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THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

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Studies in Improvisation. Lukas Foss' Chamber Ensemble premières a fascinating new form of music—improvisation according to plan. With 12-page text. It's musical history in the making!

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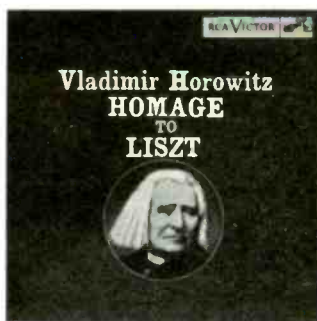
Galina Vishnevskaya. The Stereo première of the Bolshoi Opera star, singing Russian songs. "Lovely, glowing voice schooled to perfection."
—N. Y. Herald Tribune.

Van Cliburn's first solo album is pure poetry! The popular Chopin favorites include the beloved "Polonaise in A-Flat." High Fidelity says: "Cliburn is Chopin-trained; every droplet in the shower must shine distinctly." Another new album by Cliburn—Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto. Reiner, Chicago Symphony.



The most striking creations of Jerome Kern and Cole Porter reach a polished pinnacle in these settings by Morton Gould. Gould's prolific imagination brings new sparkle to such treasures as "Night and Day," "All the Things You Are," "I've Got You Under My Skin," "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," others.

This historic disc presents a reigning virtuoso at the peak of his art, and the record debut of his amazing protégé. The London Times wrote of Erick Friedman, "The dazzling brightness of his tone was startling and exciting." These two justly famous works, as played here, sum up the beauty of the violin.



A keyboard genius of the 20th century perceptively performs seven representative pieces by the supreme pianist of an earlier day, Franz Liszt. The album, marking the 150th anniversary of Liszt's birth, offers "Rakóczy March," "Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 2 and 6," "Funérailles," "Valse Oubliée," more.

Although his "New World" is better known, Dvořák's "Symphony No. 2" is held by many to be even more appealing. The colorful Slavonic flavor courses vigorously through the music. Monteux, towering master of French scores, moves into the Bohemian idiom with flawless authority and insight.
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Cover photo by Hans Wild

People who write about Patrick Cairns Hughes (whose "Miss Sutherland at Halfway House" appears on p. 50) are fond of mentioning that this opera specialist was once known as Spike Hughes, jazz band leader and composer. It's a piquant note, but other facets of Mr. Hughes's *curriculum vitae* deserve mention: e.g., composer of *Cinderella*, the first opera especially written for television; wartime propaganda worker for the BBC; author of *Famous Mozart Operas* and *Famous Puccini Operas* (*Famous Verdi Operas* soon to come); collector of composers' autograph letters, including a large batch from Puccini to his boat builder. What Mr. Hughes himself regards as a special distinction is his ownership of one of the few complete collections of one of the Stucchi aquatints of Sanquirico's early nineteenth-century scenic designs for La Scala.

It is almost two years since the last appearance in these pages of Peter Heyworth, and it is with particular pleasure that we welcome his present contribution, "Modern Opera in a Muddle," p. 54. Born in New York City, of British parents, Mr. Heyworth studied at Charterhouse and, after an interruption of some six years in the armed forces, was graduated from Balliol. His entire professional career has been devoted almost exclusively to music—as record reviewer for the *New Statesman*, music editor of the *Times* (London) *Educational Supplement*, and music critic for the *Observer* (where his unsigned but readily ascribed profiles of musical personalities are a much-awaited feature).

With "The Wagner Operas on Micro-groove" (p. 57), Herbert Glass joins the ranks of HIGH FIDELITY discographers. His concern with Wagner is, however, only one aspect of his broad musical interests: Mr. Glass was editor of the former *Review of Recordings*, has written on a wide variety of subjects for a number of music periodicals, and has made something of a specialty of Czech music, on which subject he has conducted radio programs. He's also the only music critic we know who teaches English privately and, also privately, goes in for the fine art of cooking.

We aren't sure that R. D. Darrell, record reviewer for this journal and member of its Editorial Board, really cares to be identified as the dean of discophiles, but we don't see how he can avoid the sobriquet. Viz.: editor of the old *Phonograph Monthly Review*; compiler of the pioneer *Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music* and *Schirmer's Guide to Books on Music and Musicians*; author of *Good Listening*. Through all this, Mr. Darrell seems never to have lost his susceptibility to the magic of reproduced sound. This month (p. 64) he writes of his experiences with headphone listening, for an introduction to the joys of which he claims deep indebtedness to Mr. Edgar Sharpe, of Sharpe Instruments Ltd.

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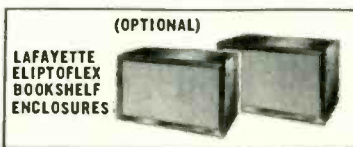


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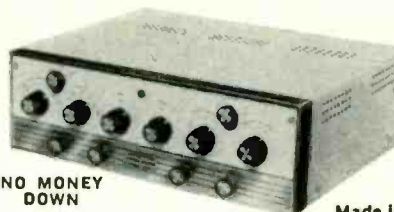
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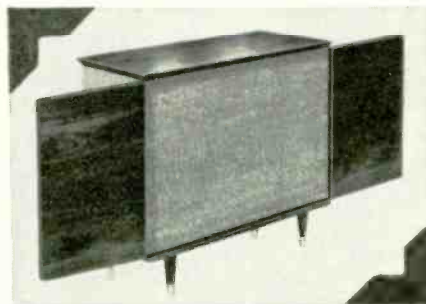
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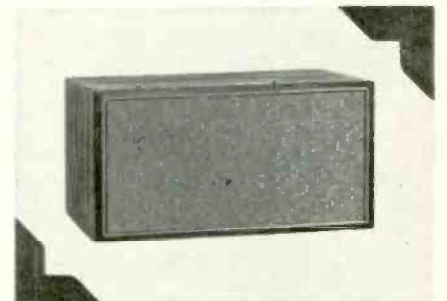


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... the first and only automatic turntable and record changer designed to meet the uncompromising requirements of stereophonic record reproduction. The heart of the finest record reproduction equipment is the constant speed hysteresis synchronous motor. This is the heart of the new MIRACORD STUDIO H. Equally outstanding is the one-piece, dynamically-balanced, seven-pound, cast and machined 12" turntable ... another assurance of uniform speed. The scientifically designed, professional type tone arm with plug-in head is non-resonant and free in all planes. It tracks faultlessly at recommended tracking weights. The arm is mass balanced and no springs are used. The 4-speed MIRACORD plays all size records as a conventional turntable, an automatic turntable or as an automatic record changer. **STUDIO H** with hysteresis synchronous motor **\$99.50.*** Where line voltage variation is not a problem the **STUDIO** with heavy-duty, shaded, 4-pole motor will provide uncompromising stereo performance. **\$79.95.***

*Complete with arm, less cartridge and base.

BENJAMIN ELECTRONIC SOUND CORP., 97-03 43rd Ave., CORONA 68, N.Y.

NOVEMBER 1961

CIRCLE 22 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

11



Birgit Nilsson

The latest in the succession of great Scandinavian dramatic singers maintains a level view of herself and her art.

THE morning I knocked on the door of Birgit Nilsson's New York hotel suite, expecting to be confronted on the threshold by the vaguely fearsome embodiment of a traditional Wagnerian Soprano, I was quite unprepared for the rather shy greeting of this black-haired Swedish woman whose place in operatic history is already so secure. Miss Nilsson ducked her head apologetically, led the way into the living room, and seemed at a loss over what to do with me next. Through a wide-open window a cold breeze blew steadily in from Central Park; she sat down in the considerable draft and plucked at the edge of the table cloth beside her chair. It was obvious that the adulation showered on her during a season of *Isolde* and *Turandots* had left her untouched by any trace of the grand manner. As she responded to questions, her shyness seemed gradually to slip away, and she spoke with candor and occasional thrusts of shrewd humor; from time to time she absently pulled a lock of hair down to the bridge of her nose and let it bob back into place again. I guessed that she could be stubborn at times, but never overbearing or pretentious.

"You want to know about *Isolde*? Well, I have sung *Isolde* eighty-five times now. When I began, I had a German coach who helped me a great deal. But he put too much hate in her. He said to me 'hate, hate, hate—she is full of fury!' And at first I liked that. But after the beginning you put *yourself* more and more into a part. Now I play her softer. The audience must feel sorry for her, that she is in love and is handled in this way by *Tristan*. You can do so much with such a part—I learn more every performance. With *Turandot*, now, there is less to be done. She is not so intelligent. But *Isolde*! I am never bored with singing her."

Was it not difficult, I asked, for a Wagnerian soprano to be equally at ease

in Italian roles? Miss Nilsson seemed to feel that it wasn't. "That is nothing unusual in itself. It just happens that many Wagner singers come up from mezzos and contraltos and don't have the lightness for Italian parts. But it is a very good thing for me to sing *Turandot*. I did sixteen last season—nine in New York and seven on tour—it keeps the voice from getting heavy. Do you know, in Italy when they hear me sing Italian roles they don't believe I can sing anything else? They say to me, 'But you are an Italian singer!'" Miss Nilsson beamed. "Conductors urge me to learn *Elektra* now, because there are not many who can sing it. But I have enough heavy parts, and if I sing *Elektra* then there will be fewer *Aidas*, fewer *Donna Annas*, fewer *Amelias*. I think I have learned all the roles that are best for me."

The subject of heavy roles brought to mind certain of Miss Nilsson's predecessors, with whom comparison was inevitable. "Flagstad? Her voice is darker than mine, and Traubel's too, I think. And speaking of Flagstad, do you wonder why Scandinavians are good singers? I think because we are hard workers! In the south, in Italy, everybody sings—but they sing when they feel like it, from the heart. But then their mood changes, maybe, and the temperament goes. (Of course, not with Callas. Callas is a great actress.) Maybe our climate helps us, too—we have such clear air, and so cold. That clearness, you can hear it in Flagstad's voice: you can almost see the mountain with a little bit of snow on top . . . and perhaps the coldness is there too? They tell me I am supposed to be cold because I am Swedish. If that is so, then Bjoerling was cold too, so I am not going to worry about it!"

Birgit Nilsson was graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm in 1946. I asked her about her student

days, and was struck by the intensity with which she answered. It was evident that she had been unhappy, and that the sting had never entirely worn off. "I studied six years with the same teacher in Stockholm," she said. "Teachers don't always know what is best for a pupil—some are possessive and try to make the singer all their own. But my teacher was very sweet to me and I couldn't break away from him. I wasn't making progress, and time was going by, but I kept thinking it was *me*. I became full of complexes. I thought, 'I am stupid!'" Miss Nilsson tapped her forehead vehemently. "Finally I got away, and worked by myself. No one had told me about supporting from *here* [a vigorous jab at the diaphragm], and I had trouble with high resonance. It wasn't until later that I got control of the high voice. Now I trust myself. This is the only way. The best teacher is the stage. And when you are on stage no one can help you. You have to have confidence in yourself."

The first success of her career came when Miss Nilsson learned the role of *Agathe* in *Der Freischütz* on three days' notice for a performance at the Stockholm Royal Opera House under the veteran Leo Blech. "He was so hard on me," she recalled. "These conductors who are so experienced, you know, they forget how hard it is for young singers. I went home after the performance and cried and cried. Then friends began calling up to offer congratulations. I thought they were just doing it to cheer me up. Then I read the papers, and there it was—a great success!"

The faculty of learning roles quickly, foreshadowed in the *Freischütz* experience, has never deserted Miss Nilsson, although she maintains that she also forgets them quickly. She memorized *Isolde* in a month, and *Fidelio* while laid up in bed with a cold. "I learn by

Continued on page 14

Leading FM Station reports on Scott Multiplex Tuner and Adaptor



Richard L. Kaye, Station Manager of WCRB, using Scott Multiplex Tuner for station monitoring.

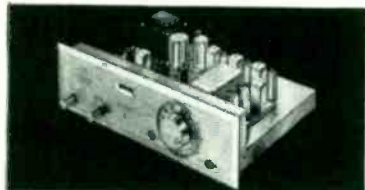
"...Outstanding stereo reception...Scott surpassed our greatest expectations..."

FM Station WCRB, Boston's leading good music station, has been broadcasting in multiplex for several months. During this period they have had the opportunity to evaluate many multiplex tuners and adaptors. Here's what they say:

"This letter is to let you know how pleased all of us at WCRB are with the H. H. Scott Multiplex Adaptor Model 335 and the H. H. Scott Multiplex Tuner Model 350. The Scott multiplex tuner and adaptor have surpassed our greatest expectations. They give outstanding stereo reception. The stereo separation, frequency response and low distortion have proven outstanding."

Richard L. Kaye
Station Manager

Many leading FM stations have chosen Scott for use in their monitoring and testing facilities. If you, too, want the finest multiplex equipment . . . choose H. H. Scott.



350 FM Stereo (Multiplex) Tuner Scott's widely acclaimed 350 FM Stereo Tuner has the multiplex circuitry built right in. You can use it to receive either FM stereo or regular monophonic FM broadcasts. Scott's Wide-Band design and unique silver-plated front end assure fine reception without distortion, drift, noise or loss of stereo separation. IHFM sensitivity is 2.5 μ v and stereo separation can match exacting FCC transmission specifications. Exclusive filtering circuits on the 350 and all Scott multiplex units permit flawless results when used with any tape recorder. **\$199.95***



335 FM Stereo (Multiplex) Adaptor You can instantly convert any Scott tuner, regardless of age or model, to multiplex with the 335 FM Stereo Adaptor. The combination of the 335 and your Scott tuner offers the same flexibility and tape recording features as the 350 FM Stereo Tuner. Optimum performance can be guaranteed only when a Scott tuner and the 335 are used together. **\$89.95**

Here's What Happy Owners Say:

"Multiplex comes in beautifully with 350 Tuner. I've heard stereo before, but never like this."

Kazunori Yonekura, Castro Valley, California

"I am 50 miles from transmitter and get perfect reception with just my TV antenna. I had (competing brand) multiplex but it didn't work."

John Flower, Concord, California

"... Here in Newburgh I am 100 miles from WGFM. I receive them every evening from 8 to 9 PM. . . . My hi-fi equipment is all H. H. Scott. My 310C tuner is 21 months old and has had no maintenance . . . not even tube replacement. My 272 Amplifier and 335 Multiplex Adaptor have been trouble-free. Your quality control must be nearly perfect. In my opinion you offer the finest hi-fi components than can be purchased."

Walter L. Bachman, Newburgh, New York

"Finest separation I ever heard."

Daniel M. Wolfe, Jr., San Francisco, California

"All other equipment is H. H. Scott. Reception 40 miles from station is very good."

W. A. Moss, Mountain View, California

"KPEN stereo terrific on Command Records — perfect channel separation."

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Model 500-501



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Center Equipment and Record Cabinet (Model 500) is designed to house amplifier and/or preamplifier, tuner, tape recorder, record changer, and transcription table. (See photo at right.) Shelf is adjustable. Blank face panel available. Lower left compartment has space for 150 LP record albums. Sliding doors. *Free-Standing Twin Speaker Enclosures* (Model 501) permit proper stereo separation or positioning for desired listening in any room. Each houses up to 15" loudspeaker. Also accommodates any size tweeter. *Cabinet Ensemble* (Model 500-501) is available with base as shown above, or with legs, as shown at right. Choice of Oil Walnut, Hand-Rubbed Mahogany, Blonde, or Ebony finish. (Individual cabinets also available separately.)

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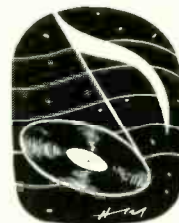
CIRCLE 97 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BIRGIT NILSSON

Continued from page 12

thinking how it looks on the page. I like to keep the same score always—if I change, I get all mixed up." Miss Nilsson does not, however, get "mixed up" on stage, and never needs a prompter.

Miss Nilsson can also dispense with the services of a claque. She was indignant when she was advised to hire one before her debut at La Scala. "They



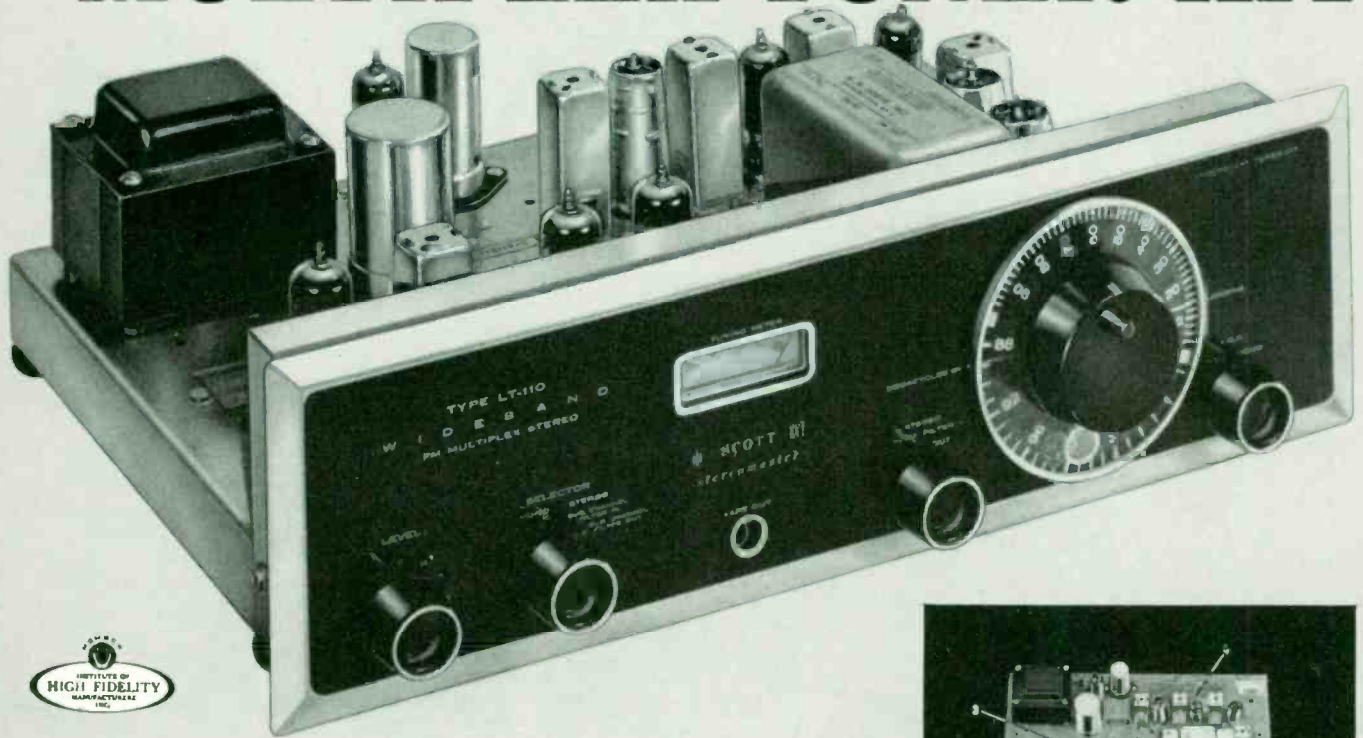
told me, 'you must have a claque or they'll kill you.' They can make it hard for a singer, you know, coughing and interrupting. (And La Scala has the coldest audience in the world. If God Himself came down to sing here, they would give only three or four curtain calls.) But I said I would never do such a thing. I would rather not sing there at all. And when I came to New York a man telephoned and said, 'We will clap for you.' I asked him how he knew he would clap for me until he heard me sing. He said, 'Because you will pay us.' I said, 'No thank you.'

The chilly breeze still blowing through the room somehow reminded me that the singer had grown up on a farm, and I asked her about her life there. "I was not completely happy there—I wouldn't want to go back to it for good—but to visit my family there in the summer is wonderful. When you are close to the earth you keep a sense of what is important in life." Birgit Nilsson, I thought, had done just that. SHIRLEY FLEMING

Fight Mental Illness

National Association
 for Mental Health

SUPERB NEW SCOTT MULTIPLEX TUNER KIT



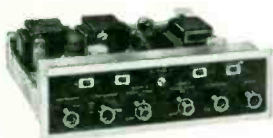
Revolutionary Kit-Building Methods Insure Factory Wired Performance

Now you can have the fun of building a genuine H. H. Scott Wide-Band FM Stereo Tuner in just a few hours . . . and save money, too. Revolutionary Scott-developed kit building techniques including full-color instruction book, mistake-preventing Part-Charts, pre-cut wires and unique Ez-A-Line alignment system assure you of performance equaling Scott factory-wired units. The LT-110 performs so perfectly and has such a professional appearance you'll be proud to use and display it in your stereo system.

The new LT-110 Scottkit features a pre-wired and tested multiplex section plus the famous silver-plated factory-built and aligned front end. Sensitivity of this magnificent new tuner is $2.2 \mu\text{v}$ (IHF). There are special provisions for flawless tape recording right "off-the-air."

Scott multiplex circuitry has become the standard of the industry. Scott Wide-Band multiplex tuners have been chosen by leading FM stations from Boston to San Francisco. Here is a proven, accepted multiplex tuner you can now easily build at home. Choose the finest . . . choose H. H. Scott.

Choose from these Superb ScottKits



New LK-48 48-watt Stereo Amplifier Kit.
A real best-buy in kits. All the features you need. \$119.95*

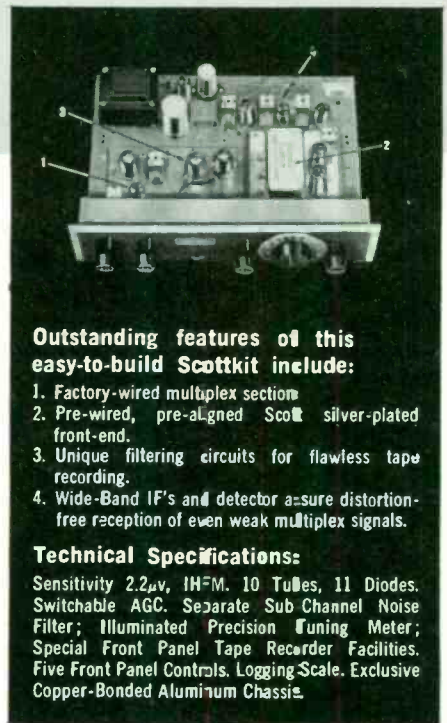


LK-72 80-watt Stereo Amplifier Kit.
Enough power for any system. Famous H. H. Scott quality. \$159.95*



New LM-35 Multiplex Adaptor Kit.
For use with any H. H. Scott tuner. Pre-wired multiplex section. \$79.95

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Outstanding features of this easy-to-build Scottkit include:

1. Factory-wired multiplex section
2. Pre-wired, pre-aligned Scott silver-plated front-end.
3. Unique filtering circuits for flawless tape recording.
4. Wide-Band IF's and detector assure distortion-free reception of even weak multiplex signals.

Technical Specifications:

Sensitivity $2.2 \mu\text{v}$, IHF. 10 Tubes, 11 Diodes. Switchable AGC. Separate Sub Channel Noise Filter; Illuminated Precision Tuning Meter; Special Front Panel Tape Recorder Facilities. Five Front Panel Controls. Logging Scale. Exclusive Copper-Bonded Aluminum Chassis.

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* Case extra. Slightly higher west of Rockies

To create quality pre-recorded tapes fast, duplicators use speeds 8 to 16 times that of home recorders, at frequencies up to 120,000 cycles—rely on SCOTCH® BRAND Magnetic Tape



Photo courtesy Magnetic Tape Duplicators, Hollywood

For top quality home recordings,

use the tape professionals use: "SCOTCH" BRAND!

Professional tape duplicators, who make large quantities of stereo and other high fidelity pre-recorded tapes, whisk magnetic tape across the recording heads of special "master and slave" equipment at speeds of 60 to 120 ips. Where frequencies reach 120,000 cps—tape uniformity and the ability to stand this torrid pace are musts. And the duplicating "pro," like most discriminating home recordists, makes quality recordings and performance a certainty by using "SCOTCH" BRAND Magnetic Tapes.

"SCOTCH" Magnetic Tapes are held to microscopic tolerances for both backing and oxide thickness. This uniformity teamed with high-potency oxides assures that magnetic



properties, dynamic range and full frequency response are identical, throughout every reel, and from one reel to another. Special binders, developed with 3M's more than 50 years' experience in precision coatings, make sure oxides really stay put. And *exclusive* Silicone lubrication allows tape to glide smoothly past recording heads, assures long-lived protection against wear, and extends tape life.

