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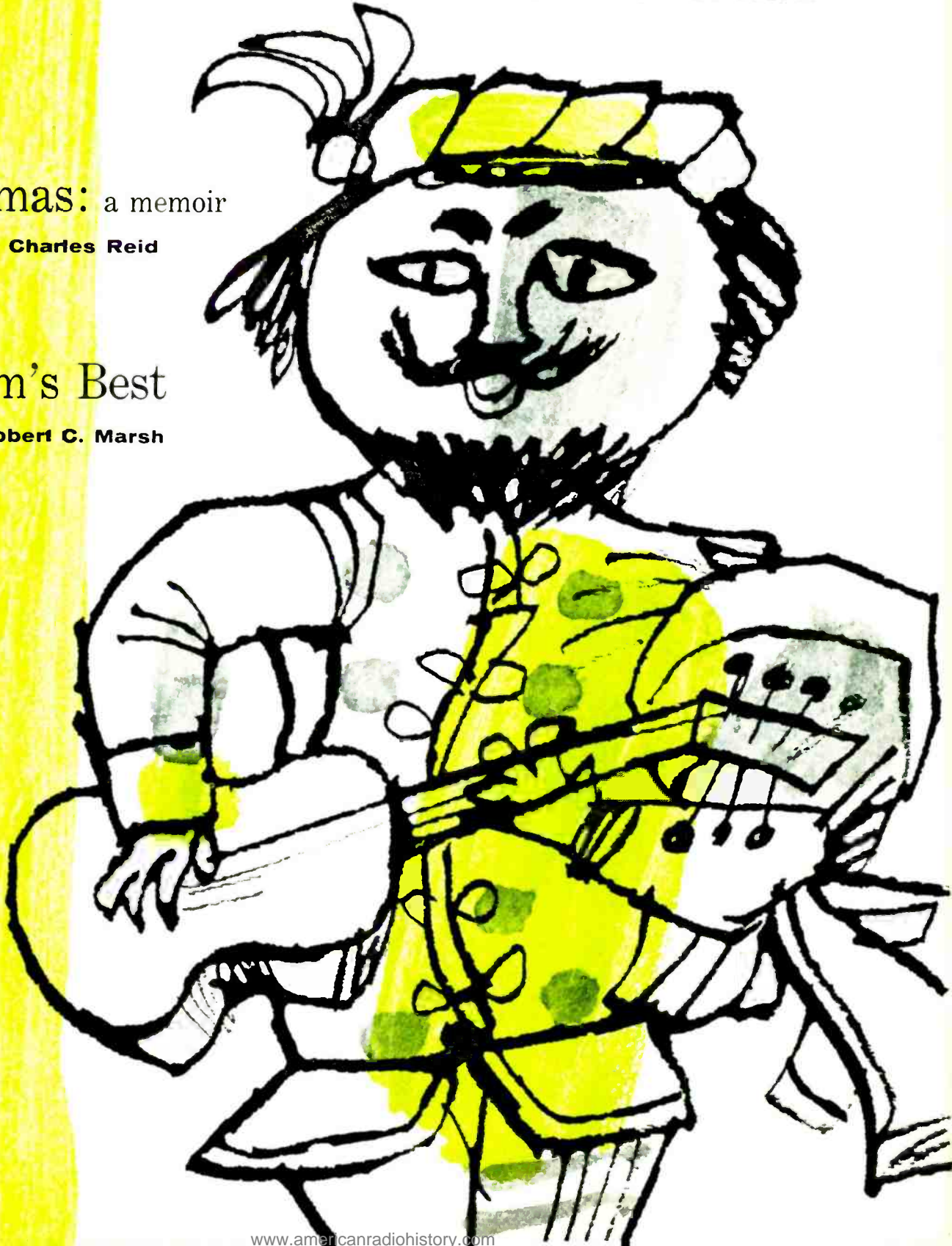
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Sir Thomas: a memoir

by Charles Reid

Beecham's Best

by Robert C. Marsh





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Herbert Reid, Hi Fi Stereo Review

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Mr. Reid’s eloquent tribute to Citation is one of many extraordinary reviews of these magnificent instruments. We are proud to present a brief collection of excerpts from Citation reviews written by outstanding audio critics.

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William Stocklin, Editor, Electronics World

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Hirsch-Houck Labs, High Fidelity Magazine

“At this writing, the most impressive of amplifier kits is without doubt the new Citation line of Harman-Kardon . . . their design, circuitry, acoustic results and even the manner of their packaging set a new high in amplifier construction and performance, kit or no.”

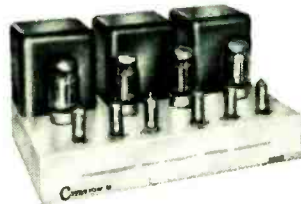
Norman Eisenberg, Saturday Review

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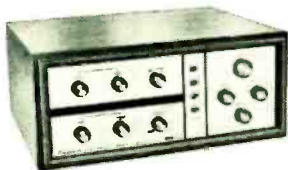
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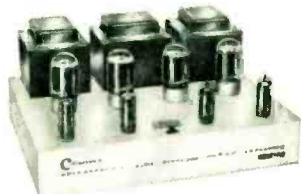
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JUNE 1961
volume 11 number 6

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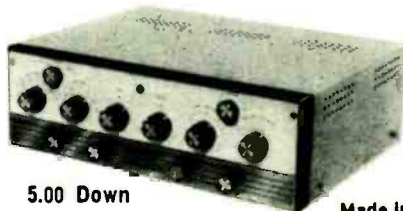
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AUTHORitatively Speaking

On page 30 of this issue will be found an article entitled simply "Sir Thomas." We felt, and we think rightly, that for our readers it was not necessary to identify further the witty raconteur and *bon vivant* whose name for more than a half century was almost synonymous with British music and music making. When he died—at the age of eighty-one, early last March—we read the newspaper obituaries and wished for more than their recital of well-known biographical data. By great good fortune, we knew that Charles Reid—frequent contributor of feature articles to *HIGH FIDELITY* and our regular correspondent from London—had for several years been working on a complete and authoritative study of Beecham's life and work, and it was to him that we turned for our memoir.

Opera critic and general features writer for *Punch* since 1954, Mr. Reid has served for many years as music critic on various newspapers (he is now with the *Daily Mail*) and has acquired a familiarity with the British musical scene from backstage as well as sixth-row-center. His personal acquaintance with Sir Thomas dates back some decades, and his research extends not only beyond the library files but beyond performances recalled and recordings studied. Mr. Reid has talked with the late conductor's friends and colleagues, has visited the places where Beecham lived and worked, and has brought to light both facts long buried and facets of personality little recognized. The material we present here deals particularly with the early career and will, we think, provide a new insight into the extraordinary figure who will surely be remembered as among the giants of this century's artistic life.

H. C. Robbins Landon, our European editor, is really a mild-mannered man, given to scholarly pursuits (he's the world's leading Haydn authority, as most of our readers know) and living an eminently civilized life in an ancient Italian hill-town. Occasionally, however, he suffers an attack of acute irritation at some current folly or other. One such he moved to write us about—and we here-with publish it: see "A Pox on Manfredini," p. 38. We suspect that Mr. Landon's jeremiad may provoke some controversy, and we feel it the better part of valor to announce in advance our own complete neutrality.

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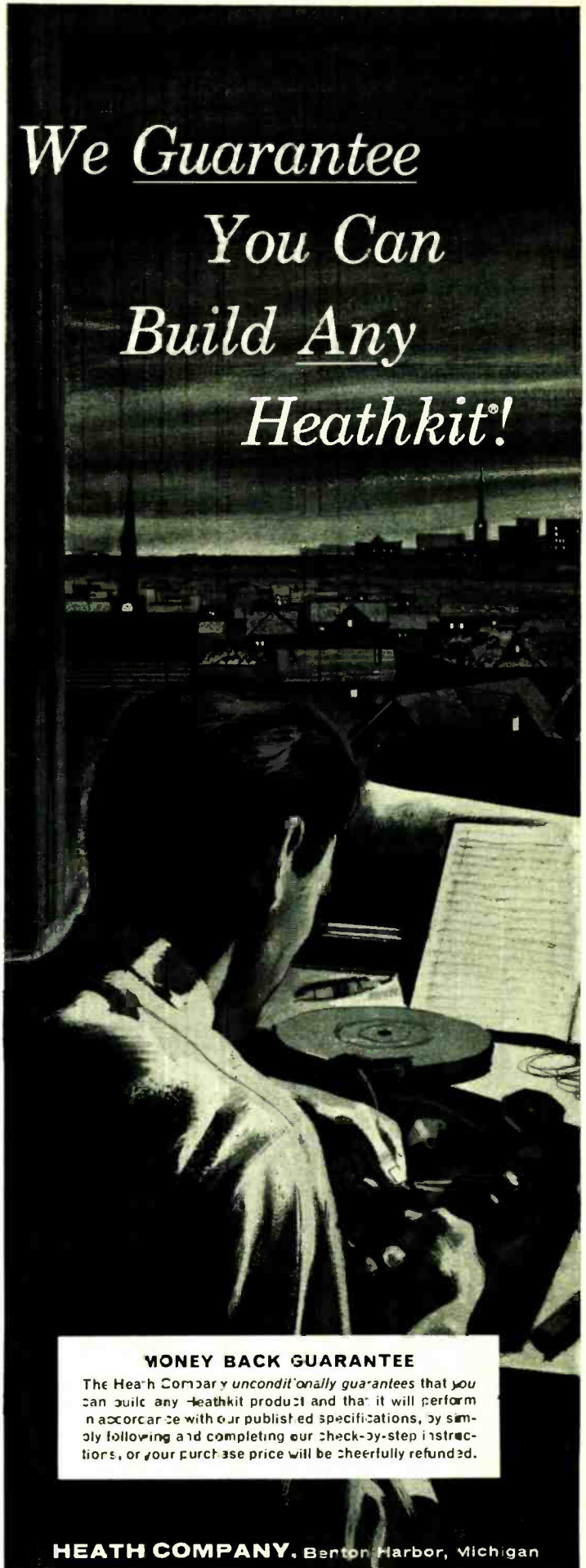
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 Manhattan Beach, Calif. Greenlee's Camera Shop
 Minneapolis, Minn. Minnesota Audio Visual
 Co.
 Mobile, Alabama Hoover High Fidelity
 Montclair, N.J. Perdue Radio Co.
 Newark, N.J. Schaeffer Camera Co.
 New York, N.Y. Airex Radio Corp.
 New York, N.Y. Audio Unlimited, Inc.
 New York, N.Y. Bryce Audio
 New York, N.Y. Durant Sound, Inc.
 New York, N.Y. Sam Goody, Inc.
 New York, N.Y. Grand Central Radio
 New York, N.Y. Harvey Radio
 New York, N.Y. Leonard Radio, Inc.
 New York, N.Y. Liberty Music
 New York, N.Y. Music Masters, Inc.
 New York, N.Y. Sonocraft Corp.
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 Paramus, N.J. Music Age, Inc.
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 Philadelphia, Pa. Danby Radio Corp.
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 producer Corp.
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 Roslyn, Pa. Grove Enterprises
 St. Louis, Mo. Aeolian Company of Mis-
 souri
 St. Louis, Mo. Newberry Radio Co.
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Tandberg of America, Inc., Pelham, N. Y.

CIRCLE 70 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



"He is deadly serious about making happy music."

Watching the Clock with LARRY ELGART

IF YOU THINK making lighthearted music is a lighthearted business, it can only mean that you have never sat in on a dance band recording session. While the clock ticks off the hours, it is also marking the number of dollars the affair is going to cost as overtime mounts. In fact, a comparison of a pops date with a classical recording might suggest as a workable formula that the gayer the music the graver the attitude, the more relaxed the sounds the tenser the people who make them. You may see a classical pianist, for example, run through his Bach or Prokofiev several times in front of the microphones—with great concentration, of course, but with a reasonable degree of serenity—and then depart from the hall with a cheerful wave over the shoulder at the engineers who will edit his tape and produce his record. But in the popular field, where an album must boast of something "different" in order to reach best seller status, leading pop artists exhibit an air of determination, not to say nervousness, which the syncopated beat and the exuberant brass would hardly lead you to expect.

Band leader-saxophonist Larry Elgart exemplifies this only in part: he is not tense, he is not nervous. But he is deadly serious about making happy music. Each of his records must be a perfect projection of what he has in mind, and he goes to endless trouble and expense to make sure this ideal is realized. He would no more entrust the editing of his tapes to recording company engineers than he would lend his alto sax to a stranger. This is not a reflection on the ability of engineers: it is simply an application of the truism that the only way to have something done exactly the way you want it is to do it yourself. One thing Elgart does *not* want (and this one suspects, has perhaps been his bone

of contention with some professional engineers in the past) is undue emphasis on spectacular stereo effects. "I'm looking for the Truth," he says, in a tone which supplies the capital T. "I feel that our technical resources shouldn't be used to enhance the sound so much as to reveal it. I want my records to give the true impression of my band as it sounds in the hall."

To accomplish his purpose, Elgart has installed a formidable complement of tape equipment in a soundproof studio on Madison Avenue, where after every recording session (which may involve seven or eight takes of a single number, incidentally), he makes his own master tape. The master is then turned over to M-G-M Records for manufacture of the disc. Both Elgart and M-G-M are happy in this arrangement, and Elgart gives every impression of feeling as much at home in his secondary role of engineer as in his primary one. He is fortunate, too, in having an additional asset which no record company could provide—a wife who not only supervises his recording sessions but works with him in editing the tapes. "Grace has a very keen ear," says her husband. "She is a musician herself—she studied the flute—and we agree on what we want. We've known each other since we were fourteen."

During a recording session, it is Grace Elgart who supervises the technician at the control panel, who decides on re-takes, who keeps an eye on the clock—who, in fact, does most of the worrying. "No one knows how much is involved in these sessions," she said the other evening between takes of a jubilant number called *Meeting Feet*. "The public thinks of just another record; but this is a competitive business and it drives

Continued on page 12

why is **Tandberg** the
better tape recorder?

because it sounds
better, clearer and
more natural...and is
more dependable.



Ask anyone of the many thousands of Tandberg owners. Your authorized dealer will gladly demonstrate any model for your critical selection.

Illustrated is the Tandberg Model 65, 3 speed-4 track Stereo Record/Playback Tape Deck . . . one of a selection of 6 Tandberg models including the new Model 65 Stereo Playback Tape Deck and the 5-4-3-2 and F models—all for industrial, educational, professional and music use as well as for home enjoyment.

re **Tandberg** of America, Inc., 8 Third Avenue, Pelham, New York

*from the leading magazine
in the jazz field:

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CONGRATULATIONS. IN THE DOWN BEAT PICK OF THE YEAR
THE AR-2A SPEAKER WAS SELECTED AS BEST MEDIUM PRICED
SPEAKER. AR-3 SPEAKER SELECTED BEST LUXURY SPEAKER.
AWARDS TO APPEAR IN DECEMBER 8 ISSUE OF DOWN BEAT=
DOWN BEAT=
AR-2A AR-3 8.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

We will be glad to send you a reprint of **down beat's*** "Picks of the Year" for 1960, listing the magazine's choice of components for three hi-fi systems (economy, medium-priced, and luxury).

The AR speakers referred to above may be heard at AR Music Rooms, on the west balcony of Grand Central Terminal in New York City, and at 52 Brattle Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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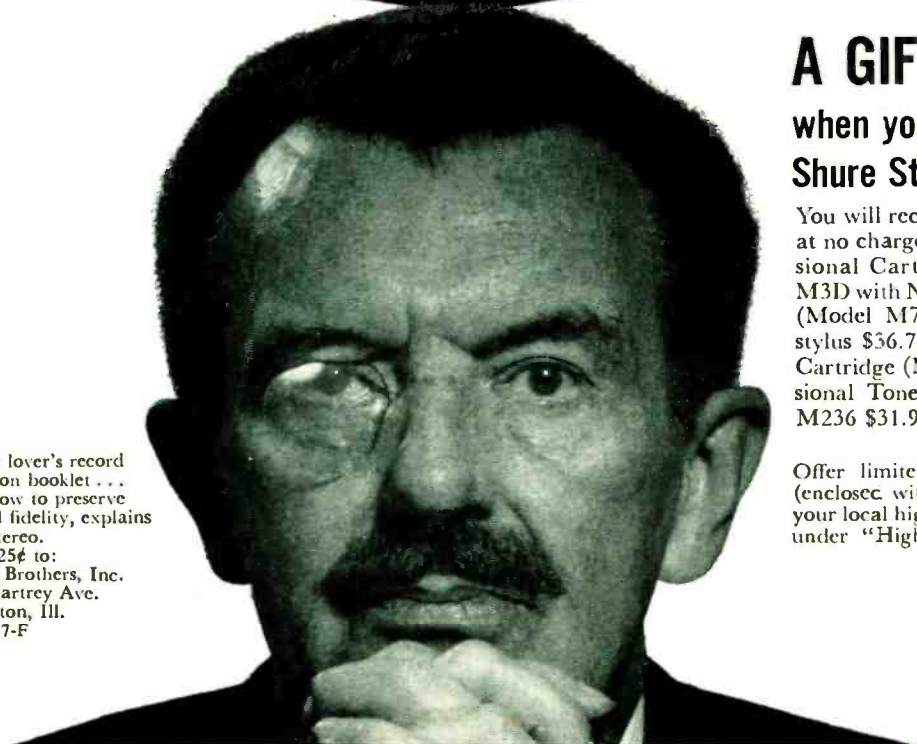
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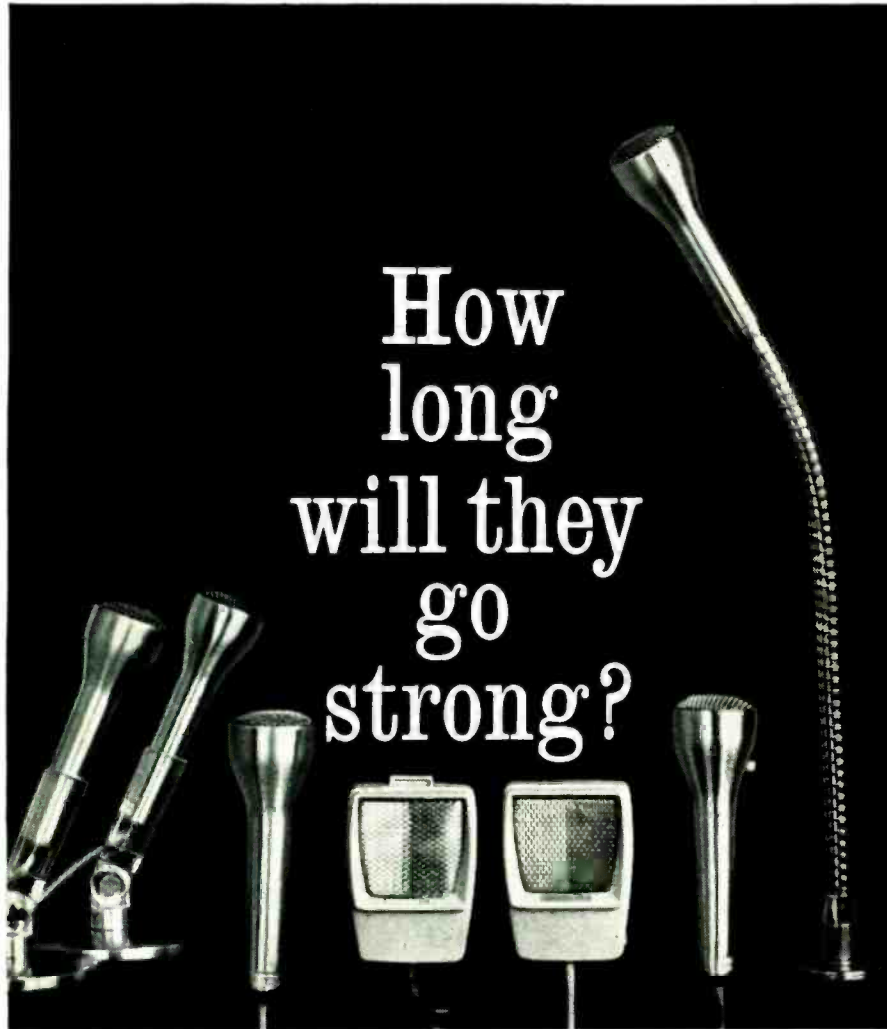
CIRCLE 64 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

the people in it hard." A little while after she made this pronouncement the band's pianist—a cadaverously thin young man with an electrifying sense of rhythm—was seized with chest pains and called for a break. "I have some anti-spasm pills," said Mrs. Elgart, reaching into her pocketbook and explaining as she did so that the young man had ulcers but the pills couldn't hurt him. At this point several other people pulled various bottles of pills out of their pockets, and among them they doctored their afflicted colleague sufficiently to enable him to leave in time for a late evening show at a Manhattan night club where he was entertaining as a singer.

Everyone then swallowed a pill or two himself, and the session got under way again: a special microphone was placed near the solo trumpet to pick up more of the high frequencies; a little more echo was added by the engineer to the saxophones; the mike covering the instruments to the left of the rhythm section was moved farther away because it picked up too much drum sound in the left channel. These changes were all made at the suggestion of Mrs. Elgart, and were approved by her husband when he came in between runs to listen to the playbacks. As the hands of the big wall clock approached the 11:30 quitting time, the pace became faster and the tension grew. With thirty seconds left to go, Grace Elgart signaled Larry to go into a final take of *Back Country Shuffle* with barely a pause for breath: if the musicians are in the middle of a number when the clock strikes, the union allows them to play to the finish.

When it was all over, Larry looked pleased and Grace looked slightly worn. They left for their mid-town studio to play through the evening's tapes; this observer reached for her own pills and went home exhausted.

SHIRLEY FLEMING



How long will they go strong?

Years! Any Sonotone "Ceramik" stands up to all kinds of mistreatment...yet stays "fidelity" itself.

Until a few years ago, mikes were variable. If they were "hi-fi," chances were they were delicate. If they were sturdy, they didn't reproduce as well as they could. Then came the Sonotone "Ceramik" series.

All "Ceramikes" are shock-proof, impact-proof, shatter-proof, heat-proof and "bad-treatment"-proof. They will work even if you immerse them in water. The ceramic transducer at the heart is immune to changes of temperature and humidity. Extensive factory tests insure you that every "Ceramik" will keep on performing at its peak no matter what!

And fidelity? Look below, for specifications that would do anybody proud. If you want trouble-free, dependable performance and an installation that lasts for years, look into "Ceramikes" first.

Specifications for Complete "Ceramik" Line


CM-10A—For tape recorders, etc.	Frequency response 50 to 11,000 cps	CM-17A—"Flex-Mike". For audio-visual labs, etc.	Frequency response 200 to 8,000 cps
Sensitivity —56 decibels ±2db	CM-11A—Where greater sensitivity is desired	Frequency response 50 to 11,000 cps	Sensitivity —63.5 decibels ±2db
Frequency response 80 to 9,000 cps	Sensitivity —53 decibels ±2db	Frequency response 50 to 11,000 cps	Sensitivity —56 decibels ±2db
CM-T10A—For stereo taping	Frequency response 50 to 11,000 cps	CM-30—Coiled Cord, Switch. For citizen's band use—	Frequency response 100 to 6,000 cps
Sensitivity —56 decibels ±2db	CM-T11A—For stereo taping, also greater sensitivity	Frequency response 100 to 6,000 cps	Sensitivity —49 decibels ±2db
Frequency response 80 to 9,000 cps	Sensitivity —53 decibels ±2db	CM-31—Coiled Cord. For communication use—	Frequency response 100 to 6,000 cps
CM-12A—For long lead installations—PA systems, etc.	with push-to-talk switch	Frequency response 100 to 6,000 cps	Sensitivity —49 decibels ±2db
		CM-32—Standard Cord & Plug. For tape recordings—	Frequency response 80 to 9,500 cps
		Sensitivity —49 decibels ±2db	

Sonotone

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. . . a triumph in combined components, the S-7000 brings together in one unit the incomparable features of Sherwood's FM and AM tuner circuitry along with two 25-watt amplifiers, two pre-amplifiers and stereo controls. The S-7000 needs only the addition of speakers to complete a basic stereo system. Overall size, just 16 x 4 x 14 inches deep.

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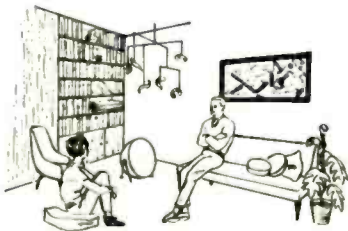
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CIRCLE 63 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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the
playmate



the wonderful
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companion speaker
that goes
with the
party

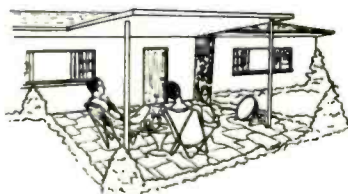


playroom

On floor, table, or hung on a wall, the new Bozak BARD is the life of the party! Singly or in pairs for stereo, the BARD provides ample volume without distortion, overcoming high-level "party noise" without stridency.

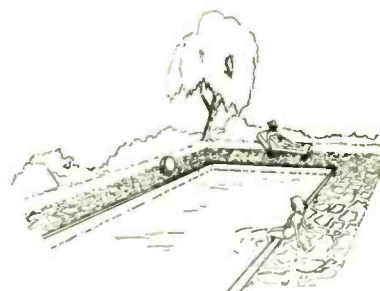
patio

Good music multiplies the pleasures of outdoor sociability, and the handily portable BARD makes it easy to provide. The sturdy stand is always steady on flagstones or uneven surfaces.



pool

No need to leave the music behind when you go for a dip! And if you forget about your BARD and leave it out over night, don't worry—it's completely weatherproof!



The new Bozak BARD is the *ideal* supplementary loudspeaker—easily portable, strikingly decorative, and typically Bozak in the fine musical quality of its sound! Its unique appearance reflects its unique design, fully utilizing the advantages of the hemisphere—one of the most perfect infinite-baffle enclosures. Many other exciting features—universal stand-up or hang-up base, plug-in connection, completely weatherproof construction, decorator styling!

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T H E V E R Y B E S T I N M U S I C

CIRCLE 20 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



For what's really new in stereo, look closely at this picture

Those who have been watching for a major advancement in components to up-date their stereo systems, instantly recognize it in the Bell "2445."

Notice, first, that *without any compromise in their individual performance*, Bell has integrated a 2-channel, 44-watt stereo amplifier and sensitive stereo tuner on one chassis. *For the first time* you have everything needed to play stereo from all sources (and ready for future multiplex reception), with every advanced stereo feature, in one master component no wider and but little deeper than an individual amplifier or tuner.

Equally obvious is Bell's new concept of styling and functional panel design. The 5 controls you regularly use are in one group, emphasized by size and color. All desirable "professional" controls are present, but sensibly subordinated. Exotic controls are absent. Note, too, the striking beauty of the deeply recessed

gold-anodized panel and modern enclosure of walnut vinyl-steel. This component belongs in tasteful room settings. Or, if you prefer panel mounting, you simply remove its cover *and slip it in*.

The Model 2445 is one of a complete line of Bell stereo amplifiers, FM/AM stereo tuners and combinations, all matching with the famous Bell Stereo Tape Transport. New Bell speakers complete your matched stereo system. See them, hear them, at your Bell dealer's. Or write us for catalog.

 **Bell** SOUND DIVISION

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In Canada: Thompson Products Ltd., St. Catharines, Ontario

CIRCLE 18 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



the giggles

Put one little girl together with something that tickles her funny bone—and out comes the purest, merriest of sounds. We don't propose there's anything quite as nice. But we can tell you about another kind of purity of sound that's worth discovering.

Make your next tape recording on Audiotape. Then listen. Audiotape . . . it's wonderful!

It has less distortion, less background noise, more clarity, more range than other tapes, because it's made to professional standards.

Let it be your silent (but knowing) partner in capturing

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Remember: if it's worth recording, it's worth Audiotape. There are eight types . . . one exactly suited to the next recording you make.



audiotape
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"it speaks for itself"

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CIRCLE 8 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

3 MUSICAL BONANZAS

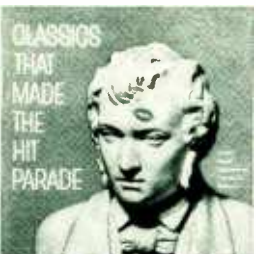
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Sprightly selections from Strauss, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Bizet.



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JUNE 1961



Letters

Correspondence by Tape

SIR:
For the past five years, I have pursued a hobby which has given me—and thousands of others—a great deal of pleasure. This is "tapesponding," on a world-wide basis.

Although one may join any of the "tapesponding" clubs, there are many people who may not know about them. Therefore, if those interested in corresponding by tape will write to me, I will be glad to exchange their names with others, though I could not send names taken from any tapesponding club directory. Any interested persons can reply by letter, giving me their tape speeds.

Thomas A. Bradford
427 Beach 69th St.
Arverne 92, N.Y.

Toscanini Reprocessed

SIR:
I am amused to encounter in Robert C. Marsh's review of the newly reprocessed Toscanini recordings (HIGH FIDELITY, March 1961) the statement, "Improvements given to some of the Toscanini recordings in the past have not always been worthy of the name"—a statement which must have surprised those who remembered, as Marsh hoped they would not, what he wrote about the earlier improvements at the time. But I was not surprised then by Marsh's failure to hear the blurring up above, the lessened solidity down below, the over-all blowzy confusion of the "improved" Debussy *La Mer* on LM 1833, his description of all this as "more brilliance, solidity," and, in a letter to me, "clarity." And I am not surprised that the man who made this and similar statements about the earlier improvements then, should now pretend to have thought differently about them.

B. H. Haggin
New York, N.Y.

Mr. Marsh replies:
Mr. Haggin apparently is offended that over the space of six years I have improved my reviewing equipment and

Continued on page 20

ACRO SOUNDINGS



A QUESTION FROM MR. GMAXKLT

It was a balmy June day, just six years ago, when we found our morning mail swollen by a postcard from a Mr. W. D. Gmxklt. (At least that's how an archeologist friend of ours deciphered his sanskrit signature.) No offense intended, especially since the zealous Mr. Gmxklt had been kind enough to take the time to write to us as a demonstration of his unbridled enthusiasm for the (then) new Acro UL-1 amplifier he had just assembled.

Since that first welcome communique the irrepressible Mr. Gmxklt has dispatched exactly one postcard per 8.2 months. We've heard his comments, suggestions, news about his own "technical advances" and a request for 4½ inches of a type of wire used in our Ultra-Linear Circuitry. Today Mr. Gmxklt asked his first question.

It seems that news of Acro's Stereo 120 amplifier had just reached him. Now, bewildered, befuddled and apparently bothered, Mr. Gmxklt wants some clear and simple answers.

"If," Mr. Gmxklt wants to know, "you say I need 60 watts per channel for my kind of hi-fi, why do other makers bother with a 'measley' 30-watter? On the other hand," he asks, "if less power will do the job, why do you bother with that 120 watt block rocker of yours?"

Here, Friend Gmxklt, is your answer: The Acro Stereo 120 is especially designed to wake up any half-decent, low efficiency speaker on the market... to wring out clarity, crispness and quality even the maker may not've realized his speaker capable of... and still have enough reserve power to do some serious roof-raising from time to time—necessary or otherwise.

Gather 'round, and we'll tell you the "inside" secret of this phenomenon. We've discovered a fantastic new European tube that can put out as high as 100 watts in our Ultra-Linear circuit. Since all we need is 60 watts maximum per channel, this amazing development means that the Acro Stereo 120 can run at full power output continuously, with rock-solid stability, unmeasurable distortion—and without the slightest hint of strain or pain.

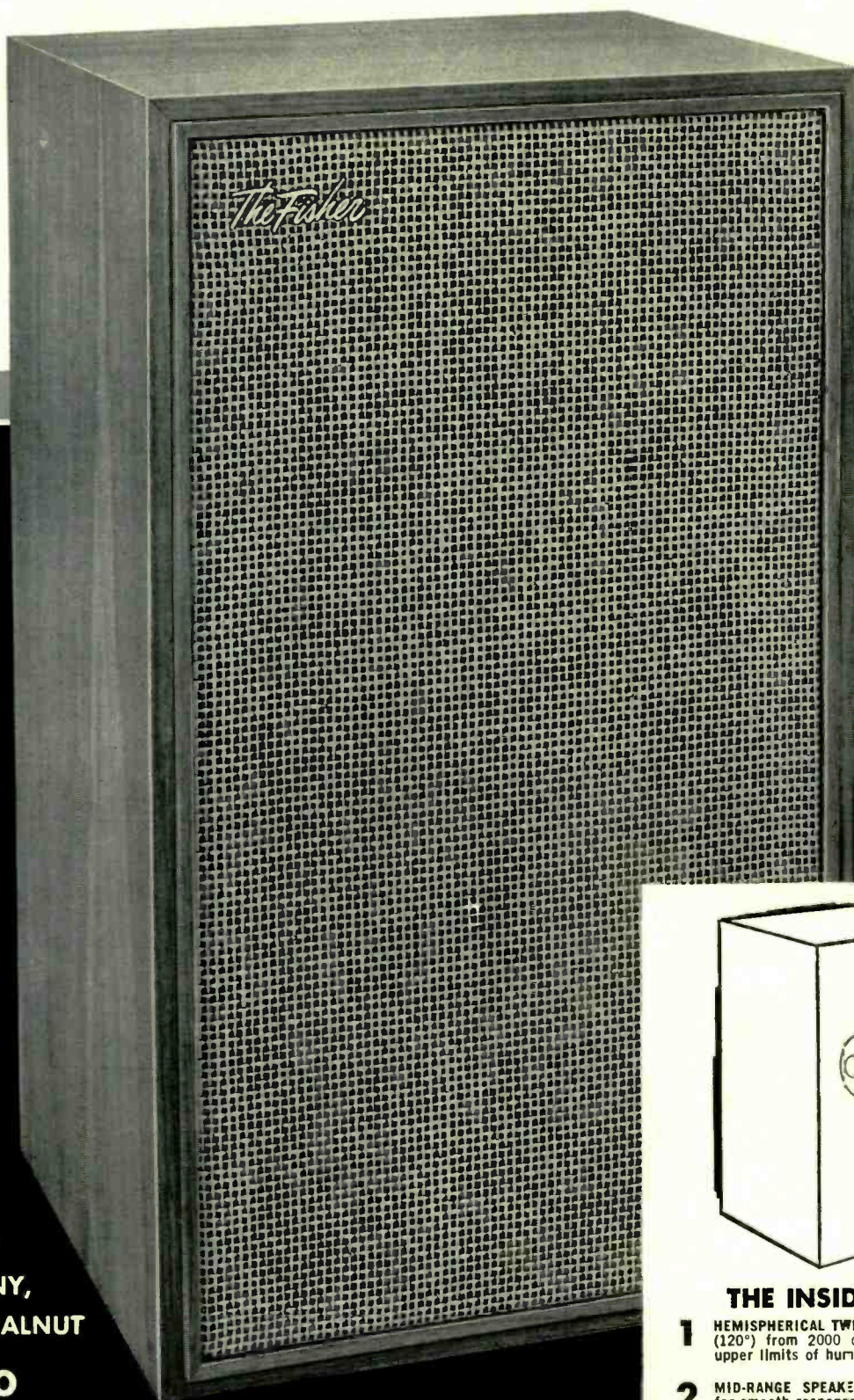
It's that simple, Mr. Gmxklt. When do you want your dealer to deliver?

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New Invention Gives

PATENT PENDING

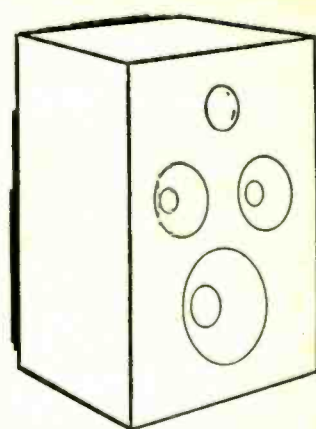


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Totally New Sound!

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XP-4

Here is the first breakthrough in basic speaker design in years! The conventional bass speaker frame, frequently the cause of parasitic vibration, has been eliminated. Now, unit construction, a principle that has revolutionized the automobile industry, has been applied to loud-speaker design—for in the XP-4 the bass speaker and the entire enclosure are a single inseparable unit. The outer edge of the bass speaker cone is supported by the enclosure alone. All inner space is filled with AcoustiGlas, deadening internal standing waves.

THE RESULT: Fatiguing 'enclosure tone'—gone. Uneven middle-frequency 'caw' quality—gone. Excessive treble hiss—gone. In their place, you will find the music itself, in direct, see-through contact with the original performance, clean and full-bodied. For only in the Fisher XP-4 are the all-important middle frequencies totally unaffected by reflections that are invariably generated between the back surface of the cone and the near surface of the conventional speaker frame. Listening fatigue is now a thing of the past.

OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF THE FISHER XP-4

SPEAKERS: Total of four. One 12" woofer with two-inch voice-coil. Two 5" mid-range speakers (AcoustiGlas-packed to eliminate cone breakup.) One two-inch hemispherical high-frequency unit, covering the unusually wide angle of 120° and assuring non-directional treble.

CONTROLS: Infinitely variable Balance Controls for middle and high frequencies. Calibrated indicator plate permits setting for average and 'bright' room acoustics. Controls can be zeroed, if under special circumstances it is desired to use the Fisher XP-4 as a woofer only.

CROSSOVER: Professional-type, three-way crossover network uses heavy air-core coils for elimination of distortion at crossover frequencies and the protection of the middle and high frequency speakers.

IMPEDANCE: Output impedance is eight ohms.

FINISHES: Oiled Walnut, Cherry, Mahogany. Also in Clear Birch sanded finish, ready for staining.

