her. Miss Clooney is too good a singer to need this sort of assistance. So, only muffled applause from this corner. J.F.I.

"Freedomland, U.S.A." Soloists; Orchestra, Frank DeVol, cond. Columbia CL 1484, $3.98 (LP); CS 8275, $4.98 (SD).
Freedomland, U.S.A., the Eastern seaboard's riposte to Disneyland, is an eighty-acre juvenile Gomorrah in the Bronx. Interspersed with amusement-park rides and spectacles are re-creations of Gay Nineties New York, Earthquake-Era San Francisco, and a Space-Age Satellite City—the whole intended to synthesize the history of the United States. Extending its sensory assault to the ear as well as the eye, Freedomland pipes appropriate songs (specially composed by Jule Styne and George Weiss) to each of these attractions. In Frank DeVol's lively readings, these portraits come off as obvious but pleasant musical complements to the bit of Americana at hand. However, standing alone, they are on shaky ground. O.B.B.

"Murder, Inc." Orchestra, Irving Joseph, cond. Time S 2002, $5.98 (SD).
Remember the oldtime "descriptive" musical accompaniments for the silent films? What Joseph and his twelve-man orchestra do here is to bring them very much up-to-date in hard-boiled, vigorously agitated, and fancily scored *genre* pieces which at their best are powerfully macabre and at their worst tiresomely raucous. Musically, only the exciting *Big Six* is particularly notable, but the ultrabold and clean, if aurally hard-toned, recording is highly stereoistic. R.D.D.

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CIRCLE 37 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Charlie Barnet Quartet: "Jazz Oasis." Capitol T 1403, $3.98 (LP); ST 1403, $4.98 (SD).

There are two memorable features about the big bands that Charlie Barnet led during the Thirties and Forties: Barnet was constantly breaking them up and reorganizing them, and every Barnet band always swung furiously. The fact that Barnet could always produce a strongly swinging band often evoked surprise, but there was a sound reason for this: Barnet himself is a tremendously swinging saxophonist. The saxophone that once urged on any number of big bands is heard on this disc with only a rhythm section accompaniment and is, if anything, even more urgently swinging than ever. Barnet's perky, jabbing style on both alto and tenor saxophones seems utterly effortless and is completely right in an extremely well-chosen program (Ellington, Waller, Hines, and Basie are among the composers) recorded in a night club with an appreciative but unobtrusive audience. Barnet is almost invariably overlooked when the great saxophonists of jazz are discussed but he deserves to be ranked with the best. This thoroughly unpretentious set is a case in point, for I know these airy performances will continue to give me pleasure long after most other discs by saxophonists have become dim memories.

Dave Brubeck Quartet: "The Riddle." Columbia CL 1454, $3.98 (LP).

This is not the Brubeck quartet one expects—instead of Paul Desmond playing alto saxophone the fourth man is clarinetist Bill Smith. Moreover the eight selections which make up the set are all compositions by Smith. Smith occasionally plays breathy subtone passages somewhat in the manner of Jimmy Giuffre and then it is interesting to note that, with Brubeck's strong rhythm section pumping behind it, this type of clarinet playing does not have to be as desiccated as Giuffre's nonpropulsive trio has made it seem. Smith is a pleasant, but not particularly distinctive clarinetist, and his pieces are pleasant but not memorable bases for improvisation by either himself or Brubeck. Brubeck is relatively restrained in these selections, concentrating for the most part on his simple and genuinely rhythmic piano style. But without Desmond the quartet loses most of its character.

Charlie Byrd Trio: "Jazz at the Showboat, Vol. 3." Offbeat 3006, $4.95 (LP).

Guitarist Charlie Byrd's thoughtful and perceptive skills have been apparent on several earlier discs, but this is the first one on which he is heard without a noticeable distraction of other instruments or singers. This is pure, undiluted, beautifully conceived jazz guitar playing in a variety of moods in which he is supported by Keter Betts, bass, and Bertell Knox, drums. Byrd's versatility in his approach to the guitar is brought out in this set as he mixes chorded playing, single-string style, and classical fingering, a scope that makes him unique among jazz guitarists. Yet this is not show-off stuff but an intelligent use of resources. I agree completely with Tom Scanlon's liner comment that this disc "is easily his best yet." More than that, it is one of the best jazz guitar LPs made by anyone.

Bobby Byrne: "The Jazzbone's Connected to the Trombone." Grand Award 33-416, $3.98 (LP); 248, $4.98 (SD).

The jazzbone, in this case, runs less directly to the trombone than to the trumpet. The primary trombonist here is, of course, Byrne (such other trombone luminaries as Lou McGarity, Urbie Green, Frank Rehak, and Tommy Mitchell are lurking in the ensemble behind him) and while Byrne is an excellent exponent of the Tommy Dorsey smooth style, he is only run-of-the-mill on the jazz side of the fence. The major jazz interest lies in the presence of trumpeter Doc Severinson, who cuts everyone in sight whenever he gets as much as four notes on his own. The net result is a good album that looks two ways at once—much of it is made up of rich, smooth arrangements with the strong underlying rhythm characteristic of the Tommy Dorsey band, while others take off on the wings of Severinson's brilliant trumpet. A happy combination.

Kenny Dorham: "Jazz Contemporary." Time 52004, $4.98 (LP); 2004, $5.98 (SD).

Most of Dorham's recorded appearances have been in blowing sessions, a setting in which he is not inclined to stand out. For Dorham is not a flashy trumpeter but, as this disc—on which he plays with his own group—shows, his métier is a setting calling for gentleness and sensitivity. Within that area, he can build moments of brilliant tension—his long, slow development of *Monk's Mood* is an excellent case in point—and also show off the beauty of his lyricism. His four-man group, all relative newcomers to the jazz wars, includes an extremely promising baritone saxophonist, Charles Davis. Half of the six-piece program is made up of Dorham originals, all of them developed with far more thought than one usually finds in record session originals.

"Early and Rare." Riverside 12134, $4.98 (LP).

The earliness and/or rareness of much of the miscellany of poorly recorded discs of the Twenties gathered here is, one suspects, the main reason for the collection. To be sure, we can be grateful for Trixie Smith's *Everybody's Doin' the Charleston* because it gives the lyrical trumpeter Joe Smith one of his rare opportunities to be heard at length, for Lovie Austin's *Mojo Strut* with its bristling solo by Tommy Ladnier, and for Blind Lemon Jefferson's plaintive *Jack o' Diamonds Blues*. But there are also a poorly transferred piano roll by Jelly Roll Morton, adequate but unexciting performances by Ma Rainey and Big Bill Broonzy, and an indifferent view of Fats Waller as accompanist to a routine blues singer. Joe Smith and Ladnier give the disc merit but, these two aside, its interest is largely historical.

The Harry "Sweets" Edison Quintet: "Patented by Edison." Roulette 52041, $3.98 (LP); S52041, $4.98 (SD).

A placid, polite, and dull set by Edison in what appears to be his bid for the society jazz audience stimulated by Jonah Jones. Although Edison has tenor saxophonist Jimmy Forest with him, as well as a capable rhythm section, the disc is made up of one low-keyed Edison solo after another.

Teddy Edwards: "It's About Time." Pacific Jazz 6, $4.98 (LP).

Although Edwards, a tenor saxophonist, has been playing in big-league jazz company since 1942, he is just beginning to get some of the attention he deserves. He is sufficiently hard-toned to rate among the presently fashionable saxophonists, but because he is more lyrical than is the current fashion he does not project the harshness common to many saxophonists now. His cleanly defined lines are strongly rhythmic and almost always contain a wryly melodic strain. For all his lyricism, however, his statements of melodies are the least convincing part of his playing. Once he is beyond that chore and into the freedom of improvisation, he blossoms into an unusually able and propulsive saxophonist with a keen sense of form. He is given helpful backing by Les McCann, piano, Leroy Vinnegar, bass, and Ron Jefferson, drums.

Earl Hines: he rises to the occasion.

Doc Evans: "Spirituals and Blues." Audiophile 63, $5.95 (LP). "Reminiscing in Dixieland," Audiophile 68, $5.95 (LP).
In the currently diluted and commercialized concept of Dixieland, Doc Evans continues to be one of the few consistently fresh voices. The groups with which he records have shifting personnels, but he usually manages to infuse them with some of his own unhackneyed attitude towards the idiom. One of Evans' best groups is heard on Audiophile 63—his associates include Dick Pendleton, a warmly lyrical clarinetist; Hal Runyan, a strong if limited trombonist; George Tupper, a highly fluent tuba player; and Evans' almost inevitable pianist, Knocky Parker. Tupper's tuba is a strong asset to the rhythm section, providing a lifting propulsion instead of the lead-footed lumpiness that tuba men in traditionalist bands usually conceive as their role. Evans himself, who is sometimes erratic on records, is in full control of both his lyrical and lusty sides, playing with great spirit and warmth. The two spirituals in the program are rather routine choices—*Just a Closer Walk* and *Just a Little While To Stay Here*—but the blues are more adventurous—*Joe Turner Blues, Terrible Blues, Winin' Boy Blues, Ain't Nobody's Business*, and *How Long Blues*. The group's playing has body and, as the modernists would have it, "soul." The uneven aspects of Evans appear at times on Audiophile 68, on which he occasionally seems to have trouble getting out the notes he intends to play. But that is quite beside the point because, on half of the ten selections on this LP, clarinetist Albert Nicholas is present, playing with a gorgeously rich tone, singing and soaring, and nudging the group along with his rolling phrases. Nicholas is superb and, fortunately, Evans rises to his challenge, reserving all his lesser work for those pieces on which Nicholas is not heard.

Ella Fitzgerald: "Mack the Knife." Verve 4041, $4.98 (LP).
Just why a singer's inability to remember the lyric of a song, causing her to ad-lib her way through it, should be viewed as high artistry is not apparent to me, nor does Miss Fitzgerald's attempt to sustain *Mack the Knife* with extremely banal improvised lyrics enlighten me. Nonetheless her performance of *Mack the Knife*, recorded at a concert in Berlin, created such a stir when it was released as a single that it is the focal point of this group of selections from the same concert. Miss Fitzgerald and her accompanists (Paul Smith, Jim Hall, Wilfred Middlebrooks, and Gus Johnson) churn up a fury of rhythmic excitement on *Mack*, but her lyrics are enough to make one cringe. In almost all other respects, this is one of her best LPs. She is in the full flush of her powers on everything from ballads (*The Man I Love, Misty*) to rugged swingers (*Too Darn Hot, The Lady Is a Tramp*, and *Mack*), and she projects a tremendous sense of excitement in everything she does. The only qualifications are the inclusion of one of her long and, by now, monotonous scat numbers, *How High the Moon*, and the inordinate amount of applause that is heard between some numbers.