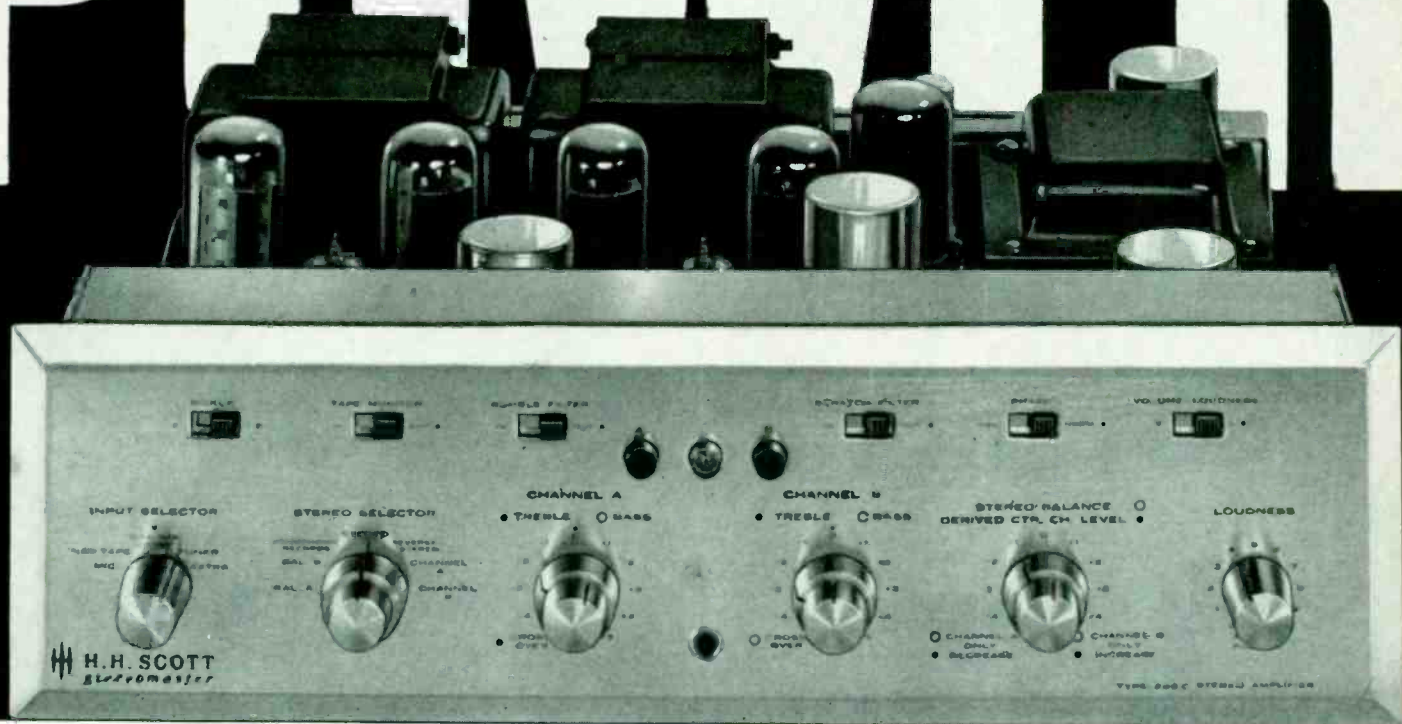
Whatever your recording need, ask your dealer for "SCOTCH" Magnetic Tapes. Available on 3", 4", 5" and 7" reels, in standard, extra-play and double play lengths. With plastic or polyester backing, at economical prices. *Play the favorite!*

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CIRCLE 81 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

POWER



Powerful New Amplifiers from H. H. Scott

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...made
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the original
fidelity of your
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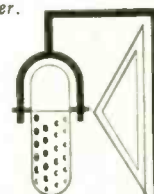
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FOR THE FIRST TIME an all transistor 60 watt STEREO-AMPLIFIER

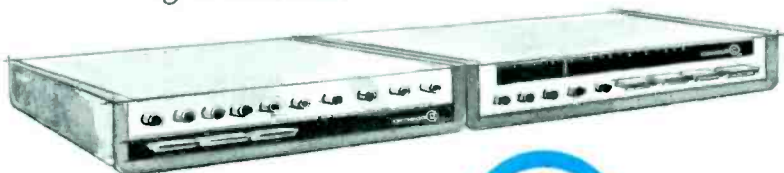
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flawless sound far beyond the normal hearing range.*

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Exclusive circuitry developed by Omega, results in audio performance never before available with transistor circuitry. The Omega amplifier offers you the performance of the finest tube-type equipment plus all the big listening and maintenance advantages of transistors.

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1. IMPROVED SOUND QUALITY —

A. The Omega amplifier has an extremely flat frequency characteristic and delivers full output power over a frequency range extending considerably beyond audible limits. Direct coupling and degenerative damping provide an ideal output signal to drive any speaker. The best speakers are free to perform with unhampered brilliance. Economy speakers exhibit surprising new quality due to elimination of ringing and electrical resonance.

B. NON MICROPHONIC — unlike tubes, critical electronic sections of transistors do not tend to vibrate and produce bothersome microphonic noise.

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3. LONGER MAINTENANCE-FREE LIFE — Your all-transistor Omega amplifier will have a far longer, service-free life than tube-type units for two big reasons:

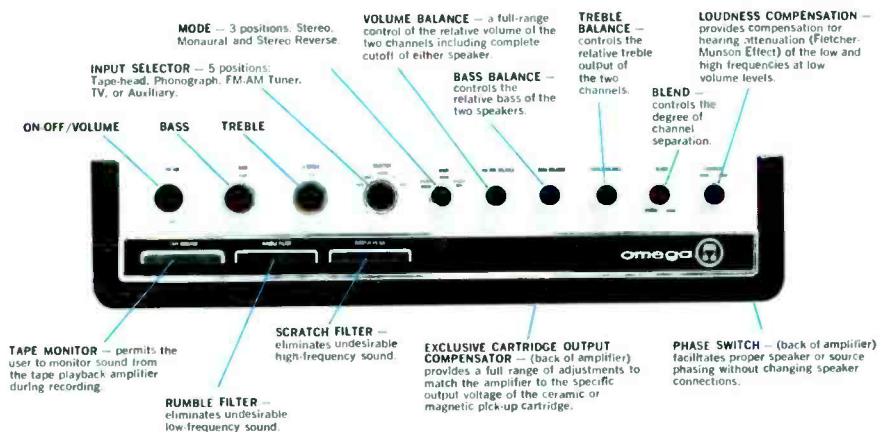
first — transistors have an indefinite life and do not deteriorate as do tubes.

second — transistors generate a greatly reduced amount of heat . . . and heat is the major source of amplifier performance deterioration and failure. Cooler operation reduces component aging (capacitors, resistors, etc.).

4. UNIQUE SOUND CONTROL — The Omega provides master Bass and Treble controls which — for the first time — allow a simple simultaneous balanced adjustment in both channels. It also provides independent Balance controls for both Bass and Treble. These two Balance controls, plus Mode, Volume Balance, Blend and Loudness provide complete flexibility and allow "ultra-fine" adjustments for the most sensitive listener.

5. CARTRIDGE OUTPUT COMPENSATOR — Another advanced feature of the Omega amplifier is the exclusive Cartridge Output Compensator — which enables you to adjust the amplifier to the specific output voltage of your ceramic or magnetic pick-up cartridge. This allows all front panel controls to operate over their optimum range regardless of cartridge output level.

6. MODERN LOW SILHOUETTE — The all-transistorized Omega amplifier looks as modern as it is. Its low, smart lines are at home with any decor. Only 3 inches high, 15½ inches wide, 9 inches deep.



THE SOUND ADVANTAGES OF OMEGA'S ALL-TRANSISTOR "QUADRA-POWER" CIRCUIT

The "Quadra-Power Circuit"* is an exclusive Omega development. This advanced concept employs four power transistors per channel in a basic bridge configuration permitting symmetrical operation and uniform distribution of power dissipation. A unique difference amplifier allows feedback from the symmetrical load to the input of the single ended driver. The result is an amplifier of the most advanced design . . . extremely linear, powerful, with very low distortion and a frequency range extending well beyond normal hearing.

*Copyright 1961 Patent Pending

SPECIFICATIONS

Power Supply — 117 VAC 60 Cycles

Power Output — 30 watts (IHFM Music Rating) per channel stereo - 60 watts monaural

Frequency Range — 18-20,000 CPS ±0.3 db at full output

Harmonic Distortion — Less than 1%

Intermodulation Distortion — Less than 1%

Hum & Noise — 75 db below full output at 10 MV sensitivity — All controls in flat position — Rumble & scratch filters nonoperative

Dimensions — 3" high, 15½" wide, 9" deep

Weight — 12 lbs.

Sensitivities: { Mag Phono - 4 MV
Ceramic Phono - 0.25 Volts
Tape - 3.5 MV
T.V., Aux., Tuner - 0.30 Volts

TRANSISTOR AND DIODE COMPLEMENT

8 PNP — diffused base high frequency power transistors
7 PNP — medium power transistors
4 NPN — small signal transistors
12 PNP — small signal transistors

4 — bias stabilizing germanium diodes
2 — silicon rectifiers 3 AMP
1 — zener diode voltage regulator

For complete information, contact your local Omega dealer or write directly to Omega.



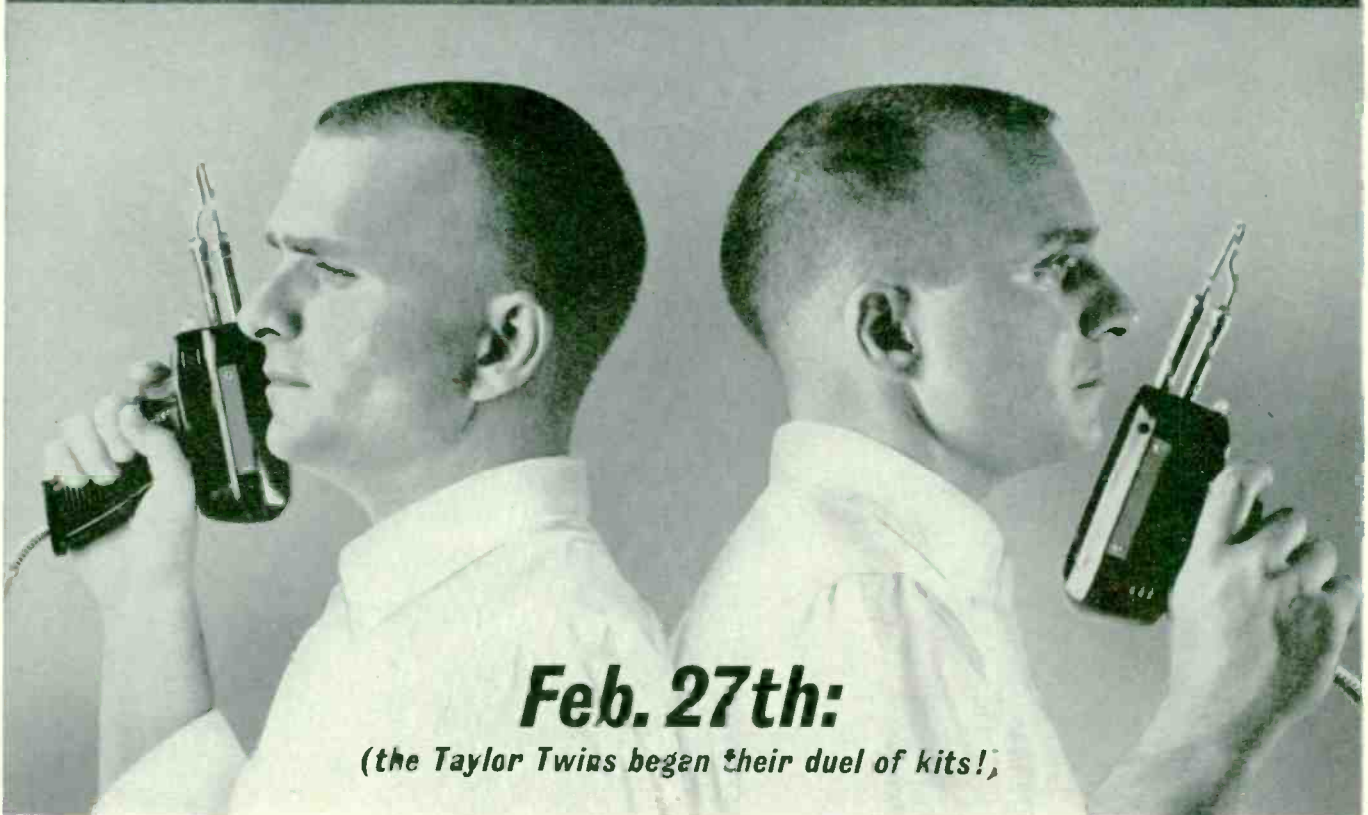
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Feb. 5th:

(Paco ran this ad in The New York Times)

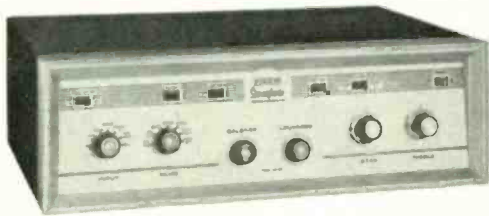


Feb. 27th:

(the Taylor Twins began their duel of kits!)

Don and Larry Taylor, with twin backgrounds and skills, have competitively built kit after kit, Paco vs. other makes. In one test Don built the Paco, in the next Larry did. Net results: Paco kits proved faster, easier, and better in performance. For a typical Twin-Test report turn the page.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF
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SA-40 STEREO PREAMP-AMPLIFIER: Power: 20W (RMS) per channel, 40W total. Peak, 40W with 80W total. Response: 30 cps to 90 Kc, within 1.0 DB. Distortion: within 0.5% at 20W per channel. Includes: 14 inputs and 14 Panel Controls, black and gold case.
SA-40 Kit with enclosure, "Twin-Tested" operating assembly manual \$79.95 net
SA-40W: Factory-wired, ready to operate. \$129.95 net
SA-50: Stereo Kit as above with different styling, 25w per channel..... TBA*



ST-25 FM TUNER: Sensitivity: 1.5 microvolts for 20 DB quieting. Harmonic Distortion: less than 1%. Includes: Dual Limiters, AFC and AFC Defeat, "Eye" type tuning indicator, Multiplex jack. Black and gold case or walnut enclosure at slight extra cost.
ST-25 Kit with fully-wired prealigned front end. "Twin-Tested" manual \$42.95 net
ST-25W: Factory-wired, ready to operate \$59.95 net



FM-TUNER/AMPLIFIER (ST-26) AND SPEAKER (L-3) KIT COMBINATION: This low-cost component high fidelity FM radio system is ideal for professional offices, dens, basement playrooms, stores, etc. They're fun to build thanks to Paco's "Twin-Tested" operating assembly manual.
ST-26 FM Tuner/Amplifier is similar in specification to the ST-25 (above), but contains compact amplifier with phono input. As a kit, with fully-wired prealigned front end. Handsome black and gold case or walnut enclosure at slight extra cost... \$54.95 net
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NOTES FROM ABROAD

PARIS

What some people feel about Wagner, many Frenchmen feel —allowing for the difference in size— about Gluck. He was, you may hear, a great stimulator. And there are still some live coals beneath the ashes of the quarrel he started in Paris two centuries ago. But his music, despite some wonderful moments, can be very tiring. Most of his operas have worn too thin to be safely unrolled to full length, except by musicologists.

This situation is worth mentioning, I think, because it is not unique and because it suggests an opportunity for record makers. Perhaps they have been concentrating too heavily on complete versions of out-of-the-repertoire works. The alternative need not be the usual recording of familiar operatic highlights, selected to enhance the reputations of the singers. Why can't we have more editing that is designed to preserve the reputations of composers who were unevenly great?

Apparently we can, for Pathé Marconi has adopted this approach to Gluck in two recordings that will soon be issued in



Tenor Gedda.

the States by Angel. On one of them soprano Régine Crespin, tenor Nicolai Gedda, and baritone Ernest Blanc sing some lovely extracts from *Alceste*, with Georges Prêtre conducting the orchestra of the Paris Opéra. On the other one Gedda and Blanc support the mezzo-soprano Rita Gorr in extracts from *Iphigénie en Tauride*, this time with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra under Prêtre.

Activity in the Principality. Prince Rainier and Princess Grace have been working hard to revive Monaco's pre-1914 brilliance as a music center, and the results are beginning to be impressive. The Monte Carlo Opera Orchestra, under the direction of Louis Frémaux, has been rejuvenated during the last two years and brought up to a strength of eighty-five. It now has a contract with Deutsche Grammophon, and has recently recorded Paul Dukas' *La Péri* and a resounding interpretation of Erik Satie's *Parade*.

During the winter season, which runs from the end of November to the end of April, there will be ballet, opera, and a series of concerts. Teresa Stich-Randall, Byron Janis, Irmgard Seefried, Arthur Grumiaux, and Karl Münchinger, among others, have been engaged. The programs are designed to appeal to the general public, and so they are less exciting than they were back when Diaghilev was animating the scene. The tendency is to favor middling modern music: Debussy to Orff.

The theatre, which is in one end of the old casino, is worth a visit for its own sake. It was put up in 1878 by Charles Garnier himself, and looks like a doll's version of his Paris Opéra. The slot machines are down the hall on your left.

Happy Ending. You may recall an inconclusive note in this space some months ago about Otto Klemperer, David Oistrakh, and the Orchestre National struggling to record the Brahms Violin Concerto in the midst of a Paris heat wave and other difficulties. Well, since the disc (Angel) will soon be made available, I had better end the suspense. They all won.
ROY MCMULLEN

LONDON

Miss Joan Sutherland, whose stature at "half-way house" is evaluated elsewhere in this issue (see page 50), arrived here from Australia as a singing student in 1951. She lived in a top-floor "bed sitter" at Notting Hill Gate and shared the kitchen with another girl. To accompany her singing exercises she bought a junk-shop piano, which the

Continued on page 26

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 24

movers got up her steep and narrow stairway with great difficulty. Her first wage as a Covent Garden beginner was £10 a week, boosted to £15 for provincial tours. On the way up she scraped, saved, sacrificed. But those days are gone now. It is reliably reported that her current American tour will bring in fees amounting to some \$100,000. As Miss Sutherland's international fame is less than two years old, she sometimes looks back on her "time of struggle" with amused incredulity.

It is clear from her engagement diary that the Sutherland successes of the past two years have been no flash in the pan. The big Italian round continues and extends. The San Carlo clamors for her. "Miss Sutherland has not yet sung in Naples. So when?" moans the management. She has undertaken to fly there some hours after her last New York appearance of the present tour, on December 22. Four days later she will sing the first of three San Carlo performances in Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda*. Her schedule thereafter takes in the Queen of the Night (*Zauberflöte*) at Covent Garden, a string of Lucias (Palermo, Barcelona, and La Scala), a return to Covent Garden for Handel's *Alcina* and Verdi's *Traviata*, and a *Puritani* at La Fenice (Venice), where by this time her rehearsal walkout earlier this year is as though it never happened.

In late spring she is due back at La Scala for two special occasions. The first is Rossini's *La Donna del lago*, after Walter Scott. ("When the curtain goes up," she giggles, "I'm in a bark in the middle of the lake. That will be something!") The second is a revival of Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* in which, if present arrangements stand, she will sing alongside Maria Callas. According to my informant, Miss Callas made it known that she would love to sing Valentine opposite Miss Sutherland's Marguerite de Valois. For ten years the relations between the two singers have been much warmer than might be expected, in view of their implicit rivalry. Maria was one of the first to predict a great career for Joan. And on the day of Sutherland's debut at La Scala last spring in *Lucia*, she sent her red roses and a telegram wishing much success and happiness.

Soon after *Les Huguenots*, Miss Sutherland flies to Australia for a recital tour lasting from June to mid-August. There are lines ruled in her diary across every week in September and October. These months are to be her first real, long holiday, her first time for lounging and lazing since she cannot remember when. After which she flies back to Europe and opens the 1962-63 Scala season.

The Sutherland Recordings. Under her Decca-London contract, which provides

Continued on page 28

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 26

for two major recordings yearly, Miss Sutherland spent the core of the summer in Rome, using Franco Zeffirelli's eyrie of a flat (ninety-eight steps up) and attending daily before the microphones at the Santa Cecilia Academy. First of all she recorded Gilda in *Rigoletto*, under the direction of Nino Sanzogno, with Cornell MacNeil (name part), Renato Cioni (the Duke), and Cesare Siepi (Sparafucile). There was a worrisome three-day delay when the burning heat of Rome played havoc with Miss Sutherland's throat, but after some re-scheduling the sessions went hammer and tongs and were over in ten days.

Then, following a day's rest, came *Lucia*, conducted by John Pritchard, with Robert Merrill, Cesare Siepi, and Cioni in the baritone, bass, and tenor leads. Practically all the traditional cuts were "opened" and two numbers reinserted which few operagoers have ever heard. As a result, the recording will play at least twenty-five minutes longer than the average theatre performance.

There was to be no rest for Miss Sutherland. No sooner had she unpacked her trunks in Kensington than Decca packed her off to Kingsway Hall for a new *Messiah* aimed at the Christmas market. Sir Adrian Boult conducted an ensemble that took in the London Symphony Orchestra and an LSO choir which ranged in strength from sixty-nine to eighty according to the caliber of given choruses. The soloists engaged for the occasion, in addition to Miss Sutherland, were the Negro mezzo Grace Bumbry, the tenor Kenneth McKellar, and the bass David Ward.

This was the first London had heard of Miss Bumbry's singing (she had just arrived from successes at Bayreuth), and she made a strong impression. First there was the natural luster of her voice. Second, its range: from G natural below to top B flat, both reached with ease. Third, her professional keenness: early in the morning she was always in the back vestry at the Kingsway, limbering up with scales and roudades. Fourth, her reliability: she made *He Was Despised*—the complete number, including the C minor second section and the reprise, the whole lasting for twelve minutes—in a single take.

Coda on Sviatoslav Richter. Having recorded the two Liszt concertos with the London Symphony Orchestra for Philips, the much sought-after Richter spent another four days at Walthamstow on an album for Deutsche Grammophon. It will comprise a Haydn sonata, a Chopin ballade (No. 3), three Debussy preludes, and Prokofiev's Sonata No. 8. Finishing for DGG on a Monday, he turned up at EMI's studios in St. John's Wood on the Tuesday and spent some hours sampling four of the firm's pianos, finally opting for a Steinway. On the Wednesday he started on an album that

Continued on page 36



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(2) *Plus* the *natural* acoustics of the greatest sound chamber in the world — the auditorium of Carnegie Hall in New York,

(3) *Plus* a miraculous *new method* of recording on film.

The key to this starting breakthrough to a whole new world of sound recording lies in new techniques for using 35 mm magnetic film for recording that have been devised by Command's research team, C. R. Fine, Chief Engineer and Enoch Light, Director of Artists & Repertoire.

The result is a milestone on the road to absolute perfection in recorded sound. It is revealed in these astonishing, breathtaking recordings — performances that are an overwhelmingly, unprecedented combination of musical brilliance and startlingly real, completely unlimited sound reproduction.

**Outstanding performances by 60 of America's greatest musicians.
Original master recorded on 35mm magnetic film.**

Arrangements include: HEAT WAVE • THE MAN I LOVE • I'VE GOT A CRUSH ON YOU • ALL THE WAY • MY ROMANCE • YOU DO SOMETHING TO ME • ZING WENT THE STRINGS OF MY HEART • SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME • LOVE FOR SALE • I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN • I SEE YOUR FACE BEFORE ME • WITH A SONG IN MY HEART.

SUGGESTED NATIONAL PRICE LIST:

Command Stereo #826SD "Stereo/35mm": \$5.98
Command Monaural #RS826 "Sound/35mm": \$4.98
Command 4-Track Tape #4T826: \$7.95

the greatest advance
in sound since
hi-fi was invented

Command
RECORDS

CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

This Fisher amplifier was built by Fisher



This Fisher amplifier was built by Andrew M. Weiss



now anyone can make as fine an amplifier as Fisher—with a Fisher StrataKit!

■ Andy Weiss, advertising executive of Purchase, N. Y., didn't know a capacitor from a capriccio when he acquired his Fisher KX-200 StrataKit. He just knew he liked music in general and stereo in particular, and he was glad his new 80-watt stereo amplifier kit was backed by a name with the tradition and stature of Fisher.

When, after a few evenings of entertaining and instructive wiring, he showed Fisher engineers his completed KX-200 StrataKit, they found it indistinguishable in all measurable specifications and performance characteristics from the KX-200 master sample in the Fisher laboratories.

Laboratory-caliber results are assured even when a *totally unskilled and inexperienced person* builds the Fisher KX-200 StrataKit. He will own the finest 80-watt Stereophonic Master Control Amplifier Fisher knows how to make, matching all other standard Fisher-built components in appearance and fitting standard Fisher component cabinets. He will also be able to maintain first-day performance permanently with the built-in D'Arsonval-type calibration meter, or add an optional center-channel speaker and control its volume from the front panel—two exclusive features of the remarkable Fisher KX-200 StrataKit.

The StrataKit method of kit construction permits assembly by easy, error-proof stages (strata), each stage corresponding to a *particular page* in the Instruction Manual and to a separate transparent packet of parts, separately identified. Major components come already mounted on the chassis, and wires are *pre-cut* for every stage—which means every page! Errors of omission, if any, can thus be checked stage-by-stage and page-by-page—before proceeding to the *next* stage. There are no surprises with a Fisher StrataKit, only the pleasure of accomplishment and the joy of effortless learning.

PRICE \$169.50*

Coming soon: The Fisher High-Sensitivity, Wide-Band, Stereo-FM Tuner StrataKit.

USE THIS COUPON FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Fisher Radio Corporation
 21-25 44th Drive, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Please send me the following FREE Fisher literature:

Complete details and specifications on the Fisher KX-200 StrataKit.

The 1962 Fisher Handbook, a 40-page illustrated reference guide and component catalogue for custom stereo installations.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

HF11K2

THE FISHER

*Walnut or mahogany cabinet \$24.95; prices slightly higher in the Far West. EXPORT: Telesco International Corp., 171 Madison Ave., N. Y. 16, N. Y. In Canada: Tri-Tel Associates, Ltd.