SIZE: 12½" front-to-back x 24½" x 14". Can be used horizontally or vertically with equal efficiency.

OTHER FINE FISHER SPEAKER SYSTEMS



THE FISHER XP-1

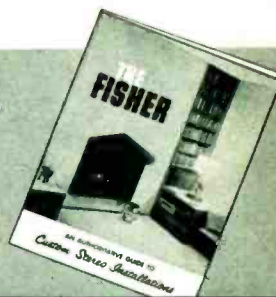
■ Free-Piston, Three-Way System, 12" woofer with 6-pound magnet structure, 5" mid-range, super-tweeter. 30 to 18,000 cycles. 13¼" x 24" x 11¼". Mahogany, Walnut, Cherry Finishes **\$129.50**
Birch, Sanded Finish **\$124.50**



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CIRCLE 69 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 17

changed my mind about some of the Toscanini releases. Therefore he fabricates the charge that I am trying to con people into thinking my opinions have remained unchanged. It seems to me that writing in 1961, I should say what I think in 1961, and that it is perfectly proper for me to do this without appending a short history of my views on the subject. What I thought in the past is a matter of record. Anyone may look it up as he wishes and interpret it as he sees fit. Today I do not by any means agree with everything I wrote in my Toscanini discography during 1953-55, and in book form this publication contains a number of errors of fact. This is why, eventually, there will have to be another edition.

Birthday and Bayreuth Comment

SIR:

Congratulations on HIGH FIDELITY'S Tenth Anniversary Issue (April 1961), and especially on Paul Moor's realistic picture of Bayreuth. I, for one, hope that record reviews, discographies, and news of recordings will be reemphasized in your second decade—along with articles of musical interest. Enough of the mechanics and gadgetry for a while!

F. Schwarzenberger
New York, N.Y.

SIR:

As a subscriber for the past five years or so, I am more or less prepared for the entertaining, instructive, and perceptive contents of your magazine. Your Tenth Anniversary edition, however, surpasses all your recent efforts. The quality and catholicity of coverage and viewpoint make this issue a veritable "hornbook" of what a music listener's periodical should be.

I was particularly impressed by Paul Moor's article, "The Barons of Bayreuth." It is a revelation to find a person whose sensitivity and conscience can be so well expressed as to give the rest of us pause to reflect. Unfortunately, many people in the world of music chose to close their eyes to the recent horrors of Nazism.

Thanks again for a fine magazine.

Herbert W. Burdow
Cedarhurst, N.Y.

SIR:

The contribution of Paul Moor on Bayreuth was a thing of art and craftsmanship. The content moved me deeply, and the reportorial technique evoked pictures of photographic clarity.

This is not to detract from the excellence of the entire issue, which was vibrant and alive.

David Waltherman, M.D.
Miami Beach, Fla.

More on Catalogues

SIR:

The letter in your Anniversary Issue from reader Elmer Wong concerning record

Continued on page 22

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

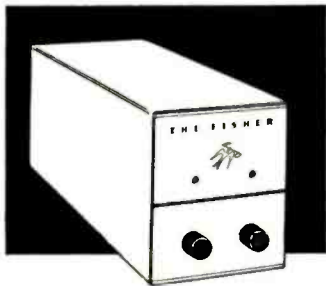
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LETTERS

Continued from page 20

catalogues has struck a responsive note. I, too, have enjoyed the catalogues published in past years, and found them wonderful for browsing and selecting records to purchase. I think their elimination adversely affects buying; I know this is true in my own case.

I, for one, sorely miss information about 45-rpm records in America; even more do I miss the records of that speed and length. American record companies should make available a selection, to enable us to hear shorter numbers when we wish to.

Joseph A. Shirley
Dallas, Texas

Recently a few classical selections have been issued in the new 7-inch 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm "compact" form. We agree with Reader Shirley that short-play records are the ideal medium for short-play music. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to sell short-play "singles." The public obviously prefers album-length records, and a reversal of this trend—in either the popular or classical repertoire—does not seem imminent.—Ed.

Stereo: "Only Roughly Similar"

SIR:

As a high-fidelity enthusiast who was one of the first to convert to stereo, I was particularly interested when I recently had an opportunity to occupy a second-row orchestra seat at the Metropolitan Opera. I must report to you that the effect is only roughly similar to that of stereo! It is true that good stereophonic sound achieves a separation and a clarity that is quite remarkable; what it fails to do is to combine the elements into a convincing whole. (I speak now as the owner of top-grade stereo equipment, placed in a fair-sized, somewhat over-bright listening area.)

This is not merely a matter of orchestral spread and balance; it is a matter of individual voices. An adequate stereo recording produces voices extremely well as regards quality, timbre—even volume. But the perspective is never realistic, never quite correct in relation to the orchestra, whether the recording has been miked close up or at a distance. In the opera house, one is aware of the placement of performers and orchestra (but only if one stops to think about it); on a recording, one is constantly conscious of it.

All of which leads me to believe that stereo recordings should be engineered for their own sake, and not in imitation of live performance, which they can never hope to resemble very closely. Stereo is most valuable when taken on its own terms.

James Dunkin
Pueblo, Colo.



HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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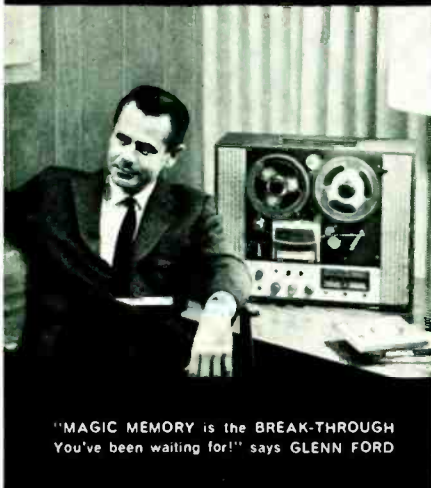
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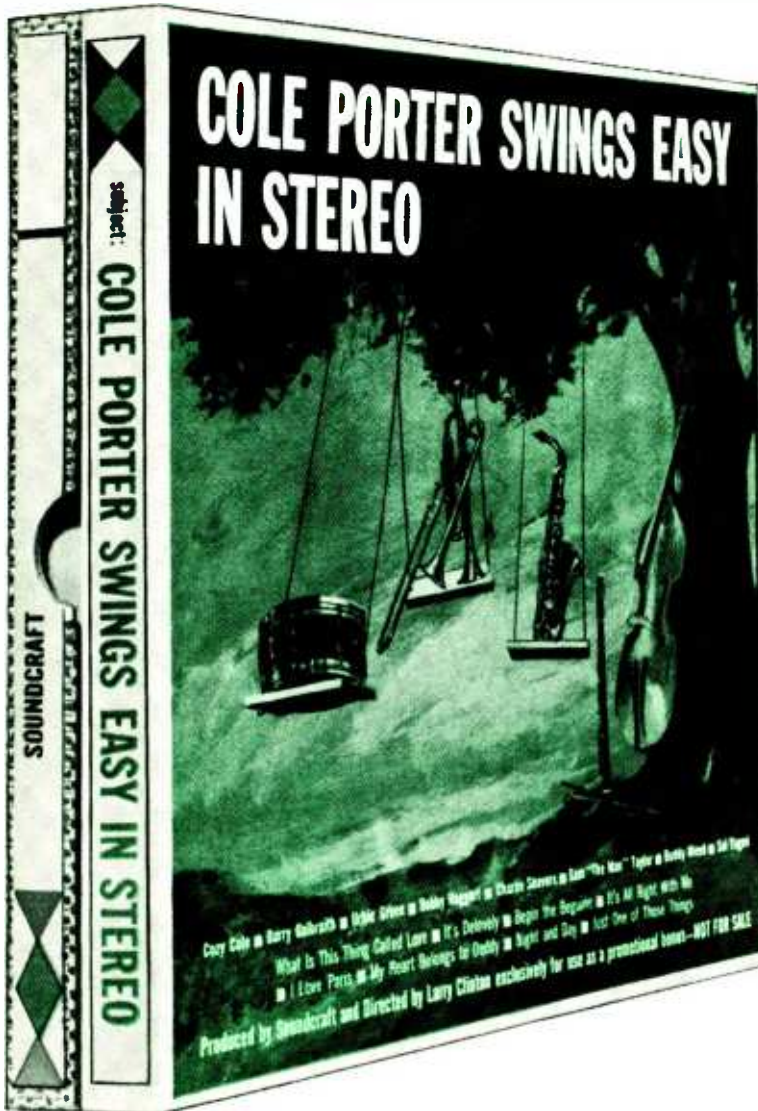
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*High Fidelity Magazine, April 1961

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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3. Adaptor is self-powered — no need for taking power from your tuner and possibly reducing component life.

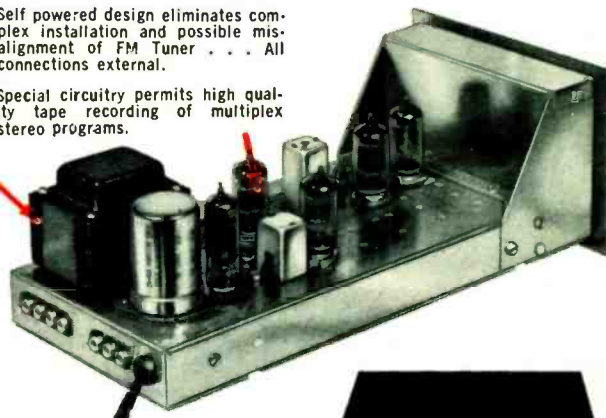
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H. H. SCOTT

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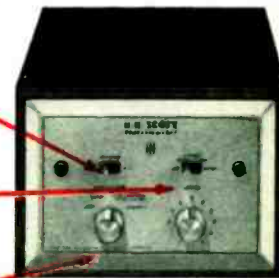
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CIRCLE 21 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The Pillmaker's Son

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM, who died in London on March 8, was an eccentric in the best and most flattering sense of the word. He made music like nobody else and in every measure gave himself away (as did Toscanini and Landowska and McCormack and all the supreme musicians). When a new Beecham disc arrived, one put it on the turntable with the certainty that boredom would not ensue. Sir Thomas occasionally seemed wrong-headed, but never did he seem dull or routine or coldly efficient. A Beecham recording was invariably an event. It is sad to realize that not many remain to be issued.

They first began to appear in 1910, at the time of the glittering Beecham opera seasons described by Charles Reid in his memoir on the next page. *The Sound Wave*, a British record magazine, reported in December of that year: "On November 15 the Gramophone Company, Ltd., issued a series of six records by the Sir Thomas Beecham Opera Company which includes four vocal numbers from Mr. Beecham's most successful production, Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*, Overture *Die Fledermaus*, and selections from D'Albert's *Tiefland* . . . under the direction of Mr. Thomas Beecham in person." This maiden effort—which Sir Thomas had completely forgotten until we called it to his attention a few years ago—was followed by sporadic acoustic recordings for the English Columbia firm in the decade 1915–25. With the advent of the electrical process in 1925, Sir Thomas got to work in earnest. His early electrical recordings of Handel's *Messiah*, the Beethoven Second Symphony, and various pieces by Delius were touchstones of gramphonic achievement, and his Haydn, Mozart, and Berlioz waxings of the 1930s played a notable part in the world-wide burgeoning of interest in those composers.

Fortunately, Sir Thomas lived long enough to produce sonically updated versions of all his "standard" repertoire and of much else besides, with the result that the LP catalogue is laden at the moment with wonderful Beecham fare. But beware. Deletions are sure to come thick and fast. A conductor's sales appeal seems to decline precipitously when he

disappears from public view, and record companies do not list slow sellers forever. Now is the time to collect Sir Thomas' inimitable recorded performances—*before* they become collector's items. To guide your choices we have asked Robert C. Marsh to survey the available repertoire (see "The Best of Beecham," page 49).

Beecham's greatness as an interpreter went hand in hand with his exuberance as a personality. The man and the music were indissoluble. His lordly sense of assurance, his elegant dignity linked to a streak of impish wit, his conviction that music making is an enjoyable and gentlemanly pursuit rather than a frowning and demonic Search After Truth—all this is reflected in his interpretations, in the swagger of a Haydn minuet, the leisurely unfolding of a Mozart adagio, the genial vivacity of a Chabrier rhapsody.

His impromptu command of the English language was formidable. Lofty sentences ballooned from his lips with a glorious profusion of vocabulary and an unflinching accuracy of syntax. Even professional instrumentalists enjoyed his scrupulously phrased sallies, his keen but seldom cruel wit. He did not terrorize his men. If a player lost his place, he did not storm and rage. "We cannot expect you to follow us all the time," he would say with unperturbed aplomb, "but if you would have the kindness to keep in touch with us occasionally . . ." and as his voiced trailed off the rehearsal would resume with renewed spirit and attention.

Almost an hour of "Sir Thomas Beecham in Rehearsal" can be heard on the record of that name which HIGH FIDELITY was privileged to publish in 1958. It is, in our perhaps prejudiced opinion, by all odds the funniest record ever pressed on vinylite—as well as being an exhilarating, heart-warming, and instructive display of Beecham's musical genius. A few extra copies have been made available on a first come-first served basis. Details are set forth on page 70. This recording too will soon lapse into collectors' item status. Get it while the getting is good.

ROLAND GELATT

AS high fidelity SEES IT





*Sir
Thomas*

by CHARLES REID

THAT MORNING I hadn't listened to the news broadcast. Then my telephone rang. The features desk of my paper was on the line.

"This piece of yours about the London Symphony Orchestra," began the features editor.

"Yes, what about it?"

"Could you write a new introduction, linking it up to Beecham?"

"Yes, but why bring in Beecham?"

"Haven't you heard? He died this morning. Peacefully, according to the reports."

For months we had all been steeling ourselves against this news. Yet when it came we were pained and stunned and, most of all, scandalized. Our feelings were immemorably expressed by the drunk who in Hampstead High Street that afternoon shouted to his companion apropos an evening paper placard, "What, Tommy Beecham dead? And I'm still alive?" The affection and bitterness behind this speech weighed a good deal more than smoother tributes which teleprinters were chattering out from Musical Top People the world over. It was a speech in Beecham's own lapidary tradition. A three-ten p.m. drunk went straight to the point. Beecham should have outlived the lot of us. That he had outdied us instead was a monstrous thing.

Briefly, I reintroduced my LSO piece. I made three points: how, in 1915, with the economic fabric of British music crumbling under the shock of the Kaiser's war, Beecham kept the LSO's head above water by dipping into the family pill fortune (at the same time saving Manchester's Hallé Orchestra, succoring the Royal Philharmonic Society, and defiantly founding the Beecham Opera Company); how, in 1931, with the LSO again suffering financial troubles, he bought its members railway tickets for a crucial provincial tour, booked them out of the blue to accompany an unforeseen week of German opera, and dunned all his rich friends on their behalf; how, not many months later, having given the LSO to understand that it was the apple of his eye, he dropped it like a hot plate and recruited an orchestra of his own, the London Philharmonic, which, throughout the Thirties, was to make the LSO and many other orchestras sound tarnished and tired.

These three points tell nearly as much as one needs to know about Beecham's openhandedness and the ruthless touch that went along with his brilliance.

Having dictated my new introductory paragraph, I propped my chin on my fist, and stared into the past. Personal memories of Beecham came crowding up.

There was the night in 1919 when, rounding off a festival fortnight of some sort, he conducted *Aida* in a theatre of my home town. At the end he came on the stage to accept a weighty presentation baton in ebony, with inscribed silver plate, from a committee of ladies in black lace dresses, pince-nez spectacles, and marcelled hair. What struck me as a boy was the curiously commanding and, I am bound to say, insolent angle of Beecham's gaze. He received the ladies in a bored, Almavivesque manner and, weighing the baton in his left hand, languidly inquired how he could

SIR THOMAS



be expected to conduct with *that*. The ladies giggled in combined embarrassment and apology. The impression he made on me was intimidating, not wholly pleasant, and lasting as marble.

The Beecham I saw in 1919 was one Beecham among perhaps a dozen. Not far from the top of the list was a quite different Beecham, warmhearted and avuncular. But this I didn't know until much later. Another thing I didn't know in 1919 (nor did anybody else outside the Beecham circle, for that matter) was that his creditors were beginning to press; that he was about to enter upon years of bankruptcy-court and kindred proceedings; and that the first of his three musical careers was approaching its end.

Beecham's first career had lasted from 1899. It took him from his twenty-first to his forty-first year. In the winter of 1899, Joseph Beecham, second of the pill-making dynasty and reputedly a sterling millionaire, was reinstalled as mayor of his native town, St. Helen's, Lancashire. A man of untrained though solid musical appetite, Joseph resolved to celebrate his new term of office not with the usual coffee-and-buns "at home" but with a full-scale concert in the municipal assembly rooms by the celebrated Hallé Orchestra.

The great Hans Richter, a former Wagner protégé, agreed to conduct. Then came a snag. Richter belatedly remembered other engagements in Vienna and backed out. Joseph cast about vainly for some other big name as substitute; all were pre-engaged. He laid his troubles before Tom, newly down from Wadham College, Oxford, and conductor already of a semiprofessional orchestra in the town.

"If Richter can't conduct," said Tom, "I will. I know most of the scores by heart."

Joseph pondered for a moment.

"All right," he decreed, "have a try."

The mayor's concert took place on December 6, 1899. The day before it, Tom—twenty years old and still beardless—went for a walk across the fields from Ewanville, his father's house, with a pretty blue-eyed brunette from New York, Utica Welles,

the first Lady Beecham. Long afterwards "Utie," as she was known to the Beechams, remembered that Tom's head that day was full of Beethoven's C minor Symphony, centerpiece of the mayoral program. As they walked, he sang and shouted the themes and waved his arms about, giving the beat and cues to imaginary players. Back at Ewanville, he played a bit of the C minor on the concert grand in Joseph's sumptuous billiard room. Suddenly he swiveled about, stood up, then sat down on the keyboard, producing a broad dissonance. Facing Utie with folded arms, he began to talk of his future. He might, he said, drop music and go in for diplomacy. "I mean to be Prime Minister one day," he said.

For the Mayor's concert arc lamps were rigged in the town square. Mounds of chicken and foie-gras sandwiches and rivers of claret cup were prepared for the eight hundred guests. In addition to the C minor Symphony the night's program took in the *Meistersinger* Overture, the third movement of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony, the prelude to *Lohengrin* Act III, Berlioz's *Hungarian March*, and vocal numbers by Gounod, Delibes, and Verdi. The latter were sung by a young American soprano, Lilian Blauvelt, whose voice and style, according to the later testimony of Sir Henry J. Wood, anticipated those of Elisabeth Schumann.

The auguries were not of the best. In the morning Miss Blauvelt said she was ill and wouldn't be able to sing. She was talked out of her indisposition by Joseph. For their afternoon rehearsal the Hallé Orchestra turned up with a deputy concert master, their principal, one Risegari, having stayed away in a huff because he had been passed over as substitute conductor. The second bassoon got drunk on the mayor's liquor. And there were only ninety minutes' rehearsal time.

How did Tom acquit himself that night?

The only seasoned musician in the audience, J. H. Elliott, a veteran choral conductor of the region, considered that in the opening piece, the *Meistersinger* Overture, the brasses were too loud for the strings and that throughout the evening over-enthusiasm led the young man to exaggerate his *sforzandi*. "But," added Elliott, "he impressed his personality on the performance. He gave more than merely conventional interpretations of the music; he put life and energy into his conducting. His method is such as to convey to the performers what he wants—and he gets it." The C minor Symphony he conducted from memory, a fact which, though by no means unprecedented in 1899, left the St. Helen townfolk openmouthed.

After the concert Beecham had conversation with a local reporter. Their talk went in part as follows:

Reporter: People have commented, Mr. Beecham, that you seemed thoroughly at home on the conductor's pedestal. You seemed to like it.

Beecham: Yes, I have drifted into conducting because I am fond of it. It is by far the most enjoyable branch of music to me. I detest solo playing. I am more or less nervous when playing the piano in public

but not the slightest when I am conducting. That is a little strange, because there is far more responsibility about conducting an orchestra. . . .

Reporter: And now you have found how well you like conducting, are you going to stick to it?

Beecham: I think I may. I hardly know yet.

Reporter: Is there any field for clever amateur conductors?

Beecham: Not much—unless a good man has a lot of money and can afford to get a tiptop orchestra of his own. There is very little field otherwise.

“ . . . unless a man has a lot of money.” There was lots of money at Ewanville. Some people put Joseph Beecham’s income from the family pill business at \$400,000—equal to at least \$1,000,000 of present-day currency. Joseph insisted that these witnesses grossly exaggerated, but certainly he was rich enough to subsidize Tom’s musical dreams as far as thought could reach, and almost certainly he had it in mind to do so. Early in 1900, however, Thomas took his mother Josephine Beecham’s side against his father in a family quarrel and walked out of Ewanville, incurring what amounted to disinheritance.

After five years’ intensive musical study, much of it on the Continent, he returned to London and founded his first two orchestras—the New Symphony (1906) and the Beecham Symphony (1909)—with the financial help of his mother, supplemented by a smallish legacy from his grandfather, Thomas Beecham the First, inventor of The Pill.

It was the Beecham Symphony Orchestra, with its fiery strings and its uncanny precision in headlong tempos, that gave Beecham preéminence. He and his astute orchestral manager, a fiddler who knew all the bandroom ropes and personalities, recruited players from theatre pits, local symphony orchestras, music colleges, and hotel palm courts throughout the land. They were all young. And, so he later claimed, they were all Britons—a startling innovation on the Edwardian musical scene.

The orchestra’s early tours were marked by reckless high spirits. The players used to signal their arrival at provincial railway stations and their departure therefrom by showering the platforms with firecrackers. They became known to shuddering stationmasters and grinning porters as the Fireworks Orchestra. It is said that after the explosion of a giant cracker at Birmingham a railway official halted their train and, boarding it, threatened to have the entire party arrested, Beecham included. From one who took part in them I have accounts of odd escapades at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. With three of his leaders, Beecham collected electric light bulbs from each landing and shot them from a bedsheet into the lobby below with deafening results. The following morning he caused widespread confusion by changing shoes outside bedroom doors a few hours before the departure of the American boat.


These pranks were in part a natural revolt by Britons against British phlegm. Both in London and the provinces, the Beecham Symphony played to disappointingly small houses. Few native ears were ready

for the newfangled or newish sounds that Beecham thrust upon them. They didn’t mind Mozart or even Grétry, within reason; but *Paris*, by this chap Delius, and Mr. D’Indy’s *Chant montagnard* symphony, which looked like a piano concerto and wasn’t one—such things were perplexin’ and borin’ and offered no value at all to a fella and his wife who expected pretty tunes for their money. Accordingly the money didn’t come in. Beecham, his mother, and his wife found themselves subsidizing the orchestra out of their private resources. Sometimes the till was empty. Veteran players recall how they were occasionally kept waiting for their pay envelopes; how they even, in such circumstances, went round to Beecham’s flat and dunned him in person.

How long the Beecham Symphony could have continued on this precarious basis—whether, indeed, it could have continued at all—are matters for speculation. Happily, intermediaries were at work. In the summer of 1909 a reconciliation was brought about between Thomas and his father. Together they lunched and dined in great cordiality. At Joseph’s mansion on Hampstead hill they played organ and piano duets in the big music room. Once more the Pill Fortune was at Thomas’ disposal. He and his father set about planning the most audacious opera festivals that London or any other capital had (or has) ever known.

Beginning in February 1910, Thomas Beecham, with eight assistant or guest conductors, put on three

Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.



(Lessee and Manager) **FRANK RENDLE.**

THE THOMAS BEECHAM GRAND OPERA SEASON

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<p>PUCCINI</p> <p>MADAME BUTTERFLY LA BOHEME</p>	<p>GOUNOD</p> <p>ROMEO AND JULIET FAUST</p>	<p>MASSENET</p> <p>WERTHER MANON</p>	<p>d'ALBERT</p> <p>TIEFLAND <i>(First Performance)</i></p>
<p>BEETHOVEN</p> <p>FIDELIO</p>	<p>TSCHAIKOWSKY</p> <p>PIQUE DAME <i>(First Performance)</i></p>	<p>ARIANE ET BARBE-BLEUE <i>(First Performance)</i></p>	<p>LE CHEMINEAU <i>(First Performance)</i></p>
<p>BIZET</p> <p>CARMEN</p>	<p>SMETANA</p> <p>THE BARBERED BRIDE</p>	<p>AMBRUOSE THOMAS</p> <p>HAMLET</p>	<p>ROSSINI</p> <p>IL BARBIERE</p>
<p>GORING THOMAS</p> <p>ESMERALDA</p>	<p>DILLIUS</p> <p>KOANGA <i>(First Performance)</i></p>	<p>SULLIVAN</p> <p>IVANHOE</p>	<p>HOLBROOKE</p> <p>DYLAN <i>(First Performance)</i></p>
<p>HUMPERDINCK</p> <p>HANSEL AND GRETEL</p>	<p>CLUTSAM</p> <p>A SUMMER NIGHT</p>	<p>OFFENBACH</p> <p>TALES OF HOFFMANN; LES TROYENS</p>	<p>BERLIOZ</p>

THE BEECHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

In 1910, "much splendid . . . much sketchy."

seasons—two at Covent Garden, one at His Majesty's Theatre—which, by the end of the year, had aggregated twenty-eight weeks and 190 performances of thirty-four operas. Most of the thirty-four were new, or as good as new, to the London public. The February season opened with the most formidable novelty of all, Richard Strauss's *Elektra*. After half a century veterans still talk with awe of the rehearsals.

At the first orchestral run-through, a scattering of musicians sat in the stalls and tried to make sense of Strauss's tonal delinquencies, as they were then deemed. Among them was a young French conductor, Pierre Monteux, who followed the run-through with the score open on his knee. Two things struck Monteux. One was the uncanny sight-reading of Beecham's fiery young players (average age, twenty-five). They had never set eyes on the music before. They sailed through it from first bar to last without having to be halted once. The other thing was Beecham's unflurried mastery. Monteux (as he told me recently) unhesitatingly put Beecham's conducting and musicianship in the Weingartner class and, although several years Beecham's senior, saluted him as *le Grand Baton*.

It was noted with marvel that, although Beecham had the score on his desk in the orchestra pit, he opened it only occasionally, to check on a rehearsal number or verify some suspect band part. He had memorized *Elektra* in one week at the rate of three hours a day. Rehearsals were supposed to begin at ten a.m. Beecham had a way of turning up an hour or ninety minutes late. He would keep his singers and players at work until three or four in the afternoon on empty stomachs and fraying nerves.

According to a viola player who was in the pit on the first night, Beecham shouted to his orchestra shortly before curtain-time, "The singers think they're going to be heard, and I'm going to make jolly well certain that they are not!" This aggravated a sufficiently dubious thesis which Beecham had propounded in his prospectus for the season. "In modern opera," he had written, "the Conductor and the Orchestra play as important a part as the singers."

Or a *more* important part? After hearing two *Elektras* that season, one conducted by the composer, George Bernard Shaw, ex-music critic, wrote to Willy Levin, to whom the score had been dedicated, "Mr. Beecham conducts *Elektra* extraordinarily well; but he certainly does make the score sound like a concerto for six drums, whereas when Dr. Strauss conducts it, I totally forget that there is any such thing as a drum in the world; I hear nothing but just what the score means."

OF BEECHAM'S thirty-four productions in 1910, only four—*Elektra*, *Salome*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, and *Fledermaus*—were unqualified successes. The rest failed in varying degrees, either because they had little intrinsic appeal or because they were more or less shoveled on to the stage. In a retrospect three years later, Richard Capell (1885-1954, one

of the leading critics of his generation) enumerated the year's "blunders." He wrote:

"One season [Covent Garden, October-December] was inaugurated by a perfectly abominable French travesty of *Hamlet* [by Ambroise Thomas], served up anyhow and heaven knows why. The taste of omnivorousness was generally felt during those 1910 days. So many exciting things (the feeling seemed to be) remained to be done that time was not to be wasted on vain refinements of representation. The inequalities in execution were fantastic. Much was splendid, much was simply sketchy. One recalls a night of *Tristan* that seemed only kept going in pure desperation; and a *Fidelio* that was as bad as could be. . . . Most people seemed disconcerted and vexed that Mr. Beecham should be out on a grandiose 'lark' . . . and stayed away discouraged."

The cost of the three seasons to Joseph Beecham was around £100,000. Thomas ended the year in eloquent fury. Nobody ever came to see his productions, he complained. Impossible to run a grand opera house for the benefit of a hundred persons!

"But what," he was asked, "of the furor caused by your productions of *Elektra* and *Salome*?"

"Get an elephant to stand on one foot on top of the Nelson Column," retorted Beecham, "and you will draw a much larger crowd than twenty-five *Salomes*. . . . Frequently the house has not been one-seventh part filled. To give opera for the next five years in the same circumstances and with the same public result I should require to be a Rockefeller and a Carnegie rolled into one."

Forward now to Beecham's second career.

By 1932 his years of musical retirement were over. The tangled affairs of the Beecham estate had been more or less straightened out. A running battle with the tax collectors had gone in Beecham's favor. He had taken up the baton again. He was fifty-three, and had reached the high plateau of his career. There could be no self-realization, no fulfillment unless, once more, he had an orchestra that should be his own creation, his own instrument. His London Philharmonic Orchestra was enrolled during the summer of that year. The poaching of crack players from the London Symphony Orchestra in particular left a bitter taste that remains in some mouths to this day.

For seventeen days Beecham rehearsed his LPO in the basement of a vast Bloomsbury insurance building. First of all he phrased-marked the scores for his opening concert—*Ein Heldenleben*, *Brigg Fair*, the *Carnaval romain* Overture, and the *Prague* Symphony. Then he handed the scores to a team of copyists, who transferred his nuances to the orchestral parts. Fingering and bowing directions were then added by the section leaders. Before and between the general rehearsals the various orchestra sections dispersed for independent rehearsals in peripheral rooms. There is nothing startling about such proceedings in 1961. In London thirty years ago they were unprecedented. The ranks of the new orchestra included many *Continued on page 85*

“BASS TAKES SOME DOING...”

by Norman Eisenberg

Conversations with a purposeful Yankee soundman — Hermon Hosmer Scott

ANYONE TOURING the historic area just west of Boston might speculate on the connection between Minuteman John Hosmer—described on the plaque at Concord as one of its leading defenders against the Redcoats—and the middle name of Hermon Hosmer Scott, whose modern electronics plant is located in nearby Maynard. Our own curiosity was satisfied recently when we met Mr. Scott on home ground. John Hosmer was an ancestor. As for his first name, “It is not,” says Mr. Scott, “a variant of ‘Herman’ but rather an old family name, after Mount Hermon in the Bible.”

Mr. Scott’s “home ground” actually stretches from the ordered bustle of his plant to home and family in Lincoln (“perhaps not on all the road maps, but a town older than either Concord or Maynard”). Proud of his New England tradition and speaking with a touch of down-East twang, Scott at home would rather listen to opera recordings than discuss business and is delighted with his latest acquisition, an electronic organ. Another recent possession, a Jaguar sports sedan, reflects perhaps his

flair for private whimsey; it came with a roll-back roof and when the family went for its first ride last winter, papa had the top open—but had thoughtfully provided woolen blankets for the passengers.

Scott’s contributions to audio, however, have been far from whimsical. One of his early inventions, for example, was the very practical “dynamic noise suppressor,” the device which, in 1947, first made it possible for radio networks to broadcast recorded music. Up to that time, records had been barred from network broadcasting because of an enforced technical compromise between the noise level of the old shellac discs and the frequency response needed for radio. Scott’s invention broke the compromise as well as the “freeze” on records.

Later the noise suppressor was incorporated in one of the first high-fidelity amplifiers (the Model 210-A), whose design and circuitry were as unorthodox as was its method of distribution through such dissimilar retailers as Boston’s Radio Shack and New York’s Abercrombie & Fitch. Scott’s amplifier design evolved to the “pancake” chassis with its tubes

At home, H. H. Scott would rather play records than talk about audio, although he can be very voluble on both subjects.



"lying down" instead of standing upright. Old-timers cluck-clucked, but soon everyone was building amplifiers this way.

To judge from what we saw (and heard) flanking his own stereo system at home, H. H. Scott's latest venture—in the field of compact speakers—will also be an auspicious one.

"These new speakers give us a complete line," explained Mr. Scott. "Besides, we have some ideas of our own on small speakers."

We went on to query Hermon Hosmer in detail.

EISENBERG: Would you care to say what your particular ideas of speaker design are?

SCOTT: Any well-designed speaker is characterized by response that is not only wide-range, but also smooth. Holes, or dips, in the response produce a boxlike sound. Peaks are equally bad: high frequency peaks create a false "presence" emphasis, while bass peaks cause boominess.

EISENBERG: Does smoothness of response have anything to do with speaker-system size?

SCOTT: Not in my view. If a small speaker sounds boxy, the reason is not because it's small, but because its response isn't smooth. Large speaker systems can sound boxy too. Incidentally, a critical factor in multiple driver systems is the rate of cut-off at frequency division. If this cutoff is too sharp, it causes ringing and that boxlike tone.

EISENBERG: Do you recognize any advantages of large speaker systems not shared by the compacts?

SCOTT: Normally, a large speaker system can sound more spacious simply because it provides more room for using several different drivers for one complete reproducer. I don't believe, however, that the reason for using large speaker systems is their spaciousness but rather their relatively high efficiency, and in fact such efficiency just isn't needed in the home. In any case the two speaker systems needed for stereo of course create a space problem with big units. Stereo spreads out the apparent sound source between the two speakers, thus providing the same advantage as a larger speaker system in this respect.

EISENBERG: Would you say that efficiency has anything to do with quality of sound?

SCOTT: Not as such. However, for a speaker system to be compact and still produce good sound, it must be designed to be of fairly low efficiency.

EISENBERG: Why is this so? Is it always true?

SCOTT: Essentially, it's a question of bass response, which depends on the compliance of the speaker and the characteristics of the enclosure. Treble response, of course, is handled by tweeters or speakers that require virtually no baffling. A good tweeter, with clean response and a suitable dispersion pattern, can be installed in any size cabinet. But the bass takes

some doing if it is to sound like the kind of solid bass that you can almost "feel." Now a large speaker system may use some kind of horn-loading to improve the impedance match between the woofer cone and the air of the room. This certainly helps bass response. Alternately, a large reproducer may depend on a huge driver for better direct coupling.

Unfortunately, there is no sure way of effectively matching a small system to a listening room except by "doing things" to the speaker that result in a lowering of its audible output, of its efficiency. To do the same job as the large speaker—that is to say, to produce the same volume of sound at a given frequency—the small speaker must agitate more air by moving farther in its frame. But, in getting this "long throw" as well as the lowest possible resonance in a speaker, you must use a heavier cone, or a softer suspension (which requires greater clearance), or both. And either of these things will, of course, lower efficiency. This lowered efficiency, in turn, means that more amplifier power is needed to drive such a speaker, or rather, more *clean* power, particularly in the bass response of amplifiers.

EISENBERG: Before we get into the power end of amplifiers, may I ask you something about the controls or front end? I notice that you use dots to indicate the "normal" positions for all knobs and switches. Why do you recommend the use of the loudness control as "normal"? Doesn't this introduce an unnatural degree of bass boost, useful perhaps at low listening levels but not always desired?

SCOTT: Our loudness control functions differently from most. It does not attempt to follow closely the Fletcher-Munson loudness curves. Instead, it adds tonal compensation much less in degree than, from viewing those curves uncritically, one might think necessary for full response.

EISENBERG: On what, then, is your loudness compensation based?

SCOTT: We have very definite ideas on what such a control should, and should not, do. It should not, for one thing, be used to mask poor response in an amplifier. We don't even believe it can really compensate for the so-called "hearing effect" of low frequencies sounding softer than other tones. Rather, our design and recommended use for this control are intended to compensate for deficiencies in the overall response of an entire system.

EISENBERG: Just what are those deficiencies? Are they present in all systems?

SCOTT: In truth, and regardless of the excellence of any single component, the end response of any sound system becomes a matter of the cumulative amounts of attenuation at the low and high frequency ends of the audio spectrum. Inevitably, this attenuation gets

progressively worse with each step in the entire recording and reproducing chain, from microphones through record processing to playback.

EISENBERG: In view of these limitations, would you say that the equipment we have today can be properly described as "high fidelity"?

SCOTT: Well, I recall that the term "high fidelity" was once applied to equipment whose response went up only to 7,000 cycles. At one time I felt that the phrase "professional quality sound-reproducing equipment" meant more than "high-fidelity equipment." And to the extent that standards are not yet completely defined—or, being defined, are not universally adopted—I feel that the term remains somewhat meaningless and confusing.

EISENBERG: Yet we've come a long way from equipment that went up to only 7,000 cycles.

SCOTT: Of course, and we'll go further yet. My description of the "cumulative limiting effect" is relative to live sound and today's techniques and equipment for reproducing it. Thus, despite the "attenuation" due to the laws of physics and nature, recorded music today approximates concert hall sound more closely than ever. Records can now be made, for instance, with relatively lower average signal levels which permit a wider dynamic range and consequently greater realism.

EISENBERG: To what extent are records in fact being made this way?

SCOTT: The later monophonic records, in the main, were cut at low average signal levels, as are an increasing number of stereo discs. An outstanding example of wide dynamic range achieved by recording at a lower average signal level is, in my opinion, London's *Aida*. I will say, furthermore, that what with solving the problems of stereo, and those of dynamic range and quiet surfaces in general, the record people generally are doing a marvelous job.

EISENBERG: To return to "lower signal levels" on records—don't low signal levels on records make additional demands on playback equipment? Also, in thinking now of low frequency speakers—isn't there an implication in all this of a need for higher-powered amplifiers? Are we reaching a state in high fidelity where a 40-watt amplifier would always be more suitable than, say, a 20-watt amplifier?