Earl Hines: "Earl's Pearls." M-G-M 3832, $3.98 (LP).
This is an encouraging follow-up to the Felsted LP of last fall which gave Hines's piano an adequate opportunity to be heard on records for the first time since his sessions with Louis Armstrong early in the Fifties. His bright, trippingly rhythmic piano is heard here with guitar, bass, and drums only, thereby putting the focus squarely where it belongs—on Hines. And he rises to the occasion brilliantly all through a program of good material—romping gaily through *Rosetta* and Fats Waller's *Stealin' Apples*, making something listenable of *The Saints*, and a positive gem of *Tea for Two*. Calvin Newborn has a few pleasant solo moments on guitar but Hines's efforts as a singer on a couple of numbers must be counted as poor judgment. A pianist as peerless as Hines should not bother singing for his supper.

"Montgomeryland." Pacific Jazz 5, $3.98 (LP).
The three Montgomery brothers, Wes, Monk, and Buddy, are heard in two different settings here, playing a group of selections which are carried largely by the appealingly warm-toned guitar solos of brother Wes. On one side of the disc they are joined by Pony Poindexter, alto, and Louis Hayes, drums; on the other by Harold Land, tenor, and Tony Bazely, drums. Land adds a strong, firm voice to the selections on which he plays and Hayes's drumming is very effective with the other group. Both groups are much less bland than the Mastersounds, the quartet in which Monk and Buddy Montgomery previously played, for the textures in these performances are more varied and the solo line-up, led by Wes Montgomery and Land, is decidedly stronger.

Kid Ory and Red Allen: "We've Got Rhythm." Verve 1020, $4.98 (LP).
As in an earlier recorded meeting between Ory and Allen, it is Allen's trumpet that is the constant focus of interest here. Once again we can hear one of the great jazz trumpeters going skillfully about his craft—in solos crisp or brooding, at the head of ensembles, filling in beautifully behind other soloists. This is not the showboat Allen but a precise, controlled, and extremely effective jazz musician. Bob McCracken's clarinet winds fluently in and out and Ory's trombone huffs and puffs with swaggering authority. The rhythm section has the heaviness typical of Ory's groups but is less earthbound than usual because of the presence of Morty Corb's light and swinging touch on bass. The selections, as on the last Ory-Allen disc, are mostly of swing origin and are a welcome relief from the overdone traditional tunes.

Santos Brothers: "Jazz for Two Trumpets." Metrojazz 1015, $3.98 (LP); S 1015, $4.98 (SD).
Two Mexican trumpeters, Juan and José Santos, show considerably more virtuosity than swing in this series of duets, backed by a rhythm section. Since both use a clipped, choppy structure of lines, the almost unbroken succession of trumpet solos and duets in an essentially similar style soon becomes tiresome.

Buster Smith: "The Legendary Buster Smith." Atlantic 1323, $4.98 (LP).
Smith is an alto saxophonist who is reputed to have had an influence in forming Charlie Parker's playing (Parker was in Smith's band in 1937 in Kansas City and had known him since 1932). Since 1942 Smith has been leading a territory band headquartered in Dallas. Gunther Schuller, who was in Dallas with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in 1959, took the opportunity to seek out Smith (this was a long, frustrating but amusing process which Schuller tells very well in a pamphlet accompanying the disc) and to record his band. What we have here is an excellent little jump band, working out of simple riffs, swinging sinuously no matter what it plays. It is a thoroughly functional band, meant for dancing, with no time for any nonsense about lifting the level of jazz. It has few subtleties other than the sometimes forgotten virtue of playing simply, directly, and wholeheartedly. It projects a basic, unaffected good-time flavor rarely found in the self-conscious jazz found on so many current LPs. As for Smith's connection with Parker, one hears occasional suggestions of Parker's phrasing but as a rule Smith plays in a less intense, more conservative style with a flowing, full tone. Schuller seems to think the band shows some effects of having to play for rock 'n' roll audiences, but it strikes me that he has it backwards—this is the stimulating rhythm-and-blues style that was, in an exaggerated form, one of the several stolen elements that went into rock 'n' roll.

"Ben Webster Meets Oscar Peterson." Verve 8348, $4.98 (LP).
The breathy vibrato of Webster's tenor saxophone etches out a group of pop standards (*When Your Lover Has Gone, How Deep Is the Ocean, Sunday*, and so forth) with the Peterson trio churning along underneath. It is all pretty low-keyed and, sonically, slightly monotonous, although there is no questioning Webster's skill at this sort of noodling. Too much is too much, however—it would have brightened this disc considerably if he had stepped back from the mike occasionally and let off a little honest steam instead of letting it all fizz out at a slow simmer.

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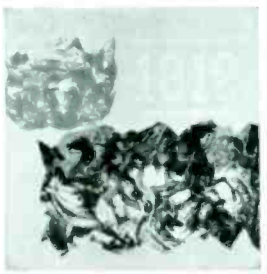

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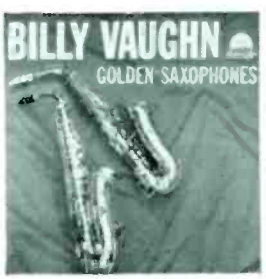

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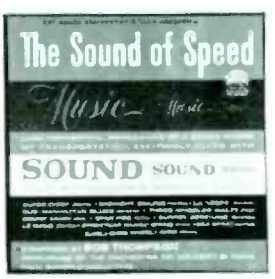
"Leave it to Jane"
ORIGINAL CAST



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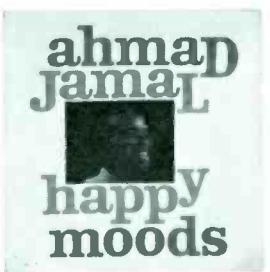

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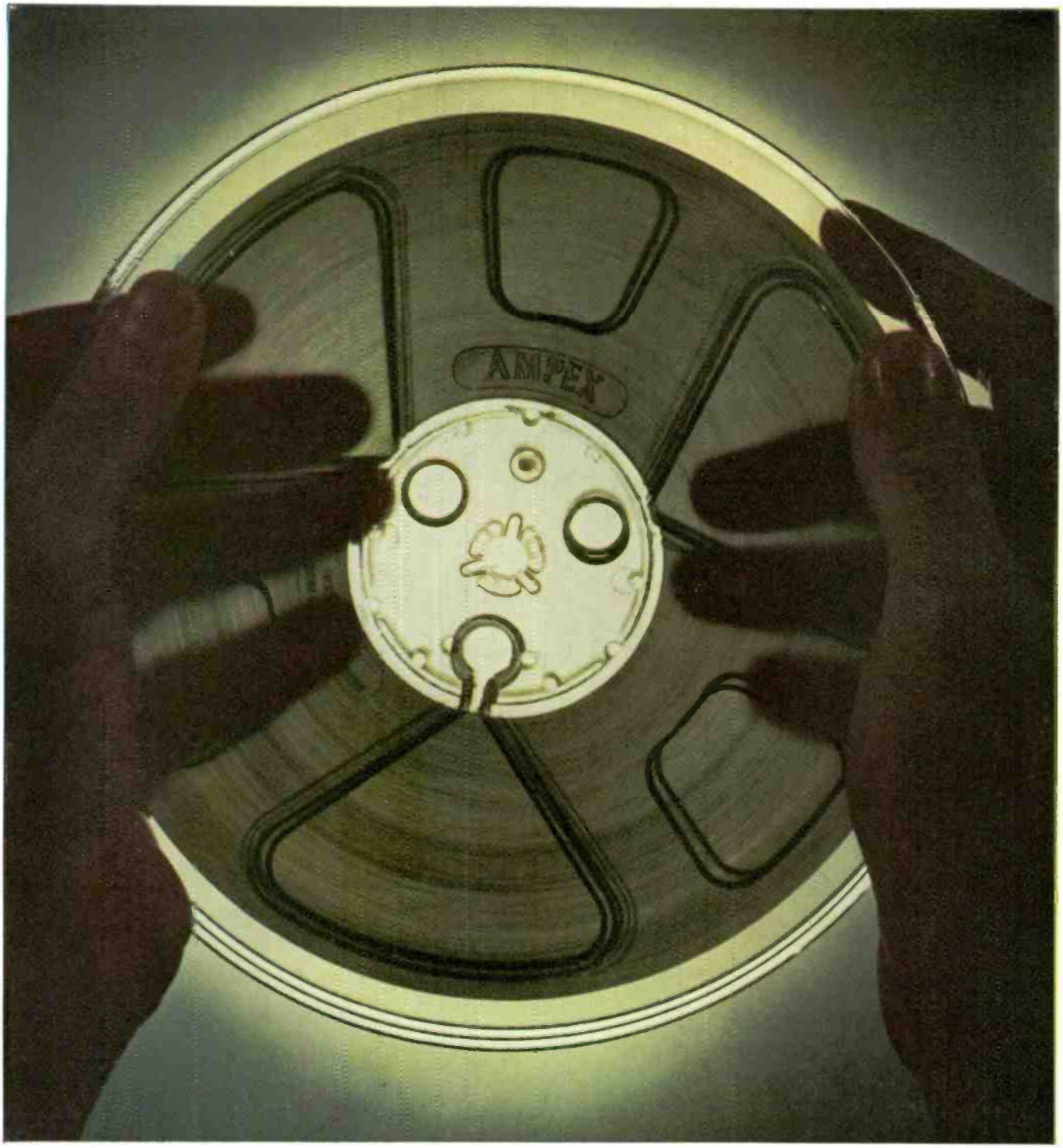

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Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL

The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5-ips stereo tapes in normal reel form.

BACH: ***Mass in B minor, S. 232***

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

●● Westminster WTZ 119. Two reels: approx. 66 and 67 min. $19.95.