CIRCLE 51 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The PRITCHARD PICKUP SYSTEM comes completely assembled and wired with cable ready to plug into amplifier.

ADJUSTABLE COUNTERWEIGHT occupies minimum amount of space behind mounting.

ACCURATELY MACHINED AND TREATED TONE ARM of walnut wood suppresses extraneous resonances.

LOW INERTIA assures perfect tracking.

PLUG IN HEAD for easy Cartridge change. Accommodates other cartridges.

PRECISION BALL BEARINGS minimize friction.

NEW DESIGN NON DRAG WIRE GUIDE.

SIDE THRUST COMPENSATOR helps maintain even groove wall pressure.

ADC-1 STEREO CARTRIDGE.

This is the new Pritchard Pickup System. Named after Peter E. Pritchard, president of Audio Dynamics, the system combines the famous ADC-1 stereo cartridge and a remarkable new tone arm.

REMARKABLE NEW SYSTEM TRACKS AT 3/4 GRAM!

Audio Dynamics presents an entirely new concept in pickup design that marks a new era in record playing performance by guaranteeing the five essentials of stereo reproduction.

In designing a cartridge for high quality tone arms, Audio Dynamics engineers perfected the highly compliant ADC-1. This cartridge made it possible for the first time to achieve the five essentials of true stereophonic reproduction.

Now Audio Dynamics has gone a step further... they have designed a remarkable tone arm and combined it with the ADC-1 in an entirely new pickup system. Results? The five essentials of true stereo reproduction are guaranteed!

Although the ADC-1 raised stereo reproduction to levels never before possible, this highly compliant cartridge has to be combined with a quality tone arm. The combination must enable the cartridge to track at a force low enough to eliminate distortions and record wear, and also preserve the linearity of the stylus tip suspension. Selecting the proper tone arm was a problem for the buyer. The new Pritchard Pickup System eliminated guesswork. It combines the ADC-1 and a newly designed tone arm that is compatible with this outstanding cartridge.


The Pritchard Pickup System gives you a true, dynamically balanced tone arm. Unlike other systems, the heavy adjustable counterweight occupies a minimal amount of space behind the pivot. To adjust stylus tracking you simply move the counterweight until the arm is in perfect balance. Fine adjustment allows the system to track at the precise force required by the cartridge design.

Because of its low inertia the system will track each side of the groove perfectly even if the record is warped. To stabilize the force created between the disc and the arm, a side-thrust compensator permits the stylus to maintain even pressure on both groove walls. Precision single ball bearings in gimbals minimize vertical and lateral friction.

If you are an owner of an ADC-1 stereo cartridge all you need for a major improvement in your system is a Pritchard tone arm. If you do not possess the ADC-1 and are searching for some way of upgrading your present set of components, visit your dealer and hear how the Pritchard Pickup System makes records sound better than you thought possible. Once you have, you will not settle for less.

*For descriptive literature on the Pritchard Pickup System by Audio Dynamics, write to us today.**

Pritchard Pickup System Model ADC-85 \$85.00
Pritchard Tone Arm Model ADC-40 39.50



Here are the five essentials of true stereo reproduction. They are yours with an ADC cartridge.

- Essential #1—Highs free from peaks and distortion ... by lowering stylus mass and eliminating heavy damping.
- Essential #2—Clean and well rounded bass tones ... by increasing compliance, lowering tone arm resonance.
- Essential #3—Record compatibility ... through lowered tracking force.
- Essential #4—Proper channel separation ... by removing resonances from the audible range.
- Essential #5—Reduced surface noise ... by eliminating resonances and using super-polished diamond styli selected from perfect crystals.

ADC-1 cartridge for high quality tone arms. \$49.50
ADC-2 cartridge for high quality tone arms and record changers\$37.50

AUDIO DYNAMICS CORPORATION
1677 CODY AVE. • RIDGEWOOD 27, N. Y.

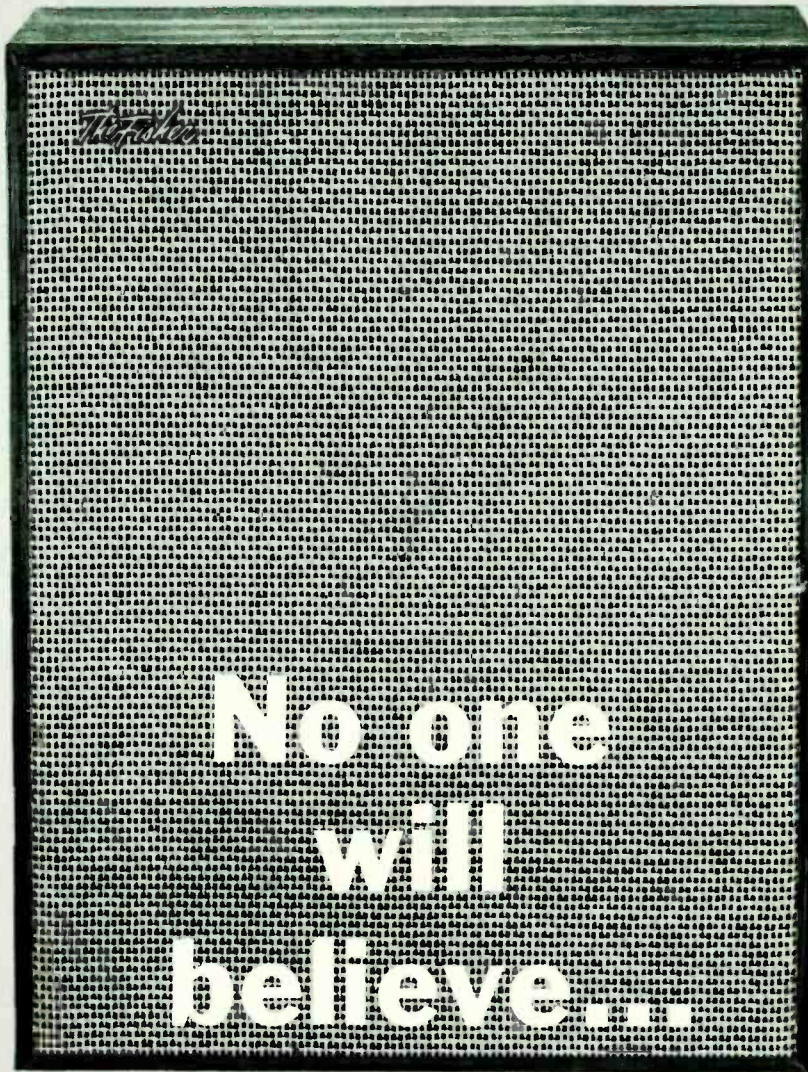
Please send me descriptive literature on the Pritchard Pickup System and ADC cartridges.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Name of My Dealer _____



you built this Fisher Speaker System yourself!

Introducing the Fisher KS-1 Slim-Line Speaker Kit.

You will have to do some strenuous convincing before anyone believes that this superb-sounding and elegant-looking Fisher loudspeaker system was home-built. A three-way system of this caliber would be important news even if it were factory-assembled, especially as it is of the new slim-line form, which requires ultrasophisticated engineering for top results. But, thanks to exceptionally careful and imaginative planning by Fisher engineers, you *can* build the KS-1 and have Fisher performance at an important saving.

This is the only slim-line speaker system available in kit form and it is designed around the most advanced components: a 10-inch free-piston woofer with 30 cps free-air resonance and 4-lb. magnet structure; a 5-inch AcoustiGlas-packed midrange unit; separate super-tweeter; fully wired and balanced three-way LC dividing network with 1400 cps and 5000 cps crossovers; 18" x 24" x 5" cabinet packed with AcoustiGlas padding; and matching grille cloth. You install the driver units, connect the network, complete the preassembled cabinet—and you

are the owner of a truly high-quality loudspeaker, which can be either wall-hung or placed anywhere on the floor to blend harmoniously with your home decor.

The sound of the Fisher KS-1 will astonish you; it is extremely clear, with precise transients, as well as full and rich—quite unprecedented in a system of this size and price. Don't miss a demonstration at your Fisher dealer. Price, in sanded birch and ready for your choice of decorator finish, \$59.50*. Factory assembled, \$84.50*.

USE THIS COUPON FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION

Fisher Radio Corporation
21-25 44th Drive, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Please send the following Fisher literature without charge:

- Specifications on the Fisher KS-1 Speaker Kit.
- 1962 Fisher Handbook, a 40-page illustrated reference guide and catalogue for custom stereo installations.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____ HF11SK1

THE FISHER

*Factory assembled in oiled walnut. \$89.50. Prices slightly higher in the Far West. EXPORT: Telesco International Corp., 171 Madison Ave., N. Y. 16, N. Y. In Canada: Tri-Tel Associates, Ltd.

Amazingly fine sound
... fits anywhere!



Kit AS-81

NEW, MINIATURE
HI-FI SPEAKER SYSTEM

Matched, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ " 2-way speaker system, has solid bass. Ideal for stereo where economy and compactness are musts. 70 to 14,000 cps. Enclosure completely assembled. In mahogany, walnut or unfinished.

- Miniature 2-way System
 Kit AS-81U, Unfin... 6 lbs... **\$17.50**
 Kit AS-81W, Walnut. 6 lbs... **\$19.95**
 Kit AS-81M, Mahog.. 6 lbs... **\$19.95**

Easy to build,
the newest, the
latest from Heath!


DELUXE PUSH-BUTTON
STEREO AMPLIFIER



Kit AA-11

Our finest! A dynamic blend of beauty, professional performance, simplicity. Separate basic and secondary controls; 13 push-button inputs; self-powered; stereo-mono; adjustable input level controls. Baxandall tone controls. 15-30,000 cps. A marvelous value.

- Kit AA-11 Preamplifier...
19 lbs... **\$84.95**


THIS YEAR GIVE
BUILD
-ING
HEATHKITS
IS AS EASY
AS DECORATING
THE
TREE

give a package of pleasure—to yourself or to loved ones

Millions of people have experienced the ease and fun of building Heathkits. All that's needed is the ability to follow tested "check-by-step" directions, a few fun-filled evening hours and the Heathkit builder will be amazed with his results. Nothing . . . but nothing matches the thrill of personal accomplishment. Each Heathkit product carries an unconditional money-back guarantee of satisfactory performance from these "any-one-can-build-them" kits. Whether your gift is to a beginner, hobbyist, amateur or trained technician, there are kits for each. Give pleasure . . . give fun . . . give pride —GIVE A HEATHGIFT.

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nothing to pay down—convenient terms

Just send your gift order and take as long as 18 months to pay. We are so certain anyone can build and enjoy the performance of Heathkits that we're attesting to this fact with these new, relaxed credit terms plus the unconditional money-back guarantee. It's an unprecedented offer. Any item from \$25.00 up to \$600.00 can be purchased on the new, easy time pay terms. Complete details are in the new catalog.

HEATH GIFTS

SPECIAL FOR CHRISTMAS

a complete FM Stereo system includes new FM table radio and a new matching Stereo Converter Thrilling FM performance from matching 15" x 8" x 6" assembled walnut units. Apartment sized stereo listening pleasure priced low. Radio has 88 to 108 mc FM coverage, 7 tubes, dual cone "true sound" speaker, AFC control. Handsomely styled, too. Self-powered converter has simple controls; operates 15' or more from radio; master volume control; easily adjusted balance. Or use the new converter with your present FM set for stereo or mono.



Kit GR-21 FM Radio...
16 lbs. **\$59.95**



Kit GRA-21-1 Multiplex...
12 lbs. **\$49.95**

Say Merry Christmas with this Heathkit 50-watt Stereo Amplifier



Kit AA-100

Out-of-this-world performance! Sparkling styling plus superlative features. Compares to amplifiers priced far higher. Look! 50 watts (25 per channel); inputs for stereo phonographs, tuner, tape recorder, microphones. Six position selector switch for mono or stereo; "stereo reverse"; balance and separation controls. Extra mixed channel speaker output. Power response of ± 1 db 30 cps to 15 kc at 25 watts per channel. A best buy!

Kit AA-100 Stereo Amplifier... 31 lbs. **\$84.95**

Kit AA-201 Economy Stereo Amplifier...
12 lbs. **\$31.95**



Kit AA-201

Heath offers you a wide, wide choice of FM Stereo Systems

There are FM stereo systems to fit every budget and please the listening tastes of the most discriminate. Enjoy Heathkit performance now!

Kit AJ-30 Deluxe AM-FM Stereo Tuner... 24 lbs. **\$99.95**

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Kit AJ-31 FM Tuner... 8 lbs. **\$39.95**

Kit AC-11 A & B Stereo Converter... 4 lbs. **\$32.50**



Kit AJ-30



Kit AC-11

our spanking, new 1962
Heath Electronic-Kit
Catalog is
yours—Free!



Send in today for your free 100-page catalog. Over 250 kits (more than 40 are new) in this most complete catalog of kits. Every piece is top quality . . . save up to 50%. Get a catalog now and receive 1962 Heathkit supplements.

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Please send my Heathgift friend a 1962 catalog, too!

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Ordering instructions: Fill out the order blank. Include charges for parcel post according to weights shown. Express orders shipped delivery charges collect. All prices F. O. B. Benton Harbor, Mich. A 20% deposit is required on all C.O.D. orders. Prices subject to change without notice. Dealer and export prices slightly higher.

Item	Model No.	Price
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Order direct by mail or see your Heathkit dealer.

Ship Parcel Post Express C.O.D. Best Way

This Christmas Give a Heathgift . . . from the World's Shopping Center for Electronic Kits

Second to None*

*(With the exception, of course, of the remarkable Marantz 70 watt model 9 amplifiers)



Here is today's top-ranking stereo combination. The Marantz model 8B amplifier and model 7 preamplifier offer a quality of performance which can only be approached—not equalled. Use these well-proven Marantz components if you want the comforting assurance of the finest results obtainable. Marantz warrants its products for two full years.

Points of superiority include:

Model 7 Stereo Console • IM distortion @ 10V eq. pk. RMS, within 0.15%, 0.1% typical • Hum and noise, 80 db below 10 mv phono input • Sensitivity, 400 microvolts (0.4 millivolts) for 1 volt output • Equalizer and tone curves matched to better than 0.5 db • Volume tracking within 2 db, 1 db typical • Beautiful precision construction • Price \$264 (Cabinet extra)

Model 8B Stereo Amplifier • 35 watts per channel (70 watts peak) • Harmonic distortion, less than 0.1% in most of range, less than 0.5% at 20 cps and 20 kc • Hum and noise, better than 90 db below 35 watts • Exceptionally stable under all conditions • Built-in metered tests and adjustments • Price \$249.

(higher in West)

Write for literature No. 56F

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25-14 BROADWAY, LONG ISLAND CITY 6, NEW YORK

ALL MARANTZ PRODUCTS ARE WARRANTED FOR TWO FULL YEARS
CIRCLE 77 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 28

will eventually be issued in the States on the Angel label. Contents: Schumann's Fantasia and Beethoven's Sonata Op. 31, No. 2.

Working for preference at night, breaking off erratically for walks in the park, removing his wrist watch and forgetting it, having not the slightest notion about time, Richter nevertheless charmed all comers with his smiling politeness, lack of "side," inner tranquillity, and the completeness with which he makes himself music's vessel. At some of the EMI-Angel sessions he played Schumann and Beethoven movements alternately until he decided which of the two masters was entering more deeply into his soul on that particular day. It was on Beethoven that he spent more time. Victor Olof, artistic director of the sessions, calculated that he played some of the sonata movements ten times before the playbacks satisfied him.

When at the piano, Richter is as remote and wrapped up as any master who ever thought the world well lost. Away from the piano he is as objective and extrovert as they come. Before leaving Russia for his London visit (which was his first), he memorized whole areas of the city from the map and walked endlessly during the small hours of the night, explaining that the only time to study architecture is when the streets are empty. In his round of art galleries, museums, and flower shows he was tireless and methodical. Breaking away one afternoon for *Romeo and Juliet* at the Old Vic, he journeyed to the theatre by tube and bus, so that (as he explained to impresario Victor Hochhauser), he could mix with Londoners and study them at close range.

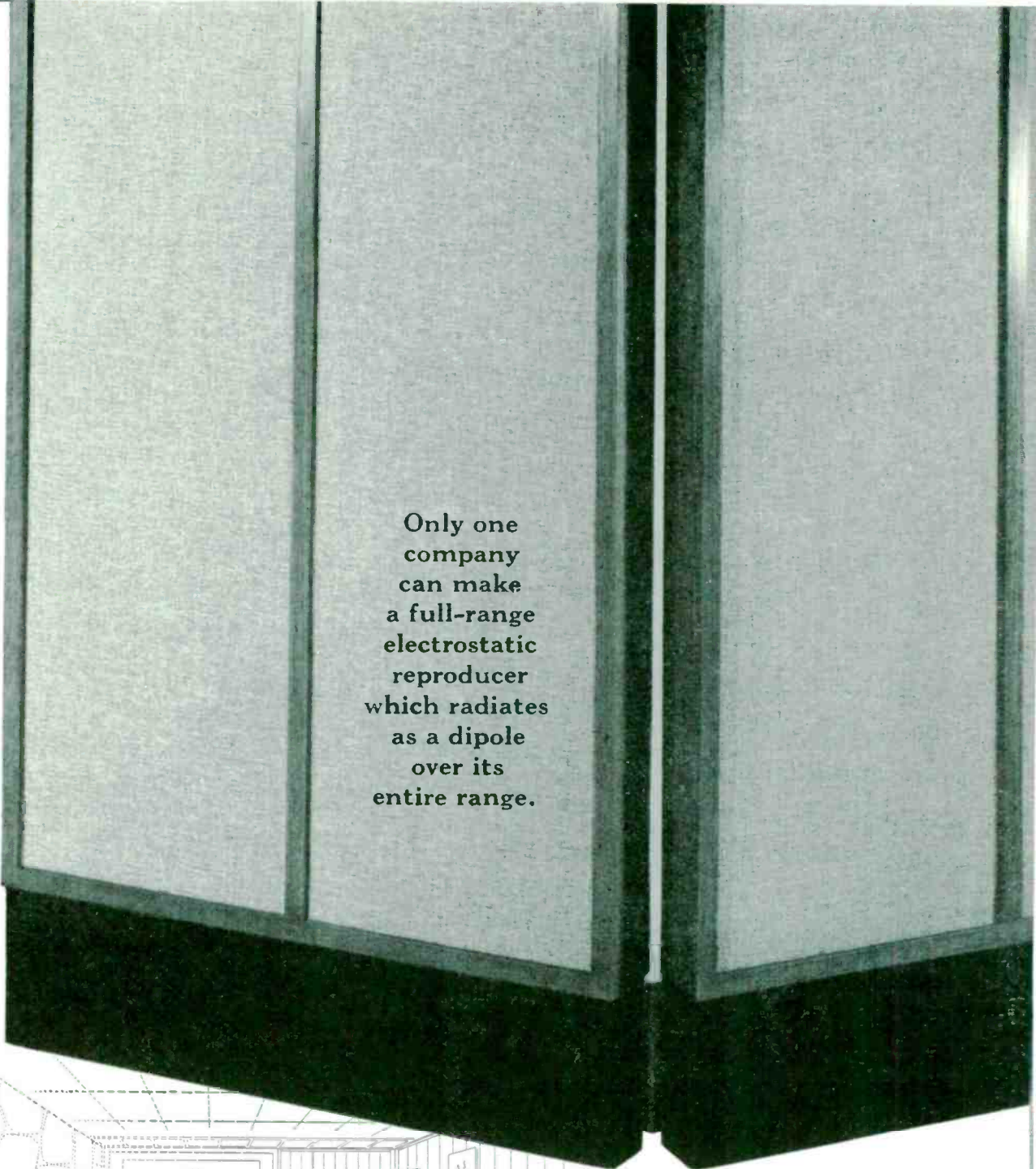
As to wide-eyed rumors about Richter's fees, Hochhauser reports: "These are no more than the Soviet Ministry of Culture considers should be paid to an artist of his eminence. They are fees which take into account Richter's tremendous drawing power, which is probably the greatest in the world so far as pianists are concerned." When I mentioned money to Richter himself over tea in the Dorchester lounge, he waved his hands before his face and seemed on the point of falling off his chair with amusement. Money, I gathered from this pantomime, is something so unimportant that one splits one's sides at the mere thought of it. CHARLES REID

SALZBURG

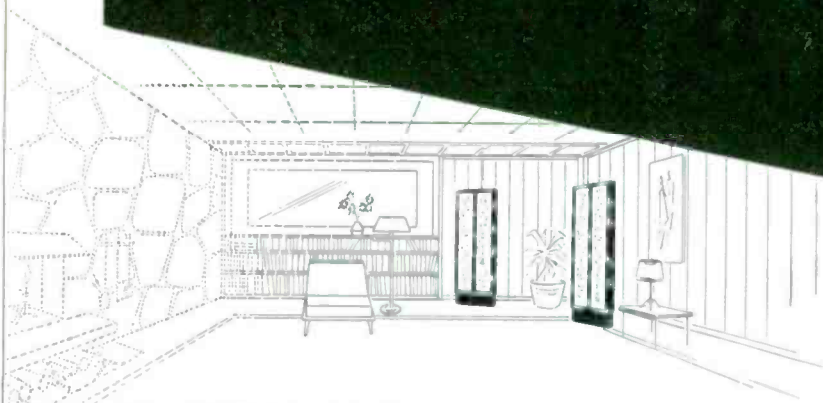
During festival time the town of Salzburg turns into the battleground of a fierce publicity war waged by large European record firms. Posters are displayed, leaflets distributed everywhere. Shrewd publicity managers discover that hairdressers, grocers, and shoemakers are willing (for a considera-

Continued on page 38

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



Only one
company
can make
a full-range
electrostatic
reproducer
which radiates
as a dipole
over its
entire range.



*The KLH Model Nine is tall, handsome, expensive —
requires 30 watts or more.*

It separates into two elegant sections for stereo.

If only the very finest is good enough . . .

listen to the KLH Model Nine.



KLH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
30 CROSS STREET, CAMBRIDGE 39, MASSACHUSETTS

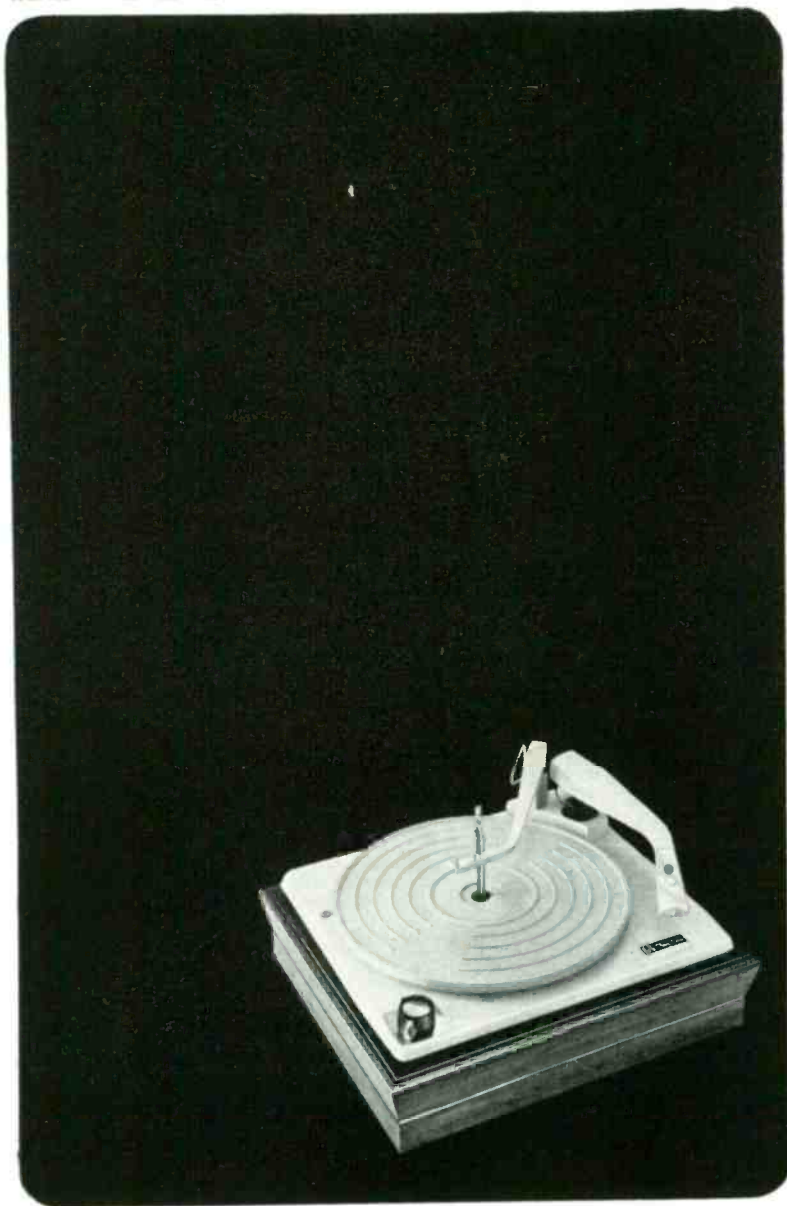
*Descriptive literature, with the name of
your nearest franchised KLH dealer,
is available on request.*

No other record changer provides the record handling care of the new GS-77T. 'Turntable Pause' makes it gently automatic. For this 9 second pause before the next record in the stack drops gently into play eliminates the grinding action between the record surfaces caused by one record dropping on another that's still spinning . . . a disadvantage of all other record changers.