SCOTT: The lower signal levels mean only that more gain is needed. Low efficiency speakers do require more amplifier power, but many amplifiers are over-powered for high efficiency speakers. Other things being equal, there is no difference in the sound of an amplifier as a function of its power rating so long as the amplifier is

Continued on page 88



by H. C. Robbins Landon

A Pox

THERE WAS A TIME, not so long ago, when Highbrows, would-be Highbrows, the Westchester Set, and the Madison Avenue Boys played recordings of Mozart. The *most* knowing among them played—in those last golden days of 78—imported HMV or Telefunken pressings (“the surfaces are so much better”) bought at New York’s Gramophone Shop; as the martinis were served, it was the smart thing to remark, casually, as one dropped the pick-up on the disc: “This is a rather pleasant Telefunken record which that incredibly rude salesman at the Gramophone Shop dug up for me; it’s Von Benda and the Berlin Philharmonic doing Mozart’s Symphony No. 32, in G, Köchel 318. What a pity no one gives it here; but what can one expect with people like Toscanini and Koussevitzky. . . .”

The Alajalov *New Yorker* cartoon of a room full of Bright Minds all talking at once, with scraps of the conversation flying about, naturally included someone chattering about “Mozart.” As time went on, however, the Mozart cult suffered two setbacks: the first was those vulgar LPs, so cheap that everyone could buy them, thus spreading Mozart to

middle-brows and even to the Middle West; the second difficulty was that, for any musician, it was disgusting and sacrilegious to play Mozart as background music—even faintly musical people on Fifth Avenue felt there was something about Mozart that, unless you turned the volume down to near-inaudibility, kept on intruding into that third martini. You *had* to listen; and that wasn’t the idea of music for a cocktail party.

After 1949, when the Haydn Society emerged, a few “advanced” Easterners took up the early Haydn symphonies and the late Haydn Masses. This didn’t last long, either: you can’t use the *Nelson* Mass as background music: too loud, too much D minor (a bad key to drink to), too many trumpets. And again, you start listening.

Then some genius on Madison Avenue discovered barococo* music: *the* music to drink to, to talk across, and to make clear that you were the

*Barococo: an artificial marriage of the words “baroque” and “rococo.” In fact, the music described is transitional, in that while it is firmly rooted in the baroque, many of its elements were to be adopted by the preclassical masters, i.e. the world of rococo.



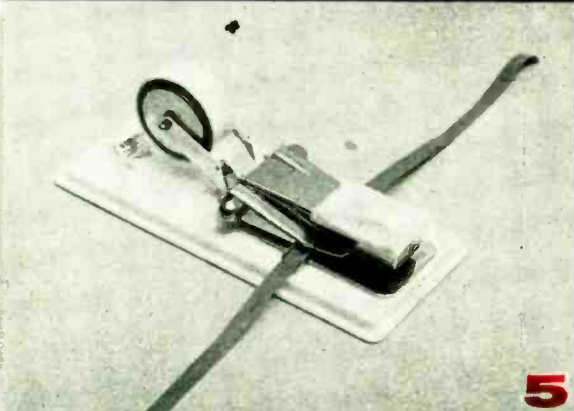
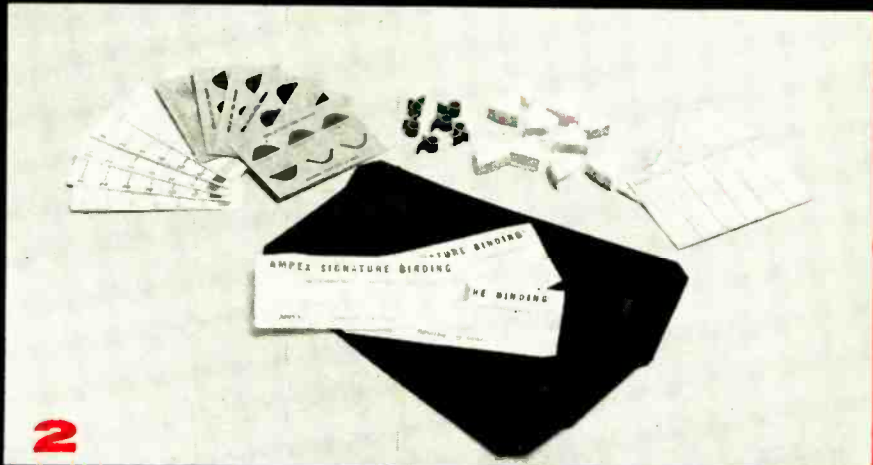
**The time has come, our irate
author suggests, to stop exhuming
wholesale concerti grossi by dull
eighteenth-century Italians.**

on Manfredini

highest of Highbrows and the smartest of the Smart Set. I should have seen it coming when, in 1952, I returned from Vienna to New York and was invited, one hot summer evening, to the chic apartment of a couple in the (you guessed it) advertising business. The rooms were just right—two or three well-chosen abstracts on the wall, the furniture and drapes worked out in rhythmic color designs (red-gray-red-black-gray—a few years back they would have called it “our Mozart Rondo room”), Kafka and Auden on the table, filter cigarettes in the Japanese boxes. And as the martinis were served, I noticed that you didn’t use gin to make martinis any more, you used vodka; and you didn’t play Mozart quartets on the phonograph, you stacked a pile of LPs on the changer—Albinoni, Geminiani, Corelli, Locatelli, and, of course, the father-figure of barococo music: Antonio Vivaldi. As I sipped the first new-style martini, I listened with delight to the crisp patterns of a concerto grosso; as the evening wore on and the figurations in the violins (over that nice, springy, “walking” bass-line) went on and on, conversation, smoke, and vodka soon surrounded the

phonograph in an indistinct haze. The music became scarcely audible, and I found myself barely listening as the record changed, every twenty minutes or so, and a new concerto grosso doodle-deedled its barococo way from groove to groove.

Now, ten years later, I see with growing astonishment the space devoted to concerti grossi in each Schwann catalogue. I see with even more astonishment that the barococo sickness is really international. In Vienna, where until after World War II Bach was scarcely played except in the circles of a few fanatics, Renato Fasano and the world’s most barococo strings (with that harpsichord you practically never hear in a hall seating 3,000 people but which gives such an authentic *settecento* flavor) play to sold-out houses; in Salzburg, an all-Vivaldi concert during the festival is sold out and cheered; in London, Kiel, Paris, and of course all over Italy, they play whole evenings of Locatelli or Barsanti or Torelli or Geminiani—and people come in droves. Vox—the father of Ye Compleat Concerti Grossi sets (all twelve Manfredini Op. 3, all twelve Torelli Op. 8. *Continued on page 86*



Splice

A short gadget-guide to better tape recording

Clean

DEGAUSS

Some accessories are essential to top performance from even the best tape record/playback equipment. While the cost of most is nominal, their use often means the difference between casual or professional results. Too, they are easy to use; not much technical knowledge is needed. Those shown here are representative of the most useful for the home recordist.

- 1 Cleaners and Lubricants**—A clean head assembly is essential to “clean” recording and playback. Dust and minute deposits of oxide particles from the tape itself build up on the heads, preventing the necessary close contact with the tape. Liquid cleaners easily rid the heads of such deposits. Dirt on capstans, idler wheels, and the like cause erratic tape speed and also must be cleaned. Use applicator or cotton swab dipped in the solution.
- 2 Labels, Clips, Indexes**—The maintenance of a tape library is simplified with special labels to identify the reels, tabs to earmark sections of tape, bindings for tape storage boxes, and index cards for filing. The loose end of a tape reel can be firmly held in place with any of a variety of plastic clips made for that purpose. These are particularly useful to keep the tape from unraveling during handling or storage.
- 3 Head Demagnetizer**—With continual use, the magnetic head of the recorder will itself become partly magnetized. This condition may lessen the recorder’s high frequency response; it also may introduce some hiss. The demagnetizer is essentially a coil with an extended pole piece. Its AC line is plugged into an outlet and the pole piece is placed across the head and slowly removed. Demagnetize after ten hours of use.
- 4 Bulk Eraser**—A tape degausser, or bulk tape eraser, removes electrical signals from a reel of tape more quickly and effectively than running it past an erase head. The reel is placed on the spindle, the button pressed, and the reel spun manually a few times. The electromagnet of the degausser produces a very strong field and the passage of the tape over this field “wipes” recorded signals or residual noise from the tape.
- 5 Splicer**—A mishandled tape—even one of the stronger tapes used today—may snap on occasion. Such damage is repaired easily with splicing tape and a tape splicer. There are many versions of the latter device; the one shown here is a most convenient model which applies the splicing tape and trims it with one stroke. Splicing, of course, is also used for editing tapes, as well as for adding “leaders” to a reel to facilitate handling.
- 6 Tape Stroboscope**—Accuracy of tape speed is essential to true pitch of music and speech. Untrue tape speed is a sign of mechanical trouble. The stroboscope provides an easy speed check. Its wheel is held against the tape and the wheel’s markings noted. If the tape is moving at the proper speed, the markings will appear as a row of stationary lines. If the lines appear to move, the speed needs correcting.

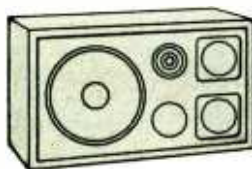
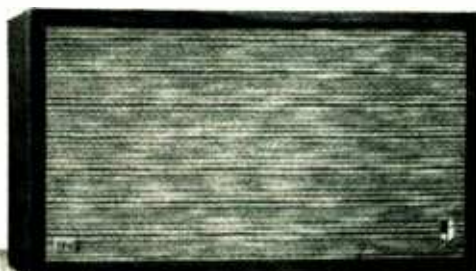
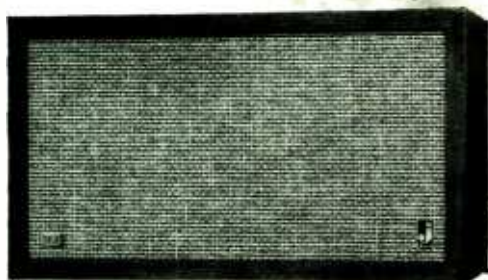
Best by Blindfold Test

THE WIDELY ACCLAIMED **TF₃**
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In the moment of truth, impartiality is paramount. The curtain is drawn and preference depends upon sound quality alone as judged by the listener.

In a recent test, both the widely acclaimed Jensen TF-3 and our precocious newcomer TF-2 were preferred above "rated" systems costing much more. So it's wise to be your own thinking-man about hi-fi speakers.

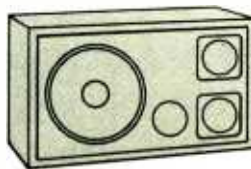
Be sure to hear the TF-3 and TF-2 ... they may well be the "best buy" for you in hi-fi speaker systems. Fine woods ... smart styling. For still more moneysaving, unfinished utility models are an intelligent choice ... paint, finish or build-in as you choose.



TF-3 4-speaker 3-way system. Covers the full frequency range with a full size Flexair® woofer in Bass-Supreflex® enclosure, two coloration-free mid-range units, and the sensational Sono-Dome® Ultra-Tweeter. Choice of genuine oiled walnut or unfinished gum hardwood cabinetry. 13 1/4" x 23 3/4" x 11 1/4".

Oiled Walnut... \$99.50
Unfinished.....\$79.50

*T.M. Reg.



TF-2 3-speaker 2-way system. Also uses a full size Flexair® woofer for distortion-free bass response, plus two special direct radiator tweeters giving smooth, extended highs. Choose from two cabinetry styles: the oiled walnut or the economical unfinished gum hardwood. 13 1/4" x 23 3/4" x 11 1/4".

Oiled Walnut... \$79.50
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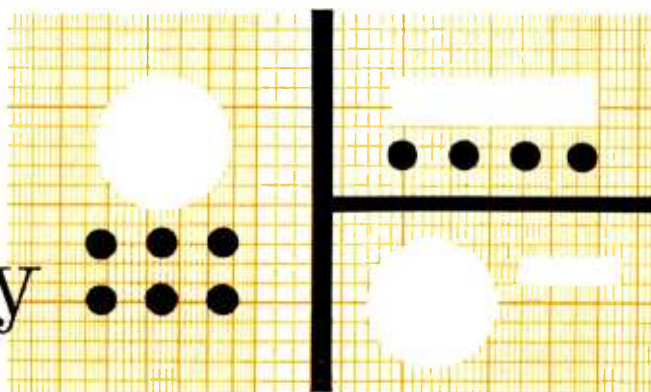
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In Mexico: Universal De Mexico, S.A., Mexico, D.F.

CIRCLE 41 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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

high fidelity



EQUIPMENT REPORTS

AT A GLANCE: The Marantz Model 9 is a single-channel power amplifier rated at 70 watts output, with built-in option of running it at 40 watts. Performance is outstanding. Price: \$324.

IN DETAIL: To those who know of the performance and quality of previous Marantz amplifiers and preamplifiers, it is enough to say of the Model 9 that it represents "pure Marantz at its best." For those who may not know, as well as those who want to know why, here are some details.

To begin with, the Model 9 is built like a battleship and shows conservative operation of all components. Four EL-34 tubes are used for the output stage; these tubes are literally loafing and should have a very long life. The other three tubes, used in the early stages, run quite cool. Inspection shows the use of high-grade parts, such as telephone-quality electrolytic capacitors, low-noise deposited carbon resistors, and so on. Complete metering facilities are provided, with adjustments for each tube, including bias and balance of the AC signal to the output tubes. Evidence of attention to controlling phase shift is seen in the use of factory-sealed trimmer capacitors. The power supply uses silicon rectifiers which improve voltage regulation and reduce heat dissipation.

The power transformer and output transformer are huge, and are unique in that they run absolutely cool. After three hours of operation, much of it at full power output, the power transformer was faintly warm to the touch and the rest of the unit, including the chassis, was actually cold.

The 70-watt rating of the Marantz Model 9 is actually quite conservative. Our tests show that even at 20 cps it will deliver 70 watts at 0.3% distortion. At higher frequencies the distortion is literally unmeasurable up to the point of overload. The IM distortion curve is very similar to the 20-cps harmonic distortion curve, with some 80 watts output at well under 1% distortion. To show the power capability of this amplifier when the usual IHFM standards are applied, we measured its output at the 1% distortion point over the audio frequency range. There is no point in plotting it, but it delivers 80 watts at 20 cps, about 85 watts through most of the range, and well over 90 watts between 15 and 20 kc.

Another unique feature we found was that with a 3-mfd capacitor across the output, the power available at 10 kc was not reduced in the least. We have never before seen an amplifier which would deliver even half its rated power under this test condition.

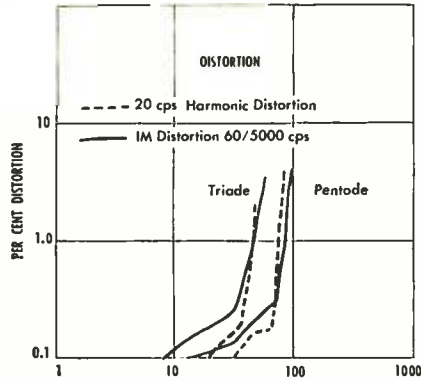
The triode connection, which may be selected on a switch, reduces power about 40%. No other characteristics are affected.

Stability is absolute. Square wave response is virtually perfect. Frequency response is flat within one or two tenths of a db from 20 to 20,000 cps. A low cut filter is provided, switch-controlled from the panel. It cuts response below 20 cps, and has no effect above that point. Such a filter in an amplifier of this power can prevent blowing speakers with switching transients, or other subsonic disturbances.

Hum and noise are totally inaudible and hardly measurable, 91 db below 10 watts. Sensitivity is relatively low, needing about 0.4 volts for 10 watts output. This would suggest that the Model 9 be used with a preamplifier of suitable output and quality of signal, such as Marantz's own Model 7 control

Marantz Model 9 Power Amplifier

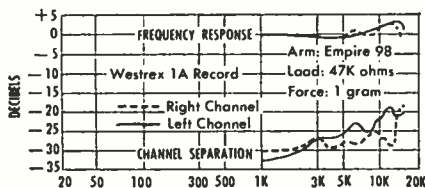




unit. Accordingly, a new model of this unit was used in listening tests with the Model 9. As far as we can determine, the Model 7 remains the same excellent device we tested some two years ago. At all listening levels, and with any low level or high level input, absolutely no hum, hiss, or other extraneous noise could be heard. In fact, hum and noise measurements made on the new Model 7 preamp produced results that, in most cases, were 2 or 3 db better than with the former unit. These, of course, could represent a normal variation among production units.

In sum, the Model 9 is an amplifier built to the highest of standards. With two needed for stereo, it is only for the most exacting and well-to-do audiophile. Little comment is needed on listening quality which is as splendid as its measured performance indicates. Our final impression is one of the extreme reliability and obvious potential for long, trouble-free life built into this amplifier. H. H. LABS.

Audio Dynamics ADC-1 Stereo Cartridge



AT A GLANCE: The ADC-1 is a moving-magnet stereo cartridge fitted with a 0.5-mil diamond stylus. The cartridge mounts on standard 1/2-in. mounting centers as well as 7/16-in. centers. The stylus assembly is easily replaced by the user; it slides off readily without the use of tools. The stylus arm extends forward of the cartridge body, for easy cueing, yet the stylus-to-mounting-hole distance remains essentially the industry standard (within 1/32 in.). The cartridge is enclosed in a mu-metal shield, gold-colored. Price: \$49.50. Replacement stylus: \$25.

IN DETAIL: To test the ADC-1, we first determined its lowest usable tracking force by playing the Cook 60 record (with its extremely large 30-cps amplitudes) and then the Fairchild 101-A record (30 cm/sec at 1,000 cps). The ADC-1 tracked the Cook 60 at slightly under 1 gram (an all-time record in our experience). It tracked one channel of the Fairchild 101-A at less than 1 gram, but "skating force" caused some distortion on the other channel until a stylus force of 2 1/2 grams was used. We then established 1 gram as the usable stylus force for the duration of our tests.

The Westrex 1A record was used for tests of stereo response and channel separation. The measured response curve was quite smooth, with a very slight rise at 13 kc (a characteristic, generally, of this record). The ADC-1's channel separation proved to be exceptionally good—actually better than 20 db up to 10 kc, and better than 18.5 db up to 15 kc. Though these figures do not confirm ADC's claim of 30 db separation, the discrepancy could easily be a matter of the particular test record used.

The output level measured was 3 millivolts per channel at 5 cm/sec at 1 kc. This figure indicates that the ADC-1 is a relatively low output cartridge, much lower than other high quality pickups we have tested, which would suggest that for best response, it should be used with a fairly high quality preamplifier or control amplifier. Its sensitivity to magnetically induced hum also was actually a few db better than other quality pickups tested previously.

The arm resonance, in the Empire 98 arm, was between 5 and 10 cps. This indicates very high compliance. In fact, the stylus is so compliant that it actually feels "floppy." In arms with any appreciable friction, such compliance might offset the stylus and introduce tracking error. However, we feel that the other benefits of the ADC-1 would more than outweigh this objection. We also feel that this cartridge preferably should be used in a low-friction arm. While most "separate" arms today meet this requirement, most record changers do not. Incidentally, ADC will soon offer an ADC-2, a less compliant model for use in changers.

For most listening tests, the cartridge was installed in an SME 3009 arm with tracking force set at about 3/4 grams. In spite of this low force, the pickup seemed almost immune to shock. Needle talk was practically inaudible.

Listening quality proved to be superb, with silky smooth highs, solid middles and bass, and generally superior definition.

The ADC-1 is seemingly delicate, although it is probably more rugged than its ultra-compliant stylus would suggest. In any case, it is a cartridge that merits being used with the finest reproducing equipment. H. H. LABS.

REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on measurements and listening tests. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with High Fidelity's editorial department. Many equipment reports are prepared for us by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, an independent organization whose staff was responsible for the original Audio League reports. Some reports are prepared by the High Fidelity staff using data supplied by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories or by other similar independent testing organizations. No report or any portion thereof may be reproduced without written permission of the publisher.

AT A GLANCE: The Lafayette KT-650 FM tuner is a basic FM tuner with two outputs, one for regular FM signals and the other for multiplex signals. It is available as a kit for \$54.50, or factory-wired for \$79.95.

IN DETAIL: This popular-priced FM tuner in kit form bears evidence of two trends in tuner design. One has to do with an effort to improve and simplify tuner construction and alignment for kit builders. The other involves an emphasis, in the basic design of a set, on low distortion as well as on reasonably high, usable sensitivity.

Building the tuner, following the instructions furnished, offers very little in the way of problems, either as time consumed or in the actual work to be done. Much of the critical circuitry, including the front end and the IF section, is in the form of two printed circuit boards which themselves do not have to be wired, but to which connections from other sections must be made. The finished job, if done according to the manual, presents a neat and professional appearance, all the more remarkable in view of the kit's low cost.

Front panel controls include the power off-on switch which is combined with a variable AFC knob; an audio level adjustment; and the tuning knob. Tuning is by flywheel action, across an illuminated station dial with logging scale and an accurate tuning-eye indicator of the "maximum closure" type.

Although the coils and IF transformers come prealigned, the manual describes two methods of final alignment for optimum performance. One method is fairly simple and requires no instruments, although a vacuum tube voltmeter (VTVM) can help. The second method calls for test instruments. Either method may be used; the difference is largely a matter of increased sensitivity which can be important depending on where, and under what conditions, the tuner is used. The former method, according to measurements made at Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, yielded sensitivity (IHFM method) of 11 microvolts, which required a signal of 1,000 microvolts for full limiting. The more advanced alignment, made with signal generator and distortion analyzer, increased sensitivity to 6 microvolts (the specified amount), which required 100 microvolts for full limiting. In both cases, ultimate distortion was very low and audio quality very high, comparing quite favorably with some costlier factory-built tuners.

Audio output level is somewhat affected by alignment but remains well over 1 volt with either method. Hum was measured at -55 db, virtually inaudible and actually about as good as in some of the best tuners. Warm-up drift, during the first fifteen minutes of operation, was found to be fairly large—about 200 kc—but is reduced considerably with the use of the AFC control. However, the AFC filtering, according to H. H. Labs., causes some loss of bass response; it represents this set's "only design weakness."

At that, it is not a particularly serious flaw. Frequency response without AFC was measured as plus 1 db and minus 2 db from 20 to 20,000 cycles, which is quite satisfactory. With full AFC, response at 30 cycles was down 2.5 db, and at 20 cycles, down 4 db.

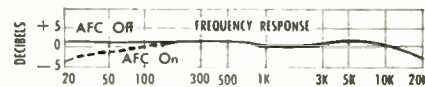
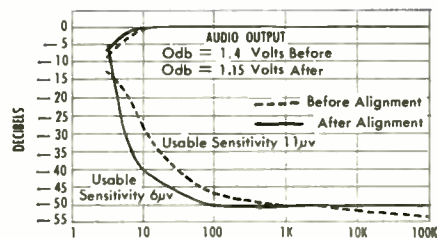
The lab report points out that the front end, being unshielded, represents "potential interference of this set to other FM and TV receivers" that are, of course, nearby and in use when the 650 is used.

The ultimate significance of the final alignment as regards sensitivity need be considered only in terms of the set's "pulling in" power and the relation of received signal strength to the limiting action required for a completely quiet background. In fairly strong signal areas, including many suburbs, the 650—even when used with a simple indoor antenna—leaves little to be desired. In more remote, or fringe, areas—particularly in hilly country—reception was still fairly strong, though not as strong as when used closer to the city, and—as was expected—not as strong as with some tuners costing considerably more.

Thus, for use in a reasonably good reception area, the 650—in kit form or factory-wired form—would represent a wise choice, offering FM value in apparent excess of its low cost and simplicity. N.E.

Lafayette

KT-650 FM Tuner



AT A GLANCE: The Weathers PS-11 is an integrated stereo pickup system consisting of a Model S-151 cartridge, the MT-8 arm, and the P-151 polarizing power supply and amplified bridge circuit unit. Price, \$129.50. Conversion kit, Model PS-11K, substitutes prewired cable for MT-8 arm, for use in any Weathers viscous-damped arm, \$91.

IN DETAIL: The PS-11 is a novel system that combines unusual design with high performance. The cartridge itself has a 0.5-mil diamond stylus, very flexibly coupled to a pair of ceramic capacitor elements. Unlike ordinary ceramic pickups, these elements are not polarized in manufacture and produce

Weathers PS-11

Stereo Pickup System



no output signal themselves. Rather the ceramic elements are charged with voltage supplied to them by the P-151 unit, and the variation in their capacitance (as the stylus moves) changes that charge. Thus the pickup modulates an externally derived DC signal, rather than generates its own signal directly. This mode of operation makes possible a very loose coupling of the elements to the stylus, and very high compliance of the stylus assembly.

The twin (stereo) outputs from these elements are then amplified by transistors used in a special circuit, not disclosed by Weathers. The transistor modules are the plug-in type, potted to prevent tampering. The stylus must be replaced at the factory.

Each channel has two outputs, with jacks located on the P-151 unit. One pair of outputs provides constant velocity signals for driving magnetic phono preamps; the other is RIAA-equalized for driving high level preamp inputs.

The arm appears to be identical to the earlier Weathers arm that was originally used with FM pickups. Made of wood, it is viscous-damped and uses aluminum sleeve bearings rotating against teflon washers. The arm is statically balanced by offsetting vertical pivots toward its rear. It need not be leveled.

Response of the PS-11 pickup system, using the Westrex 1A test record, was exceedingly smooth. Channel separation was very good on one channel (better than 30 db), satisfactory on the other channel (10 to 15 db). Irregularities in channel separation at 8, 12, and 15 kc correspond to slight (hardly detectable) wiggles in the measured response curve.

With both cartridge elements mono-connected, and using the RCA 12-5-49 test record (RIAA equalized), the output obtained at the RIAA terminals was very good, being plus or minus 2.5 db from 10 to 15,000 cps. This is at least as good a response as most preamps will provide with a very flat cartridge.

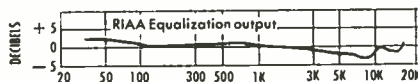
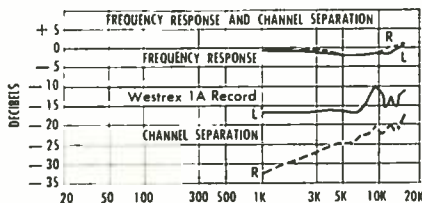
Arm resonance was about 15 cps, and heavily damped. There was no peak, but rather a sharp fall-off below that frequency. The output from the RIAA terminals was about 0.5 volts at 5 cm/sec; from the MAG terminals, about 7 millivolts at 5 cm/sec. Hum level, which was about -55 db relative to 5 cm/sec from RIAA output with turntable motor off, rose by about 6 db with the motor on. This effect was observed both on a Weathers turntable and on another turntable used in the tests. And incidentally, the P-151 should not be placed too close to power transformers, from which it may pick up hum. One or two feet should be adequate spacing, depending on the particular installation.

Tracking ability was outstanding, particularly at high velocities. The cartridge tracked the 30 cm/sec bands of the Fairchild 101A record at the remarkably low force of 1.1 grams. At that force, however, it did skip the lowest grooves of the Cook 60 record, for which the tracking force had to be increased to 1.5 grams, still notably low.

The tracking error of the arm was less than 2 degrees over an entire record surface. And despite its apparent fragility, the unit proved to be fairly rugged and easy to handle.

The sound of the PS-11 system, in listening tests, was generally excellent: very smooth and clean. It has the transparency associated with the original Weathers FM pickup at its best. What's more, the new system has no adjustments to drift off their original settings; it represents a distinct improvement over the FM pickup. Finally, due its smooth response, there was a lack of surface noise from records played with the PS-11. Certainly, this is a pickup that ranks with the best, regardless of type.

H. H. LABS.



NEXT MONTH'S REPORTS

University TMS-2 speaker system

a unitized stereo reproducer with a common bass channel.

Sherwood S-7000 stereo receiver

FM/AM stereo tuners, twin-channel preamplifier, and power amplifier on one chassis.

Sonotone 9T-SDV stereo cartridge

a ceramic pickup which provides signals for magnetic inputs.

From Europe

AUDIO NEWS

PREPARED FOR HIGH FIDELITY BY

THE GRAMOPHONE

[EDITOR'S NOTE:] *This is another in a series of reports on audio developments abroad prepared for us by our counterpart in Britain, The Gramophone, and appearing here at regular intervals.*

SPRINGTIME in England brings with it not only the sounds of the first cuckoo (heard earlier each year it would appear from letters to newspapers, and now taped by the birdwatchers as evidence), but March and April also see the coming of two audio festivals.

March LP Festival. Held at the seaside resort of Blackpool, the March LP Festival is a remarkably successful gathering organized by an ebullient and enterprising young man named Ivan March, once a French horn player and now the proprietor of an LP record-lending library. This Festival provides an opportunity for record collectors, music lovers, and audiophiles—which terms are not necessarily synonymous—to talk with each other and to meet professional musicians, record company representatives, and audio equipment manufacturers in pleasant and comfortable surroundings. The formal program at these weekends includes lectures by well-known musical authorities and audio specialists, together with a judicious admixture of live musical performances (this year a Monteverdi opera and *The Bohemian Girl* were presented). The music serves as a listening criterion for the high fidelity enthusiasts present, as well as entertainment *per se*.

For obvious reasons, the Festival attracts a good deal of interest on the part of the major record companies. Last year, Decca-London's chief recording engineer, Arthur Haddy, made one of his few public appearances in order to describe his company's technical achievements over the years. This year, the EMI organization sent some of its top men, including Edward Fowler, manager of EMI's London studios, who staged a fascinating program called "Milestones in Recording." Mr. Fowler captivated his audience with anecdotes about the early days of the gramophone and his

experiences in recording such artists as De Pachmann, Menuhin, Toscanini, Beecham, Kreisler, Schnabel, Stokowski, and Chaliapin. To accompany the lecture EMI mounted an extensive exhibition of historic recording and reproducing equipment, leading up to a display of the latest electronic gear for stereophonic recording and reproduction. Needless to say, due attention was given to the work of EMI's engineer, the late A. D. Blumlein, who in 1931 patented a technique for making the 45-degree stereo disc.

London Audio Festival. The new organizers for the 1961 event rechristened it the International Audio Festival and Fair, although it was held in the Hotel Russell as in previous years and looked and sounded rather like all its predecessors. This year, however, the exhibition of a considerable number of foreign-made components helped justify the changed name. Among them were tape recorders from Germany (Chitnis Audiograph, Butoba, Telefunken); the Japanese Sony tape machines; record players by Téppaz of France; Shure Brothers' fine range of pickups and microphones from the States; magnetic tapes made by B.A.S.F. (Germany) and Gevaert (Belgium).

Many four-track tape recorders were demonstrated, but the most novel unit displayed was the Gramophone Company's "Voicemaster" instrument, an all-British design fitted with three heads for erase, record, and playback. It has two tape speeds (7.5 and 3.75 ips), and its head/track switching enables monitoring, re-recording, and mixing without loss of signal level. By attaching a separate EMI Disc Kit, one can also play 7-, 10-, and 12-in. records.

Although other companies presented attractive loudspeakers, the only original design shown this year was the new Leak "Sandwich" cone used with a tweeter to provide a full-range reproducer. Leak suggests that the new cone represents the greatest advance in moving-coil loudspeaker design since Rice-Kellogg invented the dynamic loudspeaker in 1925. The cabinet, measuring only 26 in. by 15 in. by 12 in., has a construction that

is said to damp panel resonances and permit the loudspeaker in it to reproduce full, clean bass without "boxy" coloration. A 3-in. moving-coil tweeter and 13-in. bass and medium frequency unit of novel design, plus a half-section crossover network, complete the assembly. The 13-in. unit has a new type of cone, with a stiffness-to-weight ratio claimed to be two hundred times better than the best cones currently available. According to its designer, the new cone behaves as the theoretical ideal of a rigid piston; thus there is no flexing of the cone at large amplitudes, and no break-up distortion within the frequency range handled by the unit.

French "Festival du Son." Across the Channel in Paris, the French International Sound Exhibition demonstrated several important loudspeaker developments, including Philco International's "exploded" polystyrene as the diaphragm material, and André-Radio's "Clevox" columns with a sound reflector conically indented to resonate at different frequencies. The most exciting innovation, however, was the new "Orthophase" design by the firm Gé-Go. Influenced by the German "Blatthaller" speaker of the 1920s, this unit has ribbon conductors centered in gaps in which the field is generated by ferrite magnets.

The diaphragm itself, in this speaker, is made of foam plastic and is flat on one side and ridged on the other. This diaphragm is thus light and rigid and moves like a piston. Its high frequency response extends reportedly to 25,000 cycles. The useful low frequency range extends down to 1,000 cycles or lower, depending upon the total cell area employed. Each complete cell has seventeen driving conductors equally distributed over a diaphragm area of 4 in. by 5 in. Any number of such units can be combined as required. The system's performance, especially its transient response, has been characterized as "sensational." Of course, its present high cost does represent a snag (probably its only one). A 24-cell unit, as demonstrated, would be priced in the region of £350 (\$1,000).

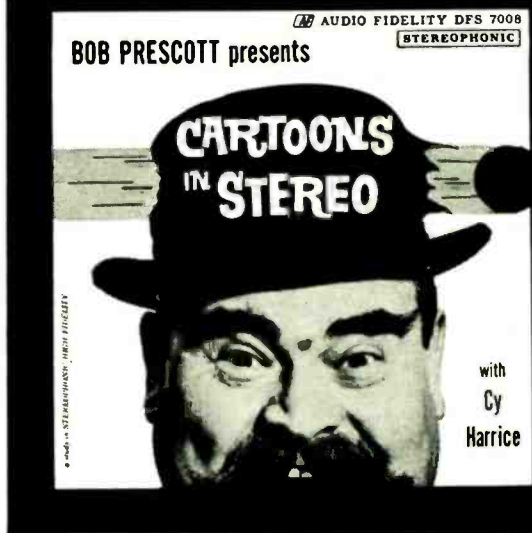


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2. BEACH SURF	1:00	2. BELL RINGING	1:00
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29. BEACH SURF	1:00	29. BELL RINGING	1:00
30. BEACH SURF	1:00	30. BELL RINGING	1:00

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VOL. 2 PER-CUS-SIVE JAZZ

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per-cus-sive Latio

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 Cba
 Cba

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AUDIO FIDELITY DFS 7005 STEREOPHONIC

per-cus-sive BIG BAND JAZZ

On the Street Where You Live
 Willow Weep For Me
 Reach Me
 Did I Remember
 Pretty Baby
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CIRCLE 12 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

reviewed by

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Records in Review



by Robert C. Marsh

The Best of Beecham His Legacy on Discs

You had only to talk with Sir Thomas Beecham about his recordings to appreciate how important he felt them to be. This was made vivid to me a little more than a year ago during what proved to be our final conversation. I was urging Sir Thomas to make his scores available, so that a group of Mozart and Haydn symphonies could be issued with his textual editing and markings; but he insisted that his recordings of this music were his "collected works" and a more satisfactory documentation of his contribution to Mozart and Haydn scholarship than any critical edition of the scores would be. "It's all there in the records," he told me.

He was probably right. No conventional musical notation could convey the special qualities of a Beecham performance, unless you knew them well enough to read them into the notes for yourself. Yet few of Beecham's contemporaries would have thought that records might provide a worthy or adequate monument to their careers. Perhaps his different point of view came from being brought up in a household that, in addition to a

pipe organ, a reed organ, and a concert grand piano, contained "musical-boxes of every kind." Beecham never looked upon records as merely a meager substitute for live music.

For some reason we do not, ordinarily, think of Beecham as a pioneer in the development of orchestral recording techniques, but he was always eager to keep pace with engineering developments. Berta Geissmar, in her memoir of Beecham and Furtwängler, tells how Beecham deserted six hundred guests at a party in his honor during his German tour of 1936 so that the chief engineer of I. G. Farben could demonstrate an experimental form of tape recording. Beecham's work for discs extended over fifty years, from his first important London seasons until a matter of days before his death. Until we have a complete Beecham discography available, we cannot tell for sure whether Sir Thomas actually made more records than any of his contemporaries, but we will probably find that he did. Yet however impressive this discovery may be quantitatively, it is the qualitative aspect that is even more

extraordinary. Sir Thomas did not simply make a great many records; he made a great many great records.

The few critics who managed to wangle admission to a Beecham recording session could give you the key to his success. Beecham knew exactly the sound he wanted from his players and he was happy to work with the engineers to try and duplicate it on discs. No ear was more sensitive than his in matters of balance, and he would gladly go over a difficult passage again and again in an effort to capture the proper blending of colors and voices. In later years, when tape introduced greater flexibility in the recording process and made editing practical, Sir Thomas took full charge of the post-session work and saw his discs right through to the production copies.

Like any exceptional musician, Beecham produced subtle variations in coloring and dynamics which only the most advanced stereo techniques captured properly, but many of the strongest features of a Beecham performance—its imaginative phrasing and rhythmic vitality for example—registered well even in

the restricted scope of 78s. Beecham was phonogenic throughout his career.

There are major Beecham recordings from sessions in the United States, France, and Germany, but most collectors invariably think first of his British productions with the orchestras he molded into his own musical likeness. The earliest of his electrical recordings to be available in this country were made with the old Royal Philharmonic about thirty years ago. The great Beecham series, which he really never surpassed, came with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, which he established in 1932 and conducted regularly through 1940. Beecham returned to the LPO in 1945 and 1946 for what Thomas Russell, in his history of the orchestra, calls two of its "happiest seasons." The happiness was not shared, however, and Beecham joined forces with the Royal Philharmonic Society to found the new Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, which thereafter became his principal recording instrument.