Since I first began tape listening and sensed the unique affinity of this medium for choral music, I have been yearning for a complete taping of the Bach Mass—and now with its appearance I feel that recorded tape has truly come of age. This first tape version is an ideal one in at least certain vital characteristics—above all those of enchanting vocal and sonic loveliness. Aurally, the only flaws in this recorded performance are the relative failure of the soloists to match (as is almost invariably the case) the tonal control and nuance of the chorus and orchestra, and the disappointing thinness of the high trumpet parts. But in compensation, immaculate processing has provided exceptionally quiet tape surfaces which permit the ethereal pianissimos here to emerge unclouded, as well as further expanded the dynamic range to encompass the most radiant of sonorous climaxes.

Scherchen's interpretative idiosyncrasies were spelled out in detail in Nathan Broder's May 1960 review of the stereo disc edition. Yet however much one may theoretically disagree with some of this conductor's exceptionally slow (or fast) tempos, many of them carry a persuasive conviction which is hard to resist as one is swept up in the overwhelming flow of the work as a whole. At any rate, the present performance, for all its quirks, ranks among the great ones, and at its best—as in the hushed and fervent "*Et incarnatus est*" and Crucifixus, and the exultant Osanna—comes close to approaching the unattainable ideal of this more heavenly than human music making.

BARTOK: ***Quartets for Strings (6)***

Fine Arts Quartet.

●● Concertapes 4T 5003-4-5. Three reels: 59, 40, 61 min. $8.95 each.

A recent landmark in the tape medium's growth to maturity is this Himalayan range of chamber music peaks: a set which perhaps would appeal only to a tiny minority of present-day tape collectors had not the concert appearances of the Fine Arts Quartet given these works special fame. Now home listening tests prove that the public success of the Sorkin group's lovingly prepared and boldly executed performances (in which again George Sopkin demonstrates his remarkable preëminence as an ensemble cellist) was no fluke—and that the present recording's clarity and unexaggerated stereoism do indeed closely approximate live concert qualities. Possibly these readings lack some of the impetuosity and heavier dramatic force of the memorable Juilliard Quartet versions for Columbia, but those 1950 LPs now seem sonically earthbound, and in any case the Fine Arts four is no less and sometimes even more poetically eloquent. For the listener approaching the Bartók Quartets for the first time, it is perhaps well to provide assurance that, hard as they may be on tender ears and sensibilities at first acquaintance, he will find their eventual rewards to be correspondingly great.

BEETHOVEN: ***Wellingtons Sieg, Op. 91 ("Battle Symphony")***
†Grofé: ***Grand Canyon Suite***

Morton Gould and His Orchestra.

●● RCA Victor FTC 2006. 49 min. $8.95.

It was only very recently that I reviewed the stereo disc edition of RCA Victor's latest "spectacular" and recounted the curious story of the origin of the display-piece in which Beethoven (in his full-page introductory notes to the score of this so-called Battle Symphony) so prophetically anticipated most of the channel-responsive sonic devices of the "latest" stereo potentialities. So I need only note here that the tape version easily matches the disc at the latter's reproducible best, with of course the subtle differences which tape devotees, at least, maintain are inherent in the favored medium.

More generally, since this is the first of the long awaited 4-track RCA Victor tape reels, a couple of repertorial and technical comments may be appropriate. First, I should have some fears that this new series might be confined to spectaculars and best sellers only, if the catalogue enclosed with each reel did not list a surprisingly varied—and large—repertory of works scheduled for early appearance. Second, the processings here consistently measure up to the highest current standards, not only in dynamic and frequency ranges, and in cleanliness of transient response and channel differentiations, but also in minimization of background noise, tape hiss, and reverse-channel crosstalk. Only a just detectable surration or hint of preëcho in the lowest level passages remains to demonstrate that the RCA Victor processors, like their colleagues at United Stereo Tapes, have yet to conquer completely the last serious handicaps of 4-track 7.5-ips tape technology. But the eventual victory seems closer than ever at hand.

Scherchen: he succeeds in persuading.

BERLIOZ: ***Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14***

Virtuoso Symphony of London, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.

●● Audio Fidelity FCST 50003. 48 min. $8.95.

Few recorded performances of popular warhorses ever received a more enthusiastic reception than this work in the inaugural stereo disc release in Audio Fidelity's "First Component" series. Needless to say, the outstanding merits of both performance and ultratransparent recording are even more evident in the present taping, which moreover boasts quieter "surfaces" than the disc edition. I can qualify a hearty recommendation only with the perhaps quite personal reservation that Wallenstein may be almost too studiedly precise. For myself, I could willingly tolerate an occasional orchestral lapse in a more uninhibitedly passionate reading. But in every other respect this is an admirable version.

MOZART: ***Don Giovanni***

Suzanne Danco (s), Donna Anna; Lisa Della Casa (s), Donna Elvira; Hilde Gueden (s), Zerlina; Anton Dermota (t), Don Ottavio; Walter Berry (b), Masetto; Cesare Siepi (bs), Don Giovanni; Fernando Corena (bs), Leporello; Kurt Böhme (bs), the Commendatore, Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Josef Krips, cond.

●● London LOV 90007. Two reels: approx. 87 and 79 min. $25.95.

My long-anticipated first experience of a complete Mozart opera taping was prefaced by some misgivings, since this, unlike the other current London operas, stems from a record dating back to 1955, when the British engineers were only beginning to

Continued on next page

TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

explore the theatrical potentialities of stereo, and since many reviewers of the stereo disc edition of late 1958 tended to dwell a good deal on minor shortcomings in the soloists' and conductor's performance. Well, perhaps the performance isn't ideal (although of the cast only Danco struck me as inadequate, while Della Casa, Gueden, Siepi, and above all, Corena delighted me far more than I had expected); and certainly the recording, sweet and clean as it remains, has a touch of heaviness and a lack of the utmost stereo expansiveness. Nevertheless, the exhilarating flow of the music itself completely swept all such quibblings out of my mind.

Even as experimenters, the British engineers demonstrate their consistent tastefulness: the relatively few stereoistic effects—here and the still rarer employment of moving sources are delectably effective as legitimate enhancements of the drama itself. So I willingly attest that I'll undoubtedly replay this Mozartean treasure far more often and enthusiastically than I'm likely to replay most works which have warranted more objective acclaim. If you have any susceptibility at all to one of the most richly enjoyable of all operas, I'll be willing to bet that you will similarly lay critical yardsticks aside and just sit back for nearly three hours of sheer Mozartean rapture!

PROKOFIEV: *Symphony No. 5, in B flat, Op. 100*

London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.

●● EVEREST T4 3034. 43 min. $7.95.

This ironically enigmatic "tribute to the spirit of man" is a work that requires many hearings, preferably in the different perspectives of various conductors' approaches, to reveal its full riches. A tape edition has been needed, and Sargent's view is illuminating at times, at its best galvanically dramatic. Yet I feel that it lacks the astonishingly impassioned eloquence of Ormandy and is overponderous in the great Adagio movement in particular. The recording, however, is superb—no less boldly open and wide range than Ormandy's stereo disc version, and perhaps even richer in its channel differentiations and blending.

RACHMANINOFF: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 30*

Van Cliburn, piano; Symphony of the Air, Kiril Kondrashin, cond.

●● RCA VICTOR FTC 2001. 43 min. $8.95.

If time has attenuated the plaudits both for this 1958 Carnegie Hall concert performance following Cliburn's triumphant return from Moscow and for the disc editions of slightly over a year later, the present tape will bring them back to full-blooded life. The tempos here may be almost exasperatingly slow at times, the romanticism overpoweringly perfumed (particularly by Kondrashin), and the on-the-spot recording uneven (especially in reproducing the orchestra)—but Cliburn's playing, at once eloquently poetic and fiercely bravura, is nothing short of sensational. And perhaps best of all, an occasional muted throat-clearing, as well as an almost palpable sense of tense excitement in the air, contributes invaluably to the authenticity of this sonic documentation of a remarkable historic occasion.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

●● LONDON LGG 80035. Two reels: approx. 71 and 61 min. $19.95.

Running into two reels (here handsomely boxed with an 8-page illustrated leaflet), Ansermet's substantially complete *Sleeping Beauty* costs $5.00 more in tape than in the three-disc album, but to demanding audiophiles, at least, the premium is well justified. The processing here achieves more subtle channel differentiations, as well as smoother and sweeter sonorities, than those in the enthusiastically received discs. I certainly enjoyed Ansermet's kaleidoscopic performance even more in its present form and no longer feel any lack of lyric tenderness to balance its piquancies and grandeurs. The only flaw, and that a very minor one, remains the fractionally hurried electronic cutoff at the very end, which evidently was a slip of the original monitoring engineer rather than that of any later editor.

VILLA LOBOS: *Uirapurú; Modinha*
†Prokofiev: *Cinderella, Op. 87: Ballet Suite*

New York Stadium Symphony, Leopold Stokowski, cond.

●● EVEREST T4 3016. 46 min. $7.95.

First recorded by Efrem Kurtz in 1950, Villa Lobos' symphonic poem of 1917 has the sound of exotic magic even in its title, *Uirapurú*—the name of the enchanted Brazilian bird who is the King of Love and whose warblings will remind devotees of W. H. Hudson of the *rialejo*, or flute-bird, of the Guyavana forests. Now waywardly lyrical, now barbaric, but always dramatically evocative of jungle domains, this music is of course ideally suited to Stokowski. But the memory of the once admired Kurtz version is now even more completely effaced by the ineffably richer present recording and its glowingly expansive stereoism.

Stokowski also makes the most of the grave prelude (*Modinha*) from *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 1 with its unforgettably haunting melody. I presume his combination of vivacious piquancy and broad romanticism is eminently befitting six movements from the *Cinderella* Ballet, but since this generally admired music is the only one of Prokofiev's major works to which I'm incapable of responding, I cannot fairly appraise the interpretation here. Happily, however, the sheer sound qualities are amply rewarding aural delights in themselves.

WAGNER: *Das Rheingold*

Kirsten Flagstad (s), Fricka; Oda Balsborg (s), Woglinde; Ira Malaniuk (s), Flosshilde; Claire Watson (s) Freia; Jean Madeira (ms),

Continued on page 102

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CIRCLE 91 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

TAPE DECK

Continued from page 100

Erda; Hetty Plumacher (c), Wellgunde; Set Svanholm (t), Loge; Waldemar Kmentt (t), Froh; Paul Kuen (t), Mime; George London (bs), Wotan; Gustav Neidlinger (bs), Alberich; Eberhard Wächter (bs), Donner; Walter Kreppel (bs), Fasolt; Kurt Böhme (bs), Fafner. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.