There is so much more to make you want the new GS-77T. A new professional size 11-inch turntable provides better record support and contributes to smooth, constant speed. Add to this an arm so precisely counterbalanced and suspended that it assures uniformly low stylus pressure from the first to tenth record in a stack.

The GS-77T is probably the finest automatic record changer available today . . . and it looks the part. The white changer with brushed gold trim mounted on its attractive oil finish walnut base is strikingly handsome. The Glaser-Steers GS-77T, less cartridge and base, \$59.50 at your high fidelity dealer—or write for descriptive literature.

**GENTLY
AUTOMATIC!
NEW GLASER-STEERS
GS-77T**



Glaser-Steers Company/A division of American Machine & Metals, Inc./155 Oraton St., Newark 4, N. J.
CIRCLE 54 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 36

tion) to adorn their shopwindows with record jackets and photos of recording artists. Salami and Von Karajan vie for attention. Perhaps as a result of all this indoctrination, the public of the Salzburg Festival has become avidly record-minded. Some visitors even spend more money here on discs than on tickets for admission.

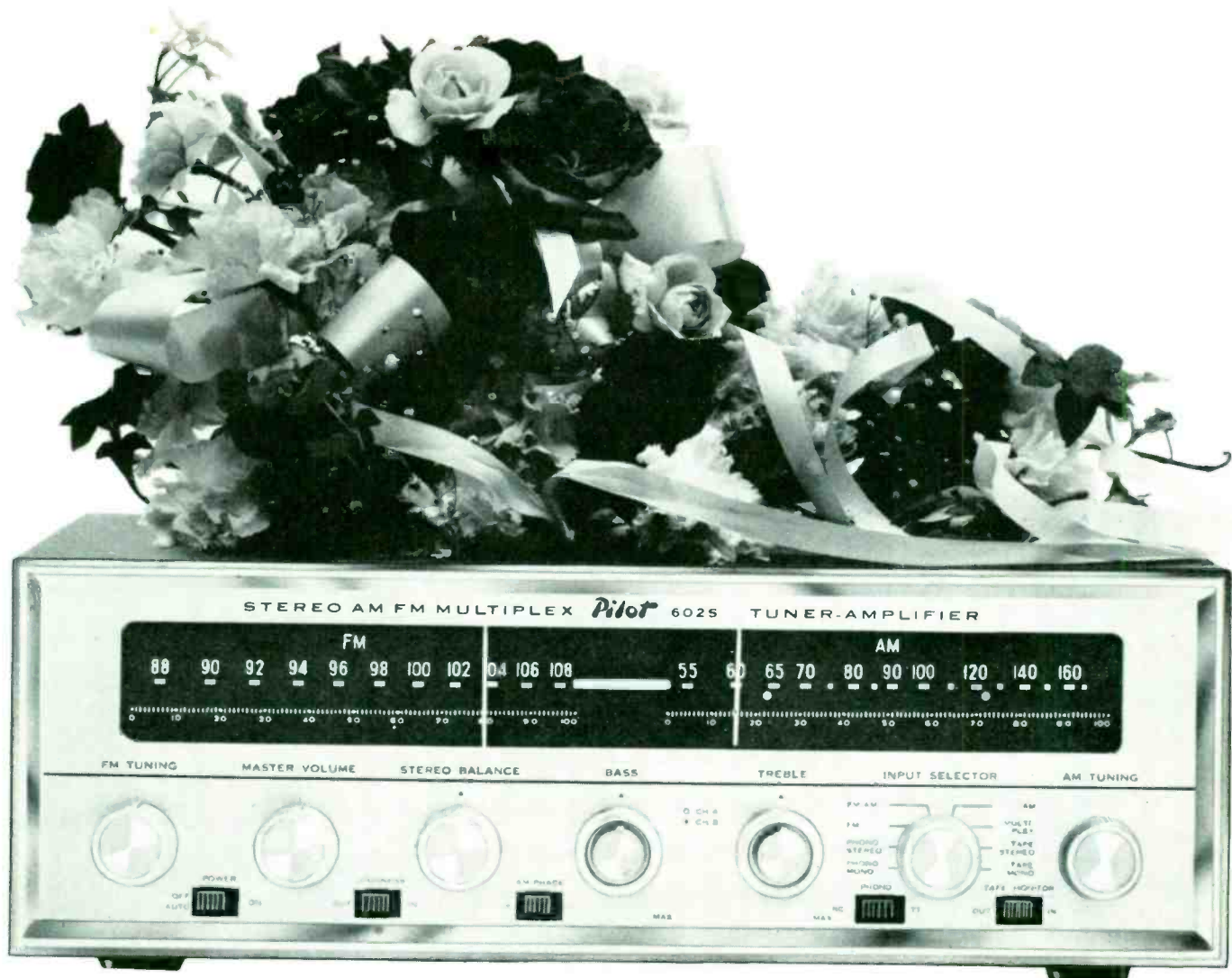
Under these circumstances it is no surprise that recording firms are trying to exploit the halo of Salzburg authenticity for their own ends. So far it has not been found possible to preserve the sound of "live" Salzburg performances on records. This year Deutsche Gramophon had made preparations to tape the opening performance in the new Festspielhaus (Mozart's *Idomeneo*, conducted by Ferenc Fricsay, with Waldemar Kmentt as Idomeneo, Elisabeth Grümmer as Electra, and Pilar Lorengar as Ilia), but the plan was stymied by the exclusive contracts that allow the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra to record only for Decca-London, RCA Victor, and EMI.

Prewar Bayreuth. Whilst DGG had to renounce their plan for capturing the spirit of Salzburg on records, Telefunken has been able to issue two records which preserve the Bayreuth spirit of twenty-five years ago. The recordings, which form part of the *Historische Aufnahmen* series recently inaugurated by this German firm, owe their existence to the initiative of Herbert Grenzebach, who recently retired from the Telefunken directorship. Herr Grenzebach was in charge of the recordings made in Bayreuth in 1936, when Heinz Tietjen conducted, Maria Müller appeared as Elsa, Frank Völker as Lohengrin, and Max Lorenz as Siegfried. These are the singers whose voices are to be heard on the first disc of the series. Among the other *Historische Aufnahmen* records issued to date are further samples from prewar Bayreuth, two famous recordings conducted by Willem Mengelberg (Tchaikovsky's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies), and three violin concertos played by the late Georg Kulenkampff (the Beethoven, Mozart K. 219, and the rarely performed Schumann). KURT BLAUKOPF

High Fidelity. November, 1961. Vol. 11. No. 11. Published monthly by The Billboard Publishing Co., publishers of *Billboard Music Week*, *Vend*, and *Amusement Business*. Telephone: Great Barrington 1300. Member Audit Bureau of Circulations.

Editorial Correspondence should be addressed to The Editor, High Fidelity, Great Barrington, Mass. Editorial contributions will be welcomed. Payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.

Subscriptions: Subscriptions should be addressed to High Fidelity, Great Barrington, Mass. Subscription rates: United States, Possessions, and Canada, 1 year, \$6; 2 years, \$11; 3 years, \$15; 5 years, \$20. Elsewhere \$1 per year extra. Single copies 60 cents.



Just Married

To share a chassis: the PILOT 602 Stereo receiver and Multiplex!

America's most popular Stereo receiver—the PILOT 602—now available with built-in Multiplex. The new PILOT 602S (S for Stereo) is the perfect instrument for any system. The 14 control Stereo preamplifier insures complete flexibility in reproducing radio, records or tape. The 30 watts delivered by the Stereo amplifier is more than enough to drive any speaker system. An FM/AM tuner and the most

advanced Multiplexer yet designed give you FM or AM Monaural reception, FM/AM Stereo reception and FM Stereo reception. And, all of this in one single instrument that is still the most compact, coolest operating unit available. UL listed, too. Simply add a pair of speakers and a record changer or turntable and you're ready to enjoy music at its finest. PILOT 602S complete with cover... **\$299.50**



PILOT 602M FM Multiplex Stereo receiver. For those who want all of the features and power of the 602S but do not require AM reception, the PILOT 602M represents the greatest value ever offered. PILOT 602M complete with cover, **\$249.50**

Pilot Radio Corporation
37-20 36th Street
Long Island City 1, New York

Please send me information on the new Pilot 602S and 602M

Name

Address

City State

CIRCLE 86 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE!



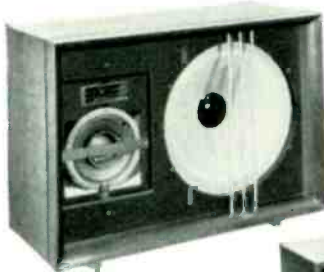
In all E-V compact systems



LEYTON



ESQUIRE 200A



ROYAL 400



PRINCESS



REGAL 300

To the uninitiated buyer, all compact systems may look much alike. But inside there's a big difference — a difference that can spell either lasting satisfaction or eventual disappointment.

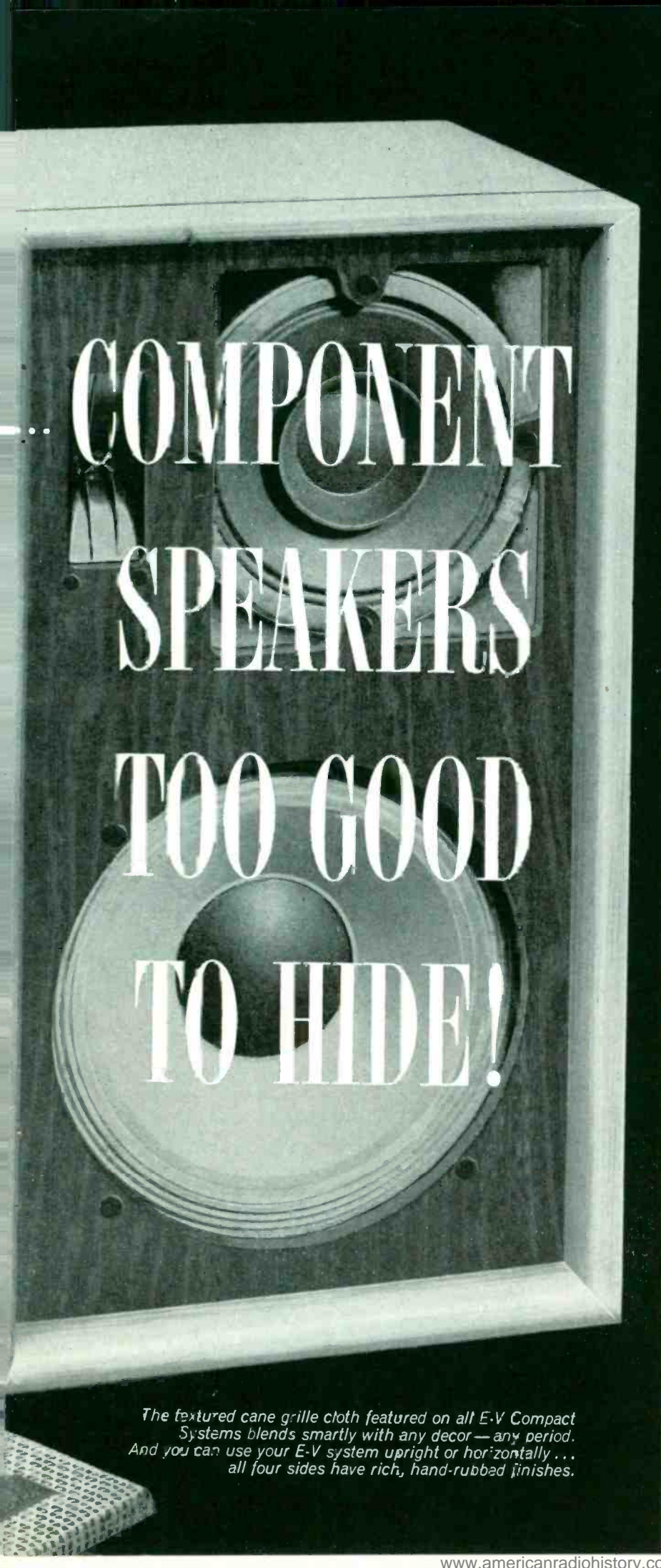
That's why we invite you to look closely at the inside components of any E-V compact system . . . at the design and construction of every single speaker in every system. No mystery . . . no mumbo-jumbo. E-V compact systems feature top-quality components throughout, to guarantee the finest original sound plus years of trouble-free performance.

Check the specs . . . check the features! Then choose the E-V compact system that meets your every requirement of appearance, price, quality . . . the system that will bring your favorite music "back to life."

USE THIS HANDY SPECIFICATION CHART TO CHOOSE YOUR E-V COMPACT SPEAKER SYSTEM

Model	Royal 400	Regal 300	Esquire 200A	Leyton	Princess	Regal 300 Kit	Esquire 200 Kit
Frequency Response	30-19,000 cps	35-19,000 cps	40-19,000 cps	50-15,000 cps	60-15,000 cps	35-19,000 cps	40-19,000 cps
Power Handling, Program Level Controls	70 Watts Two	70 Watts Two	30 Watts Two	25 Watts One	20 Watts None	70 Watts Two	70 Watts Two
Crossover Frequencies	200, 3500 cps	200, 3500 cps	800, 3500 cps	2000 cps	2000 cps	200, 3500 cps	200, 3500 cps
Speaker Types	18" foam-cone woofer, 8" cone mid-range, diffraction-horn tweeter	12" foam-cone woofer, 8" cone mid-range, diffraction-horn tweeter	10" woofer, 5" cone mid-range, diffraction-horn tweeter	10" woofer, 5" cone tweeter	8" x 12" woofer, 5" cone tweeter	12" foam-cone woofer, 8" cone mid-range, diffraction-horn tweeter	12" woofer, 8" cone mid-range, diffraction-horn tweeter
Impedance	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms
Finishes Available	Walnut, Mahogany Unfinished Hardwood	Walnut, Mahogany Unfinished Hardwood	Walnut, Mahogany Unfinished Hardwood	Walnut, Mahogany	Walnut	Unfinished Hardwood	Unfinished Hardwood
Size: (Finished Model) (Unfinished Model)	23½"H, 32"W, 14¾"D 22"H, 31½"W, 11¾"D	14"H, 25"W, 13½"D 14"H, 23½"W, 12"D	14"H, 25"W, 13½"D 14"H, 23½"W, 12"D	14"H, 25"W 12"D	10¾"H, 19½"W, 8½"D	(Assembled) 14"H, 23½"W, 12"D	(Assembled) 14"H, 23½"W, 12"D
Shipping Weight	103 lbs.	67 lbs.	30 lbs.	29 lbs.	15 lbs.	63 lbs.	52 lbs.
Price, Finished	\$249.00	\$179.00	\$133.00	\$84.50	\$49.50	\$125.00	\$93.00
Price, Unfinished	\$199.00	\$149.00	\$107.50	—	—	—	—

CIRCLE 47 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



COMPONENT SPEAKERS TOO GOOD TO HIDE!

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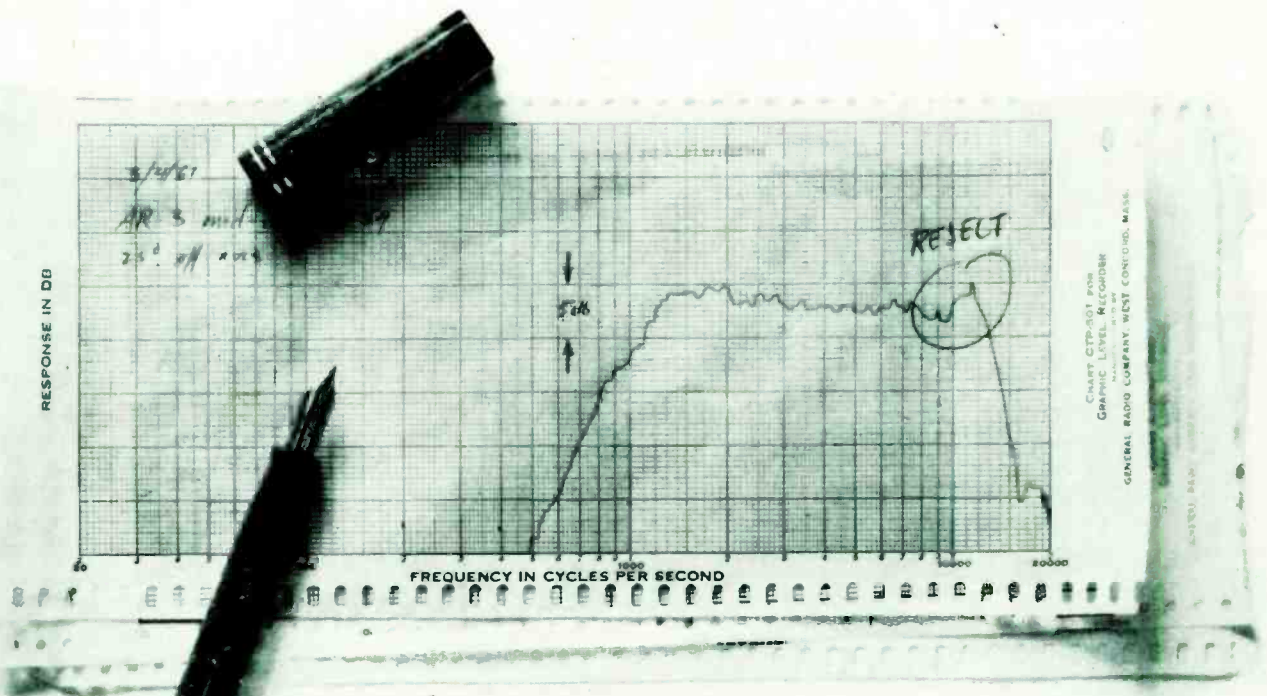
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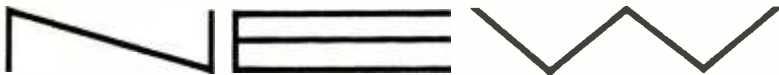


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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

The Case of the Two Otellos

WHEN a man buys a 300-horsepower sports car for use on winding country lanes with rigidly enforced speed limits, you may put him down as a spendthrift and entertain some private doubts as to his good judgment. But unless he breaks the law and endangers the safety of others with his superfluous horsepower, you cannot publicly complain. The right to waste one's own money in harmless expenditure is inalienable.

The same right applies to the incessant re-recording of standard orchestral repertoire that has been proceeding at a fearsome rate ever since microgrooves and vinylite revolutionized the record business some thirteen years ago. The antic duplication that leads to *Scheherazades* by the dozen may be spendthrift, but it is not the listener who foots the bill, and we thus have no just cause for public complaint. On occasion, it is true, we are seized with wonderment. When a large company releases within the same week two versions of the Beethoven Fourth Piano Concerto performed by its two most celebrated young pianists (as happened this fall), we may ask ourselves whether such largess really benefits either the artists involved or the company exchequer. But such questions are very possibly none of our business, which is to evaluate the aesthetics rather than the economics of record production. Since the listener has everything to gain and nothing to lose from this kind of profligate attention to Beethoven, we can only relish the bounty and assume that the record company knows what it is doing.

The truth of the matter is that the repertoire race has given rise to prodigious musical riches. The forty currently available Beethoven Fifts may have cost the record industry a mint, but they provide the record buyer with an enviably wide area of choice. For us, the consumers, the problem of endless duplication is no problem; it is a delight.

OR, RATHER, it was a delight. For there are now unmistakable signs that the proliferation of multiple versions is beginning to yield decreasing artistic dividends.

The trouble lies in the field of opera—which is today the most profitable, and hence the most sedulously cultivated, area of the classical record business. Opera, unfortunately, does not benefit from competition in the same way as a Beethoven symphony. Any number of first-rate conductors and

orchestras are available to do justice to the Fifth, but how many first-rate casts can be assembled today to do full justice to a difficult opera?

The two stereo recordings of Verdi's *Otello* just issued by RCA Victor and London Records exemplify the difficulty. Although each has its individual merits, neither could be termed a really superlative performance. Perhaps if the strengths of each had been pooled into one concerted effort we might have had an *Otello* in up-to-date stereo to rival the musical qualities of the aging Toscanini set. But as it is, competition has produced two diluted efforts. Enough talent just wasn't on hand to cast two magnificent *Otellos* in one year.

Although this kind of duplicated effort is sometimes the unforeseen consequence of competitive enterprise, it is not invariably so. The fact that RCA Victor was planning an *Otello* was common knowledge when Decca-London made its decision to do likewise. Indeed, the two companies enjoy a close working relationship and have often arranged for a mutual exchange of exclusive artists. So it is obvious that on this occasion the two versions were produced with eyes open—presumably on the premise that the world market could readily absorb both.

The case of the two *Otellos* is not an isolated phenomenon. Last year we were offered three new versions of *Don Giovanni*—all of them honorable attempts to cope with the staggering demands of Mozart's masterwork, but none without distinct blemishes. Again, a pooling of the most distinguished elements from each recording might well have resulted in an unbeatable production. Next year, we hear, at least three new recordings of *La Bohème* will be put on the market. Admittedly, Puccini's opera does not present the casting problems of *Otello* or *Don Giovanni*, but one may still wonder whether three new versions of it are artistically justifiable, even if—which seems doubtful—the three can all be made to pay their way.

Competition is wonderful when it presents us with a choice of Beethoven symphonies performed by every great orchestra and conductor in the world. But when competition scatters the available operatic talent among needlessly duplicated versions and gives us the choice of several middling efforts where one transcendent production might have been achieved, our delight at all this vigorous enterprise turns a bit sour.

ROLAND GELATT

AS high fidelity SEES IT





Hans Wild

An old friend of a new opera star offers

IT IS MORE than a decade now since Maria Callas first made us sit up and take notice again of the forgotten *bel canto* operas of Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti, but the appearance of another soprano in the same line of business is not yet such an everyday experience that we are entirely able to suppress our curiosity when it occurs. Although it has taken thirty-five-year-old Joan Sutherland longer than it did Miss Callas (two years her senior) to reach the stage where she is spoken of in the press as a diva (without quotes), she has lost no time in showing that she is there by right of temperament as well as skill. Only three years after singing her first real starring role, in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Covent Garden, she is about to make her debut at the Metropolitan Opera and is already "*La Stupenda*" to the Italian papers; she has had a remarkable international success with her two-record album "The Art of the Prima Donna"; and, in proper diva tradition, she has had a couple of acrimonious disputes with conductors at La Scala in Milan and at La Fenice in Venice.

The curiosity I mentioned above relates, of course, to what makes this singer tick as an artist. The biographical details of Joan Sutherland's career are made clear enough in her "Art of the Prima Donna" album, where the stages of her progress to prima-donnadom are fully documented. More interesting, I am convinced, than Miss Sutherland's past is her present preoccupation with what will inevitably become her future. Present and future, and indeed much of her professional past as well, are by now known to concern not only herself but her husband, Richard Bonynges, former fellow student in Australia and now her manager and coach. Mr. Bonynges is a young man of strong convictions. With his obvious and powerful influence on his wife's career as well as his insistence on attending all her rehearsals and there giving frequent advice, he has inevitably been described as a Svengali—and with far more reason than most who have had the nickname thrust on them, for at least, like Trilby, his protégée is a singer. It was he, in fact, who steered Miss Sutherland away from Wagner and the heavier

Verdi roles in which she originally fancied herself and towards the early nineteenth-century Italian school which he had first encountered and warmed to when studying the piano with one of Dame Nellie Melba's accompanists.

The Bonynges have now been married seven years and in that time have evolved a routine, or at least a process, by which Miss Sutherland has built up a considerable repertoire of roles, including many she has not yet been asked to sing. None of this industry will be wasted, of course; now that she has established herself, Joan Sutherland is in the position to create the demand which she is only too happy to supply. The initiative is very much with her.

The first step in the building of Miss Sutherland's repertoire is in every case the provision by her husband of a literal translation of the text of any part to be sung in a foreign language. As I remember Roland Gelatt's reporting was Victoria de Los

by Patrick Cairns Hughes

Miss Sutherland at Halfway House

Angeles' practice [HIGH FIDELITY, September 1960], Miss Sutherland also tries to read as much as possible that is relevant to each opera's background. In preparing her part as the New Prioress in the Covent Garden production of Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* she read not only Georges Bernanos' original "dialogues" from which the libretto was made, but also as much about the Carmelite order itself as she could lay hands on. Before she took over the part of Desdemona from Gré Brouwenstijn in the last London production of *Otello* she had a good look at Shakespeare's tragedy, commenting that "from the opera alone you cannot completely understand and get inside the characters." Needless to say there

some sober reflections on the true art of the prima donna

Family scene: Miss Sutherland as Mrs. Richard Bonynges, photographed here with her husband and Adam Bonynges.



are limits to this kind of homework. One cannot imagine that reading Walter Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor* would throw much helpful light on Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, which in any case ends much more tidily than the novel. But the conscientious application of this sort of research in the right circumstances is to be commended and is certainly typical of Joan Sutherland's determination to know all there is to know about the music she is singing and the characters she is playing.