A survey of Beecham's 78s will show that his older discs provided in many ways a more comprehensive sampling of his enormous repertory than he later provided for the long-play catalogues. There is a lot of vintage Beecham awaiting the "Great Recordings of the Century" series. The 78 collector, for example, could have Beecham versions of a quarter of the Mozart symphonies, while his Mozart on microgroove consists largely of remakes of earlier successes. In several instances the earlier edition best reflects Sir Thomas' gifts.

Beecham was thoroughly set in his interests by the close of the acoustical period, so it is no surprise that both his work in the Thirties and his second great period in the Fifties were built around his specialties. These can be itemized as follows: the Eighteenth Century, particularly Handel, Haydn, and Mozart; the early Romantics, notably Schubert, Schumann, and Mendelssohn; French composers from Berlioz through Debussy; Russian composers from Glinka to Prokofiev; Scandinavian composers, particularly Grieg and Sibelius; Wagner and Richard Strauss; Delius.

Since throughout most of his life Beecham was his own impresario, he was never under pressure to play music he disliked simply because it was felt the public wanted it. Quite the contrary, Beecham followed his own interests and persuaded his audiences to share his enthusiasms. With record companies he did not have the same freedom he possessed in the opera house or concert room, which is one reason we have no Beecham recording of Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, for example. But Beecham was completely cosmopolitan as a man and artist, and it is impressive as we examine the standard British symphonic repertory of today to see the degree to which it reflects his taste. Given a sufficient stock of records, we can acceptably, if not fully, document the range and stature of Beecham's musicianship. Naturally, with a repertory as large as his and a discography as voluminous as the one he left us, more than one set of evidence can be assembled and no single list of this sort

can include all the great Beecham recordings, particularly when slanted towards discs currently in print.

Let us start with Handel. Sir Thomas was unsurpassed in making the "big bow-wow" style thunder or the lighter and more graceful airs sing, but his editing and reorchestration of the composer's works is controversial. The opinions which my colleague Nathan Broder expressed in these pages last month notwithstanding, I find the suite *Love in Bath*, Angel S 35504, one of his most charming compilations of music from the forgotten operas. If we want trouble, it lies no further than the recently deleted *Messiah*, RCA Victor LDS 6409, in which at Beecham's behest the entire work has been rescored to provide riper sonorities.

Beecham followed his own texts in the Haydn symphonies, but here his departures from musicological scholarship are largely in the matter of ornamentation. His two volumes of the "Salomon" Symphonies, Capitol GCR 7127 and SGCR 7198 (three discs each), are among his richest legacies to us.

Mozart presents something of a problem. Probably the greatest performance of a Mozart opera ever recorded is Beecham's set of *The Magic Flute*, made in dripping heat in Berlin during the summer of 1937. It has been in and out of the domestic catalogue for twenty-two years, but it ought to be with us forever in a "Great Recordings" edition. While I am expressing my wants, let me also include the LPO discs of the symphonies. Meanwhile, for a sample of Beecham Mozart in today's sound, I suggest the clarinet and bassoon concertos on Capitol SG 7201.

Beecham's Schubert was just as fine as his Mozart, as the Third and Fifth symphonies on Capitol SG 7212 will demonstrate (although the monophonic version of this album, at least as first issued, was badly mastered). Sir Thomas was the first conductor to give us all of Schumann's *Manfred*, and Columbia M2L 245 is the result. His Mendelssohn is well represented by the *Italian* Symphony on Columbia ML 4681.

Sir Thomas was absolutely unsurpassed in the music of Berlioz. The only challenger worth mentioning is Toscanini. My choices are *Harold in Italy*, Columbia ML 4542, and (since I can't stop with one) the *Royal Hunt and Storm* from *Troyens* in Angel's "Beecham's Lollipops" collection, S 35506, which also contains the wonderful performance of Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*. The conductor's zest for French instrumental and vocal writing is most apparent, though, in his complete set of *Carmen*, Capitol SGCR 7207, with Victoria de los Angeles in the title role. This is the greatest of the Beecham opera sets in high-fidelity sound.

One of Beecham's last sessions with the LPO gave us a Tchaikovsky Fifth that dominated the catalogue. We ought to have it again, and also his old Leeds Festival version of Borodin's *Polovtsi Dances* which for years was the only edition including the choral parts generally known here. The Beecham-Szigeti

collaboration in Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto is another set that belongs in the "Great Recordings." For Russian music in stereo, I suggest his *Scheherazade*, Angel S 35505, a historic souvenir of the Beecham-Diaghilev collaborations before the 1914-18 war.

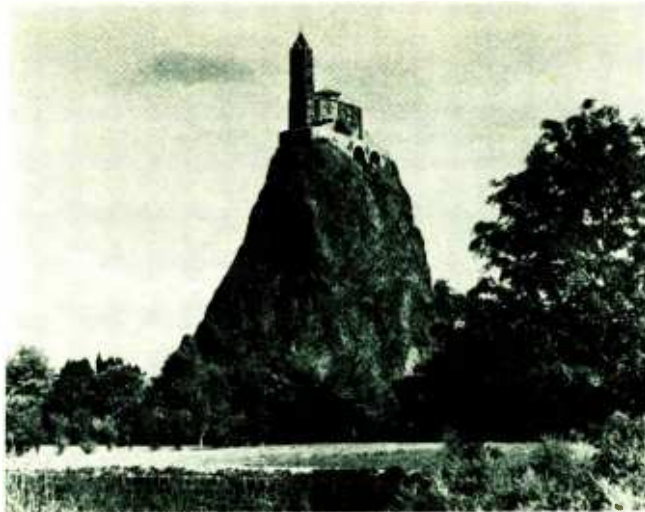
In the Scandinavian repertory, the Beecham performances I would most like to have again are the Sibelius Fourth and the Seventh in the long deleted Columbia disc with the New York Philharmonic. (His remake of the score with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra lacks the strength and direct quality of the earlier version.)

There is a Wagner concert on Columbia ML 4962 that we shall have to accept for the complete Beecham *Meistersinger*, which would have been monumental. There are similar gaps in his recorded Strauss repertory. My generation does not think of Beecham as a pioneer in new music because the new music of our day was uncongenial to him. ("This contemporary stuff, just one note after another," he once remarked to me.) Beecham's battles (Delius excepted) were long ago safely won, and the composers he introduced are snugly berthed in the repertory. But when Beecham gave the London premiere of *Elektra* in his spring season fifty-one years ago, it was not only the first Strauss opera the British capital had heard but, as Sir Thomas later described it, "excepting the death of King Edward . . . the most discussed event of the year." When *Salome* was featured in the autumn season, the effect was nearly as great. We once had on 78s Beecham recordings of *Salome's Dance* and of the final scene of *Elektra* (reissued on LP but now deleted), and we ought to have them back. Meanwhile, there is an unreleased Beecham *Heldenleben* to keep our curiosity aroused.

This brings us to Delius, a composer for whom I have no taste, except in the Beecham recordings. Since Delius requires the best sound that can be provided, later recordings dominate this list. I suggest the Incidental Music to *Hassan*, with its lovely serenade and evocative closing chorus, the *Arabesque*, and *Over the Hills and Far Away* on Columbia ML 5268. *Brigg Fair*, possibly the best of all the Delius scores, is on Capitol SG 7116. One wonders what fate awaits Delius without his great champion.

Reading back over this list and thinking of Beecham's career, one can easily spot the gaps. Inasmuch as Sir Thomas was an admirable conductor of both Beethoven and Brahms, it is unfortunate that we have not had their symphonies complete from his hand. (Perhaps this can be remedied with the use of BBC tapes.) Yet the facet of Beecham we know least in this country is his work in the theatre. He loved Italian opera, for example, as one can readily tell from his version of *La Bohème* on RCA Victor LM 6042 or his accompaniments for Eva Turner in COLC 114 of the "Great Recordings" series.

But can this O be Agincourt? Can any discography do more than suggest the character of so remarkable a protagonist?



The Shrine of Le Puy: these strange peaks abound.

Songs of the Auvergne, By Canteloube Direct from the Source

by Conrad L. Osborne

THE FASCINATION which Joseph Canteloube's settings of folk songs from the French province of Auvergne hold for a large number of people is surely a unique and curious one. It seems strange, first of all, that the folk music of a rather small rural area of one European country should speak so directly to the people of varied urban civilizations. And it strikes one as odd that the arrangements of Canteloube, lush and by no means fashionably modern, should have found almost universal acceptance, offending neither the conservatory-trained musician nor the folk song purist.

But Auvergne is a region of special meanings, symbolized, in a way, by its topography. One cannot read ten lines of any description of the province without learning of its volcanic origin, of the

strangely formed peaks thrust up irregularly from the lava floor, of the resemblance to a battlefield—site of the deforming struggle between flame and water. Auvergne was the meeting place of unreckonable physical forces; it was also a region where great cultural currents mingled and contended, where Andalusian (and hence Arabian) influences met with Celtic, where—in Limousin and Languedoc—Middle-Eastern religious mysticism converged from North and South in what De Rougemont has called "one of the most extraordinary spiritual confluences of history." The songs of the province naturally have deep roots. Many have come from religious ritual, and some of the melodies have stayed in, or returned to, the liturgy of the Catholic Church. (*Vien par le pré*, known in the original *langue d'oc* as *Passo del Prat* and included in Volume 3 of Canteloube's set, is an example—its source is a "Jesu, redemptor seculi.") The songs are divided into two general groups—"grandes," or "great" songs, and the *bourrées*, which of course were dancing songs. All of them deal with matters of primitive importance, among them harvesting, marketing, flock-tending, and love-making.

Joseph Canteloube took upon himself the task of collecting and orchestrating a large number of the Auvergne songs for presentation as concert works. In fact, after his period of study with Vincent d'Indy, Canteloube devoted his talents almost exclusively to bringing his province alive in song. His two operas—*Le Mas*, presented at the Opéra in 1929, and *Vercingétorix*, given in 1933—were on native subjects, and he compiled a book of "Songs of the French Provinces." Canteloube got the melodies for his

Chants direct from their source—the people of Auvergne. The *Bailero* he wrote down as he listened one day to a young shepherdess conversing in song with a companion on the side of another mountain, perhaps six kilometers away. The song formed, as Madeleine Grey put it, a "rainbow of sound" between the singers. Canteloube's orchestrations, with their woodwind reconstructions of bagpipe sound and the gentle beat of the tambourine, are strikingly appropriate, atmospheric, and tasteful.

The *Chants d'Auvergne* were first presented in four series, between 1923 and 1930. The soloist in the third and fourth series was Madeleine Grey, who was also responsible for first recording eleven of the songs. Grey effected a unique identification with the Canteloube settings, and sang them throughout the world. Her recording, made with an orchestra under Elie Cohen, is still very much worth owning, and is currently available on a ten-inch Odéon disc (C 60642) from import shops. Now Vanguard offers us a glowing new version, obtainable in stereo, featuring the Israeli soprano Netania Davrath and an ensemble conducted by Pierre de la Roche. It includes five songs not present on the Grey record, and omits only one of the Odéon selections; net gain, four songs. Some of the lengthier instrumental cadenzas are also given fuller treatment on the new disc, and this is pure gain, for Canteloube's sensitive handling of the instruments is of extreme importance in his sound-paintings. It cannot be fairly said that Miss Davrath actually surpasses the work of her predecessor. In general, her tempos are slower than Grey's, and this is not always to the good—the *bourrée Malourous qu'o uno fenno* is the case in point—though in the



Country folk still dance the bourrée.

Ti lirou las of Lo Fiolaire, I prefer Davrath's less hurried articulation. Then too, Grey's voice had a certain boyish directness about it that makes all the difference in a song like *Passo del Prat*. And a few of Miss Davrath's mannerisms, such as her consistently rolled r's, are likely to strike some listeners as less than completely natural. Still, Davrath's mastery of the dialect is impressive, her personal bounce and sense of style undeniable, and her voice actually somewhat prettier and more feminine than Grey's

(these qualities tell in a song like the lovely *Brezairola*).

Of the songs not recorded by Grey, I especially like the winsome *Chut, chut*, delectably sung by Miss Davrath, and the touching *La Delaissado* ("The Abandoned"). But all of these songs gain in stature and appeal from hearing to hearing, and will repay anyone's attention. The sound of Vanguard's recording is superb, and the instrumentalists—particularly the woodwind soloists—deserve the highest praise. The jacket offers reason-

ably good prose versions of the texts.

CANTELOUBE: *Chants d'Auvergne*

Malourous qu'o uno fenno; Lo Fiolaire; Bailero; Chut, chut; La Delaissado; N'ai pas ieu de mio; Lo Calbe; L'Aio de rotso; Ouid onoren gorda?; Obal, din lou Limouzi; Lou Boussu; Oi Ayai; Passo del Prat; Lou Coucut; Brezairola.

Netania Davrath, soprano; Orchestra, Pierre de la Roche, cond.

- VANGUARD VRS 9085. LP. \$4.98.
- • VANGUARD VSD 2090. SD. \$5.95.



Noah Greenberg



Paul Boepple

Josquin des Prez— Age Needs No Allowances

by Nathan Broder

JOSQUIN des Prez (about 1450-1521) is probably the first musician in history to be widely acknowledged in his own lifetime as the foremost composer of the age and to have had a profound influence on the music of subsequent generations. From the sixteenth century to our own day, writers on music and historians have agreed that he is the supreme master of the middle Renaissance, and some have called him the first of the world's great composers. And yet, despite this remarkably unanimous and sustained enthusiasm, Josquin's music has remained little known to the general public. When Paul Boepple gave an all-Josquin program in New York a few years ago, it drew a good-sized audience. Yet the quantity of this master's music on records is pitifully small. For years, only one LP disc was entirely devoted to him—a collection of secular works done by Safford Cape's Pro Musica Antiqua under the EMS label. Today the Schwann catalogue lists three of some twenty Masses (including the releases under review; actually there are four available: Schwann omits the *Missa Una Musque de Busecaya*, recorded on a little-known label, Baroque Records) and there are only the records under review, in addition to the EMS disc, to represent about a hundred motets and seventy chansons and other works.

In Noah Greenberg's performance of the *Missa Pange lingua* he employs four vocal soloists, a chorus of fourteen, and three supporting instruments. Nothing illustrates better this conductor's rare combination of innate musicality and a firm grasp of style than the effectiveness with which he deploys these forces according to the nature of the music and

the sense of the text. Since the work is a very beautiful one to begin with, and the sound is first-class in both versions, the result is a highly recommendable disc. For good measure we are also given four jolly instrumental pieces (of which two are by Josquin and two anonymous) and three motets, including the affecting *Dulces exuviae*, a setting of Dido's farewell. As in the Mass, Mr. Greenberg's approach is so vital that one has to keep reminding oneself that these pieces were written not last week but four and a half centuries ago. The singing is excellent and the instruments employed—a cornett, shawms, trombones, and a small double bass—are skillfully played.

While the *Pange lingua* Mass is entirely based on a single Gregorian hymn, the *Missa de Beata Virgine* employs sections from various plainsong Masses. Even without being able to recognize these sections, or to follow the canonic and other procedures by which Josquin weaves his music into a flowing and constantly varied stream of sound, one can appreciate the lovely curves of its long lines and the warmth of its harmonies. Nor does the age of this music demand allowances. Such passages as the end of the Gloria, for example, with its gorgeous succession of harmonies succeeded by a jubilant "Amen," are, it seems to me, ageless.

Mr. Boepple, who performs the Mass *a cappella*, uses a chorus that is probably much larger than anything Josquin ever had to work with. Yet the chorus does not blur the lines of the music, although its diction is far from clear. Its intonation is good, the balances are just, and one gets the feeling that the singers are

enjoying what they are doing. There is some distortion at the end of the Credo.

The album entitled "Choral Works" comprises four pieces with Latin texts and four with French. *Dominus regnavit*, a psalm setting; *Ave Christe, immolate*, a hymn; and the motet *Tulerunt Dominum meum* are all very fine pieces, the last one, in eight parts, being especially rich and effective. They are performed by the choir without accompaniment. *O Jesu, fili David* and the French pieces are sung by an unnamed tenor accompanied by modern instruments. In *La Plus des plus* the refrain is omitted. The others are *De tous biens plaine*, *Bergerotte savoyienne*, and *Parfons regretz* (which is a particular beauty). The sound here is good.

The Decca disc provides original texts and English translations; Vox, original texts only, and not always complete.

JOSQUIN DES PREZ: *Missa Pange lingua*

New York Pro Musica, Noah Greenberg, cond.

- DECCA DL 9410. LP. \$4.98.
- • DECCA DL 79410. SD. \$5.98.

JOSQUIN DES PREZ: *Missa de Beata Virgine*

Dessoff Choirs, Paul Boepple, cond.

- Vox DL 600. LP. \$4.98.
- • Vox STDL 500600. SD. \$4.98.

JOSQUIN DES PREZ: *Choral Works*

Dessoff Choirs, Paul Boepple, cond.

- Vox DL 580. LP. \$4.98.
- • Vox STDL 500580. SD. \$4.98.

CLASSICAL

ALBENIZ: Iberia (orch. Arbós)
†**Turina: Danzas fantásticas, Op 22**

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
• LONDON CM 9263. LP. \$4.98.
• • LONDON CS 6194. SD. \$5.98.

Ansermet has an awareness of the inner pulse of Spanish music that is remarkable for one born outside the Iberian peninsula. It has given us some exceptional recorded performances in the past, and repeats the success in this collection. To sense the extent of Ansermet's achievement you need only contrast these performances with the older Argenta set (which, unfortunately, was not made in stereo). Ansermet is equal to the competition of the finest Spanish conductor of our day. The Argenta deserves your respect as a memorial to a musician who died far too young, but stereophiles will undoubtedly want the newer edition.

R.C.M.

BACH: Cantatas: No. 12, Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen; No. 29, Wir danken dir, Gott

Netania Davrath, soprano; Hilde Rössl-Majdan, contralto; Anton Dermota, tenor; Walter Berry, bass; Wiener Kammerchor; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Mogens Wøldike, cond.
• VANGUARD BG 610. LP. \$4.98.
• • VANGUARD BGS 5036. SD. \$5.95.

Both these cantatas are new, at least to the domestic catalogues. No. 12 begins with a grave little aria for oboe and orchestra and continues with a slow chorus full of expressive dissonances over a chromatic figure repeated in the bass. This section later served as basis for the "Crucifixus" in the B minor Mass, and Liszt wove elaborate variations for piano and for organ out of the chromatic bass figure. No. 29 is an affair of pomp, having been composed to celebrate the election of the Town Council of Leipzig. Its overture is a brilliant arrangement for organ, accompanied by the orchestra, of the Preludio from the Violin Partita in E major; and it ends with an imposing chorale sung by the chorus with a large orchestra including trumpets and drums. In between are some interesting movements for solo voices, including a ringing, affirmative tenor aria that is later sung in another version by the alto; there is also a broad choral fugue that was also eventually to turn up in the B minor Mass.

Dermota is strikingly good here. His voice has an attractive quality, firmness, and accuracy—witness the solid high B in his aria in No. 29. Berry, too, is his usual very competent self. Miss Rössl-Majdan has her ups and downs on records: here she is rather up than down, singing steadily and pleasantly, if without the velvety quality of which she is sometimes capable. Miss Davrath does her lone aria (in No. 29) coolly and cleanly. The chorus is, except for occasional weakness in the altos, satisfactory, and Wøldike's tempos are plausible. Although repeats are observed, about ten

measures are cut from the tenor aria in No. 29. Aside from a slightly too prominent oboe (or a slightly too timid solo alto) in the aria "Kreuz und Krone" of No. 12, the sound is fine in both versions. Unlike some other discs in this series, the present one lacks visible bands between movements. N.B.

BARTOK: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1; Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 1

György Sandor, piano; Symphony Orchestra of the Southwest German Radio, Rolf Reinhardt, cond.
• Vox PL 11350. LP. \$4.98.
• • Vox STPL 511350. SD. \$5.98.

The First Piano Concerto is a prime example of the tough-fibered, percussive, motoric side of Bartók; it is one of his greatest works, and this version of it, performed by excellent Bartókians and beautifully recorded, supersedes the only other recorded version in the American catalogues. The *Rhapsody* on the other side is quite a bad piece in the manner of Liszt, and it is of interest only because of the wonderful music its composer wrote later on. A.F.

BEETHOVEN: Fidelio

Hilde Konetzni (s), Leonore; Irmgard Seefried (s), Marcelline; Torsten Ralf (t), Florestan; Peter Klein (t), Jacquino; Paul Schoeffler (b), Pizarro; Herbert Alsen (bs), Rocco; Tomislav Neralic (bs), Don Fernando. Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera. Karl Böhm, cond.
• Vox VBX 250. Three LP. \$7.95.

Let it be stated immediately that the sound of these records is in no sense "high fidelity." The performance, taped in Vienna in the 1940's, was actually the first *Fidelio* available on LP, and the sound was considered below par even at the time of first release. In fact, it's even worse than I had remembered. All semblance of balance and perspective goes by the boards, a number of orchestral and choral details are swamped, and frightening distortion makes sections of the opera all but unlistenable.

However—the performance is outstanding. Its first asset is Karl Böhm, who shapes the score with warmth, affection, and not a little excitement. Further, the set has in Torsten Ralf a Florestan who puts his recorded competition in the shade (to think that a singer of his natural vocal gift, training, and sensitivity was all but taken for granted when at the Metropolitan); a Pizarro (Schoeffler, and at the very top of his form) who can bring to the music just the right dark coloring and rock-steady tone; a Marcelline (Seefried) who, though a little tentative here and there, is young and delicious-sounding; a plenteous-voiced Fernando (Tomislav Neralic, who, despite a very active European career, never turns up on records here); and a Jacquino (Peter Klein) who ranks with the very best. The Leonore (Konetzni) is not irreproachable. The upper-middle section of her voice is most attractive, but she has quite a time dragging herself onto some of the top tones, and in a few cases just doesn't make the grade. Still, she is musicianly—her work in the trio with Rocco and Marcelline, for instance, is quite fine—

and her unfailingly good intentions go far toward compensating for vocal lacks. Herbert Alsen, the Rocco, is a workmanlike bass, but no more, and the timbre of his voice is decidedly on the light side for this role.

The entire performance has admirable spirit. A good deal of dialogue is retained—as is not the case on the Toscanini or Furtwängler sets—and the proceedings are always idiomatic. The overture used is the one known as *Fidelio*, the Leonore No. 3 being played between the first and second scenes of Act II.

In view of the wretchedness of the sound, I cannot conscientiously recommend the album. Still, it has important values offered by none of the other versions, and its attractive price as a "Vox Box" suggests that it might make an excellent second version in anyone's collection. Surely it would be a shame to forego the likes of Böhm, Ralf, and Schoeffler, no matter how poor the sonics. C.L.O.

BEETHOVEN: Septet in E flat, Op. 20

Melos Ensemble (London).
• OISEAU-LYRE OL 50185. LP. \$4.98.
• • OISEAU-LYRE SOL 60015. SD. \$5.98.

This was one of the most popular works of Beethoven during the composer's lifetime, probably for the very reasons that make it seem rather bland to us. It is Beethoven offering polite conversation rather than rattling his thunderbolts. Toscanini used to play this music with a chamber orchestra, and his recording in that form is probably as intense and carefully shaped a performance as you will hear. There is room, though, for a good recording of the original seven-player version, and of those available I prefer this new version. It too has imagination and wit, and stereo brings the small band to life. R.C.M.

BLOCH: Trois poèmes juifs
†**Copland: Fanfare for the Common Man; Orchestral Variations**

Hartford Symphony Orchestra. Fritz Mahler, cond.
• VANGUARD VRS 1067. LP. \$4.98.
• • VANGUARD VSD 2085. SD. \$5.98.

Bloch's *Trois poèmes juifs* are rather youthful works, composed in 1913. Today they sound rather less Jewish than French; they belong in the tradition of composers like Dukas and Florent Schmitt; they are put together with great lucidity and orchestral brilliance; they are richly jeweled and very beautifully proportioned. Their interpretation is most penetrating, and the recording is first-class.

The *Orchestral Variations* of Copland constitute an orchestral version, made in 1957, of the famous *Piano Variations* composed in 1920. This is the "hard" Copland, the strong, moral, intensely serious young composer who had yet to discover the blandishments of Carl Sandburg's folk song book. The orchestration gives the music new dimensions and, towards its end, considerable magnificence, all of which is fully exploited by conductor and recording engineers alike. The *Fanfare for the Common Man* is a very short piece, but a very grand one, in Copland's best exhortatory manner. A.F.

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

Yakov Zak, piano; Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond.
• MK-ARTIA 1517. LP. \$5.98.

The present performance opens with a French horn which sounds like a fugitive saxophone solo from the Mussorgsky-Ravel *Pictures*. And aside from provincialisms vis-à-vis vibrato, the orchestra's choppy phrasing and blotchy intonation here would hardly justify its repute as one of the world's foremost ensembles. Some of the plodding quality of the orchestra's work is also evident in Zak's pianism, and he further impedes the flow of the music by retarding the ends of too many phrases. And what in the world could have happened at Letter M in the first movement? The pianist's metric distortion there is weird enough, in itself, and is all the more so as the passage is played correctly by the orchestra, and by Zak himself, the first two times around. The recorded sound is very sound. H.G.

CANTELOUBE: Chants d'Auvergne (excerpts)

Netania Davrath, soprano; Orchestra, Pierre de la Roche, cond.
• VANGUARD VRS 9085. LP. \$4.98.
• • VANGUARD VSD 2090. SD. \$5.95.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 51.

CARTER: Quartet for Strings, No. 2
†Schuman: *Quartet for Strings, No. 3*

Juilliard Quartet.
• RCA VICTOR LM 2481. LP. \$4.98.

A new and highly individual idiom like that of Elliott Carter's Quartet No. 2 is not easy to describe. Carter himself helps a little with his remarks in the notes: "I regard my scores as scenarios—auditory scenarios—for performers to act out with their instruments, dramatizing the players as individuals and as participants in the ensemble. To me the special teamwork of ensemble playing is very wonderful and moving, and this feeling is always an important consideration in my chamber music."

The music lives up to these specifications—and then some. The work is intensely dramatic, and each instrument has a special role to play in it. The first violin is highly fantastic, the viola highly lyrical, and the other two instruments lie somewhere between these two extremes. In addition to the usual four movements, plus prologue and epilogue, the work abounds in cadenzas for each player; in fact, no quartet of modern times places so heavy a stress on the virtuoso element, and the Juilliard players respond to its challenge magnificently. It is not difficult to see why this composition won the Pulitzer Prize last year. Its recording is a major event.

Although William Schuman is two years younger than Carter, he has been before the great public a good deal

longer, and his idiom is much more conservative. His third quartet—introduction and fugue, intermezzo, and rondo variations—is one of the soundest, firmest, and finest of his many works, and one in which his genius for long lines and multicolored polyphony is at its highest. This quartet, too, receives a superb performance, and both are magnificently recorded. All in all, a record which proves that American music has come of age. A.F.

CHOPIN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E minor, Op. 11

Maurizio Pollini, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Paul Kletzki, cond.
• CAPITOL G 7241. LP. \$4.98.
• • CAPITOL SG 7241. SD. \$5.98.

I was somewhat less than enthusiastic about Pollini's contribution in the two-disc panorama of the 1960 Warsaw Chopin Contest recently issued by Deutsche Grammophon. Despite the fact that the pianist was awarded first prize at the competition, his playing seemed to me rather angular and lacked the emotional finesse of the three other contestants represented. I am happy to report that the present disc compels me to alter my opinion of Pollini's playing, and drastically at that! This concerto is given a really splendid performance. The young artist's magnificent technical endowment, already noted on the earlier disc, is stunningly in evidence here. All the nasty bits of piano writing are solved with complete authority, and then some to spare. Furthermore there is much more grace and rhythmic flexibility in Pollini's playing here than was previously the case.

In attempting to describe this wonderful interpretation, I would say that here is a basically modern account of the music. The playing does not lack expressivity, however; it has, in fact, a great deal of poetry, but it is stated with objectivity and economy. Although the pianist plays with a great deal of *tempo rubato*, there is always a frame of reference linking all tempo markings and sections of a movement into a single unit. Pollini, therefore, gets faster and slower, but the speed variations are subtle, and the basic *pulse* is continuous and unchanged. This, I feel, is the way that best conveys Chopin's completely orthodox adherence to sonata form. It is a rare quality, indeed, and one which I value highly. Chopin's music, like Tchaikovsky's orchestral writing, has been exceedingly vulnerable to the myths of "tradition" that developed in the late nineteenth century. Pollini has, so to speak, freed this music from its ball-and-chain "romantic" restrictions, just as Toscanini did for Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*. As a result the music sounds thrilling and vernal. The orchestra supplies sympathetic (and uncut) support.

I would say that this new edition supersedes the Rubinstein for those in search of an athletic performance. The recorded sound, especially in stereo (the LP has a slight trace of hardness), is far beyond that of the RCA Victor disc, and Pollini's virtuosity is more high-powered than that of the older pianist. Stefan Askenase's DGG version cannot be eliminated so easily. That is a much more

Continued on page 56

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Rudolf Serkin—Seraphic and Serious

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Eight Twentieth-Century Sages Speak

AGE has never excited veneration in American society. Historically, and never more so than at the present time, we represent a youth-orientated culture. Even our language offers no equivalent of the respectful *vieillard* of French or *viejo* of Spanish; we have only "old man," with its overtones of decrepitude



Bertrand Russell

and senility. But increasing wisdom seems to be a corollary of the aging process, and no society can afford to ignore the counsel of its sages.

With this latter thought no doubt in mind—as well as the desirability of preserving the living images and the living words of great men—NBC Television instituted a series of filmed interviews called *Wisdom*. Decca has skillfully adapted the sound tracks of eight such encounters to the special virtues and strictures of the phonograph record: the editors have so deftly emphasized aural impact that one hardly misses the original visual dynamics. The result is a brace of discs that merit the attention of any listener whose interests rise above the idols of teen-agers.

The irrepressible Carl Sandburg leads off by singing a ballad; those who have heard *Flat Rock Ballads* on Columbia ML 5339 already know that Sandburg is almost as gifted a troubadour as he is a poet. He then talks, in prose so cadenced as to seem affected, of a youth that included a stretch in the Allegheny County Jail and of the influences that shaped his verse to an absorbing commentary on Lincoln and today's America. Following Sandburg comes the most exciting personality I have heard speak in years—astronomer Harlow Shapley. Here is a great humanist as well as a great scientist. In a rapid-fire delivery, with his racing thoughts ever threatening to outstrip his tongue, he discusses the inherent internationalism of science and our expanding knowledge of the universe.

He offers a fascinating hypothesis on the origin of earthly life, "a natural chemical evolution when conditions are right," and opines that "life is also widespread throughout the universe." He also hypothesizes, not without pessimism, on the perilous future of man in an environment, both cosmic and terrestrial, in which there exists but one deadly antagonist—man himself.

By contrast, Prime Minister Nehru's wide-ranging comments on the problems of India and the world at large seem pallid and generalized. Nor does the other political leader presented in this set, David Ben-Gurion, offer a great deal of stimulation. Interested parties, however, will find much of value in his comments on Israel, Zionism, and the place of the Mosaic Law in the contemporary world.

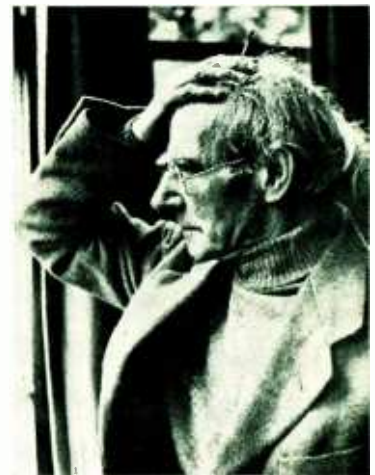
Sculptor Jacques Lipchitz, who stands in the vanguard of artistic experimentation, provides a moving and truly inspirational moment. After recalling the tensions involved when he sculptured a Virgin for a Roman Catholic church in France, he described how—with the priest's concurrence—he inscribed it. "Jacob Lipchitz, Jew, faithful to the religion of his ancestors, made this Virgin for a better understanding of human beings on this earth so that the spirit may prevail."

Another artistic experimenter, the late Frank Lloyd Wright, proves, as ever, a treat to the ear and the intellect. The old iconoclast excoriates the mediocrity of today's architecture, dismisses New York as "an overgrown, crazed village," and justifies his own ageless brashness with: "Early in life I had to choose between honest arrogance and hypocritical humility." When he describes the interrelationships between architecture and democracy, Wright displays his creative intellect at its most arresting pitch.

Philosopher Bertrand Russell outlines the changes that have come to the world

in his lifetime, the explosive emergence of Africa and Asia, and the blueprint of the world government he believes necessary to human survival. He also offers a provocative evaluation of Karl Marx as a philosopher: "Marx pretended that he wanted the happiness of the proletariat. What he really wanted was the unhappiness of the bourgeois, and it was because of that negative element, because of that hate element, that his philosophy produced disaster."

On the heels of this glittering intellectual array, perhaps only Sean O'Casey could take the stage and still stop the show: O'Casey, the master of letters who never went to school, the hard-handed hodcarrier who became perhaps the greatest playwright of our century. Like his transatlantic counterpart Sandburg, he spices his richly be-brogued conversation with a folk ballad. *Bold Phelim Brady, the Bard of Armagh*. And what is life to O'Casey? "A lament in



Sean O'Casey

one ear, but always a song in the other."

Listening to these very important albums leaves one with two conclusions. One, wisdom as exemplified by these eight sages has no common denominator, unless it be a kind of anti-parochial wit. Two, our age is heavily shadowed by The Bomb. Virtually every speaker refers to it with a mixture of wonder and apprehension. Virtually all see in it the key to the future—or lack of it—of mankind.

O. B. BRUMMELL

"WISDOM," Vol. 1 and Vol. 2

Conversations with Carl Sandburg, Dr. Harlow Shapley, Jawaharlal Nehru, Jacques Lipchitz (in Vol. 1), Conversations with David Ben-Gurion, Frank Lloyd Wright, Bertrand Russell, Sean O'Casey (in Vol. 2).

• DECCA DL 9083/84. Two LP. \$4.98 each.



The late Frank Lloyd Wright.

subjective account of the music, with less physical impact perhaps, but with somewhat greater inwardness, and the lovely little *Krakowiak* is given as a bonus. It is between Pollini and Askenase, that the ultimate selection lies. H.G.

COPLAND: *Fanfare for the Common Man; Orchestral Variations*—See Bloch: *Trois poèmes juifs*.

DEBUSSY: Piano Works

Deux arabesques: L'Île joyeuse; La plus que lente; Preludes, Book 1: Danseuses de Delphes, La Sérénade interrompue; La Cathédrale engloutie; La Danse de Puck; Minstrels. Preludes, Book 2: Général Lavigne—eccentric; Feux d'artifice; La Puerta del vino. Suite bergamasque: Clair de lune.

Philippe Entremont, piano.
 ● COLUMBIA ML 5614. LP. \$4.98.
 ● ● COLUMBIA MS 6214. SD. \$5.98.

This is Impressionist music, but Entremont's re-creation of it is highly expressionistic. Delicate tone painting is not for him, nor does he favor reticence in any form on this disc. The pianist rather resembles Rubinstein, strangely enough: both artists play Debussy with bold splashes of color, and lots of *tempo rubato*. Although some details of this performance are questionable (too much pedal at times, or a phrase here and there which becomes distorted from excessive inflection), personality is always in evidence and tremendous warmth. I, for one, do not care if Entremont makes this music all seem more akin to Roualt than to Renoir, because he is tasteful and expressive throughout. The sound is fine, especially in the stereo edition. H.G.

GABRIELI, GIOVANNI: Sacrae symphoniae and Canzoni

Choir and Brass Ensemble of the Gabrieli Festival. Hans Gillesberger, cond.
 ● VANGUARD BG 611. LP. \$4.98.
 ● ● VANGUARD BGS 5037. SD. \$5.95.

GABRIELI AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES: Canzonas and Sonatas

Concert Ensemble of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, August Wenzinger, cond.
 ● ARCHIVE ARC 3154. LP. \$5.98.
 ● ● ARCHIVE ARC 73154. SD. \$6.98.

The Vanguard disc offers eight motets and three instrumental pieces from the *Sacrae symphoniae* of 1597, and a motet (*Audi Domine hymnum*) published in 1611. The motets begin with the familiar *Jubilate Deo*, and the canzoni include the *Sonata pian e forte*, but the other works are far from well known. Among them are the very beautiful *Beata es virgo Maria* and *O quam suavis*. Aside from a few moments when the performers are not quite together, the performances are good. Mr. Gillesberger uses trumpets, trombones, and, if my ears do not deceive me, a tuba. In the canzoni they make an imposing sound. If you are interested in authenticity, however, it should perhaps be pointed out that the tuba was not invented until a couple of centuries later and that when Gabrieli specified instruments for the higher parts of his

pieces, it was not trumpets but cornetts and violins that he called for.

In the Archive record we get an entirely different type of sound. In these twelve instrumental pieces, of which seven are by Giovanni Gabrieli, two by Tiburtio Massino (died after 1609), and one each by Ludovico Viadana (1564–1645), Florentio Maschera (about 1540–about 1580), and Gabrieli's uncle Andrea (about 1510–1586), we get as close as we can nowadays to the actual sound of a large late-Renaissance orchestra. Here are recorders, shawms, a cornett, dulcians, trombones, lutes, gambas, a harpsichord, a small organ, and what Archive calls "old-measured" violins and violas. The result is an extraordinarily rich and colorful sound, an aural parallel to a painting by Titian; it is not sharp and shiny and smoothly blended from top to bottom, like the modern brasses in the Vanguard, but softly full and buzzy and composed of many different and distinctive hues.