● ● LONDON LOR 90006. Two reels: approx. 81 and 66 min. $21.95.

The first of London's current opera productions specifically designed for maximal stereo effectiveness reinforces on tape every salient impression it made in the acclaimed stereo disc triumph. It also has considerably quieter tape "surfaces" than most of the other London reel editions of earlier recordings, takes the astounding dynamic range even more easily in its stride, and if anything is even more superbly channel-differentiated and blended—although probably the slight superiority in this respect should be credited to the advantages of playback magnetic heads over pickup cartridges rather than to any inherent differences in the recording media themselves. Again Donner's thunderclap, the Nibelungen anvils, and the giants' stake-driving timpani are stupendous; but again, too, it is the artistic discretion with which such stereogenic effects are exploited which helps throw into such high relief the dramatic musicality of the performance as a whole and in particular the magisterial characterizations of Neidlinger and Flagstad.

"Behind Brigitte Bardot." Pete Rugulo and His Orchestra. Warner Bros. BST 1371, 29 min., $7.95.

The title and box illustrations are as deceptive as most paperback book covers, but while B. B. herself makes no other appearance, connoisseurs of cool jazz (if hardly those of feminine pulchritude) will experience no disappointment. For Rugulo's arrangements and performances (with a lamentably unspecified personnel) of scarcely promising tunes from the Bardot films are bracingly cool and exceptionally imaginative. The intricately scored *Arsenic Blues* and *Manina Theme* are perhaps tops, but *Ma vie est à toi* is movingly lyrical, and for once a wordless vocalist (Gloria Wood) is really effectively employed in a jauntily jumping *Paris B. B.* The extremely stereoistic recording is cleanly open throughout.

"Get Those Elephants Outa Here." The Mitchells with André Previn, piano. M-G-M STC 1012, 37 min., $7.95.

Don't overlook this release. For the Mitchells (leader Whitey on bass, his brother Blue on bass and piano, the unrelated Blue on trumpet), plus Frank Rehak, trombone, Pepper Adams, alto sax, and Frank Capps, drums, turn in genuinely galvanic and distinctive jazz performances, which are moreover superbly recorded even by the highest of current stereo standards. The elephants of the title refer to the double basses, which collaborate in a magnificent *Fraternity* (Red's

original) and *Monster Rally* (Whitey's), as well as fine solos throughout, perhaps most notably in *My One and Only*. Even the ordinarily not-too-jazzy Previn is infected with the gusto here to contribute an outstanding *sotto voce* piano solo bit in another of Whitey's imaginative originals, *Blues for Brian*.

"The Incomparable Hildegarde." Livingston (via SMS) 4T 27, 31 min., $5.95.
She still *is* incomparable among popular singers, both for her attractive and musicianly controlled voice and unmannered yet highly personalized style. And the marked presence of these unexaggeratedly stereoistic recorded performances, sung to an anonymous pianist's accompaniments, further enhances the appeal of her engaging *Lili Marlene*, *Mademoiselle de Paris*, *If I Knew You Were Coming* (with its very amusing verses in German as well as English), and *Cheek to Cheek* (which gains added piquancy in French). For that matter, her linguistic virtuosity is exhibited most dazzlingly of all in her multilingual *I Love You*, and only an overemotional (and inherently unsuitable) *September Song* fails to come off.

"The Limelighters." Elektra ETC 1509, 33 min., $7.95.
Lou Gottlieb, Alex Hassilev, and Glen Yarbrough sing and play (string bass, banjo, and guitar) with verve, if with too obvious reminiscence of The Weavers, in a well-varied and cleanly recorded program of international quasi-folk music, topped by *When I First Came to This Land* and *The Burro*.

"The Sound of Musical Pictures." Medallion Concert Band, Ralph Herman, cond. Medallion MST 47001, 37 min., $8.95.
The title here scarcely indicates the nature of the contents: an inspired resuscitation of the never to be forgotten salon *genre* and descriptive gems of yesterday—the *Ben-Hur Chariot Race*, *Midnight Fire Alarm*, *Whistler and His Dog*, *Hunt in the Black Forest*, *In a Clock Store*, etc., as well as the ever popular *In a Persian Market* and *In a Monastery Garden*. All are refurbished with melodramatically appropriate sound effects (by Bob and Peter Prescott) and the stereo spectacularism the materials demand. Best of all, Herman and his little orchestra, as well as the recording and dubbing engineers, never show any tongue in cheek. Aided immeasurably by the effectiveness of the stereoistically enhanced sound effects, the novelty pieces never sounded better.

"The Weavers at Home." Vanguard VTC 1624, 43 min., $7.95.
A welcome tape revival of one of the best of the popular folk singers' early programs, perhaps most relishable for its moving *Every Night*, spirited *Aweigh, Santy Ano*, and the favorites *Aunt Rhodie* and *Come Little Donkey*, but consistently engaging throughout, as well as happily free from the showmanship tendencies that have marred some of the Weavers' more recent performances.

SOUNDTALK

High Fidelity Newsfronts

by RALPH FREAS

Prediction. At four p.m. on the seventh of this month, high fidelitarians will converge at the intersection of New York's 35th Street and Eighth Avenue and stand patiently in line, four abreast, awaiting admittance to the New York Trade Show building. For the rest of the day and in the four days that follow, upwards of 40,000 devotees of wide-range sound will file through that building on an annual pilgrimage. Once again—for the eleventh time in as many years—the New York High Fidelity Music Show will officially open.

When the first show took place—back in 1949—a high-fidelity industry didn't really exist. Of the 3,022 people attending, most had a professional connection with broadcasting, recording, or manufacturing. Only a handful of the fifty-two exhibitors showed products intended for home use.

Aside from the fact that relatively few lay folk were aware of high fidelity at all, the first Audio Fair had a dominantly professional character. It was conceived as an adjunct to the then infant Audio Engineering Society, which was also convening for the first time. The aim of the exhibit was simply to acquaint attending engineers with new equipment available. The idea, let it be added, was the brainchild of C. G. McProud, editor and publisher of *Audio Magazine* (then *Audio Engineering*). We doubt that Mr. McProud and his advertising sales manager Harry Reizes (the commercial force behind the 1949 exhibit) could foresee the decibel level that this month's show will achieve.

Recognition. Attendance growth was unspectacular but steady in the years that followed, keeping pace with growing consumer interest in audio matters. In the ensuing three years, attendance and exhibitor figures jumped as follows: 1950—5,500 (66 exhibitors); 1951—8,000 (81 exhibitors); 1952—13,000 (101 exhibitors). At the 1951 show, the industry recognized the audio hobbyist for the first time and turned over one day of the show to him. He must have made his presence felt, for the following year, practically all the exhibits were of equipment for the home. Professional equipment, on the other hand, made up only about ten exhibits.

The idea began to spread. Chicago had its first show in 1952; Los Angeles, Boston, and San Francisco followed suit. By 1955, Philadelphians were sufficiently interested to support a show. That same year, 50,000 people flocked to the first Tokyo Audio Fair, while Mexico City clocked 5,000 visitors at its initial effort, almost twice as many as had been anticipated. The British Commonwealth joined the movement in 1956, with shows in Toronto, Montreal, and London. Here in the United States, scaled-down versions of bigger metropolitan shows were held in many medium-sized cities.

Elegance. While each show aimed at the same thing—the demonstration of undistorted, wide-range sound—each differed slightly in character and reflected regional differences. For example, take London. The British, as everyone knows, are different. The Englishman hasn't anything like the amount of money to spend on a hobby that his American cousin has. Furthermore, he expects things to last and he is acutely suspicious of anything that smacks of gimmickry. For a time, "hi-fi" seemed a gimmick—much loud noise; the British don't like loud noise (it upsets the neighbors)—and one that made you guilty of showing off ("*He's* trying to be better than he should be"). The British audio industry started an educational campaign. First lesson: music could come from a really nice piece of furniture—a big piece of furniture. Mum and Dad could take a legitimate pride in this acquisition. So—the British audio show.

For the following description of the last London Audio Fair, we are indebted to our friend John Ridley, manager of Audio Fidelity (England) Ltd.:

'Enter any room taken by a record company or equipment manufacturer. You will be delighted with the décor: soft carpets, flowers, pleasant lighting. In one corner will be an enormous piece of furniture, playing most exquisite soft sound. In another corner will be a young man, as exquisite, reading the *Times*. The room will be three-quarters empty."

Inelegance. Times are changing, however; and if the soft aura of gentility is not quite giving way to neon lights, some element of show business is creeping in. Audio people want to sell components as well as handsome consoles, and record people want to sell records—including those that should be played with the volume turned way up. Ridley, whom many United States fair-goers will remember as Audio Fidelity's bearded, pleasant-spoken pitchman at the shows here, performs a similar service for that firm in his native England. His description continues:

"Down the corridor is a large room, bare, with two enormous speakers and a kitchen table full of littered bits of wire. Stripped to the waist, dripping sweat, will be Ridley, bellowing above the full-throated blast of the Dukes (of Dixieland). The room will be crowded with people who will go out and buy—not only our records—but components. ('I've never heard sound like it.')"

Evidently something rubbed off on Mr. Ridley during his stint in the States, and we suspect it's rubbing off on his audiences too. Moreover, we hear from other correspondents that they're enjoying the experience.

Civilized? Considered in the framework of John Ridley's remarks, a description by John Gilbert (*The Gramophone*, May 1960) of the Paris *Haute Fidélité et Stéréophonie* exhibit last April is not without interest. Said Mr. Gilbert, "If one learned little from the equipment and the demonstrations, one learned a great amount about the way to run an exhibition with efficiency, courtesy, and comfort."

Mr. Gilbert described the exhibit place, the Palais d'Orsay, as "a fine hotel with several floors of large rooms, lounges, and a concert hall, all in the finest French traditional style." He further remarked that there was "a continuous series of concerts, with solo artists and choirs, lectures, and demonstrations."