Steady concentration on the task in hand is, in fact, the basis of all Miss Sutherland's work. She is inclined to be something of what is known as a "slow study" (her unsatisfactory first appearance in *La Traviata* at Covent Garden a couple of seasons ago was thought to be the result as much of unpreparedness as of vocal indisposition), and she has not yet evolved any foolproof form of musical mnemonics to help her. She simply has to study a role so far ahead and so thoroughly, she says, that by the time she reaches the first piano rehearsal at the theatre it has become second nature.

In her time as a member of the Covent Garden company, many of these long and arduous hours often had of necessity to be devoted to music she didn't greatly care for. Joan Sutherland confesses to have developed in that period what she describes as "not much affinity with the German repertoire." Nor does she care greatly for contemporary music either, which she considers "unvocal." What comes most easily to her, apart from the Italian *bel canto* operas, is French music like that of Delibes and Offenbach and "baroque music, particularly Handel."

The omission of Mozart from this list is not surprising, I feel. He is a composer no singer can regard with complete equanimity, and for all her experience in his operas—as Pamina and the First Lady in *The Magic Flute*, the Countess in *Figaro*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*—he seems to be the

one composer in her repertoire whose idiom Joan Sutherland has not yet mastered. The reason, I feel, is that the anger and pathos peculiar to so many of the women in Mozart's operas are dramatic qualities she still has to develop, as an actress as well as a singer. (It is only the true Mozartean pathos she lacks as yet, of course. Miss Sutherland's voice is uniquely endowed with the fey wistful pathos needed for Bellini and Donizetti mad scenes.)

Maria Callas is reported to have stated categorically: "Donna Anna is a bore." I doubt if Joan Sutherland would go so far as to say that; nevertheless, when she sang the part at Glyndebourne last year she evidently thought Donna Anna's music needed cheering up a bit, and at the dress rehearsal let loose a cadenza in "*Or sai chi l'onore*." This occurred at one of those empty pauses which in Mozart's day must surely have been a cue for a cadenza before returning to the first tune of the aria. (The same thing is even more clearly implied in the Countess' "*Dove sono . . . ?*") Miss Sutherland's unexpected contribution (only the conductor was prepared for it) outraged the management, however, and it was taken out before the first night. In principle, its introduction was justifiable on historic-stylistic grounds; in practice, the actual notes of the cadenza might have done well enough for Donizetti, but in Mozart they were completely out of musical character and, to my ears, sounded rather silly.

Ever since her first success in a *bel canto* part Joan Sutherland has inevitably been asked (in varying tones of voice, according to the answer the questioner hopes to hear), "Are you going to specialize in one sort of opera?" Her answer is that it is necessary for any singer to specialize to some degree. With her sights set principally on the operas of Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti this seems a sensible reply. Between them these three composers wrote

well over a hundred operas, and though a generation ago scarcely one by each of them was known to the operagoing public (at least in Anglo-Saxon countries), today—thanks to our Callases, Sutherlands, and particularly to the gramophone—the demand is virtually for as many of them as anybody is willing or able to perform. In spite of the growing popularity of certain nineteenth-century *bel canto* operas the trend is towards the firm establishment in the general repertoire of the composers more than of individual works. On the whole the public seems to want to hear more *different* operas by Bellini and Donizetti; having once heard them, it is not always passionately keen to hear them again.

So it is that while Joan Sutherland will this season make her debut at the Metropolitan with *Lucia* (the opera with which she first established her reputation at La Scala, as well as at Covent Garden) her normal working life is increasingly devoted to satisfying the public's growing appetite for novelty in this particular form. The twentieth century is now as eager to hear the latest Bellini or Donizetti revival as the nineteenth century was to hear the same works when they were first written, and for the same reason: they are a novelty. It is not surprising, therefore, that Miss Sutherland should be looking beyond the more obvious starring roles in *Norma*, *Puritani*, *Sonnambula*, and *Lucia* to parts like Donizetti's Lucrezia Borgia, and Elena in Rossini's *La Donna del lago*. (One trusts the singer's literary conscientiousness will not force her to read what Stendhal called "*un mauvais poème de Walter Scott*" in order to get to closer psychological grips with Rossini's version of same.) Both these unusual Donizetti and Rossini parts have been studied for performance in 1962—Lucrezia for Joan Sutherland's first appearance at the San Carlo in Naples, the Rossini lead for a new production on her return visit to La Scala.

The inclusion of a Rossini opera in her repertoire may be a step towards one of Miss Sutherland's major ambitions: to appear in *Semiramide*. But this depends less on her than on the availability of singers capable of dealing with the other roles in the opera, among them the tenor part, which Mr. Bonyngé says is "impossible" today. It is a sad thought that although nineteenth-century Scotland could produce John Sinclair, for whom Rossini wrote the part of Idreno, one may look in vain for the right type in contemporary Italy. In passing, it should also be noted that the principal bass part is florid enough to pass for one of the Bach cello suites, and in the end it might well be the difficulty of finding the right singer for this part that would put *Semiramide* out of court altogether. It is a pity that this should be so, because of all the odd operas Joan Sutherland has considered, this one (last revived, I believe, to open the Florence Maggio in 1940) is musically by far the most interesting.

It is also Miss Sutherland's ambition to record all Bellini's operas in due course, and she has studied all the big Bellini soprano roles "to a certain extent." Ironically, it was the music of Bellini that was at the

root of Joan Sutherland's two spots of trouble with conductors during her 1961 season in Italy. The Italian press, naturally, made a splash of her famous walkout on the very morning of the first performance of *La Sonnambula* in Venice, calling her "*la soprano capricciosa*" and accusing her of "following in the footsteps of Callas." Whatever the cause of Miss Callas' abrupt departure from the famous Edinburgh Festival *Sonnambula* in 1957, it was not due to any argument with the conductor. In Miss Sutherland's case, it is reported that she considered the conductor's tempo unreasonable in one of the ensembles. So she left. In the event, all ended happily—at least, inasmuch as Miss Sutherland didn't have to sing the conductor's way and he didn't have to conduct her way, both parties were satisfied.

The other incident, occurring at La Scala a few weeks earlier, was responsible for Joan Sutherland's making her Scala debut in *Lucia* instead of in *Beatrice di Tenda*. Conductor Vittorio Gui wanted to end *Beatrice* as Bellini had intended—that is, without the final cabaletta which the composer had not originally intended but which he had to write—in a hurry and a bad temper—for the Venice premiere of the opera in 1833. Bellini himself was never satisfied with this finale, after the first Paris production of *I Puritani* in 1835 and had actually sketched out a new final scene to *Beatrice*. This sketch is in the Bellini Museum in Catania, and Gui, having "realized" it for performance at Palermo two years ago, proposed to include it in the Scala production. Miss Sutherland proposed otherwise. Gui handed over the conducting of *Beatrice* to somebody else, and the prima donna created the inevitable furore with the cabaletta as expected—in a production whose postponement had caused wholesale and unfortunate changes in the cast. Precisely because Joan

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The soprano with conductor Carlo Maria Giulini.

by Peter Heyworth

THE OPERA HOUSES of the world have become museums. Once they were no different from other theatres: although they performed what they considered to be the best works of the past, they were at least as much concerned with the products of their own time. Today, however, the operatic repertory is to all intents and purposes mummified. Sterile and barren, it lives on in its great palaces, like some ancient dynasty that can no longer reproduce its kind, a parasite on the past. Since Toscanini conducted the first performance of Puccini's unfinished *Turandot* at La Scala in 1926, not a single work has been added to the international repertory. That is now thirty-five years ago, a period as long as separates Beethoven's late quartets from *Tristan*, or *Parsifal* from *Der Rosenkavalier*. What is wrong?

No doubt opera house management is open to blame. Staging a new work is a big financial commitment, but many opera directors add to an understandable caution in money matters a remarkable lack of perspicacity about modern music. They are not often quick to recognize such opportunities as exist. The annual new work at the Salzburg Festival has, for instance, become something of a bad joke. The fact that the principal Italian opera houses are obliged by the terms of their subsidy to stage two new works by native composers each year has not prevented the startling neglect of Dallapiccola's *Volo di notte* and *Il Prigioniero* in his own country. In Germany, where three-score opera houses represent a voracious juggernaut scouring the world for operas, it often seems that new works are chosen on the basis of their librettos. French resources are less ample



**Modern
Opera
in
a
Muddle**

R. L. L. L. L.

Popular operas that aren't really popular and masterpieces that can't be produced—is this the dilemma of contemporary music drama?

but seem largely devoted to native composers that no one has ever heard of, while in Britain fully professional productions (and opera is not a sphere well suited to the amateurism so beloved of the English) of new works are almost as rare as leap years.

No doubt opera directors with artistic perception would help matters. The remarkable achievements of the Hamburg Opera under Günther Rennert in the years after the last war is evidence of that. When, however, one settles down to prepare a list of what less gifted intendants might usefully put on, it immediately becomes apparent that the problem lies on a level far deeper than that of individual conservatism or obtuseness. Yet neither does it lie, as is often supposed, merely in a lack of works. On the contrary, there are good and even great operas of our time. The trouble lies rather in the nature of their greatness: without exception they remain one way or another remote from popular taste.

Let me arbitrarily list the operas of the present or the immediate past that I take to be of outstanding worth, and it will readily be seen what an eccentric collection they are. Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*, which is one of the great scores of our time, is so difficult to perform that to date it has had only two productions, both of them manifestly imperfect and both possible only because of exceptional circumstances. One formed part of the International Society for Contemporary Music Festival of 1957 in Zurich, and the other at the Berlin Festival of 1959 was made feasible only by a special municipal grant of some \$25,000. *Moses und Aron* is unfinished and its theme is essentially philosophic.

Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* is an equally great work. Yet it thrives on overturning every convention of the operatic stage and is deliberately static to a degree unthought of in Handelian *opera seria* or dramatic oratorio, to which it is so often mistakenly likened. *The Turn of the Screw*, Britten's finest achievement to date, is a macabre study of possession, just as Berg's *Wozzeck* is a study in paranoia and the musical riches of his unfinished *Lulu* are allied to a libretto that for all its pretensions to "significance" remains a ludicrous shocker. And while Janáček's setting of Dostoevsky's diary, *From a Prison Camp*, is musically arresting, in dramatic form it amounts to little more than a series of brief scenes, and its subject matter is hardly calculated to make it a popular piece.

Of course, it might be argued that neither is *Parsifal* designed by dramatic shape and subject to be a popular piece. But the whole point about *Parsifal* is that in its own day it was *intended* to be an exception, to be performed only on the sacred soil of Bayreuth. The trouble with the six operas that I have selected is that however excellent they may be in their own way—and most of them are, I believe, masterpieces of their sort—they do not by any standards make up a *repertory*. They are all works that in some way or other flout operatic conventions, rather as though their composers found these conventions barren and degrading, and were doing their best to escape them. (Other people would, of course, make a different selection of works, but I suspect that much the same conclusion could be drawn.)

This mistrust of convention takes different forms. With Britten, Berg,

and Janáček it is flight from conventional subject matter, with Stravinsky it is a flight from conventional forms, and with Schoenberg it is a flight from both. I am far from suggesting that operas be composed according to traditional formulas, for yesterday's revolution quickly becomes tomorrow's tradition. But what is unprecedented about the present situation is that in varying degree all the works I have mentioned represent a revolt against a tradition that no longer exists. And with this lack of any living operatic tradition goes an alarming remoteness from the general operagoing public.

Confronted with this schism, some composers have deliberately set out to bridge it by writing an opera of broad public appeal. Rather forego the applause of *cognoscenti*, they seem to say, and produce something that speaks of human flesh and blood to human flesh and blood. Eschewing esoteric librettos and elaborate musical idiom, composers like Menotti and Walton have worked to fill the gaps left by Puccini. Only an uninformed prig would deny the validity of the attempt. After all, Rossini and Verdi did not sit down in a vacuum to write masterpieces; they worked to fulfill commissions and satisfy a large public.

But the trouble with so many of today's popular operas is that they are not really very popular. Too often they represent a regurgitation of traditional operatic gestures cautiously spiced with modern condiments, and because they are derivative these gestures seem hollow. Although everything may be calculated to appeal to the general public, that public remains obstinately uninterested. Indeed it is precisely in this field of traditional opera that the deadness of the

tradition and the full extent of the crisis in opera become apparent.

Thus on the one hand there is the small number of contemporary works that appeal only to a limited public. On the other hand there are the traditional confections that do not even hold the attention of the big public they set out to attract. There seems to be some fatal schism between artistic quality and popular success, and the middle ground once occupied by composers such as Puccini seems to have disappeared like some lost continent.

In this, opera mirrors a crisis affecting all music. This crisis has its roots in the past, but its terrible destructive power has become apparent only in the last fifty years. In the eighteenth century there was no rigid dividing line between "serious" and "popular" music. As late as the time of Schubert, it was possible for a composer to write both pleasing dance music and a sublime masterpiece like the C major Quintet. Even in the latter half of the nineteenth century Wagner and Brahms, who agreed about little else, were united in their admiration of Johann Strauss, although Strauss devoted his genius purely to light music. But thereafter the gap grew rapidly until it became an ocean separating two entirely different worlds. Occasionally someone would try to establish contact between them. Schoenberg, for instance, much admired Gershwin, but his own attempt to write a few bars of popular music in his comic opera *Von Heute auf Morgen* is as self-conscious and as much of a failure as Gershwin's attempt to write "symphonic" jazz. The early works of Kurt Weill, such as *The Threepenny Opera* and *Mahagonny*, and Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* are among the very few modern scores with a genuine and individual idiom that managed to keep a foot in both camps. And of the composers who have emerged since the War, only Britten and Hans Werner Henze shows real promise of an eventual ability to reoccupy this "middle ground" with operas that are dramatically and musically adventurous and yet reasonably accessible in style.

Precisely why this division has come about remains a matter of dispute. But its roots seem to lie in that old chestnut, the artist's relationship to society. Generally, society is held guilty of failing to reserve a cozy little sanctuary for the artist. In fact it was rather the artist who first severed his links with society. In the eighteenth century the composer was a skilled worker who produced what his employer called for. This was a system that Haydn found perfectly satisfactory. Mozart, born a generation nearer the French Revolution, was already rebelling against it and paid for his rebellion with a pauper's grave. But it was Beethoven who, in obedience to his overwhelming genius, first lived on the assumption that a composer's prime and exclusive duty was to his inner light.

This essentially romantic view of an artist's function worked well enough in the case of a man like Wagner, who finally obliged society to conform to

his mighty ego. But it is a dangerous doctrine. It may appear all right when it is first attempted and some sort of relationship between the artist and society can be taken for granted. In the long run, however, it carries the seeds of destruction, for by depriving the artist of a proper social function, it leaves him with two possible courses of action. One is to curry favor with society, and from this stems the commercialism of popular music. The other is to ignore society and follow his inner light regardless of the consequences. Of course an "inner light" is a prerequisite of any true artistic creation. But when this process of creation takes place in a vacuum, without any social purpose in view, there is a danger that the composer will lose all contact with his potential audience and that it, in turn, will fail to understand what he is saying. Hence we arrive at the other face of so much contemporary music—its incomprehensibility to the general public. Originality in the arts is always disturbing and puzzling at first—there must necessarily be some gap between a composer exploring new ground and his audience, as was the case with Beethoven and Schubert. But since the end of the nineteenth century this gap has become a chasm that only a small minority of music lovers manage to cross.

With the help of the radio and other enlightened patrons much of the most advanced concert music gets a hearing, and indeed composers like Stravinsky and Bartók have eventually broken through to a larger public. But in opera the position is much more critical. In terms of hard cash it is one thing to put on a concert of modern music and quite another to mount a production of a modern opera. A composer starts off with an idiom that is remote from public taste and because of it he cannot get his operas on the stage. From this stems the additional danger that he may come to despair of performance to a point where, like Schoenberg when he was writing *Moses und Aron*, he no longer takes practical realities of the theatre into account.

There is, however, a third response that could finally prove even more fatal to the development of opera—its entire rejection by a generation of composers. It is an alarming fact that of the advanced composers who have emerged since the war, only Nono shows the slightest concern with opera. Thus it seems that there is danger of a divorce not only between modern opera and the public but between modern opera and the composers. No wonder the repertory is ossified.

Nor do opera's troubles stop here. Whether one conceives of opera in terms of Bellinian *bel canto* or Wagnerian music drama, it remains primarily a vocal art. The voice is the composer's most important instrument because it is the direct embodiment of character, without which there can be no drama. No amount of chatter about the potentialities of the orchestra as an expressive force (which, as an avid Wagnerian, I would not for a moment deny) can alter this.

It is generally supposed *Continued on page 138*



HIGH FIDELITY DISCOGRAPHY No. 52

The
WAGNER OPERAS *on microgroove*

BY HERBERT GLASS

IN THE DAYS of 78 rpm, Wagner was represented on discs by numerous operatic excerpts and three operas in "reasonably" complete form. During the dozen or so short years since the advent of microgroove, we have seen the appearance of complete versions of nine out of Wagner's total of ten full-blown operatic masterpieces. We have even progressed to a stage where four of the Wagner operas are available in several issues.

During the 1930s, the cost and unwieldiness of the many-sided albums necessary to contain a complete Wagner opera made such large-

scale productions unfeasible. Yet interest in Wagner was high. Such artists as Leider, Flagstad, Melchior, and Schorr—to name but a few—guaranteed high quality and decided frequency of performance. During the period between the two World Wars, Wagner occupied a place in public affection hardly below that enjoyed by Italian opera then or now, and Wagnerian singers enjoyed a measure of esteem proportionate to that accorded many of the great stars of Italian opera.

After the Second World War, Wagner no longer had the glamour of the old days; gone were most of the great Wagnerian performers, and only in Bayreuth were the procedures of Wagnerian staging re-evaluated and altered to suit a more modern taste. Suddenly, within the past few years, performances of Wagner are on the upsurge. Quality is increasing, and with it comes frequency of presentation. Although the papier-mâché dragons have not as yet completely disappeared, that too seems a likely prospect for the near future. The reasons for this resurgence of interest are not all obscure if we ponder the situation. In the person of Birgit Nilsson, at least one big star has appeared recently to grace the Wagnerian repertory. Within a relatively short time her name has achieved a glamour nearly on a par with that attached to the Italian prima donnas of our time, and her presence is a guarantee of interest in Wagner productions at virtually any opera house in the world. Jon Vickers, although he has been somewhat niggardly in displaying his gifts, seems cut out to occupy a similar position in *Helden-tenor* roles. A rising generation of other young singers has appeared to fill other vital parts in Wagner operas, and more will surely attempt this repertory as its acceptance by a new audience grows.

Records have played a role of vast importance in the significant Wagnerian revival which is un-

questionably taking place today. In addition to the fact that the prospective purchaser of a complete Wagner recording no longer needs a great deal of money or shelf space to realize his wishes, recording techniques have presented the composer with advantages undreamed of not very long ago. The sensational sound effects, so much a part of Wagner's vision of how his works should be presented, were possible and often quite successfully suggested in monophonic LP recordings. Stereo absolutely demands them, and is able to present us with a degree of realism (I realize, of course, that stereo realism is often quite different from what is possible in live performance) that illuminates various facets of such a work as *Das Rheingold* in magnificent terms. Sales of recorded Wagner have skyrocketed recently. The cynical reader may question the motives of some purchasers of recent razzle-dazzle Wagner recordings. There are unquestionably those who are transported to heaven by the sound of Donner's hammer striking the rock in the right-hand channel of London's *Rheingold*. But I am certain that most listeners who react in this way will become, or are already, aware of the compositional genius transmitted by such a recording. I have found, in fact, that today's brilliant recording techniques have led many recently converted Wagnerians to explore the treasures of older (LP and 78) Wagner performances with an enlightened appreciation of their worth.

I do not think it an exaggeration to state that the ever increasing interest in Wagner through records is causing our opera houses gradually to cater more and more to the tastes of this large, newly discovered audience. The composer who was in danger of becoming little more than a second-class visitor to our stages is reappearing among those masters whose genius is not merely discussed by the few but listened to and loved by the many.

Der Fliegende Holländer (1841)

It is easy enough to say that *The Flying Dutchman* is far from Wagner's ultimate expression of his unique self as a creative artist. This statement, however, hardly constitutes an evaluation of the opera. Wagner did not here "conquer a new world," but he did give us glimpses into one. Although the "symphonic" integrated style which was to manifest itself fully in *Das Rheingold* more than a decade later is very imperfectly realized in this effort of 1841, in it we find the composer already striving for a total union of music and drama in a continuum. He cannot as yet achieve this end—the continuity is broken repeatedly by the traditional forms—but the *Dutchman* is superb music at all times and frequently overwhelming in its dramatic force.

The two recent complete recordings, from Angel and RCA, not only partake of the best of contemporary engineering, but manage to bring us, in two totally different conceptions, performances of Wagner's first masterpiece which are of the highest caliber as well. It is, in fact, astounding to find that two views of the same work can be so divergent in approach and yet remain true to its basic requirements of interpretation.

Angel's features first and foremost the chilling Dutchman of Fischer-Dieskau. This sea-rover is a ghostly apparition. Whenever he appears, we can feel the stage darkening and a dank mist rising from the sea. His interpretation is full of dramatic and vocal subtleties, making the character a paradoxical mixture of the natural and the supernatural. RCA's George London, on

the other hand, is a dour, more down-to-earth creature. He curses his fate, but does not question it. We never feel that London is confused, or that he is hopeful of salvation. Both Dutchmen are magnificent. Fischer-Dieskau's "*Die Frist ist um*" vacillates between abject despair and faint hope. We must eventually feel that his Dutchman yearns with all his soul for earthly life and human love. London wants no pity. His singing of the part, which features a shatteringly defiant "*Die Frist ist um*," is as mighty and turbulent as the ocean to which he is enslaved.

Both Dalands possess gorgeous voices. Frick's is a dark bass which contrasts most effectively with Fischer-Dieskau's comparatively light baritone, but he fails to breathe much life into the part. Tozzi's awareness of the old sea dog's grasp-

ing hypocrisy makes him much the more vital Daland. Angel's Schech is a fiery Senta, but there is a growing stridency and inability to sustain soft tones evident in her singing as the work progresses. Rysanek is ideal. Her voice is filled with sensuous mystery. She projects her "Ballad" hauntingly, and is able to supply exquisite legato phrasing and freedom of tone in "*Wie aus der Ferne*." The Eriks are both first-rate. Schock, for Angel, is roughish, hotheaded, and successful in making of this often gratuitous personage a virile and reasonably believable figure; Liebl, for RCA, possesses a beautiful, light lyric voice. There is marked strain in the latter's upper register, but this is offset at all times by the intelligence and sheer loveliness of his singing. The Steersman's delightful part is well handled in each album. Wunderlich's marvelous ease of delivery and faint suggestion of the none too competent sailor give him a slight edge over the excessively dignified, albeit highly accomplished, Lewis.

Konwitschny's direction of his fine German orchestra and chorus is of the widest dynamic range. It is full of exciting blasts of sound which taper off into, or are alternated with, mysterious pianissimos. He manages to introduce many novel and highly successful touches while ever adhering to the letter of the score. Dorati's *Dutchman* is less subtle. To use the sea image again, it is broad and stony. He (and his engineers) create an atmosphere which suggests great spaces and profound depths. What Dorati succeeds in giving us is a *Dutchman* of overcast, grim splendor, employing generally slower tempos than Konwitschny to achieve his powerful interpretation.

RCA's stereo recording has the depth and spaciousness of Dorati's North Sea, giving us a wide aural perspective. In Angel's stereo, the voices are somewhat closer upon us and there is less depth of sound, a procedure completely in accordance with a performance wherein Konwitschny and Fischer-Dieskau are allowing us to share with them some dark secret which must be whispered into our ears.

Discussing the Decca and London

versions at this point is like suddenly being transplanted from a storm at sea to a bathtub. In the Decca version, Fricsay's rushed tempos cause him to overlook virtually every dramatic point the opera has to make. His Dutchman, Metternich, conveys little more than petulance, while the Senta is drab, cautious, and ineffectual. Windgassen is a fine Erik—although neither as passionate as Schock nor as warmly lyrical as Liebl—but Greindl, perhaps the best stage Daland of recent years, is straitened by Fricsay's conducting. Decca's sound belongs to a bygone age.

London's job does more harm than honor to the great shrine which is its place of origin. Uhde is an admirable artist, but not a Dutchman. His work here is emotionally nil and vocally undistinguished. Varnay has her brief good moments, but she is painfully uncomfortable in the high-lying passages. The great Ludwig Weber's Daland was recorded a few years too late. The respected Keilberth is in a rather dull, underemphatic mood throughout, and this fact should suffice to eliminate London's set from the competition. The Bayreuth version does enjoy one peculiar distinction, the Erik of Rudolf Lustig, a singer who caused quite a stir in Vienna a few years back with his shouting, bleating, and bullish insistence on emphasizing every limitation of his completely raw voice.

Hotter's famous Dutchman is heard with Birgit Nilsson in the deeply affecting Angel "*Wie aus der Ferne*." These artists could give us another noteworthy complete version of the opera, but that would complicate things too much. As matters stand, I find a choice between Angel and RCA impossible. —Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (Dutchman), Marianne Schech (Senta), Gottlob Frick (Daland), Rudolf Schock (Erik), Fritz Wunderlich (Steersman), Sieglinde Wagner (Mary); Chorus and Orchestra of the German State Opera (Berlin), Franz Konwitschny, cond. Angel 3616 C/L, Three LP; S 3616 C/L, Three SD.