Both discs are recommended, the Vanguard for the fine vocal pieces on it, the Archive for both the contents and the manner of performance. Stereo is of course much to be preferred in this music written for divided groups. N.B.

HANSON: Mosaics

Eastman-Rochester Orchestra, Howard Hanson, cond.
 ● MERCURY MG 50267. LP. \$4.98.
 ● ● MERCURY SR 90267. SD. \$5.98.

Mosaics is a short, multicolored, extremely attractive set of variations for orchestra. Hanson precedes its performance with an analysis—much longer than



Howard Hanson

the work itself—of the music and its orchestration, all of it most informative and illuminating. The avant-garde, especially the serialists, are very fond of extensive technical disquisitions on their compositions. Here a conservative takes over the methods of the avant-garde, to everyone's profit. The recording and performance, as always with Hanson, are beyond criticism. A.F.

JANACEK: Suite for String Orchestra; The Fiddler's Child; The Ballad of Blanik Hill

Prague Chamber Orchestra (in the Suite), Brno State Philharmonic Orchestra, Břetislav Bakala, cond.
 ● SUPRAPHON SUA 10053. LP. \$5.98.

Recording companies are beginning to do for Janáček what they did for Bartók

not long after his death. Five years ago there was not a single Janáček title in the American catalogues; now Schwann lists some fifteen major works by him on American labels, several of them available in two or three interpretations, with the disc here under consideration adding three more Janáček titles offered American record buyers.

I regret to say, however, that the current harvest of Janáček on records is decidedly poor. The very early Suite for String Orchestra, recalling Dvořák and Tchaikovsky, is by far the best work. The later tone poems, *The Fiddler's Child* and *The Ballad of Blanik Hill*, are undistinguished in thematic material and naïvely programmatic in their handling. Performances are presumably authoritative, recordings fair. A.F.

JOSQUIN DES PREZ: Missa Pange lingua

New York Pro Musica, Noah Greenberg, cond.
 ● DECCA DL 9410. LP. \$4.98.
 ● ● DECCA DL 79410. SD. \$5.98.

JOSQUIN DES PREZ: Missa de Beata Virgine

Dessoff Choirs, Paul Boepple, cond.
 ● VOX DL 600. LP. \$4.98.
 ● ● VOX STDL 500600. SD. \$4.98.

JOSQUIN DES PREZ: Choral Works

Dessoff Choirs, Paul Boepple, cond.
 ● VOX DL 580. LP. \$4.98.
 ● ● VOX STDL 500580. SD. \$4.98.

For a feature review of these albums, see page 52.

KHACHATURIAN: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D

Leonid Kogan, violin; U.S.S.R. Radio Symphony Orchestra, Aram Khachaturian, cond.
 ● MK-ARTIA 1533. LP. \$5.98.

A magnificent performance and good recording of a thoroughly trivial piece. A.F.

LISZT: Piano Works

Concert Etudes: No. 2, in F minor; No. 3, in D flat ("Un Sospiro"); Funerailles; Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 6: Liebestraum; Mephisto Waltz; Paganini Etudes: No. 3 ("La Campanella")

Ivan Davis, piano.
 ● COLUMBIA ML 5622. LP. \$4.98.
 ● ● COLUMBIA MS 6222. SD. \$5.98.

Ivan Davis has won all sorts of prizes for his playing and has received lavish praise from some critics, but I am afraid that, having heard him in recital as well as having studied this record, I cannot agree with the consensus. To me, Mr. Davis seems to lack the sheer incandescence of technique and the provocative imagination that can compensate for interpretative superficialities. To be sure, he plays accurately and efficiently—sometimes at brilliant speed—but he never takes the breath away. This music in order to "sound," must appear limpid and elegant, despotic, caressing and whimsical all at once; Mr. Davis sounds

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merely strained. His tone color is bleak and percussive, and many runs are uneven as to touch. Furthermore, his musical instincts, at least on this disc, appear unimaginative. For example, it is difficult to hear where a given phrase ends, and where another one starts. And the pianist's conception of "expression" seems to consist of an awkwardly stretched rubato which invariably produces a hiatus in the musical flow.

There are, of course, legitimate differences of opinion, and I suggest you try this disc for yourself. H.G.

MENDELSSOHN: *Symphony No. 3, in A minor, Op. 56 ("Scotch")*

Dresden State Orchestra, Rudolf Kempe, cond.

• PARLIAMENT PLP 142. LP. \$1.98.

Warmth of expression and clear definition of both outer and inner phrase lines characterize this performance. Only the *Allegro un poco agitato* of the first movement lacks some of the *agitato*, being a bit on the deliberate side. The playing and sound are highly commendable. This version may not have all the expressiveness and refinement of the recent outstanding interpretation by Peter Maag on London, but it is a more than satisfactory buy for the budget-minded. P.A.

MOZART: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 20, in D minor, K. 466; No. 23, in A, K. 488*

Eric Heidsieck, piano; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, André Vandernoot, cond.

• CAPITOL G 7240. LP. \$4.98.
• • CAPITOL SG 7240. SD. \$5.98.

Eric Heidsieck, who made his first tour of this country early this year and who now makes his American recording debut with this disc, is a young French pianist who studied with Alfred Cortot and Wilhelm Kempff (an interesting combination, the one so rhapsodic and romantic, the other so austere!). He has a naturally limpid style, and he imparts a good deal of flow and animation to these glorious pieces, most notably in the slow movements of both. (The stormy middle section of the D minor *romanza* is here given a powerful impetus that recalls Schnabel's recorded performance, no longer available.) Heidsieck plays his own cadenzas in every instance, and these are concise, mildly romantic but always in the best of taste.

There are details throughout these renditions, however, which lead me to suspect that the pianist lacks the penetration so essential for a complete Mozartean experience. Why, for example, does he slow the tempo for the second subject of the A major's first movement, or why does he distend (and sentimentally distort) the shape of a phrase in many instances? There is inconsistency in the execution of appoggiaturas too; some are short, clipped, and wrongly stressed before the main beat, others are lengthened to an extent that the fundamental note values are lost. There are a few strange emphasizing of nonexistent inner voices—a carry-over from the days of salon-romanticism. Vandernoot and the orchestra provide only routine support at best, and the sound, better in stereo

than in monophony, is rather muzzy.

I look forward to hearing more of Heidsieck, who is a lively and interesting player; but in music of such uncompromising perfection as this, he lacks the distinction of a Gieseking, a Schnabel, a Richter, or an Edwin Fischer. H.G.

ROSSINI: *La Cambiale di matrimonio*

Renata Scotto (s), Fanny; Giovanna Fioroni (ms), Clarina; Nicola Monti (t), Edoardo Milfort; Rolando Panerai (b), Tobia Mill; Renato Capecchi (b), Slook; Mario Petri (bs), Norton. Virtuosi di Roma, Renato Fasano, cond.

• MERCURY OL 2109. Two LP. \$9.96.
• • MERCURY SR 29009. Two SD. \$11.96.

After giving us fine recordings of Paisiello's *Barber* and Pergolesi's *Serva Padrona*, Mercury has released a recording of Rossini's first opera, produced at Venice in 1810, when the composer was eighteen. Even in his first performed opera, Rossini managed to borrow something from an earlier work, for the overture is one he had written in the course of his studies with Mattei.

Though the opera is relatively short—intended for performance in one act—the libretto is joyously complex. It concerns an agreement between Tobia Mill, a blithering tyrant whose opening cavatina speaks of the insuperable difficulties of deciphering the markings on a globe, and Slook (pronounced "Zluka") of Canada, a Colonial boor who makes Baron Ochs seem a model of etiquette. ("He is dressed outrageously," reads the stage direction for his first entrance, "and is ferociously defending himself from the servants, who are trying to relieve him of his hat and cane and to kiss his hands.") Mill and Slook have, by correspondence, entered into a contract (the "*Cambiale*" of the title), which specifies that Slook will pay Mill a certain sum for the first young lady Mill can produce, provided the merchandise meets certain personal specifications. Mill plans to take this opportunity to marry off his daughter, Fanny; naturally, she has a different idea for her future, being enamored of Edoardo Milfort, and the young lovers are aided by the inevitable scheming servants, Norton (cashier) and Clarina (chambermaid). From the resistance of Fanny and the dark threats of Norton, Clarina, and Edoardo, Slook speedily concludes that Fanny is not the girl for him, and joins in plotting to release Fanny from the terms of the marriage contract. This he does, by making Milfort his heir and returning the contract to Mill. Finale.

The libretto is full of wry, rather funny social observation. The impossible Slook, for instance, is clearly the average cultivated European's picture of the American. ("The American is a simpleton," remarks Norton. "He thought European wives were for sale like goods in a store. Well, he's not entirely mistaken.") Slook is perhaps even funnier today than he was in 1810, for he is the obnoxious but monied tourist, at once repellent and valuable to the European. And in the long run, he proves to be considerably more civilized, more sensible, more generous, and—when a duel threatens—more courageous than the European Mill.

All this is set to music typically Rossinian—engaging, flowing, often exhila-

rating. The ensembles are not as fully developed as in some later Rossini operas, and the overture, though quite pleasant, is not one of his most memorable. Some of the music was used again by Rossini later—the last section of the soprano's principal aria turns up again in *Il Barbiere*. Aesthetically embarrassing as it may be, I must observe that the music seems quite apropos in both cases, and that I can't see any reason at all why Rossini *shouldn't* use it over. *La Cambiale* is not a comic masterpiece on a level with the *Barber*—either Paisiello's or Rossini's own—but it is charming entertainment, and a welcome addition to the recorded repertoire.

Mercury's production is in the same select class as the company's earlier excursions into opera buffa. I wish that Scotto's voice were a bit softer and more pliant—many of the higher phrases are none too comfortable for her—but there are very few sopranos who could fill the part as well. Capecchi turns in another of his really expert buffo jobs as Slook, while Panerai sings solidly and characterizes Mill with considerable precision. Neither Monti nor Petri have a great deal to do, but it is a pleasure to have such experienced and expert artists in the roles; Fioroni is in the correct mold as Clarina. The Virtuosi di Roma provide their usual impeccable support.

I do have some reservations about the sound. There is a faintly hollow, almost echoed quality to much of it, probably due to the acoustics of the Teatro Grande in Brescia. I do not find it unpleasant, but some listeners may. The miking is also very close; this is fine when Petri or Monti is singing, but in the case of Panerai, it adds up to a bit too much shouting in one's ear. The stereo spread is satisfactory, and the over-all sound quality in both versions quite good, with excellent surfaces on the review copies. C.L.O.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 6, in C*

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.

• PARLIAMENT PLP 141. LP. \$1.98.

With two whole surfaces to expend on this work (which Mercury gets on one, and in stereo to boot) you would expect better sound than this coarsely bright disc provides. Presumably the fault is in the master rather than the transfer to lacquer. Scherchen's tempos are characteristically deliberate, but since he always retains a firm sense of motion, in time you are won over. The Beecham set is probably his strongest competition: I'll not say he's overcome it. R.C.M.

SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 43*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

• ANGEL 35891. LP. \$4.98.

• • ANGEL S 35891. SD. \$5.98.

I have never been fond of Von Karajan's Sibelius, in which I find too much refining of intentionally rough edges, but here the conductor positively drags his way through the score with heavy feet. This is especially apparent in the second and fourth movements; in the latter his tempos are about half the normal speed, and the results are dreary. Angel's stereo

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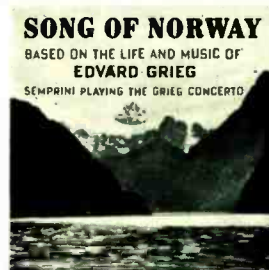
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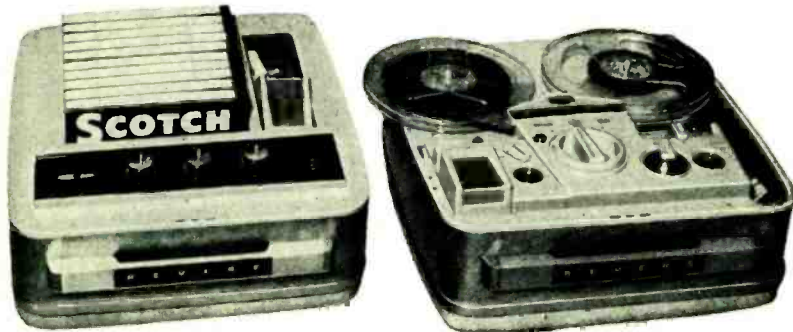
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has a reasonable spread, though it is not very directional, and the heavier passages tend to become clouded by distortion. If you want this symphony in stereo, Kletzki, Monteux, or Paray are all safe, commendable choices. P.A.

STRAUSS, JOHANN II: *Graduation Ball* (arr. Dorati)
 †Weber: *Invitation to the Dance, Op. 65* (trans. Berlioz)

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Willi Boskovsky, cond.
 • LONDON CM 9268. LP. \$4.98.
 • • LONDON CS 6199. SD. \$5.98.

Graduation Ball is a charming ballet by David Lichine in which the members of a boys' military academy visit a girls' boarding school for the annual dance. There are social dances, dance competitions, *divertissements*, and fleeting romances, all carried out to Strauss's waltzes, polkas, marches, and galops, colorfully arranged by Antal Dorati. This is the only recording of the complete score currently available, and it is a good one. A Viennese himself, Boskovsky has caught the spirit of both the music and the ballet, and turns in a crisp, vivacious performance, perhaps a bit too fast for dancing but just right for listening. His treatment of the Weber-Berlioz *Invitation to the Dance*—listed here under its balletic title *Le Spectre de la rose*—is marked by that same vivacity, which certainly doesn't harm the music, though I might have preferred a little more suavity and tenderness. The orchestral playing throughout is well disciplined, and London's stereo sound is eminently clear and spacious. P.A.

STRAUSS, JOHANN II: *Waltzes*

Voices of Spring; The Emperor; Vienna Life; On the Beautiful Blue Danube; Tales from the Vienna Woods.

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
 • COLUMBIA ML 5617. LP. \$4.98.
 • • COLUMBIA MS 6217. SD. \$5.98.

Ever since his days as conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Ormandy has demonstrated that he has a true Viennese way with the music of the waltzing Strausses. He always seems to employ just the right amount of rubato, just the perfect anticipation of the after-beats, not to mention the sweeping lushness of his strings. The waltzes presented here are not meant to be danced to; these expansive interpretations are strictly for the concert hall, yet they certainly convey the movement of the waltz. Straussian purists may object to the omission of many repeats and the use of violins instead of a zither in *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, but these are unimportant details in a collection of waltz performances that really sparkle and glow. Columbia's sound is of matching high quality; the monophonic edition has a nice spaciousness to it, while stereo adds that extra touch of concert hall naturalness. P.A.

SUPPE: *Overtures*

Die schöne Galathées Pique Dame; Leichte Kavallerie; Dichter und Bauer; Ein Morgen, ein Mittag, ein Abend in Wien; Boccaccio.

Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond.

- MERCURY MG 50269. LP. \$4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90269. SD. \$5.98.

I do not know whether this is the first Paray release to be recorded in Detroit's Cass Memorial High School Auditorium, but I'll wager it won't be the last: the crystalline acoustics here obviously are an engineering staff's delight—even if, in this case, the Mercury technicians have been tempted to overexploit them by too close miking and consequent tonal edginess. The performances also are extremely hard-driven and perhaps even more virtuosic than Solti's recent Suppé program for London, which, however, placed the listener well back in a large hall, whereas here he is right up in the front row. It's an electrifying sonic experience, but it would have been more musically stimulating if Paray's boldness had also extended into his program choices. Has he, like almost every other conductor, forgotten that Suppé wrote some twenty-five other opera and operetta overtures, at least a few of which must be as vigorous and tuneful as the present warhorses? R.D.D.

TURINA: *Danzas fantásticas, Op. 22*
—See Albéniz: *Iberia* (orch. Arbós).

VERDI: *Nabucco* (excerpts)

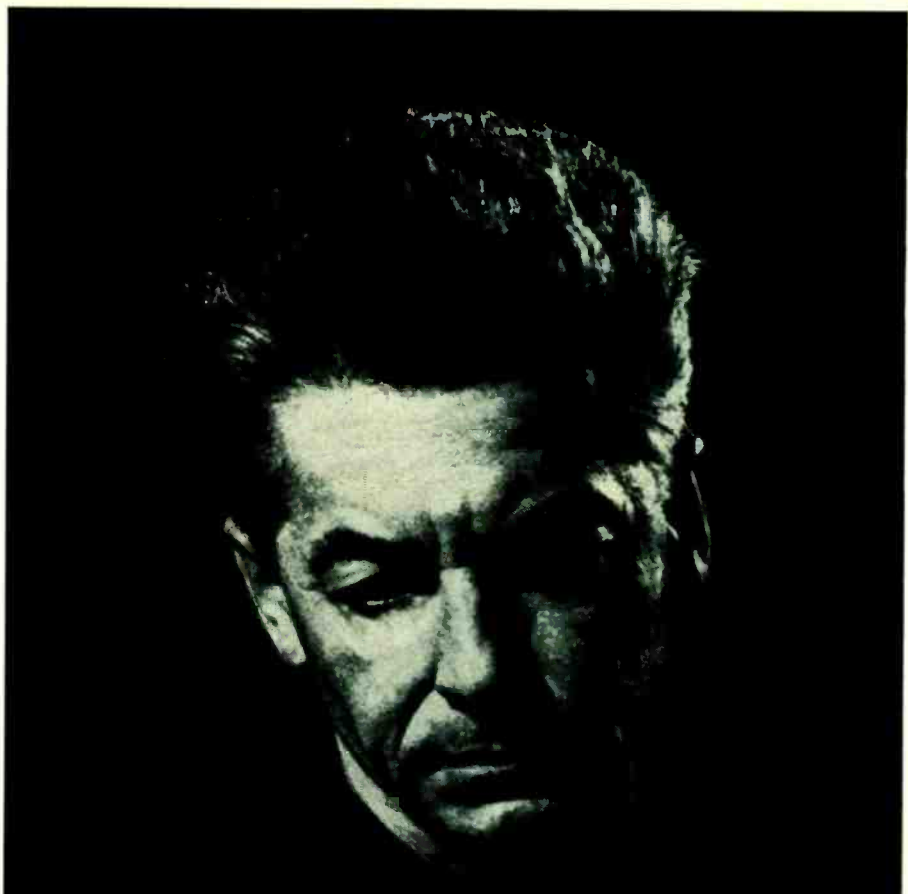
Gli arredi festivi; Come notte; Fenena, O mia diletta; Anch'io dischiuso un giorno; Chi mi toglie; Oh di qual'onta aggravasi; Va, pensiero; Del futuro nel bujo discerno; Dio di Giuda; Su me morente.

Norma Giusti (s), Abigaille; Erika Wien (ms), Fenena; Giuseppe Savio (t), Ismaele; Lawrence Winters (b), Nabucco; Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs), Zaccaria. Hamburg Radio Chorus; Musica et Litera Orchestra, George Singer, cond.
• • Asco A 106. SD. \$4.98.

With most operas, one would not give such a selection the time of day. There is only one *Nabucco* on records (Cetra's), however, and that is an old recording of a mediocre performance. Since many opera lovers will probably be content with excerpts from Verdi's third opera (though I'm not with them, since I think *Nabucco* is wonderfully awful theatre and very exciting music), this presentation of slightly less than half the score is worth some attention.

Actually, the record is not without merit. Winters is not very imaginative in the standard Italian repertory, but he is a most respectable baritone, with a ringing voice of considerable flexibility, and his singing—as such—is quite superior to Silveri's on the complete set. I wish Asco had included the cabaletta to his well-sung "*Dio di Giuda*." There is no denying the rather sad decay of Rossi-Lemeni's instrument, once the most promising on the basso scene. He remains a dynamic singer, though, and is assuredly leagues ahead of Cetra's totally inept Albino Gaggi.

The Abigaille is a young American who, I see, has been singing such roles as Norma, in addition to this larynx-masher. She pushes, pulls, pinches, and drives. Her voice is fundamentally a pleasant one, which sounds as if it might



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do justice to Mimì, Manon Lescaut, or perhaps Desdemona, if properly handled. But at the present rate, there will be not a shred of singing tone left in a very short time. A brief retirement, further study, and vocal reorientation are called for, not performances of Abigaille.

The tenor, a typical provincial bawler with a few niceties of style, and the mezzo, who appears to be a soprano with no high notes, fortunately have little to do. Orchestra and chorus are ready and willing, and, for the most part, able. The sound is crude but, if toned down a bit, rather pleasingly ferocious. I would recommend buying the complete Cetra set, which is complete and never less than professional, but Verdi lovers to whom the difference in price is important should investigate. C.L.O.

VERDI: *La Traviata*

Anna Moffo (s), Violetta; Lilians Poli (s), Annina; Anna Reynolds (ms), Flora Bervoix; Richard Tucker (t), Alfredo; Piero de Palma (t), Gastone; Adelio Zagonara (t), Giuseppe; Robert Merrill (b), Giorgio Germont; Franco Calabrese (b), Baron Douphol; Sergio Liviabella (b), Messenger; Vito Susca (bs), Marquis d'Obigny; Franco Ventriglia (bs), Dr. Grenvil. Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House, Fernando Previtali, cond.

• RCA VICTOR LM 6154. Three LP. \$9.98.

• • RCA VICTOR LSC 6154. Three SD. \$11.98.

This excellent edition should be given

place at or near the top of anyone's list of recorded *Traviatas*. Among its many virtues, the most important is the work of conductor Previtali, who exemplifies the best sort of Italian opera maestro. He provides a firm beat and a sense of balance that clarifies texture; at the same time, he brings to the music a distinct understanding of Verdi's vocal writing, with its expansive rise and fall. He is squarely in the tradition, without ever sagging to the level of *répétiteur*. I should call this the best-led *Traviata* on records.

One sure indication of Previtali's success with the score is the accomplishment of the singers under him. If I speak of Robert Merrill first in this connection, it is not to slight the other principals, but to note the really remarkable improvement in his Germont. He has, of course, recorded the role before, on the old Toscanini set. He was near the beginning of his career at that time, and much of the difference in his singing then and now can undoubtedly be ascribed to accumulated experience and increased maturity. Just the same, much of the heightened sense of textual comprehension, of the closer attention to musical nuance, and of finer, more relaxed vocalism, must be credited to a conductor who gives him time to make his points, as well as plenty of support and impetus. This is singing worthy of Merrill's outstanding potential, and a Germont that can stand with Warren's as the best on records.

The Violetta is Anna Moffo, and she is first-rate. Her generous temperament and soft, full, feminine voice are exactly right for the role; she sings with feeling and understanding, in addition to much finely tinted vocalism. I might add that, since she is a beautiful girl and an excellent actress, her Violetta is something to be seen as well as heard—but it's good to have the audible half of the part on records.

I am not quite as delighted with Richard Tucker's Alfredo as with Merrill's Germont or Moffo's Violetta. His voice really does not have all the lyric limpidity the music asks for, and he gives us emotion of the wrong quantity and wrong kind in the last act. Still, there is a wealth of rich tone here, and of stylistic flair—he holds his end up.

Orchestra, chorus, and all the *comparsi* do their jobs to near-perfection, and the sound is superb in both stereo and mono versions, with stereo movement and perspectives intelligently controlled. C.L.O.

WEBER: *Invitation to the Dance, Op. 65* (trans. Berlioz)—See Strauss, Johann II: *Graduation Ball* (arr. Dorati).

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Those who saw this program on television last season will recall it as one of Bernstein's best, neither portentous nor patronizing in tone, well illustrated with musical examples, and as interesting to and assimilable by the culturally naive as the culturally overdeveloped. It deserved resurrection, if that's the word, and I hope it receives the kind of circulation it deserves to schools and homes where there are young people. I enjoyed hearing it again (in fact I played parts of it twice, with continuing pleasure), and I'm a jaded old music critic. It's a studio product, of course, which shows up in the dry quality of the big orchestra passages, and Bernstein's sibilants slash at you occasionally, but all this is relatively minor.

The performance of *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks* is quite a good one, and happily it is made all the better by stereo. R.C.M.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CHAPEL CHOIR: "Chorus, Organ, Brass, and Percussion"

Dello Joio: *To Saint Cecilia*. Purcell: *O God, Thou Art My God*. Vaughan Williams: *O, Clap Your Hands*. Holst: *Eternal Father*. Britten: *Hymn to Saint Cecilia*, Op. 27.

Barbara Springer, soprano; Catherine Mallon, contralto; Gene Bullard, tenor; Edward Doe, bass; Columbia University Chapel Choir; Ralph Kneeream, organ; Brass and Percussion Ensemble, Searle Wright, cond.

• • KAPP KCL 9057. SD. \$5.98.

The over-all title seems calculated to entice sound fanciers into perhaps unfamiliar realms. If it succeeds, such sonic sensation seekers are not likely to feel duped since, despite the relative paucity of percussion here (restricted to chimes in the Holst anthem and to timpani and cymbals in the Vaughan Williams motet), there is an exciting clangor of variegated brass timbres in the Dello Joio and Vaughan Williams works, more restrained yet notably solid organ pedal sonorities in those by Purcell and Holst, and throughout superbly panoramic reverberantly St. Paul's-Chapel-authentic stereo recording.

Yet the primary appeal of this program lies, of course, in the predominantly choral music itself: ranging from the broadly devotional Purcell, through an exultant Vaughan Williams and serene Holst (the latter particularly distinctive for his floridly lilting final *Alleluia!*) to Dello Joio's high-tensioned and Britten's enchantingly atmospheric hymns to the patron saint of music. The chorus is apparently a relatively small one and, in its somewhat distant miking, tends to be covered up by the brass and percussion. But its obviously young and fresh-voiced soloists and members sing with enthusiasm throughout and at their best, in the intricate textures of Britten's unaccompanied masterpiece, with deeply moving eloquence. Their skillful conductor well may be proud of them. The technically excellent disc production does not neglect jacket-publication of the complete texts involved, I am glad to report. R.D.D.

SYLVIA MARLOWE: "Six Americans"

✓ Sylvia Marlowe, harpsichord.
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Here are six contemporary American compositions for harpsichord, all of them commissioned by the artist who performs them on this disc. Side 1 opens with a Serenade involving flute (Claude Monteux), oboe (Harry Shulman), and cello (Bernard Greenhouse) as well as harpsichord. The other five pieces are harpsichord solos and include sonatas by Harold Shapero, Virgil Thomson, and Vittorio Rieti, a Toccata by John Lessard, and an Intermezzo and Bagatelle by Arthur Berger. Except for the brilliant, thoroughly modern piece by Weber, all these compositions have a certain overlay of archaism; they are homages to this and that, emphasizing tunefulness, open texture, the rich color palette of

the harpsichord, and the vigorous charm of which it is capable. Lessard does something more; he takes off from the toccatas of Bach, and his work is extraordinarily vivid, eloquent, and powerful. The performance throughout is the last word, and the recording is excellent. A.F.

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Vol. 4 is extraordinarily interesting. It contains works by Antonín Rejcha (Anton Reicha), who was born in the same year as Beethoven and became acquainted with him, and who taught Berlioz, Liszt, Gounod, and Franck. One



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side is occupied by a Quartet in D for Four Flutes, a work of much charm, with some delightful ideas, such as the rich sustained chords in the slow movement, and it is very cleverly written for the instruments. The overside offers six of his twenty-four Trios for Horns, Op. 82. I was particularly struck by No. 4. All the works on this disc are excellently performed.

Two concertos occupy Vol. 5, a rather routine Bassoon Concerto in C by Jan Antonín Kozeluh (1738-1814) and a considerably more attractive Flute Concerto in D by Antonín Fils (Filtz; 1730-1760). They are well played by Karel Pivonka, bassoon. Oldřich Slaviček, flute, and the Prague Symphony Orchestra conducted by Václav Smetáček.

Vol. 6 contains organ works—four by Josef Seger (1716-1782), two by František Xaver Brixl (1732-1771), and one each by Jan Zach (1699-1773), Karel Blazej Kopřiva (1756-1785), and Jan Křtitel Vanhal (Johann Baptist Wanhal; 1739-1813). They are all well-made preludes or toccatas and fugues. Among the Seger pieces is an extended and substantial Fugue in F minor of considerable power, a dreamy Pastorale that seems a bit too long, and a Prelude in D that is actually a rather brilliant toccata. Outstanding among the other works are Zach's chromatic and impressive Prelude and Fugue in C minor and the charming and folklike Pastoral Prelude by Kopřiva. These works are played by three able performers on as many organs in Prague. The sound on all three discs is satisfactory. N.B.

LEONTYNE PRICE: *Operatic Arias*

Verdi: *Aida: Ritorna vincitor; O patria mia. Il Trovatore: Tacea la notte; D'amor sull'ali rosee. Puccini: Madama Butterfly: Un bel di, vedremo; Tu, tu, piccolo iddio. La Rondine: Chi il bel sogno di Doretta. Tosca: Vissi d'arte. Turandot: Signore, ascolta; Tu che di gel sei cinta.*

Leontyne Price, soprano; Rome Opera House Orchestra. Arturo Basile and Oliviero de Fabritiis, conds.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2506. LP. \$4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2506. SD. \$5.98.

Some highly impressive singing, occasionally flecked by what seems needless vocal roughness. It certainly sounds as if Miss Price could manage the octave drops between G naturals in "Ritorna vincitor" ("Struete! Struete!") without a sudden shift from a luminous tone to a dry, chesty one; yet she does not do so. We must allow that the soprano does not achieve more than superficial identification with some of her characters; Butterfly's sobs after "Gioca, gioca..." are pretty unconvincing.

In the main, though, her sense of style is accurate, and the voice is so beautiful and imposing as to overcome just about any sort of resistance, even in this program of predigested chestnuts. It might be noted that the *Trovatore* arias are taken from the recently released complete set. The sound is serviceable in both editions. C.L.O.

HERMANN SCHERCHEN: *Scherchen Conducts Trumpet Concertos*

Haydn: *Concerto for Trumpet and Or-*

chestra, in E flat. Torelli: Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra, in D. Vivaldi: Concerto for Two Trumpets and Orchestra, in C, P. 75. Handel: Concerto for Two Trumpets and Orchestra, in D.

Roger Delmotte, Arthur Haneuse, trumpets; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 18954. LP. \$4.98.

To the several excellent available recordings of the Haydn may now be added another. Mr. Delmotte, here and throughout the disc, provides some first-rate playing, with almost impeccable intonation, a creamy legato, and, when needed, the lightness and agility of a woodwind. The Vivaldi is also available in Kapp's series of "Music for Trumpet and Orchestra." The Torelli, however, is not the same as the Torelli concerto in the same key in that series; it is the same as the Trumpet Concerto in D issued on a Haydn Society disc some years ago. There the trumpet was silent in the slow movement, while here it plays a few phrases. What gives, gentlemen? The Handel seems to be new to microgroove. It is an earlier version of the overture in the *Fireworks Music*; it is not a concerto at all, and the trumpets are not especially featured. Mr. Delmotte is ably seconded by Mr. Haneuse in the Vivaldi, and the orchestral playing throughout is rather better than usual in such collections, although there are a couple of moments in the Haydn when the orchestra is slightly behind the soloist. No continuo instrument is audible in the baroque compositions. N.B.

CESARE VALLETTI: *"Favorite Songs"*

Paisiello: *Nel cor più non mi sento.* Pergolesi: *Tre giorni son che Nina.* Giordani: *Caro mio ben.* Caccini: *Amarilli.* Gluck: *O del mio dolce ardor.* Martini: *Plaisir d'amour.* Donaudy: *Vaghiissima sembianza; O del mio amato ben.* Arr. Quilter: *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes; Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms: Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind.* Dello Joio: *There Is a Lady Sweet and Kind.* Rachmaninoff: *The Isle; In the Silence of the Night.* Grieg: *I Love Thee; A Dream.*

Cesare Valletti, tenor; Leo Taubman, piano.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2540. LP. \$4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2540. SD. \$5.98.

Valletti is not in the free vocal condition here that has characterized his previous song recordings. The upper-middle portion of his voice sounds white and blatty, the top tones thin and dangerously constricted. Musically and interpretatively, too, he is not at his best; the Grieg numbers are sentimentalized, and *Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms* distended far out of proper proportion.

There are entrancing moments for the tenor is a master of *arie antiche*—*Tre giorni son che Nina* and *Amarilli* are especially beautiful. On the whole, however, this is disappointing singing and makes one apprehensive about the artist's vocal health. The sound is respectable, considering that the recording was done live at Valletti's Town Hall recital last fall. Taubman's accompaniments never rise above the routine. C.L.O.

by Harris Goldsmith

The Romantic Piano Concerto

A DISCOGRAPHY

Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

"Here is Tchaikovsky," wrote J. F. Runciman in London's *Saturday Review* (June 17, 1899), "a most 'advanced' musician, caring nothing for the rules and forms that served his musical forebears. . . . He wrote a concerto in his earliest days, and instead of withdrawing it altogether, he revised it! The themes are without exception orchestral themes; not one of them has been thought in the piano idiom. They are simply faked, by means of scales and arpeggios, to suit the piano."

Before dismissing the above quotation as vituperous nonsense written by a blindly prejudiced contemporary of Tchaikovsky, scrutinize it carefully. Actually, it contains more than a little truth. Tchaikovsky was never much more than a competent performer on the keyboard instrument, and his writing for it is frequently of a loosely knit, even crude, character. As with many of Tchaikovsky's compositions, his piano concertos alternate sections of lyric beauty with passages of empty cadential repetitiousness, written in awkwardly spread chords and scales. Yet by their bold creativity and extrovert splashes of color, both of the complete piano concertos are raised above their defects into the realm of great masterpieces.

The first of the two concertos, in B flat minor, is, of course, one of the most popular pieces of classical music ever composed. The later G major, while unfortunately neglected, is, to my ears, the better of the two works. There is a more subtle emotion in its pages, with graciously mercurial piano writing far removed from the stark bravura of the First Concerto. In the second movement, Tchaikovsky suggests the operatic love-duet in the tender principal theme by assigning the motive to violin and cello. The third movement ends the opus on a note of jubilation.

CONCERTO NO. 1, IN B FLAT MINOR, OP. 23

With the forty-some editions of this Concerto currently in the catalogue, it is not necessary to accept anything less than the superb, although a few lesser-rank versions perhaps deserve mention. The Istomin-Ormandy (Columbia), Gilels-Reiner (RCA Victor), Gilels-Ivanov (MK-Artia), Cziffra-Dervaux (Angel) and Monique Bruchollerie (Vox) are all less distinguished approximations of the celebrated Horowitz-Toscanini discs. Witold Malcuzyński (Angel) and Alexander Uninsky (Epic), on the other

hand, are in the Rubinstein tradition. Rubinstein's own performance in his present edition (RCA) is not extraordinary enough to justify the outmoded engineering and ragged orchestral work. Fortunately, we can look forward to a remake from this pianist. Cliburn's disc (RCA Victor) could have been superb, but was recorded when the pianist was no doubt exhausted just after his triumphant return from Moscow. Moreover, Kondrashin was struggling with an insufficiently rehearsed ensemble. (not the Symphony of the Air, which played the work in concert for Cliburn). At any rate, the disc is almost grotesquely deliberate throughout—Tchaikovsky with tired blood.

As for Curzon, he rates a letter of commendation for his poised, musicianly playing, but in Tchaikovsky the pianist lacks the emotional thrust desired and London's sound falls below its best stand-



Sviatoslav Richter

ards. So does Westminster's for the interesting Pavel Serebriakov rendition.

The Richter, Shura Cherkassky, and Sergio Fiorentino discs are lyrical, introverted, and imaginative. All three pianists stress the color and poetry of the music. These are highly subjective and temperamental readings with innovations of tempo and dynamics. Many listeners will object to the numerous tempo changes in all of these performances, but few will question the ravishing imaginations of the soloists.

Both Horowitz-Toscanini discs are overwhelming in their sheer voltage. Horowitz is not at all concerned with poetry and tone color here. He stresses the thunderous, bravura characteristics of the writing, and his rhythmic impact is almost despotic. On LCT 1012, Toscanini's personality seems to dominate

the performance: this is an extremely taut, classically disciplined reading. All of the usual tempo relaxations are resisted here, including the traditional easing for the first movement's second subject. The pianist seems content to shape his virtuoso execution to the pizzicatos and cross-accents of the orchestral playing, and in moments of climax, he sounds a mite disappointing. (The double octaves at the close of the finale sound strained, for example.)

On LM 2319, Horowitz asserts himself more. This is a broader, more powerfully inflected performance than his other one, and he rises to the climaxes gallantly. On this disc, the microphones also favor the soloist—too much so in the second movement, where the cello solo is obscured. Toscanini furnishes moments of hair-raising excitement here, but the performance, as a whole, is not as strongly imprinted with the conductor's personal style. The recorded sound is considerably firmer on this record (made at an actual concert) than on LCT 1012, and all things considered, this is the preferred edition of the two.

Byron Janis combines the best qualities of several readings. His introduction is like Rubinstein's in its breadth and firmness, his bravura octaves come close to rivaling Horowitz's, and there is lyricism aplenty when required. Menges handsomely supports the pianist in his best recorded performance to date.

In choosing a single version, let us abandon the Richter-Mravinsky (MK-Artia) for reasons of economy. The same pianist can be heard, with better sound, on a disc that costs a third as much. Cherkassky is set aside for the same reason: Richter's Parliament disc offers a better bargain. Neither Horowitz disc has modern sound. The inexpensive Fiorentino is marred by lumpy orchestral support, in no way comparable to the Czech Philharmonic for Richter's similar effort.