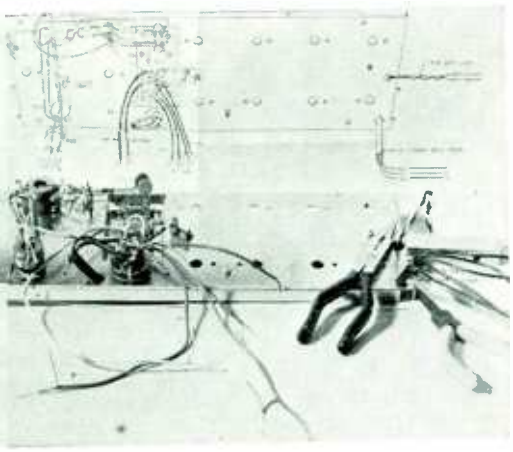
Our fairs in this country have never been distinguished by comfort. And the efficiency and courtesy with which they are run has depended in large part on individual exhibitors. Information about the equipment, however, is abundantly available. This, we suppose, is the measure of a fair's success in the minds of those attending.

Construction Notes: Citation I Preamplifier

by NORMAN EISENBERG

Harman-Kardon's Citation line now includes Citations I, II, III, IV, and V—respectively a stereo preamplifier, a dual 60-watt stereo power amplifier, an FM tuner, another stereo preamplifier, and a dual 40-watt power amplifier. HIGH FIDELITY here reports on the construction of the Citation I. Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, our independent testing organization, has checked out this preamplifier and reports on performance, technical, and "listening" features in the equipment section this month (see page 53).

Close-up of terminal board on which most of the parts are mounted. Lugs are numbered to guide the kit builder. Note connections from the board to the tube sockets below. One board is used for each channel.



Front panel is assembled separately; all switches and controls installed and then wired to point at which this section comes together with the main chassis of preamp.

ONE OF the most interesting of recent audio items is the terminal board used in the Citation kit line. The attraction of this device stems from its relative novelty as well as its virtues in amplifier construction.

Terminal boards, of course, are not new in audio gear designed for home use (viz. the Leak amplifiers and a few others), but they are relatively rare outside the professional and military electronics fields. To my knowledge, this is the first time terminal boards have been used in kits. Stewart Hegeman who designed the unit for Harman-Kardon, and Robert Furst and Murray Barlowe, respectively the company's chief and project engineers, are responsible for the innovation.

Novelty is not always a concomitant of quality or even of progress. With the Citation, however, novelty is related to both. The boards (one for each channel in this stereo preamplifier) serve as the mounting places for most of the components of the circuit; they are indeed the first order of business in assembling the kit. Parts fit onto the board conveniently, with a wrap-around of a lead and a touch of solder. Later, the boards are fitted to the main chassis so that wiring from them to switches and controls is logical and foolproof. This method of construction means that critical parts are securely in place, properly spaced from each other, and with interconnections dressed to afford minimum interference and maximum chance for proper operation. Thus the complex of parts and wiring in an electronic unit endowed with as many stages and as much versatility as this one, instead of coming together to form a pure mess that even the seasoned technician would find it tough to pick his way through, here has been ordered to a striking degree of logic and neatness. Out of the jungle, a park—with paths. One is tempted to comment, wryly perhaps, that among other things the construction of the Citation I (as well as the Citation II for that matter) demonstrates that the shortest distance between two points is not always a straight line. Certainly, cutting the connecting wires to the required lengths and bending or twisting them as indicated in the instructions may seem, at times, to violate basic geometry but not—as it turns out finally—basic electronic construction. There are even moments when you feel you are hopelessly lost, or that something has been overlooked, but like Ariadne and Theseus in the fabled labyrinth, you are successfully led by H-K engineers through the maze. The finished product breathes an air of professionalism and solidity found in the costliest of factory-built equipment, suggesting that it will need little or no servicing over long periods of use: if and when it does, that should prove relatively simple.

A comparison of the terminal board technique with that of the printed circuit board may be odious, but since many other excellent kits feature the latter type of construction, it's inevitable. Both offer a distinct advantage in terms of a kind of "built-in" quality control that assures uniformity from one model to the next, even when built under the obviously different working conditions of kit builders. The terminal board is patently sturdier; it also costs more. Ease of wiring to either type is largely a personal matter, one of the individual skill of the builder. Making connections to a printed circuit takes some delicacy, but with a little practice anyone can become quite deft at it. Terminal boards also require some care lest the heat of the soldering iron, when making one connection, loosen another,

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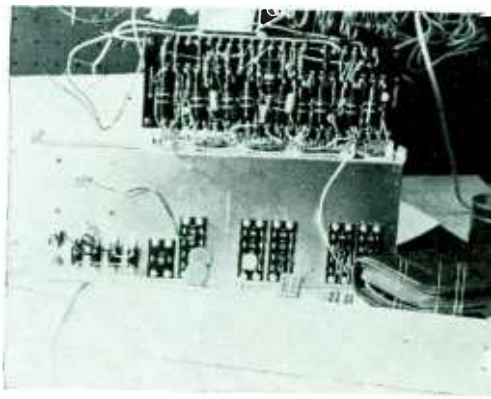
or—as once happened to me—burn away the insulation of a nearby wire which then had to be replaced.

In barest outline, here is the sequence of construction steps: following the terminal board wiring, you assemble and wire the power supply subchassis. This is put aside for later use. Next comes the assembling and preliminary wiring of the main chassis and tube sockets. Then you turn to the switches, which are mostly prewired, with all critical resistors and capacitors already connected between the lugs on the various wafers or decks of the switches. The front panel is next prepared, and the controls installed on it. Some more interconnecting and chassis assembling, and the power supply bracket is fitted into place. A final lap—wiring this subassembly to the rest of the unit—and the course is run.

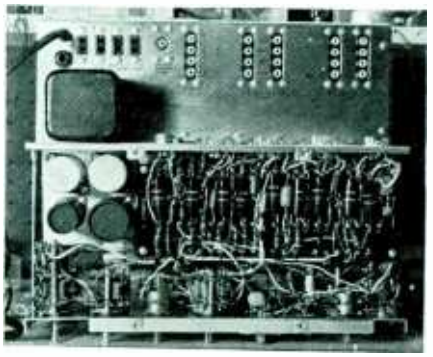
I would not venture to guess how long this work should take anyone. What is involved, statistically, is something like 406 parts held together by some 365 pieces of hardware and about 850 inches of wiring. It took me better than thirty hours, working intermittently and pausing now and then to photograph what I was doing, but I know one man who completed the job in just twenty hours. Admittedly, the Citation I is not the quickest-to-assemble kit available, although the time it takes should not be construed as offering anything formidable or abnormally difficult, particularly to one who has built any sort of electronic kit before, and knows how to handle his side-cutters, long-nose pliers, and soldering iron. The ease of assembly of a unit as complicated as this is, itself, an achievement. It is due, in part, to the construction techniques already mentioned; it also is helped by a very clear instruction manual and a comprehensive set of easily followed, labeled drawings. In the early set of instructions with which I worked, there was an occasional lapse from ultimate clarity ("ultimate" from the standpoint of a rank beginner). At most, these were ambiguities, if you will, but by no means errors. Certainly none was insurmountable after a little thought and backtracking to relate one drawing to another. These points, for example, concerned the need for a clearer labeling on one drawing of the lugs on a filter capacitor, although anyone who is not a rank novice would know that a "hot" wire in the power supply is not to be connected to the ground lug. Or, again, discovering that a black-white wire to be used at some point is the same one left dangling a few pages back. Such ambiguities—minor and rare—might give temporary pause to the most inexperienced of kit builders. Even so, I have discussed them with H-K engineers who are determined that the very slightest of questions in the instructions should be clarified beyond any doubt (reasonable or otherwise!) and who, accordingly, have been amending the manual to this end. Thus by the time this report appears, Citation construction should have been made foolproof.

Similarly noteworthy is the manner in which Citation kits are packaged. Hardware (more than you need; apparently H-K has allowed for your losing a machine screw or lock washer now and then), knobs, and other parts are packaged individually in labeled, clear plastic bags. These are fastened to large stiff boards. Resistors and capacitors come in slots in corrugated boards which may be folded to provide convenient and accessible holders that sit atop the worktable. These parts, by the way, are recognizable as quality components; together with the construction techniques they reinforce the "no-compromise" impression of this preamp.

The scrupulous attention to details to make the job as easy as possible is perhaps best illustrated by this note. Some months ago I assembled an early run of the Citation II stereo power amplifier. At that time I commented, among other things, on the finish of the paper in the instruction manual. "It reflects a glare from the worklight," I told H-K engineers, "that can cause eyestrain and fatigue." My comments were taken to heart and subsequent printings of the manual were done on more opaque stock. The construction of the Citation kits now is as easy on the eye as listening to the end products is on the ear.



Main chassis, looking down from top. Boards have been installed, most of the interconnecting is done. Input and output jacks and power sockets are located along lower section of chassis. Gap on left receives power supply subassembly. Note corrugated board shown in foreground—a convenient parts holder while work is going on.



Top view of completely wired unit, resting on control shafts that project through front panel. Knobs will be fitted next. Power supply subassembly has been installed (center left of chassis). Power transformer is one of the heaviest we've ever encountered for a preamplifier. Its weight indicates the likelihood of excellent voltage regulation.

AMPLIFIER RATINGS

Continued from page 48

which you will be listening. This means you would have to stick your head into the loudspeaker to hear any hum or noise.

Note that the hum and noise level in our sample set of specs is 70 db below rated output. Why below rated output? Remember, the frequency response and distortion figures were specified at "normal listening level" (one watt). This is a clear exaggeration of the amplifier's performance. For example, suppose you bought a 100-watt amplifier for use in a small room that did not require much power to raise the sound to adequate listening level (a situation that might arise if one expected, for example, to move to larger quarters). In the small room, one watt would drive the speaker system at an adequate level. Since the amplifier has a noise level rating of 70 db below full output, the effective noise level would be 50 db below the one-watt level being used. The top 20 db of the amplifier's power capabilities would not be used. In listening at low levels on a quiet night, some hum would probably be heard from the loudspeaker. Had a one-watt amplifier with a 70-db noise level below rated output been used, hum would have been no problem.