—George London (Dutchman), Leonie Rysanek (Senta), Giorgio Tozzi (Daland), Karl Liebl (Erik),

Richard Lewis (Steersman), Rosalind Elias (Mary); Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Antal Dorati, cond. RCA Victor LM 6156, Three LP; LSC 6156, Three SD.

—Josef Metternich (Dutchman), Annelies Kupper (Senta), Josef Greindl (Daland), Wolfgang Windgassen (Erik), Ernst Häfliger (Steersman), Sieglinde Wagner (Mary); RIAS Chorus and Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond. Decca DX 124, Three LP.

—Hermann Uhde (Dutchman), Astrid Varnay (Senta), Ludwig Weber (Daland), Rudolf Lustig (Erik), Josef Traxel (Steersman), Elisabeth Schärtel (Mary); Chorus and Orchestra of the 1955 Bayreuth Festival, Josef Keilberth, cond. London A 4325, Three LP.

—"*Wie aus der Ferne*" (Act II, Scene III only; with excerpts from *Die Walküre*). Hans Hotter, Birgit Nilsson; Philharmonia Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond. Angel 35585, LP; S 35585, SD.

Tannhäuser (1845)

Although certain convincing arguments to the contrary could be brought forth, *Tannhäuser* is, by and large, the most frustrating of Wagner's "mature" operas. The work unquestionably contains splendid moments; but Wagner's struggle to find a congenial form for the musical expression of the two legends which comprise the plot is not resolved. For long stretches, the composer achieves a measure of the symphonic unity he is striving towards, and then, as the opera progresses, we find him breaking it to include the standard "set pieces" of grand opera. The *Dutchman* finds a clear demarcation point between these two elements; in *Tannhäuser* the two elements seem to fight each other, producing something which could not easily be called an entity. If music of consistent worth had been produced, such considerations of form would recede into the background. In all, *Tannhäuser* is an intriguing failure, and a composition which looks as much to the future of music-drama as developed by Wagner as backward to traditional operatic forms of the nineteenth century.



Tannhäuser is a work which should be available in its entirety on records for our examination. For that reason I look forward to Angel's imminent release, presumably in the Paris revision of 1860, with a cast which includes Hans Hopf, Elisabeth Grümmer, Schech, Fischer-Dieskau, and Frick—Konwitschny conducting. At present, some excellent performances of vital scenes are available.

Max Lorenz's Electrola recital features the Elisabeth-Tannhäuser scene from Act II, "*O Fürstin*," in which the tenor is assisted by Maria Reining at her exquisite best; this is followed by a stunning, tortured presentation by Lorenz of the "Rome Narrative." All the selections date from pre- and early World War II days, but the sound is perfectly acceptable.

More of the opera's finest moments are presented with superb vocalism and style and in brilliant sound (mono and stereo) on an Angel disc. Grümmer is an ideal Elisabeth—light-voiced, but not thin; exultant and supremely accomplished in "*Dich, teure Halle*"; while Frick's presentation of the Landgraf's "speech" has dignity and warmth. Chorus and orchestra under Konwitschny are ideal, making a particularly delightful and refreshing thing of the hackneyed "Arrival of the Guests."

Decca's single disc of excerpts, although it gives us the most generous sampling of the opera on records, is undistinguished except for Windgassen's perceptive "Rome Narrative."

—Excerpts from Acts II and III (with excerpts from *Siegfried*). Max Lorenz, Maria Reining; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch and Rudolf Moralt, conds. Electrola E 60591, 10-in. LP.

—Excerpts from Act II (with excerpts from *Götterdämmerung*). Elisabeth Grümmer, Gottlob Frick; Chorus and Orchestra of the German State Opera, Berlin, Franz Konwitschny, cond. Angel 35844, LP; S 35844, SD.

—Collected Excerpts. Leonie Ryanek (Elisabeth), Wolfgang Windgassen (*Tannhäuser*), Eberhard Wächter (Wolfgram), Josef Greindl (Landgraf); Various orchestras and conductors. Decca DL 9928, LP.

Lohengrin (1848)

The two operas I have already discussed are impressive works, the products of a master. But with *Lohengrin* the Wagnerian atmosphere becomes immeasurably intensified. Although *Lohengrin*, unlike its successors in the Wagner canon, fits comfortably into the conventional patterns of nineteenth-century opera in many respects, we can sense in it a considerable

stretching of the bonds of convention. The opera does contain arias, full choruses and ensembles, etc., but there is also a unity of conception, a certain driving towards a goal from the outset, that at the full peak of its development in later works can be labeled as uniquely Wagnerian. The concept of leitmotiv has here become a more important factor than it was in *The Flying Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser*; although at this comparatively early date it is still far from having achieved the function it was to attain in the later operas, *Lohengrin* finds its composer clearly working in that direction. He is already using the leitmotiv—still somewhat tentatively—to reveal human motivations and conflicts rather than merely to afford superficial identification of character or idea. What a Wagnerite should also find of great importance in *Lohengrin* is the fact that here the composer's musical and dramatic facility are so integrated that he is able to create in Telramund a figure of striking complexity, a recognizable human image rather than a symbol, within the context of the opera.

London's recording of the 1953 Bayreuth production still manages to exert a powerful hold. In this day some of us may be irritated by the generous quantity of live-performance clinkers—the fading of voices, occasional sonic imbalance of forces, moments of ragged ensemble and insecure intonation (as well as uncomfortably suspended side breaks), but the sound is better than bearable and, most important, the opera is brought to life with a degree of expertness not often achieved either on stage or in the studio. Keilberth is a penetrating governor of the proceedings. He is able to bring a shimmering mysteriousness to the evocation of the Grail, a sense of drama to the weightier climaxes, and a homogeneity of conception to solo, choral, and orchestral forces which had not spent a great deal of time working together as a unit. And although he falls into the common snare of taking far too slow a tempo at the start of the "Bridal Chamber" scene to make the vocal lines properly legato, his over-all achievement remains praiseworthy.

For the brutally demanding part of Telramund, to me the most fascinating in the opera, I cannot imagine a more suitable artist than Uhde. In a portrayal that encompasses the full complexity of the character, his Telramund is never the stock villain, always the painfully confused man. And fortunately, Uhde possesses the vocal resources to project his interpretation with tremendous forcefulness. Windgassen has the proper vocal weight and smoothness for the title role; and after a somewhat

pallid start, his voice takes on as much color as the part will allow—which is not very much. Steber sings Elsa beautifully throughout, investing this somewhat vague and unrelievedly "white" role with life and consistently appealing vocalism, although she does not quite possess the high floating tones for the ethereal "*Euch Lüften*." Varnay is admirable as the opera's "evil genius." Ortrud. Like Uhde, she does not stress overt blackness at every turn; instead she indicates the character's subtlety, and her voice has the richness to make an effective contrast to that of the Elsa. The microphones tend to lose a bit of Greindl's singing in the first act, but enough is heard to demonstrate that his King Henry is dignified and strong without the usual stiffness. Better chorus and orchestra would be hard to come by, as would a better over-all performance.

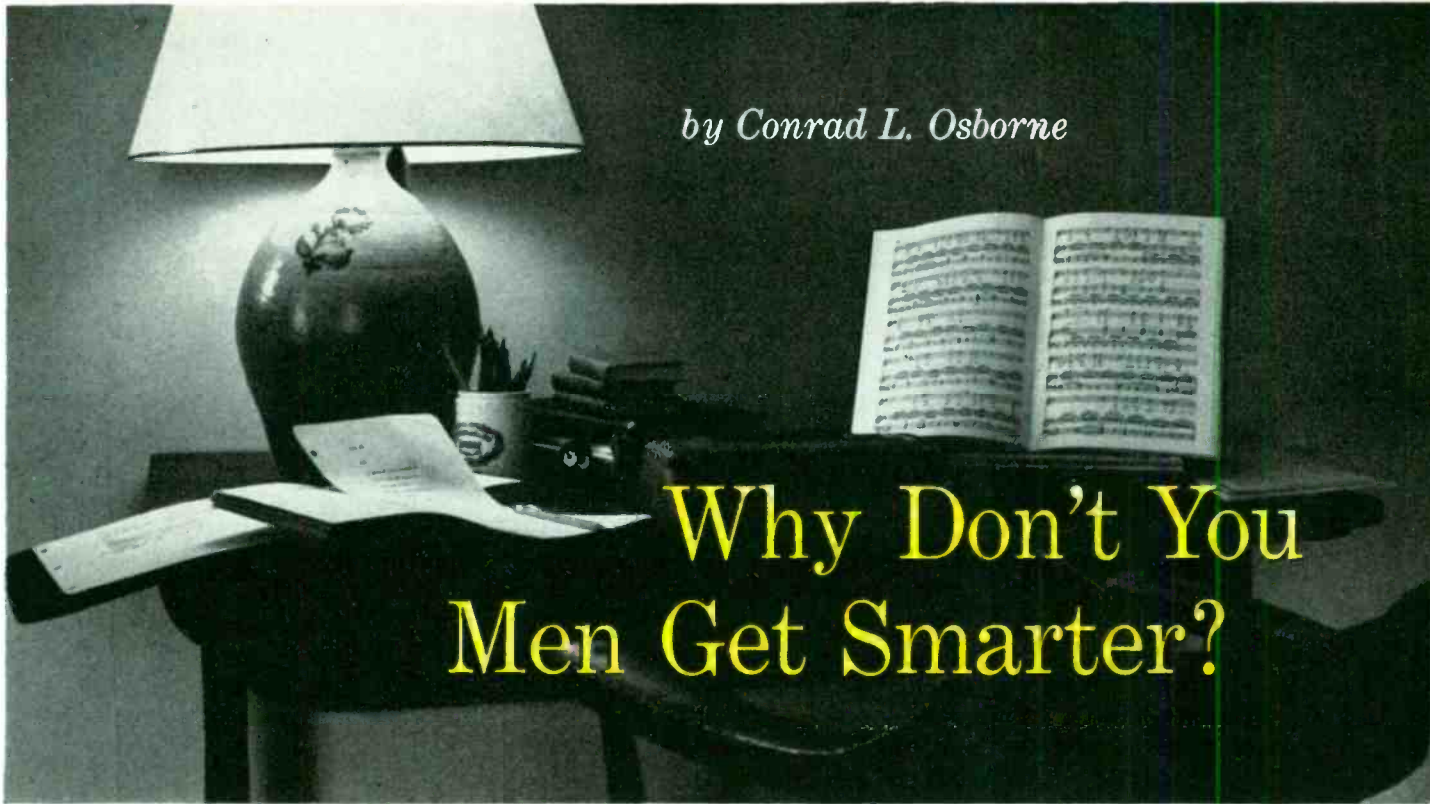
Decca's version (from Deutsche Grammophon tapes) is hardly competitive. Jochum is no less adept at vitalizing the work than Keilberth, and he manages the "Bridal Chamber" scene perfectly. The late Ferdinand Frantz is an effective Telramund—certainly the outstanding member of this cast—but his emphasis on the brutal side of the character makes his portrayal less vivid and meaningful than Uhde's. None of the other singers is on a level with those of the London performance. Chorus and orchestra are excellent, if often obscured by muddy sound. I am distressed too by the fact that the engineers have toned down the volume of the big climaxes. Here there is seldom any difference between *f* and *fff*, and the fault is not the conductor's.

We are indeed fortunate in having on microgroove the magnificent Melchior-Bettendorf (with unnamed conductor and orchestra) "Bridal Chamber" duet, via ASCO's survey of the great tenor's career in roles Wagnerian and otherwise. Melchior is splendidly virile in his part, and in glorious voice; while Bettendorf's light, girlish Elsa—although not flawless in matters of intonation—is charming. This version is slightly abridged, but that fact should be no deterrent to obtaining what is most assuredly a treasureable set.

—Eleanor Steber (Elsa), Astrid Varnay (Ortrud), Wolfgang Windgassen (*Lohengrin*), Hermann Uhde (Telramund), Josef Greindl (Heinrich), Hans Braun (Herald); Chorus and Orchestra of the 1953 Bayreuth Festival, Josef Keilberth, cond. London A 4502, Five LP.

—Annelies Kupper (Elsa), Helena Braun (Ortrud), Lorenz Fehenberger (*Lohengrin*), Ferdinand Frantz (Telramund), Otto von Rohr (Heinrich), Hans Braun (Herald); Chorus and

Continued on page 132



by Conrad L. Osborne

Why Don't You Men Get Smarter?

Which is a bit of translationese here addressed to the gentlemen who keep insisting that opera is better in the vernacular. If you're a proponent of opera-in-English, prepare to roll up your sleeves!

TWO SEASONS BACK, the Metropolitan Opera presented a new production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, sung by an international cast and directed by an Australian who has made his mark in the American legitimate theatre. The language used was Italian. For the rest of the season, *Nozze* customers received with their programs a questionnaire. Did they like their Mozart in Italian? Or English? Or otherwise?

I think we must attribute the poll to one of two motives. Either the Metropolitan management seriously considered presenting *Nozze* in English (as it had already decided with respect to *Die Zauberflöte* and *Così fan tutte*) and was engaging in a bit of market research; or else the management felt it imperative to be able to demonstrate popular support for its decision to present the work in the original. (In this they were certainly successful, for the Metropolitan patrons voted overwhelmingly in favor of Italian.) In either case, the entire process seems to me to reflect an obviously fallacious premise—that a question of aesthetics can somehow be decided by putting the matter to a vote. This assumption is no doubt a natural one in a society which places its faith in the

undisputed correctness of majority opinion and in the incontrovertible "proof" of statistical evidence.

But in considering the subject of foreign opera in English, I think we must start by recognizing that the issue is fundamentally an aesthetic one. Thus, arguments that do not address themselves to the question of aesthetic worth are, it seems to me, largely irrelevant. Consider, for example, the myriad citations of European practice, implying that if opera in the vernacular satisfies Europeans, it ought to satisfy us. A good statement of this position can be found in a short essay by Arthur Goldberg of the *Los Angeles Times*, written for the booklet accompanying Angel's recently released album of *Butterfly* excerpts in English. There Mr. Goldberg says: "... opera has established itself as a really popular art form only in those countries where, as a matter of course, it is sung in the language that everyone speaks and understands. Those are the countries where, *as a consequence* [italics mine], opera is subsidized so that it does not have to face a continual financial crisis, and where even small cities can enjoy opera nightly during ten or eleven months of the year."

WHY
DON'T
YOU
MEN GET
SMARTER?



Now, this statement and its various implications can assuredly be debated. In fact, I would challenge it on several grounds. To imply that opera is popular in Europe because foreign operas are sung in the language of the audience is simply false. From the time of its very founding by the Florentine *camerata*, opera was an aristocratic art. It was subsidized from the start simply because the heads of many royal and noble households all over the European continent wanted it as part of their court activities. It was performed not in translation, but in the original Italian. No doubt there were elements of snobbery in the practice, but it existed partly because many of its noble patrons were genuinely cultured men and women for whom the Italian tongue did not present quite the obstacle that it does for the majority of even moderately well-educated people today. The public was not admitted to these performances until later; then the poets and composers of the time quickly saw that there was a need for opera in the country's native tongue. Their answer was not to translate Metastasio (though certainly some texts were translated even at this early date, usually to the great displeasure of the audiences), but to write new operas in French and German.

Here lies the crux of the matter—opera became an integrated part of a national culture because great composers wrote great operas in the country's language. These native operas, which soon formed the great bulk of the repertory in France, Germany, and even in the Eastern countries, in turn created a native operatic idiom which formed part of the audience's natural scope of understanding and association. Only then did opera become truly "popular" in these nations, and only then did it seem sensible to translate foreign operas into the vernacular. Notwithstanding the tremendous resurgence of interest in Verdi in Germany, native operas still make up the bulk of German repertory. Subsidy continues there, despite the institution of a democratic form of government, because so many Germans (and French-

men, Italians, Russians, Poles, and Czechs) believe that their national lyric heritage deserves support—not because the man in the street can understand some of the words in *Bohème* or *Traviata*. For that matter, the Wiener Staatsoper does not perform everything in German, nor do the summer festivals; and the governments involved continue financial support just the same.

I might note that the attempt to draw the history of the opera as a series of overpowering popular movements, an irresistible urge to expression on

the part of the masses, is quite usual with proponents of opera in the vernacular. This argument is, of course, nonsense. Every significant advance in the art of the lyric stage has been made by individuals of genius, often operating in a state of indifference or even antipathy to public opinion, frequently ignored or unappreciated, usually supported (if at all) by patrons of means who, either out of genuine concern or because of a desire for status, provided them with subsidies. The form achieved a certain popularity because a large number of people found that some of the many works of these geniuses held meaning for them, not because the public demanded and received works of any particular characteristic.

But even assuming that a cause-effect correlation could be found between productions in the vernacular and popular or official support, one would still be tempted to ask, "And what of it?" Should not the serious student put aside the question of what practice is followed in some other country, or of whether the practice will result in popular approval? Of course, I am aware that one can't go about mounting opera productions as if attacking a problem of abstract aesthetics. Perhaps the singers available don't know the foreign language, and would have to learn their parts by rote, or perhaps the same is true of the local chorus engaged. It is altogether possible that the *director* doesn't know the language. Or perhaps local prejudice against anything "furrin" is so powerful as to make an original-language production a physical danger to the participants. Certainly it would be foolish to insist that the Council Bluffs Grand Opera follow the same rules in selection of repertory as the Metropolitan.

For the moment, though, I should like to lay aside these considerations, which vary from case to case, along with such immaterial questions as the degree of snobbery among original-language devotees, and consider solely the artistic question involved: does translation to the vernacular make opera better? Among the many arguments for translating opera,

I have heard only one of any aesthetic significance. It is well put, I think, by Mr. Goldberg: "Opera is drama, and drama is nothing in the theatre if it does not make sense." In a broad definition, it is true that opera is drama. So is ballet. But it does not follow that the same rules of performance can be applied to all three forms. In a narrower definition, opera is not drama at all—it is opera. An entirely different range of factors is involved in having opera "make sense" than in having a play make sense. Mr. Goldberg contends that neither words nor music can stand alone, but at the same time he would have us believe that the words and sounds can be neatly severed from the music, changed entirely, and pasted back onto the music without altering it—a flexibility of viewpoint that seems to me inconsistent, to say the least. I happen to agree that neither element *can* stand alone: change one and you change the other.

Consider but one phrase from a commonly performed translation of *Figaro*. Italian: "*Aprite un po' quegli'occhi*" (literally, "Open those eyes a little"); The phrase is set twice, the first time being rendered as "Oh fellow man, be smarter," the second as "Why don't you men get smarter?" I select this example because Mozart is generally conceded to be one of the most easily translated of composers, because this translation (by Ruth and Thomas Martin) is above-average, and because most opera lovers will be familiar with at least the first melodic fragment that accompanies it:

A

Oh fel-low man, be smart-er

B

Why don't you men get smart-er

Sing this phrase in Italian, or else play a recording of an Italian rendition. Next, sing it in English. One of two things can happen. You can preserve the clipped, clean attack of the original, thus making the English enunciation totally ridiculous; or you can accommodate the accent to normal English pronunciation, thus changing the music. Though the notes have remained nominally the same, the entire contour of the melody has been blunted and flattened out. Apply the blunting and flattening to an entire score, and to the wide vertical sweep of Verdi or Puccini, rather than to the patter of this particular aria, and you are hearing a different score. Nor is my example an extreme one; a glance at any English version will show that Mozart's quarter notes have been split into eighths, or vice versa, and that entrances have been moved a beat ahead or a beat back.

This does not even take into consideration the fact that in any singing translation relatively few phrases will actually fall on the music to which the original meanings are set; that not more than half of those that do will be understood (this is true even on recordings); that the composer has set certain vowel

sounds on certain pitches, has even selected certain intervals, to obtain dramatic effects that are important whether or not the words are understood. In fact, the more important we maintain the words to be and the more strongly we argue that they are inseparable from the music, the more we are led to the conclusion that they ought to be left exactly as the composer set them. The combination of stage action with words and music exactly as intended by their creators is far more powerful and dramatic than a compromised version of same in the vernacular, even to a person who does not have more than a general comprehension of the situation.

It seems to me that the contention that opera must be in the vernacular in order to "make sense" springs from the mistaken assumption that the key to operatic "drama" is in the libretto. In fact (how often need it be said?) the key is in the music—the music, of course, being a conglomerate of all the *sounds* produced in the course of a performance, including the words. It is this same failure to apprehend the source of the real operatic drama that causes so much grief in the staging and designing of operas—so that we get productions in which one opera takes place in the music while an entirely different one turns up on the stage. To be sure, opera *is* a theatrical art, but it is a theatrical art with a set of rules unto itself, the first of which is that all the elements of production must go to complement the music, not to violate it. Let me again point to ballet. It is clearly a theatrical art, and most of us would classify it as a form of drama. But none of us would contend that a ballet can be staged from the same "book" as a play. Why, then, merely because words are sung in operas, do we ignore the obvious fact that the opera, despite similarities to the spoken drama, is essentially different from it, and that the difference is due to the use of music as the chief expressive device?

But what, it will be asked, of the poor American operagoer? What, after all these lofty aesthetic questions have been settled, is he to do in his search for soul-satisfaction? Well, let me postulate a set of circumstances. I am an American going to the opera. It happens to be *Il Trovatore*. Someone gave me tickets—I've never been to an opera, never even heard the "*Miserere*," don't know a word of Italian. I don't even know that the curtain goes up forty minutes earlier than it does on Broadway, and so, after a leisurely dinner, I arrive at the opera house quite late—in the middle of Act III, Scene II, to be exact.

Well, a soprano and a tenor are singing a duet. They appear to be inside some sort of fortress or castle. They are dressed in medieval costume, and she is wearing bridal garments. The music is vaguely churchlike. They finish the duet and walk slowly toward an altar. Now another tenor comes in and sings in an agitated way to the first one, pointing to the outside. The first tenor becomes very excited, and the soprano quite upset. The second tenor runs off stage. Suddenly the orchestra launches into a driving, martial-sounding *Continued on page 140*



BY R. D. DARRELL

A
Private
Sonic
World

Headphone listening is easy on your neighbors and
even easier on your ears. Try it and see.



IN THIS DAY of sophisticated loudspeaker design, the use of headphones for the enjoyment of music at home may seem an anachronism, dating back to the dark ages of crystal radio sets. Banish the misconception; it has become apparent that headphones—improved in response, appearance, and wearing comfort—can prove a very useful adjunct indeed to the most up-to-date high-fidelity system, as well as a unique medium of stereo-sound experience.

The most obvious advantage of headphones, of course, is in enabling their wearer to listen to the program of his choice without being disturbed by extraneous noises and without imposing his tastes on other members of his household. There is more to this, however, than meets the eye—or rather the ear. The isolated world of solitary listening created by headphones provides a strange, intense, and wholly private musical enjoyment. A not uncommon experience is to get a sense of an almost intangible “woolly” silence, akin to that encountered in anechoic chambers. When the silence blossoms into music, one feels a direct participation in the performance, and possibly even in the composer’s imagination. Furthermore, headphones neatly obviate the inadequacies and distortions of loudspeakers and listening-room acoustics; they can furnish relatively higher sonic quality for given equipment expenditures, particularly if one is content with headphone facilities only; and on stereo they permit such a vivid and intimate perception of twin channels fusing and expanding dramatically inside one’s skull that the music seems re-created there with no apparent compression in size and often a seeming enhancement of sonic authenticity and power.

Yet even such potent appeals have their qualifications. Not all listeners relish so lonely an approach to music—and indeed certain types of music (especially those written to be performed in large halls) may be better appreciated in the company of others. Sometimes a sensitive wearer of headphones comes to feel that the sheer vividness of the inner world of reproduced sound contrasts preposterously with the commonplace vision of the room before him; and it is probably for this reason that many headphone listeners tend to shut their eyes. Even then, the apparent sound sources (which in theory should seem to be located *either* in front *or* behind) may seem panoramically ranged across one’s back, or perhaps wholly disembodied—in further contrast with the effect of listening in the concert hall or to music reproduced through loudspeakers.

Technically, headphones have certain limitations; while the best of them are relatively free from distortion, their low frequency response is largely dependent on the tightness of the coupling to one’s ears, a matter that can occasion the nuisance of frequent readjustment. Additionally, headphones are physically constrictive; they limit the wearer’s movement to the fixed length of a trailing cable, they may feel uncomfortable, and—to some people—they simply look ridiculous.

A further disadvantage is that headphones bring us into such intimate contact with the program source that normally negligible system noise—hum, rumble, etc.—becomes evident at low signal levels. On the other hand, these distractions are more completely masked by high signal levels. In any case they seldom seem (presumably for unexplored psychological reasons) to cause the same annoyance as do extraneous noises in loudspeaker reproduction. Finally—an admittedly controversial issue—since modern stereo recordings are made specifically for spaced-speaker playback, their reproduction via the narrow-spaced and completely channel-isolated headphones patently introduces a kind of anomaly. More of this later.

These considerations are relevant to both types of headphones, crystal as well as magnetic, but either type can be designed and used so that it serves

as a high-fidelity device. The important point is that in connecting phones into existing sound systems one must note that crystal types have high impedance ratings, magnetic types have low impedance ratings. In this regard, as with all audio input connections, the simplest rule-of-thumb is: in general, any high impedance device may be safely "hung" on a low impedance output; low impedance devices must be matched either directly to similar low

impedance outputs or, via suitable networks or transformers, to outputs of higher, but not too high, impedances.