The two finalists then, are Janis-Menges, and Richter-Ancel. Janis' less controversial performance will appeal to more people than will the Richter reading. For that reason, I award it first prize. But if you respond (as I do) to the whimsey and delicacy of the latter's pianism here, you will probably like it *better* than the more objective Janis rendition—and it has the advantage of economy.

—Janis; London Symphony Orchestra, Herbert Menges, cond. Mercury MG 50266 (LP); SR 90266 (SD).

—Richter; Czech Philharmonic, Karel Ancel, cond. Parliament PLP 120 (LP).

—Cherkassky; Berlin Philharmonic, Leopold Ludwig, cond. Decca DL 9605 (LP).

—Horowitz; NBC Symphony, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victor LM 2319 (LP).

—Fiorentino; Hamburg Pro Musica, George Hurst, cond. Forum 70016 (LP); S 70016 (SD).

—Horowitz; NBC Symphony, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victor LCT 1012 (LP).

CONCERTO NO. 2, IN G, OP. 44

This concerto is usually performed in the revised edition by Alexander Siloti, and performers often cut the work further.

Cherkassky plays it in Siloti's version, but without cuts. He gives a magnificent display of controlled virtuosity, and the conductor and orchestra support him in grand style. The splendidly detailed reproduction captures the pianist's ravishing tone with mellow beauty.

Tatiana Nikolayeva plays the original text with more sobriety, but the recorded sound and orchestral playing let her down. Neither her disc (Classic Editions) nor the agitated Farnadi-Scherchen (Westminster) affords the Cherkassky much competition.

—Cherkassky; Berlin Philharmonic, Richard Kraus, cond. Decca DL 9916 (LP).

Grieg (1843–1907)

Grieg wrote only one piano concerto, but his lone effort in that field ranks, with *Peer Gynt*, as his most acclaimed composition. Written in 1868, when the composer was twenty-five, the piece contains a good deal of highly effective piano writing. The instrumental approach bears resemblance to Liszt's bravura style, but the thematic content of the music is highly nationalistic. Withal, Grieg's A minor Concerto is primarily a *lyrical* creation. It will be noted that this minor master was generally more at ease in small-scaled pieces. To be sure, the present composition is a firmly put-together sonata-allegro edifice, but its adherence to conventional form is at times a bit conspicuous. The development section of the first movement, for example, sounds a bit mechanistic and stilted, as if Grieg's inspiration were running thin there. It therefore behooves performers to stress the economy of the form when they play this work; otherwise, the occasional threadbare episodes take on added emphasis.

CONCERTO IN A MINOR, OP. 16

Curzon's performance stresses the graceful simplicity of the music. His is a lightweight, singularly unbombastic rendition. All the technical elements are marvelously secure under this pianist's able fingers, but he avoids the rhetoric and glitter of the more conventional "romantic" reading. Tempos are straightforward and the total effect of this playing has a beguiling freshness. Fjeldstad is a notably tauter, more animated collaborator than Fistoulari was for Curzon's earlier recording of the work.

Giesecking also favors a lightweight sonority and gives a highly diminutive reading. This pianist's attack is more sharply pointed than Curzon's, and he indulges in slight, but tasteful, tempo changes. There is a definite profile in

evidence throughout the performance, and also a kind of aristocratic elegance. Karajan's handling of the orchestral forces is distinguished and well controlled. The sound is agreeable, but slightly woolly.

Dinu Lipatti's recording is in more dramatic vein, but it is far removed from the standard, bravura interpretation one hears so often. The pianist favors brisk tempos, and little *tempo*



The late Dinu Lipatti

rubato. He keeps the music moving ahead by adopting square-cut outer forms and massive thrust. (Giesecking and Curzon work in more circular phrase motions.) The 1947 sound is also a bit woolly.

Novaes brings a warmly intuitive quality to her reading. Her tone pearls and ripples in this highly subjective performance. Although the orchestral forces are not of the best, the spontaneous flair of the soloist's style is very attractive.

Rubinstein's and György Cziffra's (Angel) are "Grand Manner" presentations. Everything about Rubinstein's performance is good-natured, generous, and expansive. His tempos are distended and rhetorical, the tone production full-bodied, and bravura is played up for all it is worth. Now this is all very well, but it seems to me that Rubinstein's efforts at expressivity are not always paralleled by his attentiveness to Grieg's printed instructions. Indeed, the phrase divisions and dynamic curves are largely Rubinstein's own. Furthermore, the stereo version of his disc has a poorly judged side break before the third movement. Cziffra's flights of fancy outstrip even Rubinstein's. This pianist even tampers with the text, and his bleak, hard-toned playing doesn't have Rubinstein's compensating emotional warmth.

Fleisher brings a degree of ardor and fresh musical thinking to this oft-played composition, but he is far too agitated and intense for the essentially gracious music. He imparts a Beethovenish vehemence to the phrasing, and his tone production is too blunt and percussive. Nevertheless, his disc has considerable interest.

Solomon (Capitol) and Katin (Richmond) are sane and unpretentious in their presentations, but the conductorial control, in both instances, is not as focused as it should be.

—Curzon; London Philharmonic, Olivin Fjeldstad, cond. London CM 9029 (LP); CS 6157 (SD).

—Lipatti; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond. Columbia ML 4525 (LP).

—Giesecking; Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Columbia ML 4885 (LP).

—Novaes; Vienna Pro Musica, Hans Swarowsky, cond. Vox PL 8520 (LP).

—Rubinstein; RCA Victor Symphony, Arthur Wallenstein, cond. RCA Victor LM 2087 (LP); also included in LM 6039 (two LP); LSC 2429 (SD).

—Fleisher; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Epic LC 3689 (LP); BC 1080 (SD).

Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

Rachmaninoff's compositional style might be termed a synthesis of Tchaikovsky and Scriabin. In his symphonies and concertos, basically conventional as regards form and harmony, a brooding, almost morose quality is always present. Rachmaninoff favors complex rhythmic figurations, and in his piano writing creates motion by rapid progressions of notes, most of which move too quickly to be heard individually. There is a peculiarly kaleidoscopic aural glitter in Rachmaninoff's keyboard style, as pronounced in his own creative efforts as it was in his performances of other music.

The First Concerto, written in its original form in 1891, was extensively revised in 1917. The revised version is a fine work which contains many of the same qualities of robust lyricism that distinguish the immensely popular Second Concerto of 1901. The Third Concerto dates from 1909. It was dedicated to the pianist Josef Hofmann, who greatly disappointed the composer by not adding the opus to his repertoire. For all its immense technical complexity, it seems to me that Rachmaninoff overreached himself here in regard to monumentality of conception. There is an etherlike density in the work's texture, and it does not hang together as well as it might. The same kinds of excess blemish the last of the concertos, which was dismally received at its premiere in 1927. Even a revision failed to rescue this composition, which alternates daring modernistic originality with the clichés of cinematic background music. The *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini*, on the other hand, is a brilliantly effective piece of work, ranking with the best of Rachmaninoff. The traditional *Dies Irae* chant evidently fascinated the somewhat macabre-minded composer, for he introduced its strains into his writing more than once, most notably in this scintillant set of orchestral variations.

CONCERTO NO. 1, IN F SHARP MINOR, OP. 1

Rachmaninoff's own recording of this work, made in 1939-40, is still the one to own. This is a model interpretation, displaying consummate finesse, fervor, and unlimited digital prowess. No other pianist captures the blinding rhythmic precision as Rachmaninoff did, nor is anyone else able to bring off the many sudden accelerations of meter without rushing the tempos. Best of all, this is a composer playing; pianistic effects are always subordinated to the musical outline which here emerges with complete economy and a feeling of inevitability. It will be noted that this performance is available on a single disc as well as in the complete set of Rachmaninoff concertos. Since the

overside of that record contains the incomparably played *Paganini Rhapsody*, I recommend it to those listeners who want some Rachmaninoff-by-Rachmaninoff in their collections but do not care to own the entire set.

Sviatoslav Richter's record comes closest to rivaling the composer's. Richter is very much at home in this romantic music, and his somewhat warmer playing will win many adherents. Nevertheless, the renowned Russian virtuoso lacks the rhythmic acumen that Rachmaninoff brought to the writing. His playing sounds flabby and italicized when it is compared side by side with the composer's own. Moreover, the rather shallow sound on this disc is not very much superior to that on the Victor reissues. Both recordings, to be sure, are entirely adequate.

Katin's brilliantly reproduced stereo disc provides a mercurial rendition lacking in rhetorical breadth and romantic fervor. The pianism does not have enough dynamic contrast and consequently emerges with a tentativeness which surely was not intentional.

—Rachmaninoff; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA Victor LCT 1118 (LP); also included in LM 6123 (three LP).

—Richter; State Radio Orchestra of the U.S.S.R., Kurt Sanderling, cond. Monitor 2004 (LP).

—Katin; London Philharmonic, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. London CS 6055 (SD).

CONCERTO NO. 2, IN C MINOR, OP. 18

Rachmaninoff's own version with Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra was recorded in 1929. As the oldest recording in the reissued Victor set of the Concertos, it cannot duplicate the sonic impact and brilliance of modern engineering, but the transfer (especially in the later, one-sided cutting in the complete album) has been well accomplished. Since the piano-orchestra balance was originally splendid, reflecting the care and musicianship of both Rachmaninoff and Stokowski, the disc is still fully listenable, with only a prominent background hiss to differentiate its sound from that of the First Concerto, which was recorded ten years later. (In fact, its sonics are superior to those of the Third Concerto, which also dates from 1939.) The playing itself remains unequalled. This is an eloquent reading with ardor and brisk vibrancy. The musical line is always projected with economy, and there are none of the overdone rubatos that mar so many of the "popular" renditions.

Richter and Benno Moiseiwitsch are more wayward in their approaches. Both pianists adopt much slower tempos (or perhaps, more correctly, freer tempos) than does Rachmaninoff. These are salon performances which place great emphasis on line and color, rather than on brilliance and sonority. While both pianists have their capricious moments (and conductor Rignold is sometimes justifiably hard-put to coordinate his orchestra with Moiseiwitsch), they bring new and original concepts to this oft-played music. All told, I find Richter's DGG recording more convincing than Moiseiwitsch's, and it has a splendid bonus of six Rachmaninoff Preludes.

Anda and Curzon give elegantly patrician readings which are a pleasure to hear in a work so often slobbered

over. Anda's technique is beautifully regulated but he never uses it for shock effect here. Curzon's interpretation has all sorts of felicities of phrasing and dynamics, beautiful gradations of tone, and exalted serenity. At some moments of drama, however, the pianist seems to lack the needed physical impact (although one may derive this impression from the somewhat backward relationship afforded the keyboard instrument in relation to the orchestra, admittedly a balance closer to concert-hall practice than the usual prominence given the instrument in the recording studio).

Cor De Groot (Epic), Leonard Pennario (Capitol), Byron Janis (Mercury), and Eugene Istomin (Columbia) all pattern their interpretations on the composer's own. This is particularly true of Istomin and De Groot, who place *tenutos* as well as accents on the first notes of the runs at Measure 23 *et al.* in the third movement, thereby emphasizing the tonic-dominant bass line there. (This identical run reappears just before the big climax at the end of the piece, and the rhetorical emphasis these players give it greatly enhances the drama inherent in the music.) Nevertheless, these performances fail to equal those by the performers named above. The Istomin temperament, which is so convincing in the finale, produces restlessly agitated and disruptive tempo extremes in the first movement. De Groot's solidly expansive playing, on the other hand, is rather lacking in temperament. Janis is very virtuosic, but my reservations regarding his lack of poetry and flexibility are reinforced by repeated hearings. Warmth and fancy are also in short supply on the Pennario-Golschmann effort. In terms of sound reproduction, Janis fares the best of this quartet.

Reiner's accompaniment for Rubinstein (RCA Victor) captures a good deal of the breadth and grand-manner opulence of Stokowski's for the composer, but Rubinstein is far from his best here. All too often he seems content to "hide" behind the playing of the Chicago Symphony men. The *alla marcia* recapitulation in the first movement, and the beginning of the finale are cases in point. The tempo of the latter is cautiously pedestrian, and when the piano enters, one wonders if Rubinstein is meeting the technical challenge without flinching.

Katchen's new version with Solti (London) is a bit rushed and theatrical for my taste, but the stereo reproduction is very rich. This pianist's earlier edition, reissued in London's inexpensive Richmond series, is, for the price, a commendable performance, well recorded save for a backward brass section. This performance does not have, however, the musical distinction of the poorly reproduced Parliament LP by Richter and the Leningrad Philharmonic which sells for the same price.

To sum it up, Rachmaninoff's incomparable playing cannot compare with the other recommended versions as a recording. Since the Richter-DGG disc contains a performance that is different from, but comparable to, the composer's own, it must be placed at the top of the list.

—Richter; Warsaw Philharmonic, Stanislaw Wislocki, cond. Deutsche Grammophon DGM 12036 (LP); DGS 712036 (SD).

—Rachmaninoff; Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. RCA Victor

LCT 1014 (LP); also included in LM 6123 (three LP).

—Anda; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond. Angel 35093 (LP).

—Moiseiwitsch; Philharmonia Orchestra, Hugo Rignold, cond. Capitol G 7143 (LP).

—Curzon; London Philharmonic, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. London CM 9154 (LP).

CONCERTO NO. 3, IN D MINOR, OP. 30

Towards the end of his career, Rachmaninoff is reputed to have voiced his reluctance to perform the immensely difficult Third Concerto, claiming that he was no longer able to achieve the accuracy and power of younger virtuosos. To judge from his own recordings, made in 1939, the great pianist-composer was being drastically severe with himself. His interpretation shares many of the merits characteristic of the First and Second Concertos: the structural proportion, the romantic eloquence, and the aura of "rightness." It must be noted, however, that Vladimir Horowitz's interpretation is equally structural in its planning and boasts a precision of sonority and rhythm that even exceeds Rachmaninoff's. I myself am convinced that it was Horowitz whom Rachmaninoff had in mind when he referred to younger performers. The steely precision of twentieth-century pianism and the analytic calculation that it embodies evidently appealed to Rachmaninoff, although he himself belonged to the romantic, subjective school. Horowitz is ably assisted by Reiner and his disc is well reproduced. The composer's version, unfortunately, is mainly of documentary value. To begin with, Rachmaninoff slashed quite a few sections out of his music (perhaps to fit a stipulated number of 78 sides). The most serious cut is the important first appearance of the third movement's second subject, Second, Ormandy's orchestral accompaniment is stolid and insensitive to the soloist's supple rubato. This is particularly conspicuous in view of the wonders Stokowski elicited from the same players in the *Rhapsody* and Second Concerto. Finally, the oldish sound is garbled and scratchy.

Van Cliburn's reading is full of wonderful moments. It is spontaneous, emotional, and nonformal. He makes no attempt to integrate the different sections of the music into one basic tempo; instead, he concentrates on extracting the last ounce of sentiment from the lush musical fabric. By virtue of his vibrant tone and warmly extrovert gesture, the pianist puts a unique personal stamp on the musical proceedings and he is ably partnered by Kondrashin. But in a work that could profit by being contracted in presentation rather than expanded upon, Cliburn's performance does not cohere as well as it might.

Janis (RCA) interprets the piece in the same basic style as Rachmaninoff, but he lacks the latter's richness of color, and also the whiplash attack of Horowitz.

Gilels (Angel) gives a good middle-of-the-road exposition of the piano part, but the recording engineers seem to have put his accompanying orchestra on another planet.

—Horowitz; RCA Victor Symphony, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Victor LM 1178 (LP).

—Rachmaninoff; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA Victor

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LM 2051 (LP); also included in LM 6123 (three LP).

—Cliburn; Symphony of the Air. Kiril Kondrashin, cond. RCA Victor LM 2237 (LP); LSC 2237 (SD).

CONCERTO NO. 4, IN G MINOR, OP. 40

Discouraged by the shabby reception which greeted this work at its first performance in 1927, Rachmaninoff attempted in 1939 or thereabouts to do some extensive repair work on the piece. It is that later version which is performed in the recordings discussed here.

The composer's own reading is in characteristic style: fleet, concise, formalistic, but always romantically expressive. Ormandy provides a sturdy, dependable account of the orchestral part, though it is not particularly volatile or enlivening. The sound is adequate.

Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli's rendition is taut, swift, and almost antiromantic in style. His playing here is detached in spirit and geometric in outline. He favors sharp, black-and-white contrasts of tone, and his tempos are even faster than the composer's. (Needless to say, it follows that Michelangeli is therefore a spectacular technician!) Because Gracis' conducting is tighter and more distinctive than Ormandy's, and the orchestral execution is more responsive and less opaque than that of the Philadelphia ensemble, this is the performance that I prefer. The sound, moreover, is thoroughly contemporary.

On a Westminster disc, Yakov Zak turns in a steady, reliable performance but not one to challenge either Rachmaninoff's or Michelangeli's for fervor and excitement.

—Michelangeli; Philharmonia Orchestra, Ettore Gracis, cond. Angel 35567 (LP); S 35567 (SD).

—Rachmaninoff; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Included in RCA Victor LM 6123 (three LP).

RHAPSODY ON A THEME OF PAGANINI, OP. 43

In this particular work it is as much the conductor's task as the soloist's successfully to project the clarity and dynamic power of the music. Fortunately, Rachmaninoff's definitive recorded interpretation is graced by the presence of an eloquent and evocative Stokowski at the helm. There is complete unanimity in the collaboration of conductor and composer-soloist, as well as fervent emotion and blinding color. Furthermore, the reproduction is nothing short of remarkable for its time. This recording was made shortly after the premiere of the composition in 1934, but only a slight background hiss and some shrillness in the upper reaches of the strings differentiates this engineering from good modern sound. There is excellent instrumental clarity, and a goodly amount of presence.

The most striking performance after this one has unfortunately been discontinued: the brilliant Kapell-Reiner collaboration for RCA Victor. The late William Kapell was in peak form here, playing with herculean force and mercurial speed, and Reiner contributed a brilliantly controlled rendering of the orchestral portion.

Reiner happily repeats this performance in his more recent rendition with Rubinstein. This is one of the Polish pianist's finest contributions to the recorded repertory. His reading lacks the incisive drive of the composer's own, but it is lively enough, and wonderfully lyrical. The finely directional stereo engineering over the mono version issued a few years back.

Fleisher plays with rhythmic flair and high-powered technique. His tone quality is rather percussive, however, and the disc is further impaired for me by Szell's Germanically oriented conducting. The Cleveland Orchestra, to be sure, plays brilliantly for its maestro, but the inflected broadening out of climactic passages gives the performance an aura of beefiness. Sonorous, detailed sound here, however.

Both Katchen-Boult records have sleek, rich sound, but in both cases, the sonorous, well-prepared performances could stand more inner tension and bite. If anything, I find the earlier mono-only version on Richmond a bit more solidly convincing than the stereo remake on London. At its inexpensive price, the Richmond disc is an attractive buy.

—Rachmaninoff; Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. RCA Victor LCT 1118 (LP); also included in LM 6123 (three LP).

—Rubinstein; Chicago Symphony, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Victor LM 2087 (LP); also included in LM 6039 (two LP) and LSC 2430 (two SD).

—Fleisher; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Epic LC 3330 (LP).

—Katchen; London Philharmonic, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Richmond 19076 (LP).



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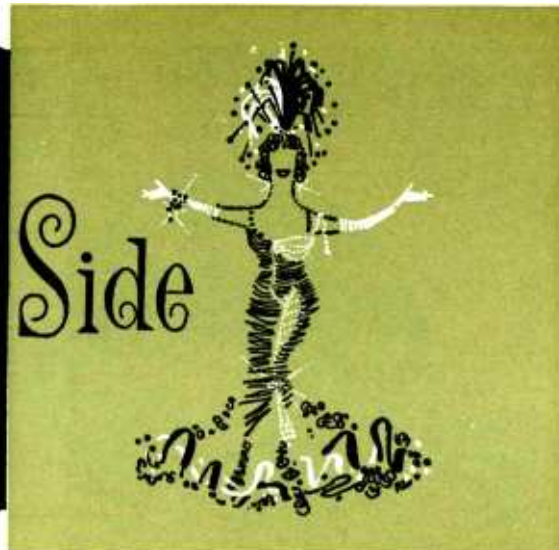
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With Wit and Devilish Ingenuity

"Cartoons in Stereo." Cy Harrice, narrator; Robert J. Prescott, sound effects. Audio Fidelity DFS 7008. \$5.95 (SD).

"Sounds/Funny." Earle Doud, narrator; Ralph Curtis, sound effects. Epic BN 598, \$4.98 (SD).

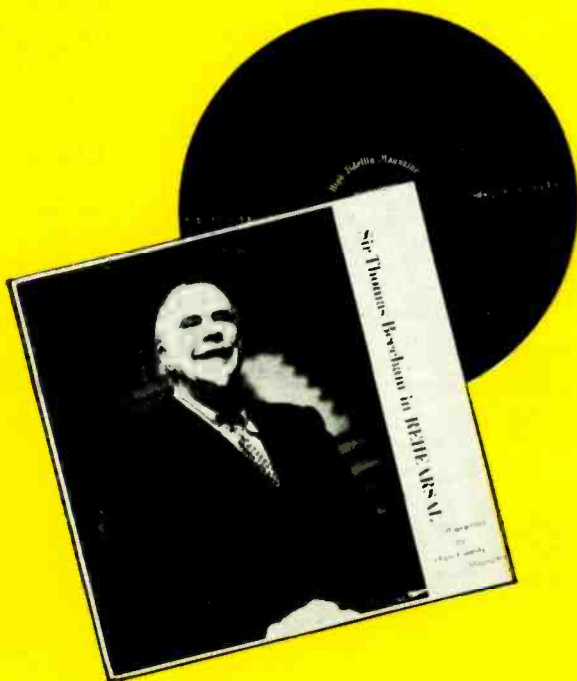
AFTER many years of wrestling with the ticklish problems of recorded humor (from the blackface dialogues of Moran and Mack in the Twenties to the present twist-exploitations of dual-channel sound effects), I've finally discovered a decisive criterion for evaluation. It's simply this: no matter how loudly I may laugh the first time around, the record doesn't go into the genuinely funny category unless I find myself compulsively replaying it for every captive visitor and even attempting verbal descriptions when an actual demonstration is impracticable.

It's this test which has convinced me that my first response to the Harrice-Prescott "Cartoons" (as something chiefly intended to wow the prep schools crowd) was far from adequate. For as I continued to think about these skits, to replay and describe them for the more sophisticated of my friends, the pointedness of their wit and the devilish

ingenuity with which their gag-ideas are developed became more and more evident. The Doud-Curtis essays in much the same vein haven't yet met this test of ability to grow in memory after the original guffaws they evoke, but perhaps in time they may do so too. In any case, both discs are obviously forerunners of a popular new technique in stereogenic comedy.

The operative pattern of these sonic comic strips, in the *Mad Magazine* spirit, and burlesque blackout skits can be illustrated by two of the shortest examples: someone asks Harrice for a match, which realistically scratched in one channel promptly flares up over both in a conflagration to which fire engines rush with sirens screaming; Doud (left) answers a telephone bell: "Joe's Hilltop Diner" . . . a landslide roars from left to right . . . and the next call (right) draws the reply, "Joe's Valley Diner."

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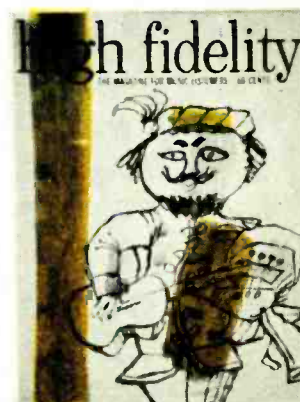
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So many skits are included (twenty-three in the Audio Fidelity disc, twenty-one in the Epic) that it's hardly surprising some of them are sophomoric or too synthetically contrived. But at their best and most ingeniously stereogenic—as in Doud's rocketless wind-up missile and similarly mechanized inventor, or his swimming-pool kids' quite literal "Last one in is a big fat elephant!"; in Harrice's boomeranging artillery shell, Columbus' vainly protesting plunge over the edge of an only too flat world, and, funniest of all to me, the disconcerting outcome of a game of Russian roulette—there are here some decidedly quaint ideas. Furthermore, they are devastatingly

worked out in dramatically effective as well as highly comic terms.

The enormous variety of sound effects is excellently produced and recorded (in general Prescott's have greater point and authenticity than Curtis'), but in both series the brisk "blackout" music (piano and carousel in the "Cartoons," banjo in "Sounds/Funny") is rather too brashly mechanical and much too high in relative level. This is a minor handicap, though, to two outstandingly novel records which—if only in self-defense—you should go out and get for yourself before you find them being inflicted on you by others. R.D.D.

"Danish Imports." Svend Asmussen, violin; Ulrik Neumann, guitar. Warner Bros. WS 1408, \$4.98 (SD).

"Intimate Jazz," the subtitle of this record, will be unacceptable to those jazz buffs who feel that the violin has no place in the jazz world, but those who take a broader view will find these crisply played, lightly swinging performances of standard tunes fascinating instrumental dialogues. At first hearing, the percussive performances sound almost extemporaneous, but closer listening will dispel that illusion. Two examples of the interplay of musical ideas come immediately to mind: the guitarist's introduction of *Two Guitars* as a countermelody to Youmans' *Hallelujah*, or the slight suggestion of Kreisler's *Liebeslied* that Asmussen introduces into *Yesterdays*. Obviously neither is a spur-of-the-moment invention, but each is, rather, the result of the close musical rapport which exists between these two Danish virtuosos. Translucent sound . . . even to the breathing of the musicians. J.F.I.

"Sailor, Sailor and Lolita's Greatest Hits." Kapp KS 3219, \$4.98 (SD).

Lolita, a Viennese thrush with a sultry soprano, initiated a large ripple on the American scene last season with a haunting German hit called *Seeman* (Sailor, Sailor). She leads off her Kapp recital with this favorite of happy memory and goes on to other German pops staples, some derived from American originals, others—such as *Die Sterne der Prairie* (Prairie Stars) and *El Paso*—presenting typical, disarmingly misinformed European views of the New World. All, however, are very suavely performed and Lolita emerges as a *chanteuse* in the best Continental tradition. You won't regret auditioning this superbly recorded release. O.B.B.

"Honky Tonk Piano and Percussion." Mike Di Napoli and Trio. Directional Sound DM 5005, \$4.98 (LP); DS 5005, \$5.98 (SD).

In the first of this series that I've really enjoyed, the exuberantly rowdy Di Napoli's aged-in-the-wood super-jangling upright piano is beaten to a frazzle in such appropriate old-time favorites as *Under the Bamboo Tree*, *In My Merry Oldsmobile*, *In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree*, etc. But it also cavorts with no less nose-thumbing sauciness through

surprisingly sprightly take-offs on Mozart's *Turkish March* and "In a Twentieth-Century Drawing Room" Sonata, the "Toreador Song," and *La Donna è mobile*. The sidemen add suitably clattering percussive support and an occasional raggy sax solo bit; and if there isn't any serious attempt to exploit the antiphonal potentialities of the coarsely stereoscopic recording, this edition is still markedly more effective than the more constricted and far drier monophonic version. R.D.D.

"Stories in Song." William Clauson, accompanying himself on the guitar. Capitol SP 8539, \$5.98 (SD).

Each successive recording by William Clauson, a Swede transplanted to California, reveals his steadily broadening artistry. The sheer ebullience that marked his earliest efforts still shines through, but now there is a discipline, a keener insight, and an attention to detail that adds depth to his interpretations. This program—reproduced in extraordinarily realistic stereo—ranges both in time and place across the whole field of Anglo-American folk song. Throughout, Clauson's primary interest is to present each sung story in the most vividly dramatic terms, while preserving intact its universality. As one example, the tortured dialogue of his *Lord Randall* seems to epitomize all the horror of murder. all

the pathos of apprehended doom. Yet, with equal skill, Clauson can etch the lighthearted bawdiness of *The Oyster Girl* and the aching nostalgia of *Look Away Over Yandro*. O.B.B.

"Eastern Square Dance Music: Jigs and Reels," Vol. 2. Folkways FW 8826, \$5.95 (LP).

Many square-dance groups must have longed for uncommercialized, authentic music to which one of their own members could supply home talent, appropriately local-colored "calls." The present collection of seventeen well-varied Canadian, English, Scottish, Irish, and American tunes, played with a rock-steady beat and toe-tickling gusto by a Danish-Canadian ensemble (fiddle, accordion, piano, and traps), not only fills that need admirably but strikes me as one of the most danceable programs of its kind I've ever heard. It's also much more interesting musically than most more familiar examples of the generally faster Western square-dance styles. And student callers will find invaluable advice in the accompanying notes on calling techniques by pianist N. Roy Clifton—who himself supplied the calls for this ensemble's earlier album, *Honor Your Partners!*, on Folkways FW 8825. R.D.D.

"Rakhel." Rakhel Hadass; musical accompaniment, Gil Adema, cond. Monitor MFS 350, \$4.98 (SD).

Rakhel Hadass, a clear-voiced Israeli soprano, displays astonishing versatility in this delightfully different musical tour of the Mediterranean basin. On these shores, from the age of Homer to the end of the Moorish domination of Spain in the fifteenth century, the Orient met—and often inundated—the West. The final ebbing of the Islamic tide left behind a fascinating residue of folk song that synthesizes both local and Eastern elements. Miss Hadass, whose linguistic abilities match the very high quality of her voice, here presents ballads collected from Israel, Greece, Macedonia, Lebanon, and Yemen. While all are handsomely sung and handsomely recorded, two Sephardic songs—*Romances de la Guerra* and *Los Bilbilicos*—and the Yugoslav *Vranyanka* will haunt you long after your turntable has ceased its spinning. O.B.B.



Rakhel Hadass

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* See HIGH FIDELITY Magazine,
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CIRCLE 11 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

"Wild Hi-Fi [or Stereo] Drums." Various Ensembles. Capitol T 1553, \$3.98 (LP); ST 1553, \$4.98 (SD).

Instead of trying to ring inevitably imitative changes on current spectacular percussion clichés, Capitol has wisely gone back through its catalogue to select outstanding earlier examples of performances in which percussive displays are blended with genuine musical interest. Particularly effective here are the lilting and delicate *Bongo Bush*, *Bangkok Beat*, and *Blue Rumba* by Pepe Dominguin's Orchestra, and the stirring antiphonal snare-drumming in Felix Slatkin's *Drummer Boy*. But Les Baxter's *Ting Ting Ting* also has excellent timbre contrasts and vitality, and even the most pretentious piece here, the raucous *Tri-Fi Drums* starring Stan Levy, Alvin Stoller, and Irv Cottler with Billy May's band, has impressive impact. The LP is every bit as glittering and powerful as the SD, but it is only the latter that does full justice to the deft scoring antiphonies and airy timbre definitions and spacings here.

R.D.D.

"Join in the Chorus." Stanley Holloway;

Chorus and Orchestra. Ivor Raymonde, cond. Vanguard VRS 9086, \$4.98 (LP). Holloway gives such a rollicking account of these famous old English music-hall songs that listeners will readily accept his invitation to join in the chorus . . . if they know the songs. And there's the rub, for only two or three (*While Strolling in the Park*, *Two Lovely Black Eyes*, and *Down at the Old Bull and Bush*, an Anglicized version of *Under the Anheuser Busch*) are really familiar in this country. It's easy enough to pick up the catchy melodies, but the lyrics, many in dialect, are more troublesome. A song sheet of words and music would have been most helpful here, but this Vanguard has not supplied.

Even if you can't join in the chorus, though, this record is great listening fun. Holloway, an extremely versatile performer with years of experience on the English variety stage, is an ideal choice for this assignment. Without trying to burlesque these songs, as a lesser artist might, he is able to extract the last ounce of sentimentality from the Victorian ballads as successfully as he can project the humorous overtones of the Edwardian comic songs—and he is given splendid support from both orchestra and chorus.

J.F.I.

"Mark Twain Tonight!" Vol. 2. Hal Holbrook. Columbia OL 5610, \$9.8 (LP); OS 2030, \$5.98 (SD).

Poor Mark Twain! Or is it, perhaps, a cynically vindicated Mark Twain? Textbooks persist in characterizing his bitter, scathing prose as humor and, in one of the great ironies of our time, the NAACP managed to ban *Huckleberry Finn*—the most searing indictment of race prejudice extant—because Twain's character, Nigger Jim, is treated with disrespect. Mark Twain took a very dim view of his fellow men; posterity has not disillusioned his shade.

Hal Holbrook, who has become the alter ego of Twain in our generation, here offers a brilliant sequel to his *Mark Twain Tonight!* (OL 5440/OS 2019). Speaking in a reasonable, and moving, facsimile of Twain's voice and using the old giant's inimitable words, Holbrook's lash rakes the backs of mission-

aries, insurance companies, and human hypocrisy in all its guises. His recreation is both dazzling theatre and nostalgic Americana. Both recorded versions are excellent, with the stereo holding no apparent edge over the mono. O.B.B.

"Rio with Love." Joe Basile, accordion, and His Orchestra. Audio Fidelity AFSD 5939, \$5.95 (SD).

Either Basile has imported some indigenous Brazilian sidemen for this superbly evocative program or else his own visits to Rio de Janeiro have given him total-recall impressions of carnival music making, for these unfailingly high-spirited and intricately rhythmized performances of *Apanheite Cavaquinho*, *Delicado*, *Madelena*, *Acquela do Brasil*, *Bahia*, *Cidade Maravilhosa*, etc., sound like the Real Brazilian McCoy throughout. More than that, they are played with infectious relish and virtuoso skill, and they are thrillingly recorded in the brightest and most transparent of stereo. Basile has produced a number of hit programs before now, but surely none that is richer in ear- and toe-tickling delights.

R.D.D.

"The Best of Herbert and Romberg."

Frank Chacksfield and His Orchestra. Richmond S 30086, \$2.98 (SD).

Chacksfield solves the knotty problem as to what is the best of Herbert and Romberg by falling back on ten of the more familiar operetta favorites by these two masters. Attired in his light and deftly written orchestral settings, notable for some extremely pretty writing for the strings, the lovely old melodies take on an unexpected freshness and charm. I was particularly taken by the irresistibly stylish performance of Romberg's lilting *You Will Remember Vienna*, probably the least familiar number in the entire program. The Richmond stereo sound is really notable, both for its richness of tonal quality and its admirable expansiveness. J.F.I.

"The Soul of Jazz Percussion." Various Ensembles. Warwick W 5003, \$5.95 (SD).

"Where There's Burns There's Fire." Ralph Burns and His Orchestra. Warwick W 5001, \$5.95 (SD).

These particular releases in Warwick's "sight and sound, three-dimensional stereo" debut list strike me as achieving real freshness in their attempts to galvanize conventional performances with percussive spectacularities. "The Soul of Jazz Percussion" not only has admirably bright and channel-differentiated, if somewhat too closely miked, sonics, but also uncommonly original musical materials in which, for once, the featured percussion playing (starring "Philly" Joe Jones, Ed Shaughnessy, Armando Peraza, Willy Rodriguez, and Earl Zindar) is skillfully integrated. Best here are the poetic *Quiet Temple*, vital *Ping Pong Beer*, and vibrant *Call to Arms*, but throughout there's a wealth of imaginative improvisation by bassist Paul Chambers, saxophonist Pepper Adams, trumpeter Booker Little, and timpanist Zindar in particular. And while the stereoism is ingeniously exploited in many duo and antiphonal passages, it invariably is musically meaningful.

Ralph Burns's performances of *Moon Child*, *Portrait of Mia*, *Felicidade*, an atmospheric *Blue Holiday*, etc., run a

greater risk in their attempt to reconcile mildly jazzy rhapsodic solos (by Zoot Sims and Al Cohn, saxophonists; Urbie Green and Bob Brookmeyer, trombonists; Irvin Markowitz, trumpeter; *et al.*) with suave string sonorities and more sheerly decorative percussion. But the arrangements are generally effective, the playing is both assured and zestful, and again the brilliantly clean if somewhat dry recording makes the most of the wide variety in tonal coloring.

R.D.D.

"Spectacular Guitars and Strings: A Fiesta in Sound." Leroy Holmes and His Orchestra. M-G-M E 3919, \$3.98 (LP). There may be more spectacularity in the stereo edition of this disc (which hasn't yet reached me); there certainly is little here. But there is a welcome aural attractiveness both in the brilliantly clean, surprisingly expansive monophony and Holmes's warmly vibrant readings of the lilting *Andalucia*, *Vaya con Dios*, *Delicado*, *Lisbon Antigua*, and eight other guitar- and accordion-dominated Latin-American favorites.

R.D.D.

"The Restoration Revisited, or The Pursuit of Happiness." Pro Musica Erotica. Offbeat O 4014, \$4.95 (LP).

A sociological phenomenon well worth investigating is the sudden resurrection of Restoration ditties that had been buried under the cumulative disapproval of three piously proper centuries. A decade ago only a specialist with the purest credentials could gain access to the unbowdlerized texts of the seventeenth-century catches and glees composed by such as Henry Purcell and John Blow. Now you can hear them expertly performed—with many an Anglo-Saxon monosyllable preserved—on a steadily growing collection of discs. This Offbeat release stands in the front rank of these. The very best is probably the the Deller Consort's *Tavern Songs* on Bach Guild BG 561, but the present record duplicates only two songs in that collection. The singers and instrumentalists of Pro Musica Erotica perform impeccably, skillfully underlining the songs' humorous elements. Bear in mind, though, that this is strong meat; Purcell *et al.* called a spade a "damn shovel" and relished doing so. Flawless reproduction.

O.B.B.

"Spectacular Strings." David Rose and His Orchestra. M-G-M E 3895, \$3.98 (LP).