The foregoing illustration may seem to argue against the use of powerful amplifiers in small rooms. This is not the intention. The buyer, however, must be sure that the effective noise rating is good enough to be so used. To have a noise rating of 70 db at the one-watt level, a 100-watt amplifier has to have a noise rating of 90 db below full output. Always bear in mind that the performance of an amplifier is exaggerated if the signal-to-noise ratio is stated as decibels below full rated output. To say that a 100-watt amplifier's signal-to-noise ratio is down 90 db sounds very impressive. However, a 10-watt amplifier with a signal-to-noise ratio of 80 db will produce exactly the same noise level in the reproduced sound.

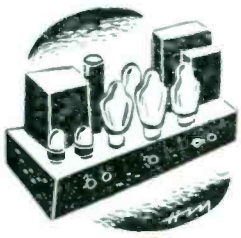
Sensitivity: This specification is, let us say, matter-of-fact. It is stated in the case of the set of specs we have been examining as 0.5 volts and there is little else to be said about it. The 0.5 volt sensitivity figure means, of course, that the amplifier is sensitive to a signal of that strength. If a preamplifier gives only 0.25 volts to an amplifier that requires 0.5 volts, full output will not be delivered to the speakers. That isn't the fault of the amplifier or of the manufacturer who stated the sensitivity factor. It is the fault of the person who mismatches preamplifier with amplifier.

Thus far, we have examined a set of specifications from the point of view of discovering what real meaning they have. Our examination has not, however, answered all of the questions posed at the outset. There is a good reason for this: specifications cannot answer all questions. The characteristics of an amplifier that can be measured

guide us only with respect to major performance features. Test equipment—the yardstick used for measuring the performance of one amplifier against another—does not listen like the human ear. In addition, some factors of amplifier performance are not fully understood even by the people who design them, however much they strive for fuller knowledge. Imagination, inventiveness, and more subtle qualities are called for in the design of a new circuit just as they are needed in the creation of a fine musical instrument. Technology helps, but it will not produce, of itself, a Stradivarius.

To raise the question again: if the specs of two amplifiers read the same, will the amplifiers sound the same? The answer is: not necessarily. How can the differences be determined? Subjectively, by listening. Are there areas in which manufacturers' specs are inadequate? Yes, in part, as we have seen. There are areas of performance in which the specification data would reflect poorly on the unit. It is therefore not stated, or it is stated in such a way that the unit seems to stand up well when compared to others. Again, there are areas in which no performance criteria or measurement standards have been established. And there are ratings that we would like to have that manufacturers do not state.

One move to clarify the situation has been taken by the Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers, which has set up a minimum number of specifications that should accompany the description of an amplifier. If a manufacturer adheres to the IHFM minimum, the prospective purchaser will know more about the potential performance of the unit than heretofore. But even the "IHFM minimum" does not assure full information. Other factors pertain. To quote from a recent equipment report that appeared in this journal: ". . . the performance data described herein might appear to be no better than those of a number of fine amplifiers. Because of unexplained factors such as phase shift, overload recovery, etc., we have always been skeptical of claims that 'amplifier X sounds better than amplifier Y'. In most cases there is no audible difference between good amplifiers. However (and here we depart from the laboratory and rely on our ears) [this amplifier] seems to have a special quality which may be unique. . . . There is a solidity, combined with a total ease and lack of irritation, which sets this amplifier apart from most others."



What, then, is meaningful about amplifier specifications? Much—but amplifier specifications do not tell all.

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MUSIC ON MARS

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still on the outside are *Wozzeck*, *Falstaff*, *Otello*, *Boris*, *Pelléas*, and those two small modern masterpieces, Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* and Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*. But the choice must be made: *Le Nozze di Figaro* is the Mozartean entry, to keep our spaceman occupied not only with its wondrous gaiety and humanity but with the problem of untangling the involved affairs of the Almaviva household. As a doleful counterbalance, I cite on *Tristan und Isolde*, with its incomparable dark texture, its power and sweep. The *Ring* operas, methinks, might begin to fray after the first ten million miles, while *Meistersinger* and the *Meisterwerke* of Messrs. Berg, Verdi, Mussorgsky, and Debussy fall victim to the inevorable limitations of space.

Solo instrumental works: here, too, a flock of deserving candidates, choice almost unbearable. The Bach music for solo violin and solo cello; the *Goldberg Variations*, the *Diabelli* ditto, Brahms's *Variations on a Theme of Handel*, Op. 24; the *Hammerklavier* Sonata, the Kodály Cello Sonata, the Bartók Sonata for Solo Violin. But Bach and Beethoven prevail, and aboard the space ark go the *Hammerklavier* and the Bach Partita No. 2 in D minor for Unaccompanied Violin, that of the mighty chaconne.

Solo vocal works: a small but estimable category. Arbitrarily ignoring recitals of miscellaneous pieces (thus discarding Fischer-Dieskau's matchless Schubert and Strauss collections), we narrow the focus to song cycles alone, on the perhaps shaky notion that relatively brief offerings will not sustain interest but that the *gestalt* of a unified group will exert some mystic effect to prolong appreciation. Prime candidates here? For me, Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, *Kindertotenlieder*, *Lied von der Erde*; the Schumann *Dichterliebe* and *Liederkreis*; the Schubert *Schöne Müllerin* and *Schwanengesang*; the Wolf *Italienisches Liederbuch*. Some of these are not strictly song cycles, of course, but they have an underlying unity all the same. The choice, however, seems inevitable: Schubert's *Winterreise*, saddest and greatest of all Lieder cycles, the ideal companion on a plunge into the dark void of space.

I find the problem less difficult in the concerto department; others may have a harder time. My choices are the Berg Violin Concerto and the Mozart Piano Concerto in D minor, K. 466; runners-up in the violin repertoire are Brahms, Beethoven, and Bartók; in the piano repertoire, Brahms Two, Beethoven Four. But most of the other great concertos are too soloistic, too obvious in their construction: fine pyrotechnics, maybe, but unsuitable for the long haul.

Choosing one work from the broad list of miscellaneous orchestral works provides a temporary crisis. Most of this category I highhandedly discard as being merely agree-

Continued on next page

MUSIC ON MARS

Continued from preceding page

able, listenable stuff: tone poems, most ballet music, overtures, suites. Five works, though, I find hard to part with: the *Agon* and *Sacre du Printemps* of Stravinsky, Hindemith's *Nobilissima Visione*, Bartók's Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta, and the Brahms *Haydn Variations*. I pick the Brahms; his music is otherwise absent aboard ship, and the variation form provides for much listening in depth.

The category left for last is that in which choice is hardest: large choral works. For me, there are many choral works in whose polyphonic realms I can explore forever. Each would be ideal for this hypothetical voyage. I'm referring to the B minor Mass and the *St. Matthew Passion* of Bach, the *Missa Solemnis* of Beethoven, the *Pope Marcellus* Mass of Palestrina, the various Requiem Masses of Mozart, Berlioz, and Verdi, the *German Requiem* of Brahms, and Handel's *Messiah*. Beneath this exalted level there are things like Bach's Cantatas 106 and 140, Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ*, the Bruckner Te Deum—but the list is long enough. To make the most difficult choice of all, I finally elect Palestrina and Beethoven, the Palestrina Mass being a thing of flowing polyphonic line, wonderfully ever-changing in texture, and the Beethoven being quite simply the noblest hymn to the universe ever set down by human hand.

Beethoven, Bartók, Bruckner, Mozart, Wagner, Bach, Beethoven again, Schubert, Berg, Mozart again, Brahms, Beethoven *again*—thirteen works to accompany the starfarer on his endless voyage. An odd assortment, perhaps—but I'll stand by it as my choice of music that will last through infinite hearings.

So be it. Quite possibly, after a decade of the *Missa Solemnis* and *Tristan* and all the rest, I might yearn for the good, simple tunes of Rossini and Puccini and Strauss, for *Falstaff*, for the B minor Mass. It's an eventuality that has to be considered, but, as always, pioneers have to make harsh decisions.

Music for a Spaceman—One Earthman's Choice of Preferred Recordings

Beethoven: Quartet No. 14, Op. 131 (Budapest Quartet, Columbia ML 4585). No other recorded version seems to me to plumb the depths of this work adequately—except perhaps the long-vanished earlier Budapest performance on ML 4106. The Budapest recording gives a powerful sense of problems met head on and mastered; the fine engineering aids in clarifying this work's dense structure; and, of course, the Budapest's ensemble work is breath-taking. A stereo remake is forthcoming this year, incidentally.

Bartók: Quartet No. 5 (Juilliard Quartet, Columbia ML 4280). Two subsequent recordings of this piece both have individual

excellences, but my choice remains with the 1950 Juilliard version. Their reading of this knotty, energetic work is vital and exciting, and the decade-old sound is still superb, a model of natural string tone. The competing versions lack this startling fidelity of texture of bow against strings, and their interpretations lack the fire of the Juilliard foursome's.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 7 (Van Beinum, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, London LL 852 3). Hardly a new recording either, but it delivers that warm, golden sound which Bruckner demands, as well as a fine idiomatic performance by the lamented Eduard van Beinum. A competing version on Vox 10750 gets everything onto two sides (the London takes three), but at the expense of a break in the slow movement and of a certain constriction of sound. Van Beinum makes the great adagio sing; Rosbaud on Vox doesn't, and that makes all the difference. There are now four versions of this available—Jochum and Van Otterloo in addition to the Van Beinum and Rosbaud.

Mozart: *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Kleiber, London A 4407, LP; OSA 1402, SD). The new Leinsdorf recording for RCA Victor has somewhat brighter sound than the Kleiber, and benefits from the substitution of George London for Alfred Poell, Giorgio Tozzi for Cesare Siepi. But the Kleiber set is still the one I prefer to live with; the sound is beyond cavil, and the entire production has a unity of style and warmth of personality that the rather glossy Leinsdorf version lacks.

Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde* (Furtwängler, Angel 3588). The Schwann catalogue lists no competition for this performance, nor need there ever be. Flagstad's peerless Isolde, Furtwängler's eloquent conducting, and outstanding support from Thebom and Fischer-Dieskau make this one of the immortal records of the long-play era. I haven't heard Angel's recent reissue of this set, but I assume the sound is at least as good as it was on the deleted Victor pressing I own—which is to say, excellent.