Thus, high impedance phones may be connected to the outputs of most tuners, phono preamps or tape machine preamps, or even "bridged" across these outputs while they remain connected to and used with following power amplifiers. With low impedance phones, however, connections can be

MODEL	MFR. or DISTRIBUTOR	PRICE	TYPE & IMPEDANCE	CLAIMED RESPONSE	ACCESSORIES
AKG K-50	Electronic Applications, Inc. 194 Richmond Hill Ave. Stamford, Conn.	\$22.50	Dynamic, 400 ohms	30-20,000 cps	
Ampex 881	Ampex Audio 1020 Kifer Rd. Sunnyvale, Calif.	55.95	Dynamic, 16 ohms	Not stated	Adapter available
Beyer DT-48	Gotham Audio Sales Co., Inc. 2 West 44th St. New York 36, N.Y.	79.50	Dynamic, 5 ohms	20-15,000 cps	TR-48 matching transformer (\$14.50 each) for bridging 600-ohm line
S. G. Brown "Super-K"	British Industries Corp. 80 Shore Rd. Port Washington, N.Y.	28.95	Dynamic, 52 ohms	50-10,000 cps	Other models and impedances also available
Clevite-Brush BA-220	Clevite Electronics Components 3402 Perkins Ave. Cleveland 14, Ohio	29.35	Crystal, 100K	50-10,000 cps	Other models and impedances also available
Telex "Dyna-Twin"	Telex, Inc. 1633 Eustis St. St. Paul 1, Minn.	23.10 to 24	Dynamic, 6 ohms	30-15,000 cps	Price depends on type of plug furnished
General	General Phones Corp. 5711 Howe St. Pittsburgh 32, Pa.	30	Dynamic, 3.2-16 ohms	20-18,000 cps	Monophonic model, \$5.00 less
Jensen HS-1	Jensen Manufacturing Co. 6601 S. Laramie Ave. Chicago 38, Ill.	24.95	Dynamic, 8 ohms	20-15,000 cps	Includes jack panel
Knight KN-840	Allied Radio Corp. 100 N. Western Ave. Chicago 80, Ill.	22.95	Dynamic, 16-600 ohms	20-16,000 cps	High impedance matching transformer, \$5.95; remote control unit, \$5.95
Koss SP-3	Koss, Inc. 2227 North 31st St. Milwaukee 8, Wis.	24.45	Dynamic, 4 ohms	30-15,000 cps	Various adapter boxes for different connections; also headphone stereo amplifier
Lafayette F-618	Lafayette Radio 165-08 Liberty Ave. Jamaica 33, N.Y.	15.95	Dynamic, 4-8 ohms	30-15,000 cps	F-641 junction box
Monorch ES-300	Monarch Electronics Int'l, Inc. 7035 Laurel Canyon Blvd. N. Hollywood, Calif.	19.95	Dynamic, 8-16 ohms	25-15,000 cps	3-way switchbox included
Permoflux HDB 16/16	Permoflux Products Co. 4101 San Fernando Rd. Glendale 4, Calif.	40	Dynamic, 16 ohms	Not stated	Other models and impedances available, also various adapters
Sargent-Rayment "Binaphone"	Sargent-Rayment Co. 4926 East 12th St. Oakland 1, Calif.	24.50	Dynamic, impedance not stated	60-12,000 cps	"Binaphone" amplifier, \$34.50
Sharpe HF-15	Sharpe Instruments of Canada, Ltd. 6080 Yonge St. Willowdale, Ont., Canada	65	Dynamic, 6.4 ohms	20-15,000 cps	Adapter control unit available
Superex ST-M	Superex Electronics Corp. 4-6 Radford Place Yonkers, N.Y.	29.95	Dynamic woofer, ceramic tweeter; 8-16 ohms	20-20,000 cps	

made directly only to power amplifier outputs of the same impedance rating. By means of suitable matching transformers (available from most low impedance headphone manufacturers) the alternative connection to preamp outputs also is possible, and indeed is commonly utilized by many home recordists for monitoring purposes. But there are two catches here: one, that normally this connection must be switched off or unplugged to minimize the chance of signal attenuation and distortion when the preamps are used to drive main amplifiers; the other, that with most hookups of this type, the maximum playback level in the phones is reduced. For many monitoring or listening-for-pleasure purposes this last consideration presents no serious handicap; but for those who, like myself, prefer to listen at higher levels, it poses the problem that even when the preamp level controls are cranked wide open (which for considerations of both quality and flexibility is always best avoided), the aural output at one's ears is likely to lack the desired dynamic intensities.

My own feeling is that the ideal setup for serious headphone listening is to drive the phones with a low power—5 watts or less—amplifier of their own. (If for some reason all one's listening will be by headphones, simple disc-playing systems, embodying a miniature control amplifier and originally designed for library and school use, are now generally available.) Regular high-fidelity amplifiers, of course, normally have output connections that match low impedance phones. If you wish to go in for headphone listening, an added convenience would be a switch to change from speakers to headphones, and a desirable accessory—particularly with high-powered amplifiers—would be suitably rated heavy-duty L-pad matching attenuators. These simultaneously reduce the amplifier output to tolerable listening levels and protect the low-power-rated phones themselves from overload damage. It is advisable, however, not to employ these attenuators as constantly varied listening-level controls but to lock them at the safest maximum usable setting and then adjust the actual listening levels by the normal preamp volume control. Fortunately, suitable switching and attenuation boxes are available at relatively low cost, and they are recommended for purchase along with one's choice of phones—unless, of course, the lack of matched-channel amplifiers, lack of proper impedance-matching facilities, or the need for a completely or partially separate headphones-only system prohibits this method. Some headphones are furnished with a pair of resistors that attenuate the amplifier signal, but even these—used with a high-powered amplifier—might well be supplemented with additional attenuation unless the user makes a point of remembering to use the volume control on that amplifier with due caution.

The data included in the accompanying tabulation of widely available headphones can serve to guide the prospective user. Data notwithstanding, remember that headphones—like loudspeakers—are transducers. As such, they are bound to have unique

performance characteristics that must be judged individually and subjectively. Thus, you may find that the response of some headphones seems too "bright" unless you press the shells very tightly to the ears, or add rubber-pad fittings—if available—to provide closer coupling and consequent better-balanced bass response. On the other hand, some models—when closely and tightly fitted to the ears—may seem heavy even while they insulate one quite thoroughly from ambient noise or external sounds. Yet, with use, even these can become comfortable.

Aside from cost, very likely the decisive factor in choosing a set is the particular "coloring" it lends to its over-all response characteristics. Hence a selection is best based (as with loudspeaker and pickups) on comparative trials to determine one's aural preferences for varied program materials. Luckily, such pre-testing can be made anywhere, thanks to headphones' near independence of room acoustics. And one can rely on a manufacturer's or an informed salesman's recommendations about what auxiliary equipment (matching boxes, etc.) will best meet one's system-connection requirements.

Until quite recently an introduction to headphone listening might have stopped at this point. A warning that this mode of stereo reproduction will sound very different from that via loudspeakers would be superfluous, since the "difference" always has been not only immediately obvious but one of the primary dramatic attractions of the medium. The canard that headphone listening to stereo recorded with normal-spaced microphones gives a feeling that one's ears are stretched to ten or more feet apart thus could be dismissed by a headphones enthusiast. Lately, however, concern has arisen over another "unnaturalness."

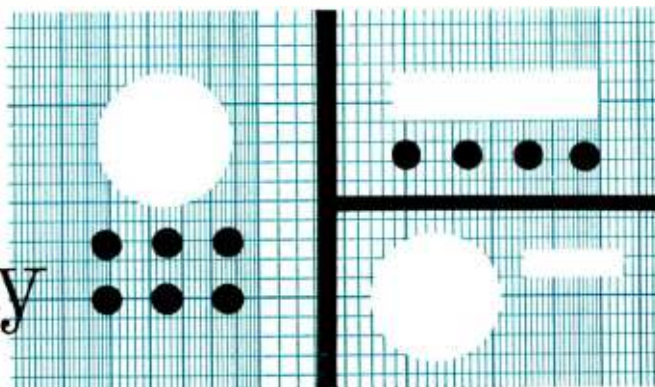
This new unnaturalness—the anomaly referred to earlier—stems from mixing the two (quite different) "stereo" and "binaural" media. True binaural recordings are made with two closely spaced microphones, usually mounted on and separated by a dummy head. Such recordings properly should be reproduced only by headphones. (Incidentally, many listeners feel that this earliest form of "dimensional" sound, which did much to spark the adoption of stereo, remains the ideal. Large-scale production of binaural recordings never has been considered feasible, however, although some are made for specialized purposes and tape recordists often experiment with them for their own pleasure.)

While stereophonic sound, on the other hand, *theoretically* demands infinite channels (of deployed microphones for recording and of speakers for playback), in practice three independent channels prove to be enough. And for the home, only two channels, with or without a "bridged" or "phantom" third in playback, provide the stereo sound we know best today, with carefully spaced speakers providing a stereo effect within the limits of the listening room's geometry and acoustics and without risking a "hole-in-the-middle." Thus, in normal room listening, one's left ear does not

continued on page 143

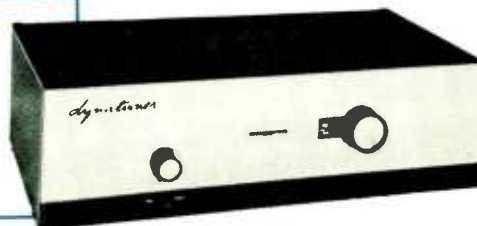
*The consumer's guide
to new and important
high-fidelity equipment*

high fidelity



EQUIPMENT REPORTS

**Dynaco
Dynatuner FM-1**



AT A GLANCE: Dynaco's first entry into the field of FM tuners, the Dynatuner FM-1, is characterized by United States Testing Co., Inc., as a remarkable work of engineering and design, even more so in view of its relatively low cost. It lacks many of the convenience features of costlier instruments and is simply though neatly styled. From the standpoint of quality and performance, however, it ranks easily with the best tuners available. Price: \$79.95, kit; \$119.95, factory-wired.

IN DETAIL: Tests of the Dynatuner bear out the impression of a very successful "no-frills" but high performance instrument. The tuner has a deceptively small and simple appearance, but its performance in all respects is quite excellent.

The antenna input to the tuner is provided with terminals for matching either a 300-ohm balanced line or a 75-ohm unbalanced line, thus permitting the set to be used with any standard antenna. The RF stage consists of a high-gain low-noise cathode-coupled tunable RF amplifier, using a type 6AQ5/ECC85 tube, which is a high conductance, high frequency type. The oscil-

lator-mixer circuit is built around a 6AT8A high conversion triode-pentode, the triode section of which is used in a "tickler feedback" tuned grid oscillator. The pentode section of the 6AT8A serves as the mixer. The oscillator is screen-coupled to the mixer to provide complete isolation of the oscillator tuning circuit from the signal tuning circuit at the mixer grid. Four IF amplifier stages with progressive limiting then are provided, using two 6BA6 variable-mu pentodes for the first and second IF's, and 6AU6 sharp cutoff pentodes for the third and fourth stages. When the input signal to any of these stages reaches a predetermined point, that stage acts as a limiter, making for lower phase and harmonic distortion and preventing overloading on strong signals.

The discriminator consists of a balanced-bridge configuration using matched semiconductor diodes.

The audio section employs a 12AX7 dual triode, the first section of which is used as a direct-coupled cathode follower between the high impedance discriminator and the low impedance de-emphasis network. This stage also feeds the volume control and the multiplex take-off point. The second half of the 12AX7 is wired as a feedback

REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and listening tests. Data for the reports, on equipment other than loudspeakers, is obtained by the United States Testing Company, Inc., of Hoboken, New Jersey, a completely independent organization which, since 1880, has been a leader in product evaluation. Speaker reports are based on controlled listening tests. Occasionally, a supplementary agency may be invited to contribute to the testing program. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. No report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher.

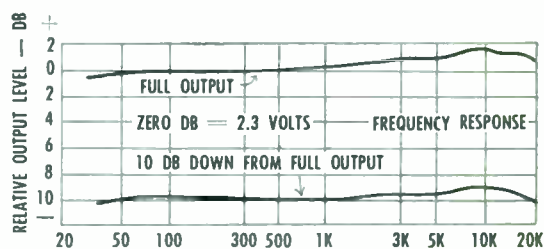
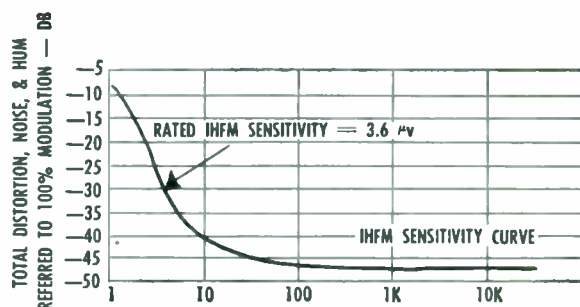
"plate follower" audio amplifier.

Tuning is accomplished by a smooth-working planetary drive system and is aided by the magnified station numerals and the set's tuning indicator, a 6FG6/EM84 "tuning eye" which is sensitive to weak signals but which cannot be overloaded by strong signals. The power supply uses a conventional full-wave "pi" rectifier with a 6V4/EZ80 rectifier tube.

In keeping with the design philosophy which holds that AFC can degrade the audio signal, the Dynatuner has no AFC. And indeed, none is needed in this tuner. Careful temperature stabilization and choice of operating parameters result in an oscillator circuit with sufficient stability to eliminate completely the need for AFC. And without it, the Dynatuner is completely drift-free, even during the first minute of operation. Space has been left on the chassis for the addition of a Dynaco multiplex adapter to convert the set to FM stereo, if desired at a future date. Alternately, the same space can accommodate a new Dynaco 10-watt basic amplifier to convert the tuner to a self-contained receiver, requiring only a speaker to be heard.

In listening and lab tests, the Dynatuner proved to be an outstanding performer, with measurements that generally confirmed or surpassed Dynaco's own specifications, and a quality of clear reception and clean sound which bore out these measurements. For instance, Dynaco claims 4 microvolts IHFM sensitivity; USTC measured 3.6 microvolts. This, by the way, was achieved on a kit-built model without the use of instruments or professional alignment techniques, but simply by following the instructions as they were spelled out in the accompanying manual. Similarly, IM distortion was measured as 0.14 per cent. Harmonic distortion at 40 cps was 0.36%, and at 1,000 cps was 0.5%. Capture ratio was found to be 5.7 db. IHFM selectivity (alternate channel method) was 52 db. Audio response was uniform within plus 1.6 db and minus 0.3 db from 30 cps to 20 kc at the full output level of 2.3 volts. Again, this is a higher output signal than is claimed by Dynaco. At lower output levels, audio response was even better, and on one sample, was measured from 10 cps to 40 kc, plus zero db, minus 0.5 db. Taking a variation of plus or minus 3 db, audio response went from 3 cps to 70 kc, with harmonic distortion only 0.25% at 40 cps; 0.16% at 1,000 cps. Signal-to-noise ratio was found to be 68 db. Frequency calibration of the Dynatuner's dial was excellent.

As with other kits from Dynaco, the present one makes use of printed circuit boards which speed the construction and assure the exact location of critical

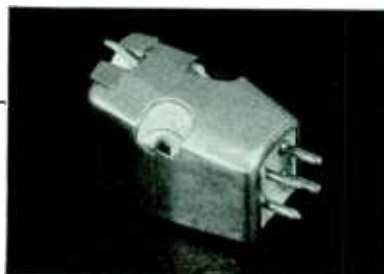


parts. The instruction manual was judged to be very clear and easy to follow. As an added feature, the manual describes various circuit functions, so that by the time the kit has been completed, the builder—if interested—can have gleaned a fair understanding of just how the tuner works.

A word on the sensitivity figure may be in order here. Admittedly, 3.6 microvolts is not the highest numerical sensitivity we have ever measured on an FM tuner. However, due to the set's extremely low distortion and very effective noise rejection with the weakest of signals, its effective *usable* sensitivity is comparable to that of sets having higher numerical sensitivity. The simple fact is that stations well over 300 miles away have been received on the Dynatuner—even as with costlier and higher-sensitivity-rated sets. While this fact may raise some questions regarding the ultimate significance of bald sensitivity ratings, or at least sensitivity figures that are unrelated to other performance criteria, it does indicate to us the outstanding performance ability of the Dynatuner's circuitry. This tuner, in a word, is an achievement of which Dynaco can well be proud and which should satisfy the requirements of the most critical FM listener.

Audio Dynamics

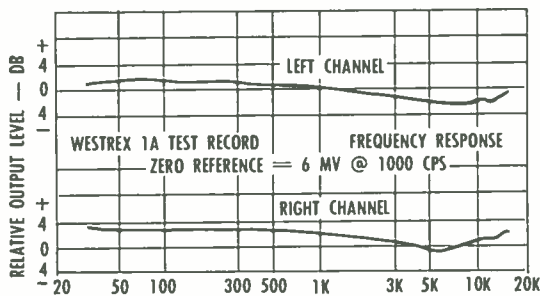
ADC-2 Stereo Cartridge



AT A GLANCE: The ADC-2 is a stereo cartridge generally similar to the ADC-1 (reported on in our June 1961 issue), except for a different stylus assembly, which enables it to be used at the higher tracking forces required with record changers as well as some separate tone arms. The test results and listening

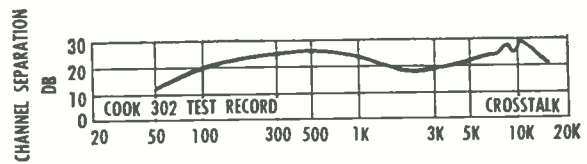
quality of the ADC-2 are very close to those of the costlier ADC-1—which is to say, remarkably clean and smooth, throughout the audio spectrum. As with the ADC-1, the stylus of the ADC-2 is readily replaceable by the user. Price, including .0007-inch diamond stylus, \$37.50. Replacement stylus, \$15.

IN DETAIL: The ADC-2 is a moving magnet stereo cartridge housed in a mu-metal shield, and suitable for mounting in tone arms which have the standard 1/2-in. or 7/16-in. mounting centers. It is, essentially, the same cartridge "body" used in the ADC-1, but fitted with a new stylus assembly which lowers the pickup's compliance (15×10^{-6} cm/dyne, as compared with 20×10^{-6} cm/dyne). This reduced compliance is intended to render the pickup suitable for use in high quality record changers, or at least those changers whose mechanism can be tripped when tracking at the recommended 2 to 4 grams. Apparently, this increased versatility has been achieved with virtually no sacrifice



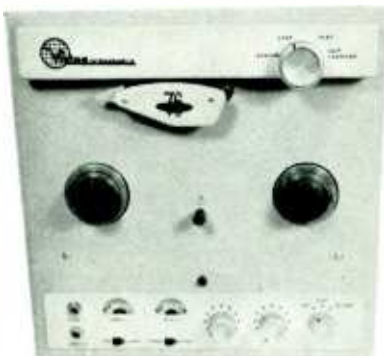
in performance or listening quality. United States Testing Company, Inc. characterizes the ADC-2 as a superb-sounding cartridge, which would complement the finest of high-fidelity systems.

An average of the recommended tracking force—3 grams—was used in USTC's tests, which were run with the Westrex 1A and the Cook 302 test records. At a peak recorded velocity of 5.0 cm/sec, the cartridge output per channel was measured as 6 millivolts. The ADC-2 is designed to operate into a load of 47k ohms per channel although, according to Audio Dynamics, this load is not critical. An increased load resistance, of course, will provide a slight increase in high frequency response.



As indicated by the measured curves, the response of our sample was found to be quite uniform from 30 cps to 15 kc within plus or minus 2 db. Both channels (despite the slight dip in the left channel) were essentially the same. Channel separation was better than 20 db over most of the audio range, and remained above 17 db from 70 cps to above 15 kc, thus providing very adequate stereo service. No hum pickup could be detected, and needle talk was as low as encountered with other high quality cartridges. With both channels combined, the ADC-2 performed as admirably on mono records as it did on stereo discs.

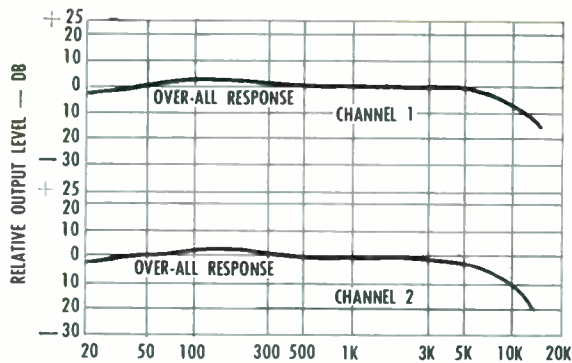
It may be worthwhile to point out that the chief distinguishing physical feature between the ADC-1 and the ADC-2 is the more compliant stylus assembly used in the former. When used in a top quality arm, set to track at the lower forces possible in such an installation, the ADC-1 should produce somewhat less record groove wear, although the difference might well be unmeasurable. Even so, the 2 to 4 grams tracking force required of the ADC-2 is a low enough figure for average use, comparing favorably with most high quality pickups. Aside from this point, there is actually very little difference between the two pickups. Some listeners claim to hear a slight difference in the degree of "transparency" in the very high frequency region, with the ADC-1—as might be expected—somewhat superior. This point, however, remains purely subjective and not susceptible to proof or disproof by lab tests. One thing does seem apparent, and that is, simply, that the ADC-2 is one of the cleanest-sounding cartridges presently available, and one that appears capable of delivering the complete performance impressed on a record.



Viking 76 Compact Tape Recorder

AT A GLANCE: The Viking 76 Compact is a dual-speed ($7\frac{1}{2}$ and $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips) four-track stereo tape recorder, designed to record and play monophonic as well as stereo quarter-track tapes. The unit is intended for playback through existing music systems, although all the recording electronics are supplied, built onto the compact, lightweight deck. Price: \$199.50.

IN DETAIL: The transport used in the Viking 76 is basically the same as used in the former Viking 75, which was quite popular for several years. To this mechanism, Viking has added a stereo recording pre-amplifier with twin inputs, VU level meters, and controls. The entire unit is little more than 1 foot square and weighs 20 pounds. It is suitable for installation in



Record/Playback Characteristics 3.75 ips

a number of ways.

Operation is fairly simple. Speed changing is accomplished by a push-pull knob on the deck, and tape motion (rewind, stop, play, and fast forward) is controlled by a single rotary knob. The "76" is equipped with two magnetic heads. One serves as a quarter-track record/playback head; the other, the quarter-track erase head. In the "stop" and "rewind" modes, tape lifters remove the tape from contact with the heads.

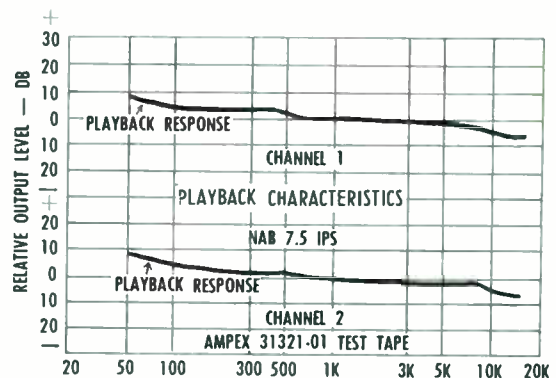
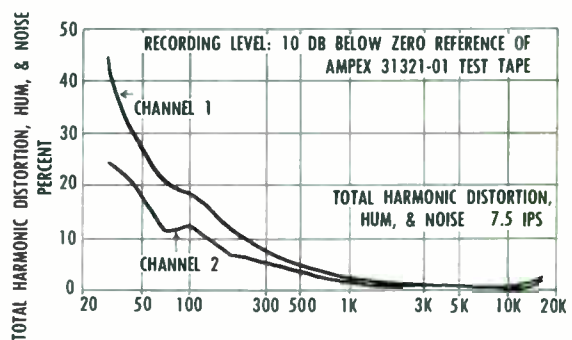
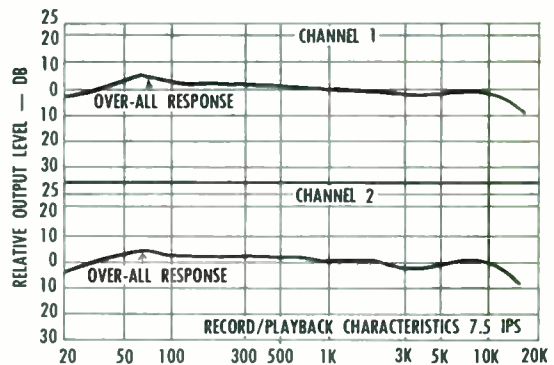
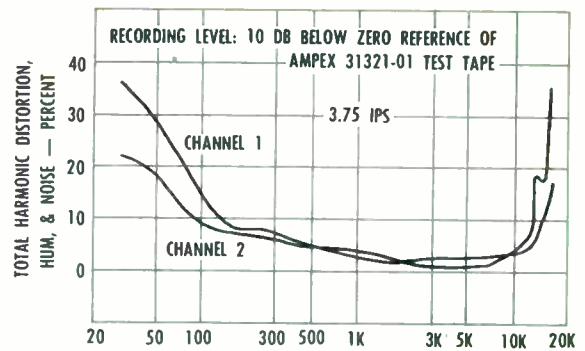
The transport is powered by a single induction motor, with rubber belts to transfer the power to the supply and take-up reels, and the capstan. The model tested at United States Testing Co., Inc. was found to be fairly quiet in operation. Speed accuracy at $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips was within 1.3%. Wow and flutter, at $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips, measured only 0.07% rms. At the slow speed, this increased to 0.22% rms. In the rewind mode, a 1,200-foot reel took 1 minute and 20 seconds to be rewound. In the "fast forward" mode, the same reel took $5\frac{1}{4}$ minutes to be transferred from the supply reel to the take-up reel, which is comparatively slow.