This program of light music, a mixture of standards and David Rose originals, turns out to be, not surprisingly, something of a fiddler's field day. To display the virtuosity of his strings, Rose has written two short pieces, *The Happy Bow* and *As Kreutzer Spins*, in his best perpetuum mobile style, and his players respond with dazzling performances. *Piccadilly*, a jaunty little excerpt in less frenzied tempo, I find even more attractive in the skillful way it suggests the bustle of London's famous promenade. In arranging other composers' music, Rose still keeps the spotlight on strings, but adds more tonal color with woodwinds, harps, accordions, pianos, and even bongos. His use of the latter in *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue* creates a tension and excitement seldom found on other recordings of Rodgers' ballet music. The sound on the mono version

is excellent, though hardly spectacular. Perhaps this adjective may truly apply to the stereo version, which I have not heard.

J.F.I.

"Carolyn Hester." Tradition TLP 1043, \$4.98 (LP).

Carolyn Hester, a city-born folk singer, employs with dexterity a high, nasal soprano. At certain moments, in fact, her delivery reminds one of the early, ungimmicked John Jacob Niles. Miss Hester's choice of songs covers a very broad spectrum—from Walter Schuman's setting of a Stephen Vincent Benét verse, *Blackjack Oak*, to *Malaguena Salerosa*. While she displays a high degree of flexibility, sounding virginally Irish in *She Moves through the Fair* and properly whorish in *House of the Rising Sun*, she tends to clutter her interpretations with stylistic adornos. An over-all silvery beauty more than redeems these efforts, however. Clear, full-range reproduction.

O.B.B.

"La Guitarra Que Lloro." Antonio Bribiesca, guitar. Columbia EX 5034, \$3.98 (LP).

I suspect that "The Guitar That Weeps" may find a large and appreciative audience. Those captivated by the marvelous tonalities of this instrument but unwilling to grapple with the flashing complexities of flamenco or the technical subtleties of a Segovia will find Señor Bribiesca's efforts precisely *al punto*. His adaptations of such Mexican standards as *Estrellita*, *La Paloma*, and *La Rondalla* practically caress the eardrum. While given to the dripping legato (real tears, Columbia?), Bribiesca handles his instrument with languid finesse. Since this release is aimed at Mexican audiences, it may not be easy to come by. Interested parties, however, should make an effort.

O.B.B.

"Carol Burnett Remembers How They Stopped the Show." Carol Burnett; Orchestra, Irwin Kostal, cond. Decca DL 74049, \$4.98 (LP).

Carol Burnett is obviously too young to remember how these old show stoppers were sung by artists like Ruth Etting, Al Jolson, Lillian Roth, and others, and she sensibly makes no effort to imitate their style. She sings them as she feels them, in a rather brash, rowdy manner, and most of them come off quite successfully. She is particularly satisfactory in *Ten Cents a Dance*, *Adelaide's Lament*, and *I Can't Say No*, and she deserves a special note of thanks for unearthing an almost forgotten Gershwin song, *Lorelei*, which she does most charmingly. It was perhaps a mistake to attempt Bert Williams' old number *Nobody*, but this is about the only miss.

J.F.I.

"Broadway to Hollywood." Ferrante and Teicher, two pianos; Orchestra. Columbia CL 1607, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8407, \$4.98 (SD).

"Latin Pianos." Ferrante and Teicher, two pianos; Orchestra, Don Costa, cond. United Artists UAL 3135, \$3.98 (LP).

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straightforward, if always high-powered, cocktail-hour virtuosity. Apart from a warmly flowing *Wonderful Copenhagen*, the rather fancy whistling-strings-embellished arrangements in the Columbia program have no special distinction; the United Artists' Latin pieces are more imaginatively scored and varied, topped by a catchy *Ariba* (based on Chabrier's *España*), rhapsodic *Adios*, and slapdash but breath-taking *Tico Tico*. The recording of both discs is extremely brilliant if somewhat hard-toned, and Columbia's stereo edition (United Artists' has not yet been received for comparison) seems to have no substantial advantages over the LP. R.D.D.

"Gold Diggers in Dixieland." Matty Matlock and The Paducah Patrol. Warner Bros. WS 1374, \$4.98 (SD).

The group of musicians who operate as The Paducah Patrol (although their home base is Hollywood) here stage a Dixieland attack on ten songs originally spawned in the series of Warner Brothers' film musicals entitled *Gold Diggers of*... which appeared between 1929 and 1937. These old favorites—among them, *Lullaby of Broadway*, *Painting the Clouds with Sunshine*, *We're in the Money*, and *Tiptoe through the Tulips with Me*—stand up surprisingly well under this unexpected musical assault. Even so fragile a song as *The Shadow Waltz*, handled, it is true, with more restraint than other numbers in the program, emerges relatively unscathed. On more orthodox Dixieland lines are two original compositions, *Sugar Daddy Strut* and *Million Dollar Rag*, which round out the program. The performances are brisk and slickly professional, although I am left with the impression that the people most interested in this project were the engineers, who have provided really superior stereo sound. J.F.I.

"Mariachi México." Mariachi México de Pepe Villa. Capitol T 10269, \$3.98 (LP); ST 10269, \$4.98 (SD).

Contrary to widespread misconception, a mariachi is not an assemblage of melting guitars and torrid tenors, but rather a wandering combo strong—very strong—in brass. Pepe Villa's Mariachi México is about as brassy and as entertaining a Latin troupe as will ever enchant your ears. Their program, encompassing such as *Cielo Andaluz* and *Sonrisas*, runs the full spectrum of their trade. Capitol's two-channel reproduction, all blaring rhythmic splendor, renders the excellent LP achromatic by contrast. O.B.B.

"Brazen Brass Plays Songs Everybody Knows." Henry Jerome and His Orchestra. Decca DL 74106, \$4.98 (SD).

Jerome's highly stereogenic array of open and muted brass choirs flanking a centered rhythm section seems to have made a deserved hit with its first two releases, and here the ensemble is enlarged to twenty-five men for a program of similarly antiphonalized pops standards. But apart from the exceptionally brilliant "pyramiding" in *You Were Meant for Me* and a swinging *Darktown Strutters' Ball*, the present performances are less strikingly distinctive. The ultra-brilliant recording is, however, extremely exciting in itself—at least when one's playback volume is lowered sufficiently to bring the overheavy modulation-level back to tolerable limits. R.D.D.



Louis Armstrong: "A Rare Batch of Satch." RCA Victor LPM 2322, \$3.98 (LP).

Louis Armstrong and the generally frightful bands he played in front of during the early Thirties are the subject matter of this collection. Armstrong gets good support on three selections (*I Hate To Leave You, That's My Home, and Hobo, You Can't Ride This Train*) from Chick Webb's 1932 band. But even when he is afflicted with bumbling backing, his trumpet sings gloriously through all these pieces. His vocals are more dependent on the lyrics at hand (unlike Fats Waller, he could not always make something of nothing) and even his geniality cannot always overcome their mediocrity. A pair of medleys from Victor's premature venture into 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm recording in 1932 are included along with a rare bit of trumpet virtuosity in an otherwise dreadful opus called *Laughin' Louie*.

Benny Bailey: "Big Brass." Candid 8011, \$3.98 (LP); \$4.98 (SD).

Bailey, who spent most of the Fifties in Sweden, came back to the States as a member of Quincy Jones's band last fall. He has used four men from the Jones band (Phil Woods, Julius Watkins, Les Spann, and Buddy Catlett) for his first American disc, concentrating on forthright swing and easy, melodic ballads. In either vein, Bailey is an assured and rewarding performer. His open horn tone is dark and strong and honestly brassy; his muted work, particularly on ballads, is crisp, clean, and lyrical. When he swings out, he has a big, brash, building attack with force enough to carry the entire group. There are some stimulating contributions from Woods and Watkins, but Bailey is the vital element—a fresh, strong voice that could be an enlivening factor on the American jazz scene.

Al Casey Quartet. Prestige/Moodsville No. 12, \$4.98 (LP).

Casey's first appearance on the Prestige label was on its Swingville branch (*Buck Jumpin'*, Prestige/Swingville 2007). This time he has been moved to Prestige's Moodsville department—which sums up the essential difference between the two discs. Where the first was a lifting, pulsing series of exercises, this one is more languid, and Casey gives way to a tendency to overdecorate. On only two selections, *I'm Beginning To See the Light* and *A Case of Blues*, does he seem to find the rhythmic groove that allows him to relax into the easy, flowing style so pleasantly present on his first disc. His accompanying rhythm section includes a

strong, fluent bassist, Jimmy Lewis, and a pianist, Lee Anderson, who falls into Garnerisms in most of his solos.

"Clarinet New Orleans Style." Southland 227, \$4.98 (LP).

Two current New Orleans clarinetists are showcased with rhythm section accompaniment here. Pinky Vidacovich has the mellow, relaxed style typical of so many New Orleans clarinetists, a style associated most recently with Irving Fazola. Given suitable material (it's about a fifty-fifty split on his side of the disc), Vidacovich upholds the New Orleans tradition well. The other clarinetist is Raymond Burke, who has created a very individual sound by mixing New Orleans mellowness with a tartness that might be associated with Pee Wee Russell. The playing seems soft yet has a remarkably wiry effect. Burke gets particularly good support from Joe Capraro, a relaxed but disciplined guitarist, and Jeff Riddick, a performer who manages to make an organ really serviceable in a jazz setting.

Ornette Coleman Quartet: "This Is Our Music." Atlantic 1353, \$4.98 (LP); SD 1353, \$5.98 (SD).

By this time, attitudes on Ornette Coleman have pretty well crystallized. He either raises sparks in you or he curdles you. For either camp, it is scarcely necessary to say more than, "Here he is again." It might be noted, however, that there is more variety in this collection than in his earlier sets, and it includes a non-Coleman composition (*Embraceable You*) for the first time. Coleman departs from his customary scattering of bleats to play, on *Beauty Is a Rare Thing*, a long, reflectively probing alto saxophone solo. Many of his thematic statements continue to be promising, and his rhythm team of Charlie Haden, bass, and Ed Blackwell, drums, is remarkably strong and fluent. But the solos by Donald Cherry on pocket trumpet and Coleman on his plastic saxophone, for all their earnestness and emotionalism, are tediously uncommunicative.

Bill Evans Trio: "Explorations." Riverside 351, \$4.98 (LP); 9351, \$5.98 (SD).

Evans is a deceptively unostentatious pianist who creates neat, polished cameos that are skillfully direct and to the point. With no needless, showy frills, he finds fresh and pertinent approaches to familiar tunes (*How Deep Is the Ocean, Beautiful Love*). remembers a tuneful Arthur Schwartz song that got lost in the Forties

(*Haunted Heart*), and mulls a couple of pieces from the jazz repertory (*Israel, Nardis*). His graceful piano work is complemented by the sensitive playing of bassist Scott La Faro, who not only gives him close, strong support but works his way into the front line of some of Evans' developments.

Maynard Ferguson and His Orchestra: "Maynard '61." Roulette 52064, \$3.98 (LP); S 52064, \$4.98 (SD).

Having established the fact that his band can play loud, Maynard Ferguson is now prodding it toward a wider range of musicality. This disc evidently represents the band in the process of transition. The most complete shift away from the earlier Ferguson manner is a brooding arrangement of Benny Goodman's sign-off theme, *Good-Bye*, with Ferguson on French horn. Balancing this is a blaring, slogging piece, *New Blues*, by Slide Hampton, who contributed considerably to the previous style. Another Hampton piece, *The Pharaoh*, succeeds in blending the essential fire which has always burned in this group with the sense of form and variety it is now developing. Ferguson is moving out of the noisy rut in which he cradled his band and is making a place for it among the major big ensembles.

Erroll Garner: "The Provocative Erroll Garner." Columbia 1587, \$3.98 (LP).

The last time Columbia released a Garner disc ("The One and Only Erroll Garner," Columbia 1452), Garner went to court to try to stop it, complaining that it was issued without his authorization. This disc should provide him with new grounds for complaint. It contributes nothing memorable to his recorded repertory except for one long piece, *Blue Ecstasy*, which is Grade A romantic Garner, a bit of brooding rumination developed with typical perkiness and flamboyance.

Morris Grants: "Presents JUNK." Argo 4006, \$3.98 (LP).

The wry and anonymous musical mind which produced an LP attributed to Morris Garner several years ago has now turned its satirical attention to a wider range of jazz styles. This time, along with Morris Garner, we are offered glimpses of Morris Brewbeck, Miles Morris, Morris Ferguson, Ornette Morris, and Thelonelst Plunk, among others, allegedly playing during a J(azz) U(niversity's) N(ew) K(icks) concert. Jazz has been surprisingly lacking in humor in recent years and it is refreshing to

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find someone interested in attempting it. Although there are occasional comic moments here, however (Ornette Morris' wild introductory bleats, Morris Ferguson's plea for help from beyond the sound barrier), most of it has the hit-or-miss quality of parlor entertainment. And quite often the goal seems to have been imitation (usually successful) rather than caricature or satire.

Eddie Harris: "Exodus to Jazz." Vee Jay 3016, \$4.98 (LP).

Harris is a young Chicago tenor saxophonist with a strong feeling for melody and a light, willowy tone who, in this debut recording, reveals a distinctive and interesting manner. Although one occasionally hears suggestions of Paul Desmond, Harris is not noticeably derivative. Superficially, his thin, vibratoless attack might be classified as "cool," but he invests his playing with a warmth the cool jazzmen usually lack. His program, mostly originals by himself or Willie Pickens, his pianist, has considerable breadth. It includes a gently reflective out-of-tempo piece for saxophone and guitar, a catchy development of the *Exodus* theme, a hard-driving swinger, a fresh treatment of the well-worn pop tune *Little Girl Blue*, and a provocatively complex piece by Pickens that hangs together with apparent ease. Harris is individual without being either far out or calculatedly strange, and his quintet is a cohesive, strongly rhythmic group.

Lightnin' Hopkins: "Lightnin' in New York." Candid 8010, \$4.98 (LP); 9010, \$5.98 (SD).

In his quiet, probing way, Hopkins can capture a listener more completely with his voice and guitar than almost any other contemporary blues singer. (John Lee Hooker, it seems to me, is the only one who approaches him.) This disc contains some of his most effective performances. Hopkins at his best never forces anything but, quickly setting an atmosphere, tells his story in such an effectively underplayed manner that it gains compelling interior intensity. *The Trouble Blues*, *Wonder Why*, and *Take It Easy* are superb examples of his artistry. He accompanies himself on piano in two selections, phrasing much as he would on guitar but without the gently cushioning effect his guitar provides. There's also a short piano boogie solo of little consequence. But the top-drawer performances here far outweigh these minor defects.

Barney Kessel Quartet: "Workin' Out." Contemporary 3585, \$4.98 (LP).

After many years as a top studio man in Hollywood, Kessel has built a quartet around his guitar and taken to the road. On this introductory disc, Kessel has chosen to do much of his soloing in a twangy, hard style offering only limited possibilities. On a pair of ballads he turns to a darker, warmer manner which, under the circumstances, is most welcome. His pianist, Marvin Jenkins, has a roaring, two-fisted attack which, like Kessel's twang, eventually becomes tiresome.

Nick La Rocca: "Dixieland Jazz Band." Southland 230, \$4.98 (LP).

Two New Orleans bands are heard here, neither of which seems to have any special connection with the late Nick La Rocca, the trumpeter and leader of

the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. La Rocca appears only at the beginning of Side 1 to recite a cadenced greeting against a background of *Basin Street Blues*. Although trombonist Bill Crais plays with both bands and the rhythm sections are almost identical, there is a world of difference between them. The one featuring Sharkey Bonano on trumpet and Pinky Vidacovich on clarinet has an assertiveness and authority missing from the other group, in which these two are replaced by Mike Lala and Bill Bourgeois. Crais, a rugged, lunging trombonist, is a bulwark of strength in both. The tunes, as might be expected, are mostly by La Rocca.

Lenny McBrowne and the Four Souls: "Eastern Lights." Riverside 346, \$4.98 (LP); 9346, \$5.98 (SD).

McBrowne, a drummer, has put together a young quintet (trumpet, tenor saxophone, piano, bass, drums) that is, as of this recording, a promising but still far from exciting group. The promise comes from the quintet's cohesiveness, its apparent willingness to seek its own personality by staying away from such current fashions as mechanical "soul" exercises or hard bop barrages, the general modesty of its soloists, and the presence of Daniel Jackson, the tenor saxophonist, who wrote seven of the eight tunes on this disc and arranged all eight. Jackson's originals have engaging qualities and his arrangements usually give the soloists a decent measure of ensemble support—which is more than we normally hear in groups with this instrumentation. So far, all the merits of McBrowne's group are small ones, but they at least provide a sound foundation on which the quintet can build.

The Modern Jazz Quartet and Orchestra. Atlantic 1359, \$4.98 (LP); SD 1359, \$5.98 (SD).

Essays into what has become identified as "third-stream music"—music that draws on both jazz and European composition without fitting snugly into either category—make up this disc. There are short compositions by André Hodeir, Werner Heider, and John Lewis, and a long work, *Concertino for Jazz Quartet and Orchestra*, by Gunther Schuller. As so frequently happens when attempts are made to use an orchestra of symphonic size in a jazz context, the problem of what to do with the orchestra is never satisfactorily resolved. In this case, the Modern Jazz Quartet is on hand to bail the symphony out, or at least to try to. Because the symphony string and woodwinds are present and presumably have to be used, they constantly intrude on the quartet and succeed in nullifying whatever it may be doing. The area between jazz and European composition is undoubtedly worth exploring, but such attempts as this suggest that a less hide-bound approach to orchestral make-up might be a step in the right direction.

Dick Morgan Trio: "See What I Mean?" Riverside 347, \$4.98 (LP); 9347, \$5.98 (SD).

Morgan's first disc was so cluttered with his grunts and mutterings that it was almost impossible for the listener to cut through to his piano playing. Now we can hear him properly, and he is revealed as a pleasant, unpretentious, rollingly rhythmic pianist whose generally low-keyed style lends an air of glibness

to much of his work. He shows that he is capable of more than this on one of his own compositions, *Meditation*, a much more probing performance than his relatively bland toying with such pop tunes as *I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face* and *Home*.

"The Music of Quincy Jones." Argo 668, \$3.98 (LP).

These eight compositions were recorded in Sweden last year by a group of Swedish musicians, plus Benny Bailey, trumpet, and Joe Harris, drums, both of whom were then members of Jones's band. They are pleasant pieces pleasantly performed, but they are not memorable. Jones is at his best writing melodic ballads, and the high points here are two selections in this vein—*The Midnight Sun Never Sets* and *Fallen Feathers*. The performances are brightened by the warm, luminous trumpet of Benny Bailey and, occasionally, by Ake Persson's dark-toned trombone. Bailey, who has returned to the United States after many years in Sweden, is on the verge of becoming an important jazz trumpeter and this disc (along with his own *Big Brass*, Candid 8011) is a provocative introduction to his work.

Charlie Shavers and His Orchestra: "Like Charlie." Everest 5127, \$3.98 (LP); 1127, \$3.98 (SD).

On the surface, this would seem to be a collection aimed at the Jonah Jones audience. But Shavers is too flamboyant a performer to be confined to polite mutings. He also opens up and flings his full, brassy tone around, and romps giddily off on fleet, light-footed dancing forays. He has a spirit of merriment that cannot be buried, and it bursts through even in these staid circumstances.

Elmer Snowden Quartet: "Harlem Banjo." Riverside 348, \$4.98 (LP); 9348, \$5.98 (SD).

The banjo can be a strongly propulsive instrument in a jazz ensemble but it is relatively limited as a solo vehicle. Thus it is a bit unfortunate that Elmer Snowden's banjo is required to carry so much of the load here. He is accompanied by an excellent trio (Cliff Jackson, piano; Tommy Bryant, bass; and Jimmy Crawford, drums) in a program made up of twelve tunes. While Snowden plays with skill, taste, and inventiveness, banjo solos wear thin after a while. The only variety is offered by Jackson's piano. He proves to be a delightful exponent of the stride style, but even during his solos the stolid banjo accompaniment sometimes interferes. Taken a little at a time and selectively, there is a good deal of charm here, but the variety possible with a larger group would have helped a lot.

Buddy Tate: "Tate-a-Tate." Prestige/Swingville 2014, \$4.98 (LP).

Tate's tenor saxophone is teamed here with the trumpet and the flugelhorn of Clark Terry. Both these men are swinging, fluent musicians and, with the help of a good rhythm section, they have turned out a set that is buoyant and bristling. Terry's sly, twinkling phrases are a constant delight, while Tate's lithe, rubbery drive provides a lifting, urgent force throughout. The group's playing has an after-hours ease, an atmosphere in which Terry and Tate are at their best.

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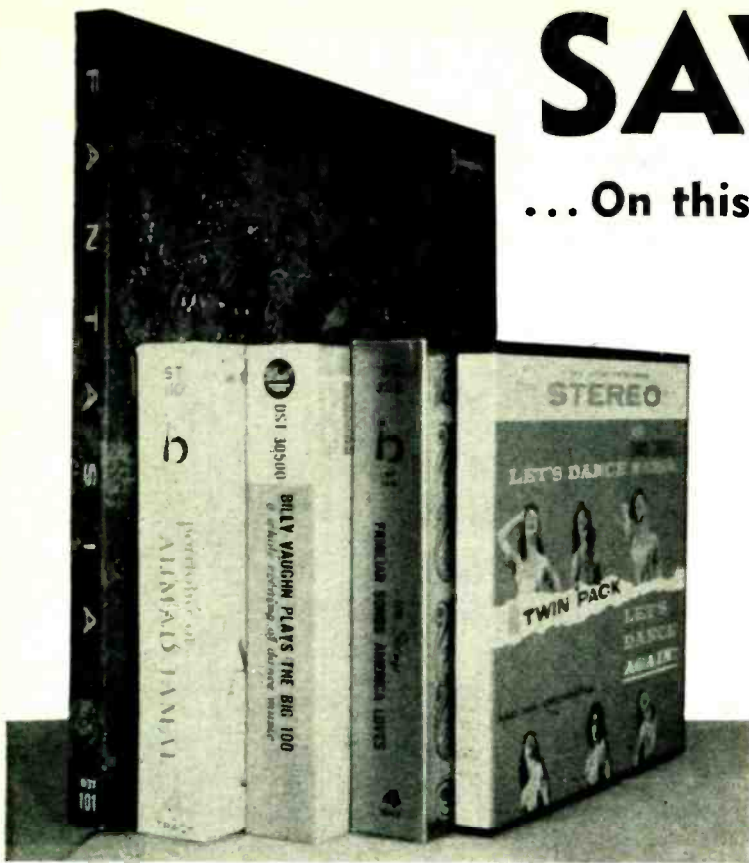
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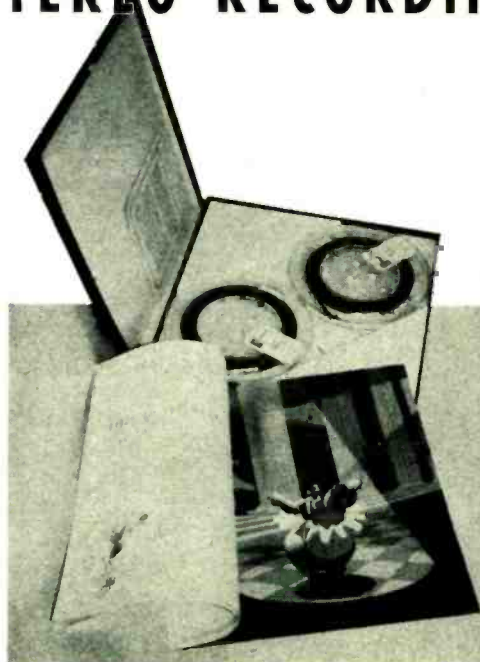
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the **Tape Deck**

Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL

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

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies: No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
● ● LONDON LCJ 80065 (twin-pack). 54 min. \$9.95.

The penultimate reel in Ansermet's Beethoven symphony series represents much earlier recordings than those in the previous tapings: the First appeared originally on discs in 1956 and was rather coolly received; the Fifth came out in 1958 and was generally ranked near, if not at, the top of available versions. Today, on tape, the latter now seems a bit dry sonically, in comparison with the more recent recordings, and while it still remains an admirably clean, straightforward, and spirited reading, I find even livelier pleasure in the unpretentious but far from routine First. Perhaps that is because so many other versions strike me as overheavy or over-mannered. For me, at least, Ansermet captures better than most conductors the early work's essential lilt and gusto, and technically it seems to me that the clean, bright, older recording stands up even better than that of the more recent Fifth.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68; Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80*

Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond.
● ● COLUMBIA MQ 337. 54 min. \$7.95.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World")*

Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond.
● ● COLUMBIA MQ 339. 43 min. \$7.95.

Since there has been no notably satisfactory Brahms First on tape before this one, reel collectors need not be particularly concerned with the spirited debate among discophiles over the relative merits of Walter's latest edition and earlier versions of his own and of other conductors. We need only remember that Walter, who was born in the very same year that Brahms completed his first symphony (1876), is the last of the great conductors boasting firsthand knowledge of the original Brahmsian traditions. He has a unique way with this music and infuses it here with the warmth and ripeness of a lifetime's insight and devotion. His present West Coast orchestra may

not be one of the great ones, but he often makes it sound like one in spite of the lack of a sufficiently voluminous violin choir—and even that is almost compensated for by the weight and breadth of the low string sonorities. Although others, Toscanini above all, have given the First more dramatic excitement, there is a relaxed strength here and an often radiant poetic eloquence.

There have been several fine *New World* tapings, but here again Walter (in his long delayed first recording of the work) displays his characteristic warmth, lyricism, and expansive exultancy. As in the Brahms First (and its vibrant overture coupling), the recording is a model of stereo transparency and smoothly blended channel-to-channel spread. Here the relative scantiness of the first and second violins is less noticeable and the performance reveals not only the high skill of the orchestra's first-desk men but also a unanimity of ensemble and an enthusiasm of which many more permanent organizations might well be proud. Perhaps the best way I can express my own respect for both these reels is to confess that although I prefer, in theory, a more dynamic approach to the Brahms and a more lustily folkish Dvořák, I gladly abandon all my theories when listening to Walter's persuasive and heartwarming songfulness.

KALMAN: *Die Csardasfürstin: Selections. Gräfin Mariza: Selections*

Liselotte Maikl (s), Friedl Loor (s), Hans Strohbauer (t), Olaf B. Jensen (t); Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Josef Drexler, cond.
● ● FERRODYNAMICS CS 1206-7. 47 and 48 min. respectively. \$7.95 each.

Although the Ferrodynamics Corpora-



Henryk Szeryng—master violinist.

tion made its official recorded tape debut with the "Royal Music of Europe" last January, it actually produced earlier tapes in an unpublicized "Collectors' Series," drawn largely from Period masters, which is only now made available for review. The music chosen is well off the beaten path, which makes it all the more regrettable that these frequently enticing tapes have been issued with such sadly inadequate labeling and annotations. The lack of a detailed contents listing is, however, the only handicap to such delightful discoveries as these reels, which remind us anew that the last of the great Viennese operetta composers has been inexplicably neglected in this country.

Of the two high-spirited sopranos here, Maikl (in the *Czardas Princess* only) is somewhat hard-voiced, but Loor (in *Countess Mariza* only) is a charmer, gifted with a beautiful tone and deft virtuosity. The tenors (who appear in both works) are admirably fresh and vigorous. Yet the real star is Drexler, who conducts with all the Wiener verve and expansive sentiment that Kálmán's music—now sparkling, now haunting—demands. The recording is boldly stereoisitic and theatrically effective. The *Princess* reel is slightly more original, but the *Countess* is scarcely less rich in tuneful and rhythmic appeal—light music, of course, but of the vintage years.

LALO: *Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21*

Henryk Szeryng, violin; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Walter Hendl, cond.
● ● RCA VICTOR FTC 2051. 34 min. \$8.95.

MOZART: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 3, in G, K. 216*

†Bruch: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 26*

Jaime Laredo, violin; National Symphony Orchestra, Howard Mitchell, cond.
● ● RCA VICTOR FTC 2053. 50 min. \$8.95.

Familiar though their materials may be, one of these reels boasts a special if rather lightweight charm, while the other achieves outstanding stature. Young Jaime Laredo had a stroke of inspiration when, just before his own nineteenth birthday, he chose to record two of the best-known standard concertos which he had discovered were composed when both Mozart and Bruch were the same age as himself. The results are engaging indeed in Mozart's K. 216, which he plays with delectable vivacity in the fast movements and adolescent poignance in the Adagio; but the broader romanticism of the Bruch G minor finds Laredo more self-consciously "expressive," and the performance's effectiveness is handicapped by Mitchell's somewhat ponder-

ous handling of the orchestra. Both reels are beautifully recorded in clean, unexaggerated stereo (in which the soloist is always firmly centered). The Szeryng tape, however, has more than technological excellence and youthful verve: it is one of the finest performances of the *Symphonie espagnole* I have ever heard, tautly finespun, incisive and resilient as demanded, unmannered yet fiercely individual. The complete score is played here, ignoring traditional cuts, and Hendl provides sinewy and scintillating orchestral accompaniment. If Laredo is a violinist from whom much may be expected in the future, Szeryng is a fully matured master of the instrument, revealed here at the peak of his powers.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 41, in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter"). Overtures: Don Giovanni; Le Nozze di Figaro; Die Zauberflöte*

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Felix Prohaska, cond.
 ● ● VANGUARD VTC 1631. 43 min. \$7.95.

This Prohaska Mozart program is almost a "must" reel, as the only other 4-track *Jupiter* is the far from satisfactory Krips version for London. Prohaska's reading, in comparison with many famous "big" interpretations, may sound at first almost miniature in scale, but it is also one of uncommon lucidity and piquancy. The intricate contrapuntal writing is revealed with a clarity which only a modest and clean-cut orchestra of Mozartean proportions could achieve. This clarity is further enhanced by the transparent, unexaggerated stereoism of a recording miked at just the proper distance. For good measure, there is a trio of overtures: a broadly pulsing *Don Giovanni*, a somewhat tense and over-vehement *Marriage of Figaro*, and an exuberant *Magic Flute*—for which Prohaska apparently uses a larger orchestra and certainly more vigorous dynamics for enhanced dramatic effectiveness. The reel is one few listeners will resist.

PUCCINI: *La Bohème*: (highlights)

Renata Tebaldi (s), Mimi; Gianna d'Angelo (s), Musetta; Carlo Bergonzi (t), Rodolfo; Ettore Bastianini (b), Marcello; Renato Cesari (b), Schaunard; Cesare Siepi (bs), Colline; Fernando Corena (bs), Benoit and Alcindoro; Chorus and Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Tullio Serafin, cond.
 ● ● LONDON LOL 90026. 44 min. \$7.95.

My only complaint here is that London hasn't seen fit to give tape collectors its justly acclaimed complete *Bohème*, which surely ranks as one of the best versions on records. But perhaps the complete taping will come later. Meanwhile this sampling is generous enough to make any listener realize the effectiveness of Serafin's occasionally somewhat slow but always dramatically moving reading, and savor the first-rate singing-acting of D'Angelo, Bergonzi, Bastianini, and Siepi. (The last-named contributes a particularly expressive and unmannered "*Vecchia zimarra*." Notable above all is the soaring splendor of Tebaldi, whom I have never heard in better voice. And if the stereo recording isn't as sensational as that of *Das Rheingold* and *Aida*, it must nevertheless be considered superlative by normal operatic standards.

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

Philippe Entremont, piano; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
 ● ● COLUMBIA MQ 325. 46 min. \$7.95.

When this performance appeared in disc form last fall it stirred critical opinions which were diametrically opposed. A hearing easily reveals why: Entremont and Bernstein make no attempt to objectify, streamline, or modernize this music, but deliberately revel in its unabashed romanticism. To some, the result is "mawkish" and "exhibitionistic," to others, emotionally satisfying. I myself prefer a less extravagant, leaner treatment (as indeed Entremont himself once gave us in a now extinct 2-track Concert Hall tape) but I must admit that the present approach, for all its slapdash, heart-on-sleeve qualities, can be potentially intoxicating. The solo preludes, however, are played with more reserve and grace. The recording is appropriately broadspread and expansive in the Concerto, more lucidly transparent in the solo selections.

LOUIS LANE: "*Pop Concert, U.S.A.*"

Anderson: *Serenata*. Bernstein: *Candide: Overture*. Copland: *Rodeo: (3) Dance Episodes*. Gould: *American Salute*. Piston: *The Incredible Flutist: Ballet Suite*.

Cleveland Pops Orchestra, Louis Lane, cond.
 ● ● EPIC EC 808. 40 min. \$7.95.

A well-chosen and varied panorama of Americana, this reel achieves real distinction in the exciting *Candide* Overture and in the familiar *Rodeo* episodes, which are given new zest and bite in Lane's individualistic treatment. And his performance of Piston's ballet score is a worthy rival to the favorite Fiedler version (and is even better recorded). The reverberant yet clean stereo gives no hint that it actually dates back a couple of years, and I doubt that it could be improved upon today.

"Around the World with Anton Karas."

Anton Karas, zither; The Two Rudis, accordions. Ferrodynamics CS 1211. 42 min., \$7.95.

It's good to hear again from the man who (in the *Third Man* film and many subsequent recordings) has done more than anyone else to make us familiar with the sonic charms of the zither. Here he soliloquizes with lilt and sentiment in a dozen long medleys of well-varied European and American popular and traditional favorites (inexcusably unidentified in the inadequate labeling). Wheezing accompaniments and florid obbligatos are supplied by his veteran accordionists. Although the somewhat exaggerated stereo dates back several years, it still does brilliant justice to the solo instrument.

"Back in Town" and "Mel Tormé Swings Schubert Alley." Mel Tormé and the Mel-Tones, with Marty Paich and His Orchestra. Verve VSTP 246 (twin-pack), 66 min., \$11.95.

Old-time devotees of the Mel-Tones will

welcome their resurrection in several former hits (*It Happened in Monterey, I Hadn't Anyone Till You*, and *What Is This Thing Called Love?*) and perhaps enjoy their now somewhat outdated close harmonizing and scat singing in *A Smooth One* and in eight other new arrangements. But in the coupled solo program Tormé's determined attempts to swing and dramatize *On the Street Where You Live, Hello Young Lovers*, etc., suit neither his pleasant voice nor normally engaging personality. What gives this boldly stereoistic, double-length reel its prime distinction is the swinging, jaunty playing provided by Marty Paich and His Orchestra.

"The Best of Ballet." Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel, cond.

Westminster WTC 149, 49 min., \$7.95. These highlights from *Les Sylphides, Giselle*, and three Delibes ballets (*Coppélia, Sylvia, and Naila*) are brightly colored although somewhat heavy-handed and coy. The stereo is brilliant but bottom-heavy.

"The Button-Down Mind Strikes Back!"

Bob Newhart. Warner Bros. WSTC 1393, 36 min. \$7.95.

This sequel to the monologist's first recording apparently strikes his devotees as equally fresh and funny. Except for the devastating take-off on unscheduled airlines, however, the humor here seems to me more forced and (especially in "The Retirement Party") more severely handicapped by the lack of the visual mugging which helped to put it across in his live appearances. The San Francisco and Minneapolis tapings are boomily realistic in their inclusion of audience noise and applause.

"Do Re Mi." Original Cast Recording, Lehman Engel, cond. RCA Victor FTO 5006, 51 min., \$8.95.

The rather grudging reviews of this Broadway hit in disc form didn't prepare me for as much fun and brash vitality as I find in the present taping. *Do Re Mi*, to be sure, never approaches the second *Guys and Dolls* it attempts to be: neither Jules Styne's music nor (surprisingly) the Comden-Green lyrics have any distinction, and the straight singing by Nancy Dussault and John Reardon is either routine or somewhat overmannered. But Phil Silvers, shooting superpersonality in every direction and singing surprisingly well, infuses enthusiasm into the whole show, with Nancy Walker's help. *Take a Job, It's Legitimate, The Late Late Show*, and *All of My Life* are genuine triumphs, and the last in particular reveals unsuspected dramatic powers in the protean Mr. Silvers. Luther Henderson's orchestrations and Lehman Engel's conducting are also to be credited in large part for the gusto of the proceedings, while the notably strong, broadspread stereo recording does full justice to the fine orchestral playing. Oddly, however, the obvious potentialities of stereo localization and movement in providing a sense of stage action have been largely ignored.

"Exodus and Other Great Themes." Mantovani and His Orchestra. London LPM 70042, 36 min., \$6.95.

In the richly atmospheric title piece, the poetically pastoral *Karen*, and the catchy *Theme from A Summer Place*, Manto-

vani's unmannered readings and his well-nigh symphonic finesse match the outstanding excellence of his recent "Operetta Memories" tape. And although he reverts, elsewhere, to lushness and sentimentalization, the recording throughout "floats" glowing sonorities of the Mantovani orchestra in magical stereo expansiveness.

"Guitars, Woodwinds, and Bongos." Al Caiola and His Orchestra. United Artists UATC 2220, 27 min., \$7.95.

The overfancy arrangements here clutter up pop tunes with a pointless clatter of bongos and other percussive "effects," but for once the seventeen-man band doesn't take itself or the sonic mallarky—which it apparently makes up as it goes along—too seriously. At its best (in *Cuckoo*, *Bernie's Tune*, and *Tango Boogie*) it even succeeds in endowing its doodlings with engaging zest. In any case, the exaggerated stereoism and ultra brilliance of this recording are a technical delight.

"Have Band, Will Travel." Lester Lanin and His Orchestra. Epic EN 608, 47 min., \$6.95.

Despite the lack of variety and originality in these nine long medleys of standards and four south-of-the-border tunes, this program would be hard to beat for consistent danceability. The sonorous orchestral playing is warmly colored and superbly recorded in seamlessly spread stereo. Ballroom background sounds add further atmosphere here, but I suspect that these have been discreetly dubbed in, for few on-the-spot recordings can approach the purity and breadth of this sound.