Bach: Partita No. 2 for Solo Violin (Heifetz, RCA Victor LM 1976). There is little to choose between this recording and the Milstein performance on Capitol P 8298. Both are masterly, unraveling the Bachian complexities with awesome assurance; but for my taste the Milstein tone is a trifle oversweet for the rugged music, the Heifetz tone more suitable. Sound is excellent on both recordings.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 29 (*Hammerklavier*) (Solomon, HMV ALP 1141—import). The perfect *Hammerklavier* exists only in lofty regions of the Platonic ideal, but this one is as good as we are likely to have for some time. Perhaps not as thunderous as it might be, it is magnificent in tone and control, and the tempos seem more "right" than in competing versions. Alas, the side break occurs in the slow movement, which would not happen in an ideal universe.

Schubert: *Die Winterreise* (Fischer-Dieskau, HMV ALPS 1298/9—import). Some might complain that the singer's highly emotional approach to this music would pall with repeated listening. I can only report that after five years Fischer-Dieskau's account still fascinates me and makes all the competitive versions sound wooden and coarse and insensitive. Gerald Moore's accompaniment is splendid, and the sound needs no criticism.

Berg: Violin Concerto (Gitlis, Strickland, Vox PL 10760). The performance by the Israeli violinist Ivry Gitlis is intelligent and vigorous, even muscular; the recording is outstanding. In some ways the old Louis Krasner version on Columbia is a more deeply felt reading, but the elderly sonics eliminate that recording from serious competition.

Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 20 (Gieseking, Rosbaud, Angel 35215). This is one of those rare instances in the history of Mozart concerto recordings when everything goes right. Gieseking is in top form, his tone delicate but masculine, and the orchestral precision is impressive. Fine recorded sound. Good performances by Serkin, Fischer, and Badura-Skoda must take a back seat here.

Brahms: *Variations on a Theme of Haydn* (Klemperer, Angel 35221). The catalogue abounds with excellent recordings of this lovable work. But my preference remains with the Klemperer of some years back: his powerful reading negotiates successfully the deceptive difficulties of the score, and the warm Philharmonia sound is just right for this most mellow of all composers.

Palestrina: *Pope Marcellus* Mass (Netherlands Chamber Choir, Epic 3045). Three competing versions are totally eclipsed by the sensitive singing of Felix de Nobel's Netherlands Chamber Choir. This gifted group has a fine sense of Palestrina's flowing line, making the competition seem four-square and clumsy by comparison. The sound is adequate, if perhaps not the last word in choral recording technique.

Beethoven: *Missa Solemnis* (Klemperer, Vox 11430). The Vox engineers have done wonders in this refurbished reissue of an early LP set. The sound is not the highest of fi, but there's surprisingly little distortion, all things considered, even though the huge work is crammed onto just two sides. Klemperer's soloists have less appealing voices than Von Karajan's, the sound is not so clear as in the Böhm set, and the interpretation lacks the blazing intensity of Toscanini's. But the three competing discs also have major defects, while Klemperer's sum is much greater than the parts. His majestic reading is the one I would want to preserve.

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to avoid this distortion. The phono input starts clipping at only 15 millivolts of signal, which is too low for any but the lowest output cartridges, and marginal even for these. Some external attenuation must be used in the phono input circuit.

The gain of the amplifier is quite high, with less than 2 millivolts needed at the phono input for 10 watts output, and 100 millivolts at the tuner input. The hum and noise are very low at normal gain settings, being better than 66 db below 10 watts on the phono input.

The indicated center positions of the tone controls on our test unit did not correspond to flattest response. A small amount of bass and treble boost corrected this, and resulted in a very smooth, flat response. The scratch filter is sharp and effective in its action, breaking at 5 kc. The rumble filter is rather mild. The phono equalization shows some deviation from the RIAA characteristic, with a pronounced drop below 50 cps and a slight rise above 5 kc.

One of the most unusual features of the EMI Model 555 amplifier is the oscilloscope. This monitors the outputs of both power amplifiers, with the right channel deflecting the spot to the right and the left channel deflecting it to the left. With no signal a vertical line appears on the screen. The power output monitor control acts as a sensitivity control for the scope, and is calibrated in watts. For any given setting of this control, the indicated power in either channel is supposed to deflect the spot $\frac{3}{16}$ inch on the cathode ray tube. This proved to be approximately correct, except that it indicates peak watts, or about double the actual steady state power output.

When the individual channel level controls are set for equal outputs, the pattern on the scope indicates this. If speakers of identical efficiency are used, this can be a simple way to balance the system. By injecting the 60-cps test signal with the front panel switch, the vertical trace on the scope tube is replaced with a horizontal trace. Any unbalance is indicated by the line extending to the right or left of center. At balance, the line disappears and becomes a dot in the center of the screen.

In general, the packaging and construction of the EMI amplifier, as well as its flexibility, are impressive. The oscilloscope, which must add significantly to the price of this unit, seems to be a rather costly method of accomplishing the balancing functions, and of course the power measurement feature, while of undoubted interest to many users, nevertheless does not contribute to the amplifier's listening performance. The low power output, by today's standards, makes the use of reasonably high efficiency speakers mandatory. We found the easily overloaded input stages to be the weak link in this otherwise intriguing little package. With caution in its operation, the over-all sound of the EMI 555 is very satisfactory. H. H. Labs.

SIR WILLIAM WALTON

Continued from page 46

which he had been sent down as an undergraduate for failing to pass his examination, including even his Mus. Bac., for which he neglected to submit the required written composition. He needed a straight face, too, I know, at another recent conferment when he walked in the academic procession to the accompaniment of what he has described as "the queerest noises" coming from the organ. It was only when the music reached a rather familiar-sounding tune to which he had put ribald words that he realized he was being played in by his own Coronation March, *Crown Imperial*.

The practice of putting satirical and slightly Rabelaisian words to phrases of his own music is one of William Walton's most endearing habits, and its very unpretentiousness and gaiety is symptomatic, I think, of his inner assurance. The last thing he can be called is "touchy"; and it was very typical, after the disappointment he must inevitably have felt at the moderate reception given to the first night of *Troilus and Cressida* at La Scala (the second night was a great success), that he should have written from Milan to say that he had been greatly comforted by the solemn assertion in the Italian press that his music was influenced by the long residence in London of Tosti and Denza. His *sang-froid* was quite capable of dealing with the Scala *Troilus* episode. He recognized it as a clear case of heads-I-win-tails-you-lose: a faction in the gallery demonstrated because the music was not like Dallapiccola's; another faction would just as certainly have demonstrated if it had been.

This philosophical outlook is thoroughly professional in origin. Though Walton has enjoyed the benefits of private economic patronage on an almost eighteenth-century scale, he has not forgotten that there was a time when he had to work as a hack arranger in Charing Cross Road, the Tin-Pan Alley of London. Nor has he forgotten that even the most successfully self-made man can still need help from his friends on the way up. The singing teacher's son who was born in the steel-and-cotton Lancashire town of Oldham has grown up to be what he looks—a hardheaded North Country businessman. But prosperity and success have not spoiled him; still less have they affected the generous spirit always ready to help friends and colleagues in any moral or material way—a spirit directly contrary to what one would expect from the creator of the sardonic *Presto con malizia* of the Scherzo in his first symphony.

Walton's own witticisms are sharp-edged, but it is not so much malice that prompts them as a delight in teasing—a form of torment which he himself suffers at the hands of his friends and tolerates with characteristic good humor. So it was that inquiries about the progress of his new, second symphony, to be performed at the Edinburgh

Festival in September, brought the information that he had got "stuck in the last movement as usual." Further hints suggested that as he had got so stuck with the last movement of his first symphony that the work was originally performed without it, he had decided this time to write the last movement first and perform the symphony without the other three. He had evidently told the bearer of these tidings about being "stuck in the last movement" with such conviction and so straight a face that the information was passed on as true.

It does seem, however, that the new work has progressed comparatively rapidly since my wife and I last stayed with the composer on Ischia, in the Bay of Naples, three summers ago, when he was finishing the last of the three movements of his Partita for the Cleveland Orchestra. A secluded corner of the island near Forio d'Ischia, where he has built himself a house with a view, is now the permanent home of Sir William and his charming young Argentine-born wife, Susana. The composer's immigration to Italy did not come as a surprise; he is now living there all of the time instead of merely most of the time, as he did before the War, when at least five of his major works were written in or near Amalfi, and as he has done in the past ten years, which have produced *Troilus and Cressida*, the cello concerto, and the Coronation Te Deum. Italy has always had a strong and thoroughly healthy influence on Walton's work, giving it clarity and color and acting as a refreshing antidote to the average English composer's national obsession with temperate half tones and melancholy reflections on the mysteries of autumn.

Ischia now is not only the Walton's home; it also is the scene of a flourishing family business enterprise: the renting of four delightful houses—built, decorated, and furnished down to the last ashtray under Lady Walton's supervision and available both in and out of season to imaginative visitors who like to feel they are residents of Ischia and not just tourists. Vaughan Williams was a Walton tenant not long before he died. Forio d'Ischia, with a wonderful beach on the northwest side of the island, is the center of the island's wine trade, an accident which Sir William appreciates to the extent of maintaining a cellar fully stocked with huge demijohns of the excellent local product costing about twelve cents a gallon. Walton has always done his guests well; sometimes too well, as I remember from many years ago when, after dining out and drinking a red Burgundy, we returned to the house he shared with Sir Osbert Sitwell in Chelsea and he opened a bottle of Tavel, a *rosé* grown on the right bank of the Rhone near Avignon. I drank the Tavel and was very ill.

"I must say, that's very interesting," said my host in what I considered an unnecessarily dispassionate way, when I had recovered. "I always thought it was *white* that wouldn't mix with Tavel."

By its very nature as the least representational of the arts, music perhaps reveals most clearly and immediately the character of its creator. Certainly, to his friends, nothing is more plainly expressive of Walton's whole personality than his music. His natural quick-wittedness, his intense physical vigor and masculinity, the strong romantic streak, his sense of fun and horror of pomposity, his wide variety of everyday interests—all these are easily recognizable characteristics of his music.

In only one respect have I encountered a trace of paradox in the make-up of this practical, businesslike, and thoroughly professional artist. In the house on Ischia there is never a daily newspaper—magazines, both English and American, financial weeklies, yes, but nothing that will tell you what day of the week or even what month it is.

As my wife and I left Ischia for Naples, with the sun setting behind the island in all the unreal glory of a travel brochure, I wondered whether since there was no visible evidence of anything in the composer's household to mark the passage of time except a metronome and a stopwatch, he did not after all believe with the Irish that "the man who made Time made plenty of it." We shall never know for certain, I fear, for his music does not in the end tell us quite everything we want to know about William Turner Walton.