"A Mighty Fortress." The Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Richard P. Condie, cond. Columbia MQ 338, 45 min., \$7.95. [Also in part on the 2-track GMB 95, \$6.95.]

A long program of twenty-two hymns, fervently sung to discreet organ backgrounds (by Alexander Schreiner and Frank Asper) in the familiar radio broadcast style of the 375-voice Mormon Choir. Relatively close miking and reduced reverberation improve the singers' intelligibility but reduce the atmospheric effectiveness of performances which run a restricted gamut from hushed devotionism to evangelical martialism.

Carlos Montoya. RCA Victor FTP 1044, 38 min., \$7.95.

I have some reservations about the closeness with which the solo guitar has been recorded here: it has uncommon brilliance but also a tonal edginess at times which is scarcely characteristic of Montoya's sensitively varicolored playing. But the performances themselves rank with his best, and the selections range so widely (from gypsy wildness through engaging zarzuela medleys to Turina's lyrical *Sacromonte*) that this must be hailed as one of the most appealing introductions to the Spanish guitar repertory that any flamenco guitarist has yet given us.

"The Music Goes 'Round and 'Round." Leo Addeo and His Orchestra. RCA Victor FTP 1076, 31 min., \$7.95.

Rather than bury this ridiculous production in the oblivion it deserves, I'd like

to single it out as a horrible example of stereo action and odd-sounds experimentation gone wrong. The stereo itself is magnificent, but the synthetically contrived sound-source movements are musically pointless and nerve-racking, while little if any distinction can be claimed for the thin pipings of an ocarina quartet, the obnoxious twanging of a guitar quartet, and two wheezing accordions.

"Rosie Solves the Swingin' Riddle."

Rosemary Clooney, with Nelson Riddle and His Orchestra. RCA Victor FTP 1048, 31 min., \$7.95.

Everything is impressive here: the superbly open and authentically "ringing" recording with its admirable balance between soloist and orchestra; Miss Clooney's straightforward yet vital singing in *Get Me to the Church in Time*, *You Took Advantage of Me*, etc.; and Riddle's distinctive, seldom overfancy orchestral arrangements and accompaniments. I doubt if either of these two artists has ever sounded to better advantage than they do in this splendid example of Victor taping.

"Sounds of the Great Bands." Glen Gray and His Casa Loma Orchestra. Capitol ZW 1022, 36 min., \$7.98.

Anyone who fondly remembers, as I do, the Casa Loma band in its heyday (more years ago than we dare compute) will have a warm spot in his heart for its current program of swing era hits played more or less in the style of the famous band leaders with whom they are most closely associated. But others should enjoy these polished performances (and the richly open recording) for their own sake. If they have no special distinction as jazz, they are notably attractive as buoyant dance music and for their warmly colored sonics.

"Tonight: In Person." The Limelights RCA Victor FTP 1066, 42 min., \$7.95.

A best seller in its recent disc edition, this on-the-spot recording of the trio's appearance at the Ash Grove in Hollywood should be no less successful in its immaculately processed taping. The appreciative but well-behaved audience stimulates Messrs. Gottlieb, Yarbrough, and Hassilev to indulge in perhaps a bit too much verbal and vocal comedy, but they are irresistibly amusing in *The Monks of St. Bernard*, *Hey Li Lee Li Lee*, and *Rumania Rumania*, and they bring down the house with their multilingual farewells in the energetic closing *Prosch-chai*. The Limelights may still have to achieve their potential stature as music makers, but their already matured capacity for magnetizing audiences is vividly demonstrated here.

"Wildcat." Original Cast Recording. John Morris, cond. RCA Victor FTO 5004, 44 min., \$8.95.

Apparently Lucille Ball has succeeded, by the sheer power of personality projection, in making a hit of her badly reviewed Broadway starring vehicle. This technically expert and authentic show-in-stereo recording brings the indefatigable Miss Ball right into one's living room, but it also exposes only too candidly her musical limitations and the futility of the rest of the cast's dogged attempts to give any real distinction to Cy Coleman's nondescript score.



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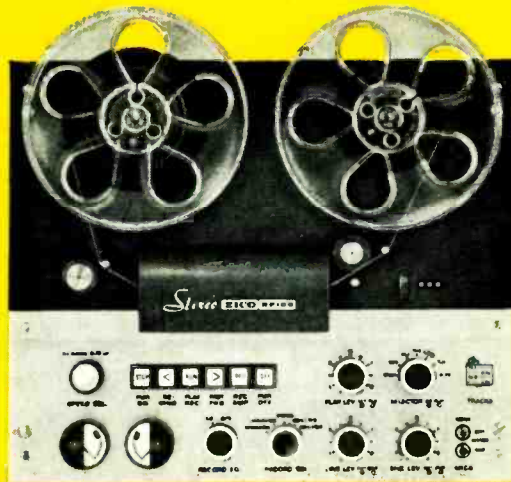


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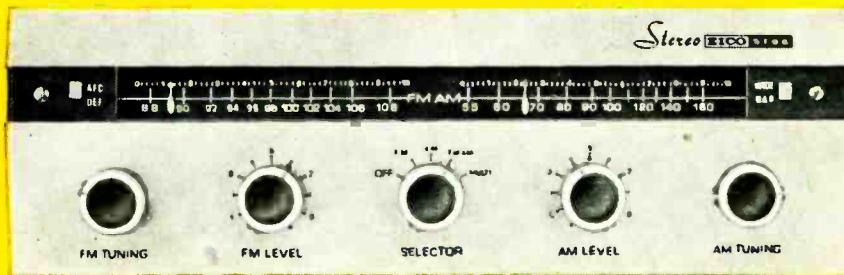
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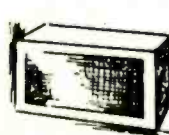
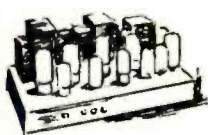
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High Fidelity Newsfronts



Multiplexing—Promise and Problems.

Stereo broadcasting via FM-multiplex may get under way the first of this month, the FCC having approved a slightly modified version of the "Zenith-GE" system for impressing the requisite second channel of sound onto the same FM carrier hitherto used for monophonic transmissions. The Zenith-GE system, it will be recalled, emerged in the tests conducted by the National Stereophonic Radio Committee as the leading contender against the Crosby system (for details, see "FM's Next Chapter" in our April issue). The ultimate wisdom of the FCC's choice will become manifest, of course, only after the new system has been in use long enough to satisfy both the broadcasters of, and the listeners to, FM stereo. Early opinion regarding the new system is quite divergent and not a little confusing, with the FCC heralding its action as something that will "add a new dimension . . . and offer listening pleasure comparable to that now obtainable through stereo records and tapes." Others disagree on the amount of distortion and channel separation in the new system, and whether these factors are related more closely to the system itself or the equipment used for receiving it. And at least one major newspaper has befogged things even more by stating that to receive FM multiplex, you will need two FM "receivers."

Dimensions, distortion, and daily newspapers aside, what emerges from the confusion of the first shock-wave can be summed up as follows:

Most, if not all, FM tuners can be wired to receive multiplex, although sets of the "wide-band" circuit design probably will do a better job of it.

The adapter for connecting to FM sets in order to extract the stereo signal will not necessarily be a cheaper device than would be required for any of the other proposed multiplex systems. We can expect a small flood of such adapters—some in kit form—as well as new sets that incorporate an adapter.

FM antennas will become more important than before, particularly in fringe or other weak reception areas. More will be needed and more will be sold.

Frequency response, on both stereo channels, can be as good as it has been on monophonic FM, which is to say, from about 50 to 15,000 cycles.

Channel separation can be about as good as, or better than, what is available from stereo discs.

Phasing of the two signals transmitted can be controlled by the station and thus, presumably, will cease to be the problem it is when receiving stereo from two distinct transmitters.

Broadcast stereo will offer a new source of program for home tape recording. However, the multiplex adapter used in such applications must be carefully designed so that harmonics from its own subcarrier generator are prevented from interfering with the recorder's bias oscillator.

Multiplex will not immediately kill AM-FM stereocasts or FM-FM stereocasts; these forms will coexist with multiplex for some time, with most stations simply duplicating on multiplex the stereo programs sent out by other techniques presently used.

A hopeful, though reserved, attitude is summed up by Dick Kaye of WCRB, Boston, who states that his station is going ahead with multiplex although "nobody really knows just how it will work out on a practical transmission basis. The new system has been tested, but not as much as some of the other systems."

Listeners, of course, will be concerned with two main considerations. If the subcarrier for background music will not interfere with the broadcast FM signals, and if those signals can be transmitted and received with no increase in distortion over regular FM, then the new technique well may fulfill its promise of adding that "new dimension" to broadcast music.

Double-Duty Accessory. For use on a tone-arm. "Selecto-Brush" has a cam-

el's hair brush that sweeps the record groove while a delicate spring at one end of the mounting strap permits the user to set the pickup into a desired groove. The device, at 98 cents, is made by Duotone Co., Keyport, N.J.

Wired for Ballet. Having made its mark in home music systems, the Citation line of Harman-Kardon, Inc. recently invaded the musical theatre when a load of amplifiers and loudspeakers were installed by Stewart Hegeman in New York's City Center—not only to reproduce the musical content of the program but, in a very real sense, to help "perform" it. The event was the first series of performances of a new George Balanchine ballet, titled "Electronics" and danced by the New York City Ballet ensemble to an original composition by Remi Gassmann and Oskar Sala, described as "the first electronic music of symphonic proportions."

The music was created on tape according to Gassmann's "compositional specifications," and, of course, reproduced from tape played over the assembled audio components. The original sounds themselves were obtained not from natural or instrumental sound materials and not from signal generators either, but rather from a device developed by Sala and known as a Studio Trautonium. According to Gassmann, who also has composed for regular musical instruments, the Trautonium opens a new era of sound and offers great possibilities for the composer that "extend beyond the traditional means of musical expression." Ballet director Balanchine called the music



Music was heard, and the dancers performed—but where was the orchestra?

"fascinating and compelling." What says the audio man, working to reproduce this new music? "From the standpoint of both frequency response and dynamic range," states Hegeman, "this music has significantly greater scope than any previously known conventional symphonic work." Westminster reportedly will bring it out in disc form in the near future.

Acoustics and Architecture. Among the more close-to-home side effects of last winter's record snowfall in Massachusetts was the demise of the Theatre Concert Hall, a familiar musical landmark at the summer Tanglewood Festivals. Tons of snow piled up on the roof until it collapsed. Now a building is a new structure, designed by Pittsfield architect Prentice Bradley and using steel members such as are used in the Music Shed.

Meantime, far from these snowy climes comes a report about an audio structure of another variety, the "largest audio building of its kind west of the Mississippi." It's the two-story, glass-and-concrete high fidelity retail outlet of I.F.A. Electronics in Encino, California, with some 20,000 square feet of display and demonstration area. One aspect we found intriguing is the "supervised kit department" in which specialists will test and check a kit-built unit. The customer will pay half the difference between the kit price and the wired unit price.

"Patrician Manifesto." It takes, apparently, a king-size volume to describe a king-size product. So it would seem from a recent tome prepared by Electro-Voice, Inc., Buchanan, Michigan. The "book" (more like part of an engineering file that broke loose from its cabinet) bulges with data, statistics, illustrations, and discussions—all on the philosophy, design, and performance of E-V's largest single high-fidelity component, the new Patrician 700 speaker system. It is titled, with pride, the "Patrician Manifesto."

The single copy that now exists is not designed for "mailing on request" al-



No horn; just a 30-inch woofer.

though E-V's Don Kirkendall indicates that eventually much of it may be condensed into pamphlet form for prospective Patrician buyers.

Impetus for amassing new data stems

largely from the introduction of what is, essentially, a new product. The term "Patrician" is not, apparently, confined to a specific product or design, but rather to a "concept of sound." Thus, the new model 700 differs radically from older Patricians. Instead of an 18-inch woofer working into a folded horn for frequencies up to 200 cycles, the new Patrician uses a 30-inch woofer as a direct radiator for response up to 100 cycles. From this point to 700 cycles response is handled by a 12-inch speaker, also a direct radiator. Two compression horn drivers take over, respectively, from 700 to 3,500 cycles, and above 3,500 cycles. What's more, the new behemoth, which weighs in at 315 pounds and stands 54½ inches high, may be used as a corner speaker or placed flat against a wall. Net price is \$795.

Acoustics and Horticulture. Of the many uses to which sound has been put (anesthesia, cleaning, industrial testing, to name a few), none quite stirs the spring-tide imagination as much as a current phenomenon reported by a lady of our acquaintance, and involving the unlikely combination of a batch of tulips and a loudspeaker.

The tulips, from a florist in the southern Berkshires, had been cut and placed in a stem vase which sits atop the speaker enclosure. When sounds came forth from the speaker, the tulips' petals unfolded and continued to spread to near-record proportions. And when the music was turned off, the petals again closed.

This has been going on now for nearly a week and bids fair to becoming a local attraction as momentous as the Tanglewood Festival or the County Fair. Speculation is rampant. We are trying to conceal our concern that something extra-dimensional (perhaps extra-terrestrial) is at work by talking glibly of developing a new test for loudspeakers to be known as "petal response." One dour chap suggests a metaphysical tie between "nature and the muse." A local handyman hints darkly at trickery, explaining the process in terms of forced air from hidden vents. And a growing number of observers have simply accepted the fact of the phenomenon with a "Well, why not?" attitude.

Significantly enough, the music that started this whole thing is a new recording of Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony.

No Taps for Tape. Diversity of products and forms of recorded tape, once seen as a cause of confusion, now is viewed as a healthy sign. In fact, Herbert L. Brown, president of the Magnetic Recording Industry Association and a vice-president of Ampex, calls tape "the greatest potential in the high fidelity field." Every major music company in the U.S., says Brown, is marketing music on tape, and the large manufacturers of music equipment are "impressed with the long-range future of tape."

Just how do you spell out that long-range future? Brown sees three coming trends. One is the continuance of the "traditional" tape recorder market. Another is the growing demand for tape players which do not record but simply

play prerecorded tapes. Finally, says Brown, there is the tape cartridge, which "in the decade to follow will be directly competitive with phonograph discs."

Tape and Disc Hybrid. While speculation on tape continues, a radically different kind of "record" and player have been introduced by Westrex. The vehicle for recorded sound is an interesting cross between a tape and a disc. It is, actually, a grooved tape. The "tape" is made of flexible polyvinyl plastic known as Hostilite and held, by Westrex, to be undamagable. About seventy-five recorded grooves are pressed into the ⅝-inch-wide tape which is coiled inside a plastic cartridge. A phonograph-type needle assembly engages the groove and plays from the top of the tape downward as it spirals from beginning to end.

According to Westrex general manager Harry Rich, recordings will be available in three standard lengths of play: twenty



"Phonotape" cartridge and player.

minutes, one hour, and four hours. Both stereo and mono "phonotapes" will be issued. The player itself may be plugged into a music system in much the same manner as an ordinary record player. It also is supplied on one model of Westrex's portable, transistorized AM-FM radio.

Two for Price of One. Owners of the Stanton Stereo Fluxvalve (the stereo phono pickup made by Pickering & Co., Inc., Sunnyside Blvd., Plainview, N.Y.) are offered a free stylus for playing 78-rpm records when they buy a replacement tip for microgroove discs. The regular 0.7-mil diamond stylus for LPs and stereo records now is packaged together with a 2.7-mil sapphire stylus for 78s. Brochure VP, which gives details of the deal, may be obtained by writing to Dept. PR at the manufacturer's.

Silent Spinning. In reply to numerous queries regarding an item in the April issue on Rek-O-Kut's new "Rekothane" belt: this belt is intended to reduce rumble by 6 db. And by way of further clarification, the belt itself (at \$2.95) is a direct replacement for the belt used in one of the firm's recent "stereotables," such as the Model N-34H. When using it on older models, such as the K-33, K-33H, and N-33H, you actually need the Rekothane belt together with Rek-O-Kut's "motor mounting kit." The combination of belt and kit costs \$3.95.

SIR THOMAS

Continued from page 34

veterans from the Beecham Symphony. They noted a new mellowness and self-discipline in Beecham. He no longer turned up with a jest an hour or more behind schedule. Always he took his place punctually on the rostrum at ten a.m. Occasionally he would conduct with a lighted cigar instead of a baton. No other oddity is remembered. For the first time in his professional life Beecham was not only in deadly earnest but revealed his seriousness.

October 7, 1932, the LPO's first night, is another Beecham occasion that will stay forever in eye and mind. In the conductor's room at the old Queen's Hall, Langham Place, a moment before going on, Beecham turned to his leader, Paul Beard, and said, "Come on, Paul, let's show 'em what we can do." What the LPO could do was startlingly proved by their first item, *Carnaval romain*. The last chord had hardly died away before the audience leaped to its feet and roared in the manner of football crowds when a winning goal is scored.

But there was one grievous thing. The attendance that night was hardly up to Big Game standards. There were many empty seats. Just how many it is hard to estimate after thirty years, with the Queen's Hall an open site as a result of Hitler's fire raids and relevant records either destroyed or dispersed. Some say the hall was three-quarters full. Many years later Beecham himself, as appears below, told me that it wasn't more than half full. During the interval he strode and stormed. The thing was, he shouted, a bloody disgrace. A new secretary who joined him the following day found him fulminating still. He went on fulminating for a week. "I will never set foot in the Queen's Hall again," he threatened.

This threat, like many others uttered by Beecham in ire, was quickly forgotten. But what I have called British phlegm was remembered bitterly to the end of his days. In terms of box office, his third musical career, which began with his founding of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (1946) and blossomed prodigiously in the recording studios, was a good deal more successful than the first and second. The RPO was recruited and rehearsed in precisely three and a half weeks. From the Delius Trust and other sources there was plenty of money.

Even so, the early months brought difficulties. The entourage of that day vividly remember a provincial tour which took the orchestra to Newcastle-on-Tyne. They arrived at this (relatively) far-flung port, after a week's grueling work, on a Friday morning. It was customary to pay the men's salaries at the Friday morning rehearsal. The orchestra manager had been assured that he would find money deposited against the weekly payroll in a Newcastle bank. Telephoning the bank that Friday, he was met with blank surprise. Nobody had seen a penny of Beecham money. The cupboard was still bare on Saturday morning. The manager knew that if their money wasn't forthcoming the players would pack up

and return home instead of playing Newcastle that night. He solved the problem by calling his own bank in London and having personal funds transferred.

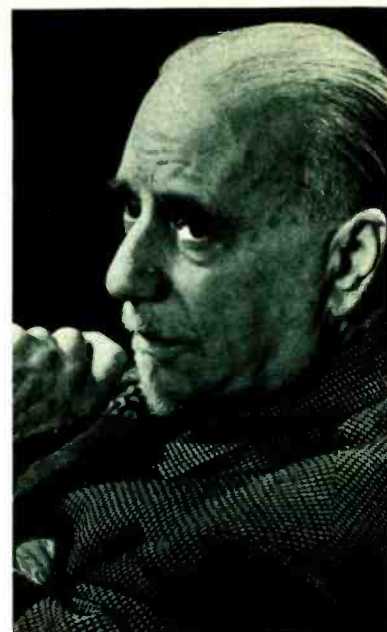
After this initial hurdle, the orchestra prospered mightily and soon became as firmly rooted as the Bank of England. But, as I have said, the years of struggle were never forgotten. Four years almost to the day before Beecham's death, I talked with him for hours at the Mayfair Hotel. His mood was retrospective and denunciatory.

"I have fought against British snobbery and hypocrisy," he said, "for forty years. I gave concerts here in 1906. I was acclaimed by leading critics as a conductor of remarkable ability and individual outlook. Twenty years later I was saluted by Robin Legge [1862-1933, the most widely read English musical journalist of his day] as one of the greatest musicians the orchestral world had seen. But nobody else noticed me, even though I had conducted *Elektra* and *Rosenkavalier*, when these works were quite new, without a note of music in front of me and had been round all the world conducting. I had conducted a hundred operas. All this made not the slightest impression on the British public or the British press.

"For decades I had no audience in London. I gave my first concerts with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 1932 to half-empty houses. Why? Because I was an Englishman. That state of affairs lasted for three years. Until 1935 music was monopolized by such old humbugs as Mengelberg and Toscanini, who gave third-rate concert performances. My own orchestra gave first-rate ones, acknowledged as such by the United States and the world. . . . And still it goes on. In Britain we are not interested in what our fellow countrymen are doing, either here or abroad. We are interested only in what picturesque foreigners with spectacular names or romantic-sounding pseudonyms and unknown backgrounds are doing. It is going to take any young man thirty years to make a scratch on the national consciousness. Any brilliantly talented beginner starting out today will be an old man before it becomes evident to his fellow countrymen that he is equal to anything that comes from outside."

Truly his tongue was a lash. Often he used it recklessly. He left many a scarred *amour-propre* in his wake. So do all men whose nature it is to hate humbug on sight. We who have oddly outlived him remember with fervor the best of his Mozart; all of his Delius; every bar of his Berlioz; a dozen or so supreme Wagner nights; the volcanic might of his Strauss; and Bizet and Puccini performances with a fragrance and bloom upon them that will never be surpassed.

But he is remembered, too, and with little less fervor, by millions who do not give a fig for music. As the average commuting, pipe-smoking Englishman saw him, Beecham was one of the great character symbols of his century. In his own field of impish, truculent, or salty dicta there has been only one who came near to outrivaling him. Beecham was in the Churchill class.



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Sir Thomas wouldn't approve. No man so dramatically alive, so vividly affirmative, could conceivably consent to any mournful recital of his qualities; certainly not to a world that delighted in him. In his long and rich life he accomplished much; he enriched much; and he laughed much. We laughed with him. He touched greatness and he touched us. And that is quite enough.

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A POX ON MANFREDINI

Continued from page 39

all twelve Corelli Op. 6, etc., etc.)—made their albums models of luxurious presentation: whole little books of analytical notes were offered with the records. With Op. 8 by Torelli, they included a 36-page booklet ("Giuseppe Torelli and the Early Concerto." "Giuseppe Torelli: Life and Cultural Environment," "The Concertos of Opus 8") with pages of illustrations, facsimiles, and fifty-one engraved musical examples. Nothing since the old prewar HMV Society sets had ever boasted such a lavish presentation.

I can see it coming: the full-page, four-color magazine ad with the Bright Young Couple under the Christmas tree. He is holding up a bottle of imported Russian vodka (the diplomats' drink); she, in tapered slacks with the right foot delicately toed outward, is grasping a "handsome recording complete with a free reproduction of Massacio's *St. Peter Baptizing a Disciple*" (it's very fashionable to have Renaissance pictures on the covers of your barococo albums) and is exclaiming in tones of utter rapture: "Darling! It's Manfredini!"

If you start to analyze a Manfredini concerto, you will find nothing inept or wrong. The composer was a solid craftsman and, like almost every Italian musician of the time, he knew what he wanted and how to get it. The concerto grosso form, in Manfredini's hands, might be a model—formally speaking. The trouble with Manfredini is that we have so many better works in the same form by other composers. It seems that we do not have, in music, the same tolerance for the "also were's," the second-string artists, as we do for painters. A work by a *Kleinmeister* in the visual arts is admitted; it is rare that music's *Kleinmeister* are accepted. Perhaps we are overcritical of what we hear; but perhaps, too, a Manfredini is *not* on the same level as a Renaissance or baroque painter of the second order. Manfredini's structure is impeccable, but when you examine half a dozen of his concerti grossi, you see that they are all of the same fabric, turned out in a variety of attractive colors which at first hide the threadbare pattern and the lack of any real creative imagination. And there are not those flashes of genius which generally dart through even a second-rate work by a first-rate composer.

Do I exaggerate? Perhaps, but not much. The fact remains, however, that something has gone wrong with our musical values as far as barococo music is concerned. No one denies the documentary value—especially for schools of music—of complete recordings of concerti grossi; I hope Vox and Epic sell thousands. The point is that a series like Manfredini's Op. 3 is just not first-rate music judged by any standard—historical, musical, or (and this is the most important criterion nowadays) musicological. Certainly I cannot pos-

sibly see any purpose in recording all twelve works; for historical purposes one or two would have been quite sufficient; and for the general music lover, I am afraid that there are several thousand compositions which would more profitably fill the twelve or fifteen minutes listening-time that a Manfredini concerto requires.

It will be thought that I am an enemy of concerti grossi; but this is far from the truth. No one enjoys Vivaldi's *L'Estro armonico* more than I; but I feel very strongly that the emotional and intellectual content of the average concerto grosso is too limited (and, I think, *purposely* limited by its composer) to permit a present-day musician—filled as he is with Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Mahler, Schoenberg, Bartók, Stravinsky, and Webern (to tear through our musical culture in three lines)—to want to hear a dozen Locatelli or Barsanti or Stradella or Torelli concertos in one sitting. The left-wing crowd in Britain (of the *New Statesman* type) have, I am told, declared war on the present craze for Vivaldi and consorts. One of the most perceptive of this group was visiting me in Italy not long ago and I—having just finished some research on Vivaldi—was arguing that composer's case. We finally ran into the question of the Great Gubernman Project, the complete recording of all five hundred (or is it now six hundred?) Vivaldi concertos. My friend dug in his heels:

"Listen, Robbie," he began firmly, "let's get our bloody values straight. We've just had the whole of Vivaldi Op. 3 (*L'Estro armonico*) on the BBC Third Programme. Mind you: I was much struck with its originality, and how much difference there was between the various works. They are brilliantly written. But, look here: it's completely *unintelligent*, small-boned music. It's not *thinking* music like Mozart or Haydn or Bartók or Beethoven. Of course that's why the Italians like it: an easy way to enjoy old music; you lie back and relax. You can't *relax* to a Mozart Quintet or the *Missa Solemnis* unless you're an idiot."

"The Italians do," I said (not meaning it nastily).

"Yes, because the Italians are not intellectuals at all—how could they be with this sun," said my friend, pointing out the French windows to the blazing Tuscan afternoon. "And that's the whole secret of this great fuss nowadays about Vivaldi. It's easy music. It's precisely the right music for half-intellectuals and snobs; moreover, you'll notice it's the homosexuals' delight—bright, brittle, fast-moving, surface glitter."

He got up and walked to the piano and, standing over the keyboard, began to play *Art of Fugue*.

"I'm sorry," he said dreamily, as he worked into the fourth voice and the room began to be filled with the somber D minor peace that only Bach knows how to write; "all this Vivaldi business—

the five hundred concertos on 292 LPs—is just nonsense. Degenerate. It's another symptom of our civilization's sickness; five minutes before twelve; how Spengler would have laughed. . . .” And we moved off to politics and other *Weltprobleme*.

One of the principal reasons for this lopsided adoration of barococo music is, I think, intimately bound up with the advent of LP. When I was in college, we used to save up our dollars and get lovely baroque music on 78s: that Bruno Walter set of the Corelli *Christmas Concerto* (the ornaments all wrong, but how sensitively played!); an Arthur Fiedler single 12-inch Victor of the *Christmas Symphony* by G. M. Schiassi (died 1754)—sophisticated and utterly delightful preclassical music; or that exquisite HMV recording of a Dall'Abaco B flat Concerto Grosso with Edwin Fischer and his Chamber Orchestra; and, one of the greatest sensations of my youth, the practically unobtainable Vivaldi A minor Concerto for Two Violins from Op. 3, with the Concertgebouw Orchestra—a Telefunken set that a Harvard colleague of mine obtained from Argentina (this was towards the end of the war). Nowadays, my young New York friends can stroll around the corner and get twelve of everything baroque: instead of having to choose among a dozen first-rate products (as was the case when one bought baroque music twenty years ago), one is now served up with two hundred choices.

After this conversation with my British friend, I thought I had better go into the concerto grosso question more thoroughly. To this end, I went out and bought \$100 worth of Corelli, Vivaldi, Geminiani, Locatelli, Manfredini, Torelli, Pergolesi, Sammartini, Albinoni—all in gorgeous packages with reproductions of old Italian masters; most (if not all) played with careful attention to ornaments, cadenzas, realization of the harpsichord continuo, etc.; and accompanied by analytical notes which (as I have suggested above) are models of presentation and annotation (if not, always, of English style). Every evening for a fortnight I sat down—often with the scores—and played through a total of 208 concertos. Naturally, this is a big dose, and it might be thought that any category of music would not stand up to 208 servings. Yet there have been periods when we played Mozart (usually live) night after night; and I can quite cheerfully face the prospect of hearing two hours of Beethoven string quartets every night for as long as they last; or Schubert; or Haydn; or Handel; or Bartók. Moreover, this playing of concerti grossi every night for two weeks must be being duplicated in many houses throughout America: if not, how could the purchasers of all that barococo even get through the music at all?

I ought to preface my summing-up by saying that my own life has been, and will continue to be, devoted to music. This has to be said because there are,

after all, people who would be bored to death by any 208 pieces of old music. It also has to be said because I approached my barococo marathon—if with any preconceived notion—with curiosity and with the expectation of much pleasure.

In a word, I was horrified. Corelli, Vivaldi—yes, of course (not to speak of Handel, where barococo is transformed into great music); but the dreary horror of an evening with Signor Manfredini! I simply cannot for the life of me comprehend what ghastly perversion has brought us to the pitch where we sit around the phonograph, deadly serious and intent, listening to fourth-rate concerti grossi which never should have left that dusty archive shelf. To me this is the absolute negation of music: it is the point where musicologists (most of whom don't like music anyway) have triumphed. Groaning under their Teutonic footnotes—and often expressing themselves in a language only faintly resembling that generally conceded to be English—they have elbowed their way into our musical culture: talked record companies into recording hundreds of LPs of endless, jogging preclassical trash; persuaded all the snobs and musically semiliterate to buy these records and to fill up concert halls whenever those touring Italian chamber orchestras come to play two and one-half hours of music whose original function must have been *Tafelmusik*.

So we land where we started: much of Manfredini's music was probably first played to the accompaniment of clinking spumante glasses and fashionable conversation: he was paid, no doubt, to entertain guests of the prince, or count, or baron, as they lustily attacked their *pollo al mattone* and roasted *colombi*. Thus, cynically speaking, we have reinstated Manfredini in our twentieth-century culture: music to drink (and eat) to. Instead of chianti or soave, it's vodka martinis, and instead of *colombi*, it's Ritz crackers with anchovies. And as the guests move about, balancing their glasses and cigarettes and canapés, chatting brightly with each other, Manfredini floats from the corner, barely heard above the party uproar, obligingly made welcome.

The fact that much of our most beloved music, like Mozart's serenades and Handel's *Water Music*, was written, more or less, as *Tafelmusik* should not lead us to copy the manners of the aristocratic patrons who commissioned it. Even if Herr Haffner clinked his glass and munched his *Tafelspitz* to the tune of Mozart's Symphony K. 385, there is no excuse for our doing so. Music that is worth anything cannot be made to function as pleasant background noise. It is therefore symptomatic that our neurotic civilization goes out of its way to find an old music sufficiently snobbish to be "U," sufficiently old to be respectable, and sufficiently boring not to need listening to.

Something has gone horribly wrong somewhere.

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BASS TAKES SOME DOING

Continued from page 37

operated below its "clipping level." Actually there is a fairly definite level above which the amplifier will not be called upon to function simply because higher levels will not be present in the program material.

In recording and broadcasting, for instance, either the average level is kept low to keep the high level passages below the clipping point, or the signal is compressed by compression amplifiers or manual monitoring, or some clipping will take place in the recording of broadcasting processes. An AM transmitter, for instance, clips at 100% modulation. An FM transmitter may not clip as sharply but it also has upper limits of distortionless frequency swing. Similarly, the groove on a record and the track on a tape have definite upper limits of signal modulation which cannot be exceeded. All this means that during playback reproducing equipment does not really handle the same peaks in volume level that might be present in the concert hall. Some have already been clipped off in the recording and broadcasting processes.

EISENBERG: What, then, is the difference between amplifiers of widely different power ratings? Or, rather, why select one rather than another?

SCOTT: In the main, it's a matter of power for bass frequencies. You see, other things being equal, the output transformer in a 40-watt amplifier should be twice as big as the transformer in a 20-watt amplifier if it is to deliver full power at low frequencies. But then, it becomes not so much a matter of the amount of rated power, but of its quality—which is to say, clean power for undistorted bass response. Of course, the bigger the transformer, the more expensive an amplifier becomes, other things being equal.

EISENBERG: Is power related to quality of sound?

SCOTT: The more expensive amplifier generally will sound better not because it has "more" power as such, but because it can deliver its power at all signal levels over a wider frequency range.

EISENBERG: How wide should that range be?

SCOTT: For the bass end, 30 cycles or somewhat lower. There's no use in going below the usable limits of speaker response. In any case, the amplifier's power response should be maintained flat up to about 6,000 or 7,000 cycles, from where it may roll off, similarly to the recording deemphasis curve, to 20,000 cycles. The higher the frequency at which roll-off begins, the better, although above 5,000 cycles power requirements are not nearly as great as in the bass region.

EISENBERG: Power response is not the same as frequency response, though.

SCOTT: No, it is not. Power response is the maximum power an amplifier will deliver with a certain minimum distortion. It is nowhere nearly as flat a curve as "frequency response," which should not change appreciably until the amplifier reaches overload. Actually, power bandwidth, particularly at the bass end, is a truer indication of an amplifier's capabilities.

EISENBERG: What does frequency response show?

SCOTT: Frequency response is measured at some level below overload, and thus is not affected by the amplifier's true power capabilities. As such, it can indicate only the degree of coloration of signals at low levels. Power bandwidth, however, tells you just how well music signals can be reproduced without overloading the amplifier. To be really meaningful, power response should not be taken as an average figure of an amplifier's over-all response. What happens in the 30- to 100-cycle region is far more significant. This is the frequency region that involves the really careful (and costly) design considerations. Power ratings based on mid-frequency performance alone do not necessarily tell you anything about the available power in the 30- to 100-cycle region. Thus, some so-called "40-watt" amplifiers won't fully drive low efficiency speakers, because their "40 watts" is delivered only at mid-frequencies. On the other hand, some "20-watt" amplifiers drive these speakers perfectly well in a typical living room.

EISENBERG: How can the buyer know? Isn't there some standard covering this matter?

SCOTT: Indeed there is, and as a member of the Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers, I'm doing my best to try to get the entire industry to use it. Not only does it give the consumer a more accurate picture of amplifier performance,



but it provides a basis for comparing different types of amplifiers and thus enables the purchaser to choose intelligently the one best suited to his own requirements. Ratings other than those recommended by the IHFM standard really are meaningless and provide no basis for comparing different equipments. This is not intended to weigh against low-powered amplifiers which certainly can be designed as high-fidelity components. The purpose of the IHFM standard is to permit the buyer to know just what he's paying for. It's a very logical idea, really: when you buy some yards of fabric, for instance, you don't expect the clerk to measure it out for you with a rubber yardstick.

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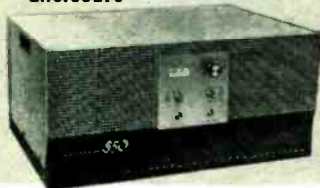
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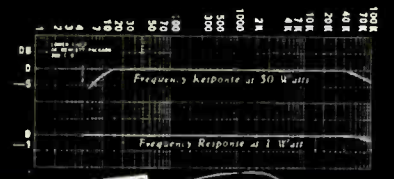
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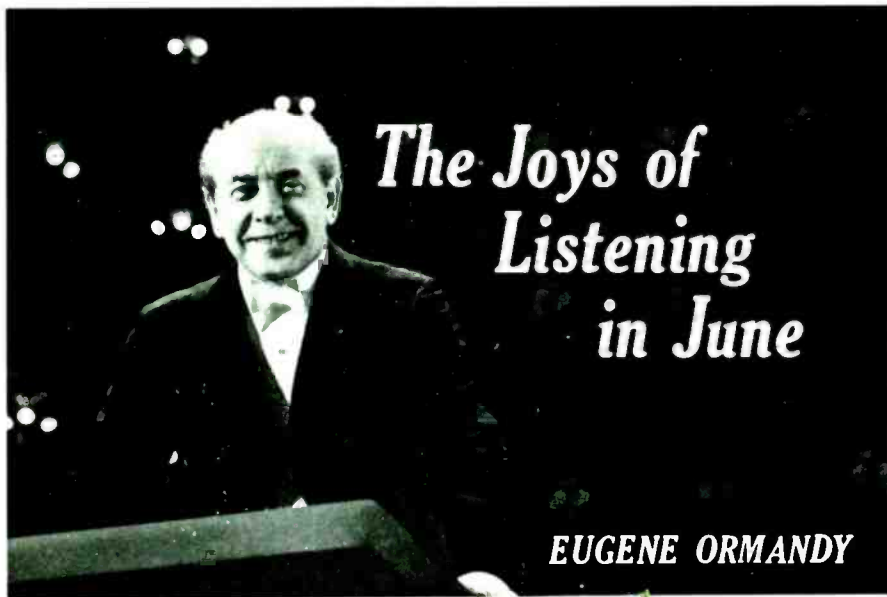
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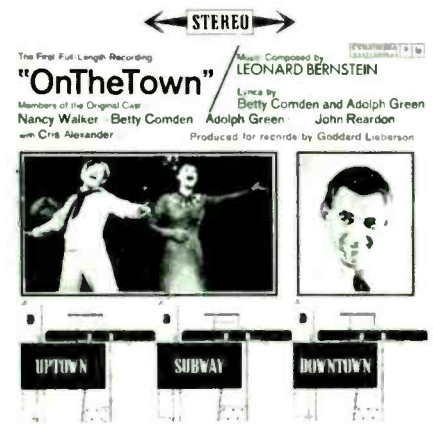
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