CHEATING ON SPEAKERS

Continued from page 42

can accommodate such a contrivance; smaller enclosures are essential, and in many cases, the smaller the better.

At this point, the designer of enclosures runs into a serious difficulty. Enclosing a speaker raises the frequency of its cone resonance, sometimes dramatically and disastrously. If an ordinary 12-inch speaker with a normal cone resonance of 65 cycles is put into a small bookshelf box, the system resonance may jump to 150 or 200 cycles. Efforts to overcome this handicap resulted in one of the major contributions to speaker system art. Edgar Villchur of Acoustic Research reasoned that raising the system resonance wouldn't be harmful if the speaker resonance was low enough to begin with. So he builds bookshelf-size systems with a resonance of around 45 cycles by using speakers having cones resonating around 10 to 15 cycles. Additional benefits accrue from the Villchur system because the enclosure is made airtight. Then the air mass acts as a damper on cone movement, thereby achieving a further reduction in distortion.[4]

To summarize: getting a loudspeaker cone to start and stop is the single biggest design problem. Overcoming the influence of the resonance frequency and achieving adequate and smooth dispersion of high frequencies are two further problems. To reproduce low frequencies adequately, drastic measures must be taken. If small enclosures are necessary or desirable, extreme care is required in their design and production.

Perhaps one of the unappreciated blessings of old-fashioned monophonic sound was that it required only one speaker system. Stereo, alas, calls for two. There are several methods of meeting this requirement, since it is known that low frequencies are not nearly as important to stereophonic perception as high frequencies. There is mounting evidence that the former do contribute, however, to over-all effect; hence the list of speaker arrangements below, in order of general desirability, starts off with:

A. Two full-frequency-range systems.
B. One bass-only, plus two middle-and-high-range, systems.
C. One full-range, plus two middle-and-high-range, systems.
D. One full-range, plus one middle-and-high-range, system.

Which of these arrangements is finally selected depends on the rest of the equipment, room acoustics, and room décor. Given a fine existing monophonic system, D might be a logical first choice, perhaps to be converted eventually into system A.

Certain fundamental analyses will help to rule out whole classes of speakers. Room acoustics deserve first attention. If the room is large, small speaker enclosures may well be inadequate. If corners are available, they are likely to be so far apart that their use may

[4] For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see HIGH FIDELITY, February 1960, pp. 45 ff.

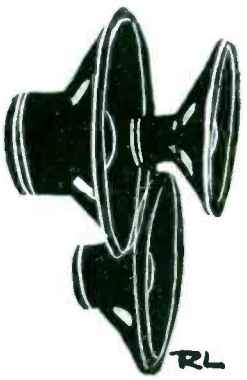
require a pseudo-third-channel speaker, for center fill.

Then room décor should be analyzed. The arrangement of furniture may dictate speaker placement, and therefore speaker selection. Even if corners are available, a pair of Klipschorns would create a problem if the center-fill speaker had to be stuffed into a fireplace normally used for toasting marshmallows.

Last, but by no means least, is cost. If cost is no consideration, the newcomer to stereo should buy the two best and biggest full-range systems he can afford. The convertee (from mono) should, ideally, match his original system. The more money spent on loudspeakers and their enclosures, the greater the eventual satisfaction. It is perfectly true that a fine speaker system will show up flaws in the rest of the equipment; that is as it should be.

Given comparable quality of cabinet construction, it can be expected that price will be a good index of sound quality. This rule applies to comparisons among full-range systems and to systems or speakers covering comparable sections of the audible frequency spectrum. It is not possible to compare a woofer with a tweeter on a basis of price.

If size, but not cost, is an important consideration, then the two most expensive full-range systems of acceptable size should be purchased. Very careful consideration should be given to the choice between two full-range bookshelf systems and a large bass-only unit plus two smaller-than-bookshelf outriggers. The latter arrangement might fit in better with the decorative scheme as well as please the ears. In general, the full-range bookshelf-size speaker systems are best in medium to small rooms. But bear in mind that some of the smaller speakers are quite inefficient and greater amplifier power may be needed.



For the average person, not only is size a consideration but so is cost—a factor made more dominant by the advent of stereo. It used to be more or less a rule of thumb that approximately the same amount should be spent for a speaker system (loudspeaker plus enclosure) as for the rest of the phonograph (i.e., no tuner) equipment. This ratio no

Continued on next page

CHEATING ON SPEAKERS

Continued from preceding page

longer holds. Above a normal rise in the cost of all components, stereo has added a little, but surprisingly little, to the cost of tuners, amplifiers, and the like. The cost of speakers has risen comparably, but two are needed.

For the person who must watch costs closely, the important thing is to determine exactly what is wanted for the final system. Then one of the great advantages of component high fidelity can be realized: the final system can be built, step by step, over as long a period of time as necessary.

Here is just one typical plan of action for a cost-conscious newcomer to stereo. Start with two 8-inch speakers. Use as a System A arrangement. Some months later, buy a good woofer and convert to System B. Later on, get another woofer, returning the system to arrangement A. Or, if high frequency response seems weak, first add a pair of tweeters, leaving the system in a B arrangement, with the woofer to come later.

The problem of securing inexpensive enclosures leads one to wonder what has happened to an art widely practiced in years gone by, say six or seven (monophonic) years ago. There then flourished the practice of going out to the neighborhood lumber yard, buying some sturdy plywood, and building speaker enclosures. A husky enclosure, constructed according to the speaker manufacturer's specifications, costs practically nothing and can give wonderful sound. From $30 to well over $100 can be saved in this fashion, and that saving is per enclosure. Clearly, it's work—but the achievement is a major satisfaction (No one except the manufacturer, however, should fiddle with an AR-1 or enclosures of similar super-precision design.)

Choosing speakers, even on a limited budget, is certainly not beyond the powers of the average audiophile. And in fact it can be fun if the problem is approached a little bit slowly and with a conscious effort to understand the whys and wherefores. You'll find it helpful to read widely about loudspeakers, and an exciting challenge to listen as often and to as many as you possibly can.

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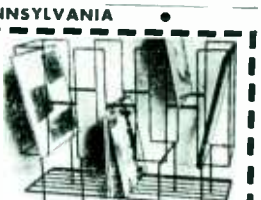

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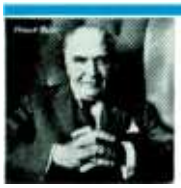

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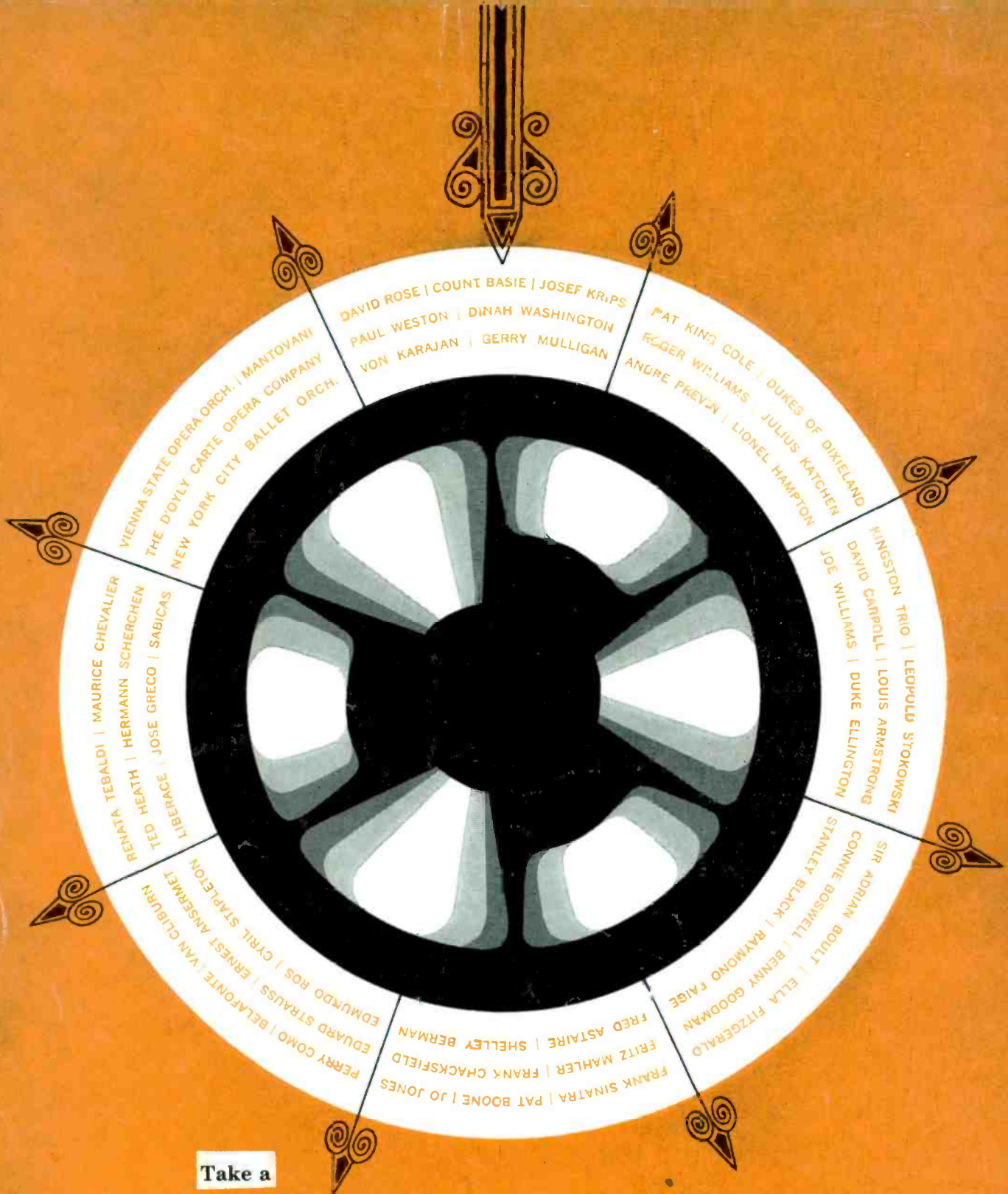

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