The recording amplifier of the "76" uses four stages of amplification per channel, each stage containing one-half of a dual triode tube, type 12AX7. A monitor output and the VU meter are connected between the third and fourth stages, just before the recording equalization. An 80-kc bias oscillator is built around a 12AU7 dual triode. The first two stages of each channel are heated by filtered DC voltage.

The input sensitivity of the recorder (for a zero VU recording level) was 1 millivolt at the microphone input, and 90 millivolts at the high-level input.

In the playback mode, no amplification is provided by the "76" which, therefore, must be connected to an external amplifier which itself has a tape-head input. For best results, the connecting cable should not be longer than 5 feet—and the shorter, the better. On our recorder, the playback head output on one channel was measured as 0.85 millivolts at 1 kc and zero VU recording level; on the other channel, output was 1.5 millivolts. This represents a difference of about 5 db, which could be readily adjusted by the balance control, or individual channel level controls, on the external playback amplifier.

Playback frequency response compared fairly, but not too closely, with the NAB standard equalization for $7\frac{1}{2}$ -ips speed. Both channels were up about 8 db at 50 cps, and down about 3 db at 10 kc, and 5 db at 15 kc. The record/playback frequency response at $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips, using a signal recorded at minus 10 VU, was

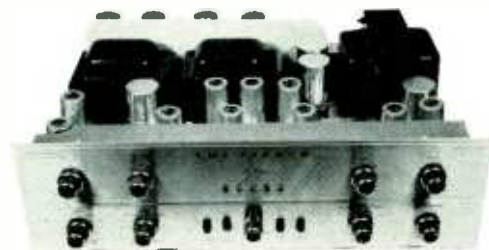


better, being reasonably flat from 20 cps to 13 kc within plus or minus 3 db. And at the slower speed (3¾ ips), as might be expected, the high frequency response was somewhat poorer, being down 3 to 5 db at 7,000 cps.

The recorder's signal-to-noise ratio was fair, being in the region of 38 to 39 db, referred to a 1-kc signal recorded at minus 10 VU. When playing back tapes

recorded on one machine, some low frequency noise could be heard, which probably originated in the motor. This was not noticeable on another sample.

All things considered, the Viking 76—while admittedly not intended for the most critical applications—is nevertheless worth considering for a budget installation in which the advantages of a compact, low cost, easy-to-use tape system are desired.



**Fisher X-1000 Stereo
Master Control Amplifier**

AT A GLANCE: The Fisher X-1000 is the highest-powered and most elaborate in a new line of Fisher integrated stereo control amplifiers. It provides a multitude of operating features and controls (for stereo and mono) as well as two power output channels of 55 watts each, with an optional "center channel" output without the need for an additional power amplifier. The unit is very well built and, despite its many facilities and high power, is relatively compact and handsomely designed. In tests conducted at United States Testing Company, Inc., it met its specifications in all important respects and, in fact, proved to be an outstanding performer in its class. Dimensions are 16 15/16 in. wide by 5 13/16 in. high by 13¾ in. deep (exclusive of knobs). Weight is 44 pounds. Price: \$329.50. Cabinet extra.

IN DETAIL: The X-1000 has 8 pairs of inputs for microphone, tape head (with equalization for either 3¾-ips or 7½-ips tape speed), magnetic phono (two inputs, one of which is equalized for RIAA and the other for either RIAA or Columbia), tuner, tape monitor, and two separate auxiliary inputs, one pair of which has individual channel level controls located on the rear panel.

After passing through the input selector, low level input signals are fed to a twin triode (type ECC83/12AX7) for initial preamplification and equalization. These signals then are fed, as are high level input signals, to the function selector. Provisions are made for normal stereo, reverse stereo, left input to left amplifier alone, right input to right amplifier alone, both inputs to both amplifiers monophonically, or either input to both amplifiers.

A second ECC83/12AX7 is used for the next stage, which furnishes the tape monitor inputs, recorder outputs and inputs, and outputs for the Fisher "Spacepander" reverberation unit. Also associated with this stage are a center channel (monophonic) recorder output, low frequency cutoff filter, and phase reversal

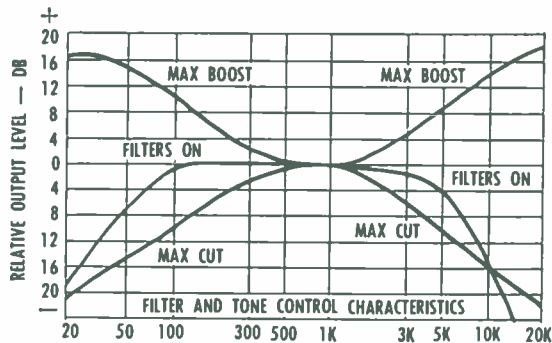
switch. Bass, treble, volume, balance, and variable channel separation controls, as well as high frequency cutoff filters come next, with each amplifier using a 7247 twin triode, half an ECC83/12AX7, an EF86/6267 pentode, half of an ECC82/12AU7, and two EL34/6CA7 pentodes in push-pull outputs. Output impedances of each channel are either 4, 8, or 16 ohms, and provision for connecting a "center channel" speaker directly to the amplifier is provided, as well as a center channel high impedance output jack and a low impedance stereo earphone jack.

Tests indicate that the Fisher X-1000 would make an excellent choice for an all-in-one stereophonic amplifier and preamplifier. Each channel will deliver approximately 55 watts of clean signal at 1,000 cps with a total harmonic distortion of only 0.5%. At half power, or 3 db down from maximum power output, the total harmonic distortion is less than 1% from 50 cps to well above 20 kc.

At full rated power output (55 watts per channel), the frequency response of the amplifier was measured as flat within 2 db from 24 cps to 20 kc. Response at half-power level was essentially the same.

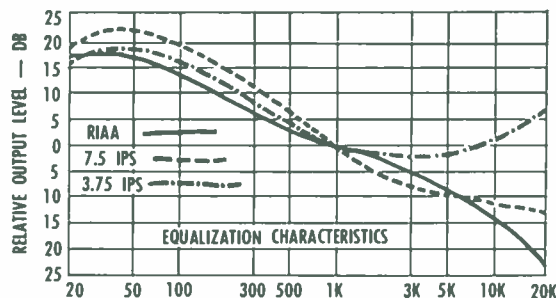
All frequency response measurements were made with the tone controls in the *mechanically* flat position, as indicated by the dot or arrow on the control knob. However, manufacturers rate their amplifiers and preamplifiers with the tone controls in the *electrically* flat condition, but since most owners of high-fidelity equipment do not have the facilities to check accurately the frequency response of their amplifiers, USTC operates the amplifiers as the consumer would. Slight variations between mechanically centered and electrically flat are normal in most amplifiers, and many users eventually find the exact control setting that suits their listening needs. In any case, the high frequency response of the X-1000 could be greatly improved by setting the treble control at "1 o'clock," and a slight improvement also could be made in the low frequency response with a small amount of bass boost.

The bass control provides a maximum of 14.4 db of bass boost and cut at 50 cps, and the treble control provides up to 15 db of treble boost and cut at 10 kc. The low frequency rumble filter operates at a slope of 10 db/octave below 80 cps and the scratch filter operates at the rate of 16 db/octave above 5 kc. These



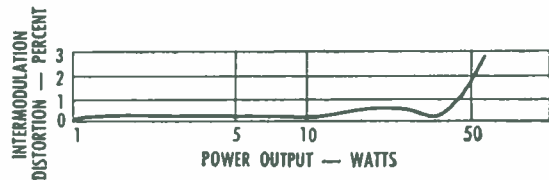
are desirable filter characteristics since they permit the filter to suppress most of the noise with virtually no loss of musical quality.

The equalization provided for RIAA recordings and NAB tapes (7½ ips) is very good, being quite close



to professional standards for those media. Similarly, the equalization for 3¾-ips tape resembles the EIA standard for that speed.

The intermodulation distortion was extremely low, less than 0.2% up to 10 watts, less than 0.5% up to 40 watts, and 2.9% at full power.



The channel separation of the X-1000 was better than 56 db at 1 kc, and was down to 38 db at 10 kc, which is more than adequate for all stereo program sources. Channel balance, once adjusted, remained excellent at all volume levels, with a measured variation in balance from full power to minimum power of only 0.6 db.

The amplifier's signal-to-noise ratio, measured at maximum gain, was 78 db on the high level inputs, 52 db on the RIAA phono input, and 48 db on the tape head inputs. The amplifier sensitivity (for 55 watts output at 1 kc) was measured at 170 millivolts at the high level inputs, 2.2 millivolts at the RIAA inputs, 0.85 millivolts for microphone, and 1.25 and 1.4 millivolts for tape head inputs, 3¾ and 7½ ips



respectively. A speaker-damping factor of 10 was measured at both the 8- and 16-ohm speaker taps. The amplifier, incidentally, appears to be quite stable and should encounter no difficulties in driving electrostatic speakers. With its clean sound, operating versatility, and fine workmanship and appearance, the Fisher X-1000, in sum, would make a very suitable foundation block for those people who are just getting into stereo or high fidelity, as well as for many others who are considering up-dating their system.



NEXT MONTH'S REPORTS

Miracord Studio H Automatic Turntable

Astatic 45D Cartridge

Knight KN-400B Transistor Amplifier

reviewed by

PAUL AFFELDER
NATHAN BRODER
O. B. BRUMMELL
R. D. DARRELL
ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN
HARRIS GOLDSMITH
JOHN F. INDCOX
ROBERT C. MARSH
CONRAD L. OSBORNE
JOHN S. WILSON

Records in Review



by Conrad L. Osborne

Elektra—A Strong Cast

And Direction on Sanity's Side

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN a source of vexation to Straussians that, when Sir Thomas Beecham assembled a carefully picked *Elektra* cast for the recording microphones shortly after the War, he commenced the performance with Elektra's Digging Scene, thus omitting approximately half the opera. The result is one of the great Strauss recordings, re-pressed by RCA Victor for its I.C.T. series but no longer available; still, it seems a pity that a good Clytemnestra (say Hoengen or Klose) could not have been added to the fine line-up of Erna Schlueter (*Elektra*), Ljuba Welitsch (*Chrysothemis*), Paul Schoeffler (*Orestes*), and Walter Widdop (*Aegisthus*) for what would surely have been a most memorable complete recording.

In other respects, I suppose it is just as well that *Elektra* has had to wait until 1961 for its first complete recording, for the technical perfection of the stereo edi-

tion lays the structure of the work before us in a unique and exciting way. It is really impossible to study *Elektra* in the opera house, for no representative performance of it will allow you a firm enough grip on yourself for sober evaluation. Yet it is worth study, being, among other things, a brilliant piece of musical and dramatic architectonics. This is where the work of Dr. Karl Böhm comes in. Most conductors rather allow themselves to be devoured by *Elektra*. They are so impressed by its feverishness, its high emotional pitch, that they tend to let the climaxes conduct them, rather than vice versa. The result is too often jerky and hilly. This goes hand in hand with what seems to me a faulty view of the drama—namely, that the events described are in some way “unnatural.” The terms commonly applied to the two sisters are symptomatic: Elektra is generally called “abnormal”

or “neurotic,” while Chrysothemis is somehow “normal,” apparently because she wants children. I can see no sense in these adjectives. Under the circumstances, which attitude is more “normal”—that of Elektra, who broods revenge, or that of her sister, who is doing her best not to think about it all? I hate to use the old argument that begins “How would *you* feel if it happened to *you*?”—but I'm bound to say that if my mother were to take a lover, and that the two of them were to carve up my father some evening in the bathtub, I wouldn't be disposed to take it lightly, and that, were I a woman, I might think twice about bringing up the kiddies, too.

In fact, it seems to me that one of the most obvious aspects of the entire story of the house of Atreus is the utter naturalness with which its characters react to each other and to events. Given Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia,

Clytemnestra's subsequent behavior is not really very strange; and given the murder of Agamemnon, the behavior of Elektra and Orestes is not really so unusual, any more than is the half-successful suppression of Chrysothemis. A day-to-day check of the six-o'clock news will confirm that this sort of thing happens with boring regularity.

Whether all this is apropos of the work of Karl Böhm or not, I cannot say, but it is certainly true that he (like Beecham) comes down on the side of sanity. The listener gets a fine sense of one event leading inevitably to another, of a ritual of human action/reaction, inexorable and terrifying. Withall, his reading never lacks passion or exultation—all these things were written in by Strauss, and Böhm is giving us Strauss with the most painstaking care. An admirable achievement, aided not little by the superb clarity of DGG's engineering.

The cast is strong. Inge Borkh's excellent Elektra will be familiar to Metropolitan operagoers. Her voice is in good shape here—firm, clear, and well focused—and her characterization displays both feeling and intelligence. Jean Madeira's Clytemnestra is well known on the Continent, and I am inclined to think that it is the best thing I have heard her do; she projects the words well, and the unevenness of her production can be turned into an advantage here. Ideally, of course, one would wish for a voice whose natural timbre (I do not refer now to artificially weighted low tones) is a bit darker. The voice of Marianne Schech sounds somewhat thin in some of this music, but when Strauss gives her a typical high, arching line, her soprano blooms out beautifully; she too is a conscientious and thoughtful interpreter. Fischer-Dieskau intones his opening lines magnificently, laying them out on a series of flat planes in just the right manner; his voice hasn't sufficient weight for the Recognition Scene or the duet, however. Fritz Uhl does very well by the small role of Aegisthus. The five maids are powerfully cast and the other bit parts nicely handled.

This splendid production is augmented by an eye-catching booklet; no text was included with the review set, but I understand it will be available with the retail albums. One should check on this before buying.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Elektra*

Inge Borkh (s), Elektra; Marianne Schech (s), Chrysothemis; Ilona Steingruber (s), The Overseer; Renate Reinecke (s), The Confidante; Jean Madeira (ms), Clytemnestra; Cvetka Ahlin, Margarete Sjöstedt, Sieglinde Wagner, Judith Hellwig, Gerda Scheyrer, The Maids; Fritz Uhl (t), Aegisthus; Gerhard Unger (t), A Young Servant; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), Orestes; Fred Teschler (bs), Orestes' Companion; Siegfried Vogel (bs), An Old Servant. Chorus and Orchestra of the Dresden Staatsoper, Karl Böhm, cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 8690/91. Two LP. \$11.96.

•• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138690/91. Two SD. \$13.96.



Inspecting an antique instrument.

THE STORY of that April night in 1749 when Handel's *Royal Fireworks Music* had its first performance is given a vivid retelling in the notes R. D. Darrell has written for this album. The festive crowd gathering in London's Green Park to celebrate the signing of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the cannons booming, the fireworks blazing while Handel's suite was being played, and the final catastrophe when flying sparks caused a fire that sent the crowds fleeing headlong in terror—the whole extraordinary scene is re-created for us.

Then we get down to the business at hand. It has been Vox's aim to reproduce the original performance as faithfully as possible—without the artillery and conflagrations, of course. It will be remembered that Handel had gathered together for this occasion a wind band of remarkable size and constitution. Vox scoured the field for actual eighteenth-century trumpets and hunting horns. The brass players—recruited from a number of ranking American orchestras—then had to put in long hours acclimating themselves to the unfamiliar ancestors of their normal instruments. The company even turned up a military serpent, and insisted that oboe and bassoon players use the thicker, stiffer reeds that are thought to have been employed in baroque times.

The sleeve bears a "warning," urging listeners to hear a demonstration band on the B side before playing the Handel. On this band the differences in sound between modern instruments and their prototypes are demonstrated and certain shortcomings in the old brass instruments, owing to the absence of pistons and valves, which were not introduced until the nineteenth-century, are explained (the notes provide more detailed discussion). The listener is given notice that some of the strange sounds he will hear result from these deficiencies in the natural horns and trumpets.

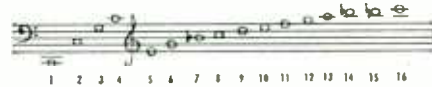
Well, how does the music sound? In some portions, where the brasses are required to play only those open tones that are definitely on pitch, it sounds wonderfully rich. (Incidentally, the old-

The Royal Fireworks, With Authenticity the Aim

by Nathan Broder

style reeds do not seem to make a drastic difference; some modern oboe players get just as round and warm a tone out of their instruments, it seems to me, as do the oboists here.) But whenever the brasses have to play tones that do not conform to the pitches established in our equal-tempered system, the results are excruciatingly sour.

Vox claims this has to be so. To clarify the discussion, we reproduce the table of open tones available on the natural horn and trumpet, assuming the fundamental to be C:



Nos. 11 and 13 are "off," by more than half a tempered semitone (so are Nos. 7 and 14, though by slightly less than a quarter-tone). Now, in the second half of the eighteenth-century there was widespread use of a technique whereby a horn player, by inserting his hand into the bell of his instrument, could modify the pitch of an open tone by as much as a semitone or more. But in Handel's time, it is said, this technique had not yet been discovered, and it was "wholly impossible for a hornist in particular to 'lip' these [off-pitch] tones into tempered-scale 'tune.'"

Maybe so, but we doubt it. A more practical musician than Handel never lived, and it is impossible to believe that he would have written both F (No. 11) and F sharp in exposed passages for horns and trumpets knowing that his players could only play something in between those pitches, whichever he wrote. Nor is this an isolated instance. The horn parts of Vivaldi (in P. 359, for example) call for not only F and F sharp but also E (No. 10) flat and C (No. 8) sharp. In the first *Brandenburg*, Bach demands B (No. 7) natural and flat, E (No. 10) natural and flat, F (No. 11) natural and sharp. Is it reasonable to suppose that composers of such enormous skill and experience would have called for, not once but many times, tones impossible to obtain

on the instrument? It is far more likely that it is our knowledge, not Handel's craftsmanship, that is defective, and that good players' could somehow inflect the open tones by "liping," or that the technique of hand-stopping is older than is generally supposed. "It is by no means impossible," writes R. Morley-Pegge in *The French Horn* (listed in the useful "Recommended Supplementary Reading"

which forms a part of Mr. Darrell's notes), "nor even improbable, that certain trumpet players . . . put their fingers in the bell of the instrument in order to improve the intonation of the 11th, 13th, and 14th harmonics."

Give Vox due credit for effort, and an A for the charming pieces by Robert Woodcock, a little-known contemporary of Handel's.

HANDEL: *Music for the Royal Fireworks*

†Woodcock: *Concertos: for Sopranino Recorder and Orchestra, in C; for Oboe and Orchestra, in E minor*

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Conductor George Szell.

Beethoven's Concertos: Pyrotechnics Abjured

by Robert C. Marsh



Pianist Leon Fleisher.

BEETHOVEN'S CAREER as a concert pianist lasted thirty years, from his debut as an eight-year-old *Wunderkind* in Bonn until December 1808, when deafness made further efforts at ensemble playing impractical. The Viennese public actually heard him once more, in 1814, when he took part in a performance of his *Archduke* trio. He was provided with a wretched piano, and his virtuoso technique had vanished. Yet the most grotesque and tragic aspect of the event was that Beethoven played in a private world of silence, unable to hear either his own instrument or the strings who struggled vainly to stay with him.

The piano concertos are a monument to Beethoven's years as a performing artist of supreme achievement. "Beethoven's playing is extremely brilliant . . . it is most extraordinary with what lightness and yet firmness . . . Beethoven not only varies a theme . . . but really develops it." So wrote an anonymous commentator in 1799, when the twenty-nine-year-old composer was reaching the peak of his skill at the keyboard. We must think of Beethoven's piano concertos as vehicles for his personal use, written to exploit his talents as a pianist. Concerto performances were a part of his life from adolescence, and he began as early as the age of fourteen to keep himself supplied with suitable compositions for this purpose. (His first two works in the form lie outside the canonical five, since Beethoven felt them unsuited to the establishment of his reputation in Vienna.) Once he had written a concerto, he was in no hurry to publish it. Those we know as One

and Two waited five or six years before going into print in 1801, and Beethoven remarked candidly on the event that "I am for the present keeping the better ones for myself until I make a tour." The Third was not issued until the Fourth had been planned.

Beethoven's attitude towards this aspect of his production is best seen in the termination of the series with the E flat concerto of 1809. It is in no sense a late work, its neighbors being the *Pastoral* Symphony and the incidental music to *Egmont*. But it was the first of the concertos which Beethoven was himself unable to present to the public. Publication followed hard upon the premiere, and in this period Beethoven also made available his own cadenzas for the first four concertos, thus transferring to the pianists of his own day, and the future, the total substance of his own performances. The perpetuation of this music was now in other hands.

In recent years it has become clear that Beethoven's legacy is as carefully preserved and effectively revealed by young North American pianists as those of his native Germany or adopted Austria. Nothing could lead more emphatically to that conclusion than the recordings considered here. They contain distinguished Beethoven playing such as an earlier generation would expect to come only from a celebrated pianist of Central European lineage.

If we grant that Beethoven intended these concertos to show off his own pianistic skills, then it must follow that Fleisher's playing has many characteristics in common with Beethoven's own. Hearing what he does with the incredibly

long runs that are a characteristic Beethovenian device, one may sincerely wonder if anyone could make any more of them than he does. The lightness and brilliance the composer was said to exhibit can surely be found as dominant elements here, and so too the firmness of tone required to project this music in its greatest strength. Yet the quality which on rehearing proves most impressive of all is Fleisher's grasp of the function of developmental passages. Contemplating these works in score, one can easily see that there is not an unnecessary note in them, but rarely does one hear a performance which does not make one or another passage seem to be mere stuffing. Through the possibilities made available by tape editing, Fleisher and Szell appear always at the crest of their energy, always tightly focused upon the thematic line, always able to bring us the most concentrated and effective statement of the material. The result is quite astonishing. The freshness, vitality, and imagination conveyed by these performances greatly exceed one's normal expectations from recorded music.

Gould's account of the Fourth Concerto, which comes as the latest chapter in his edition of the scores with Leonard Bernstein, is just as splendidly recorded as the Epic sets and profits from the higher level made possible by the relatively short sides. Yet, compared with Fleisher's reading, the whole concept of the work has changed. It is expansive, even at the cost of seeming dilatory, and flexible, even at the cost of seeming willful. Gould's interest appears to be not in the brilliance of the

music but in projecting how he feels about it, how intensely it stimulates his emotions.

We would not be far wrong to take these contrasting Fourths as defining the valid interpretative boundaries of the score. To go much further in the direction Gould leads us is to lose Beethoven in bathos. To tighten up on Fleisher gives us the insensitive finger-exercise type of performance we have heard too many times in the past. Personally, I am completely in accord with Fleisher, whose splendid 1959 recording of No. 4 (included now with No. 2 on LC 3789 and BC 1137) is the only reprint in the set—the other four works being the product of sessions held early this year.

The excellence of Fleisher's playing and the skill with which the Cleveland players build around it are fully evident in the early concertos. With so many things done so well it is difficult to single any particular matter for praise, but certainly the Turkish passages, so

often made ludicrous, are here achieved with the exact balance of accent, humor, and zest. And on a different level, one cannot but be moved by Szell's beautiful slow accompaniment to the middle movement of No. 3.

From the standpoint of practical discographic considerations, however, the triumph of the series must be the *Emperor*. This is the first stereo edition of that popular score to rival in all significant respects the best of its monophonic predecessors. Often hope has been kindled and been dampened, as in the recent version by another North American, Van Cliburn, which lacks the secure stylistic focus and exemplary sound of the Fleisher-Szell collaboration. The trouble with the *Emperor* (like the Seventh Symphony) is that it has been used too often to bowl over the yokelry; we have almost become inured to performances in which it is deliberately coarsened to impress the tin-eared. But here, as in the earlier works, the effect is always brilliantly musical—and bril-

liant precisely because it *is* musical. To hear sensitively inflected playing where pounding and blasting "will do" is to have returned to us the masterpiece that Beethoven wrote.

BEETHOVEN: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in C, Op. 15; No. 2, in B flat, Op. 19; No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37; No. 4, in G, Op. 58; No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73* ("Emperor")

Leon Fleisher, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

• EPIC LC 3788/91. Four LP. \$4.98 each.

• • EPIC BC 1136/39. Four SD. \$5.98 each.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto No. 4, in G, Op. 58*

Glenn Gould, piano; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 5662. LP. \$4.98.

• • COLUMBIA MS 6262. SD. \$5.98.

CLASSICAL

BACH: *Cantatas: No. 32, Liebster Jesu, mein Verlangen; No. 57, Selig ist der Mann*

Agnes Giebel, soprano; Bruno Müller, bass; Stuttgart Chorus and Orchestra, Rolf Reinhardt, cond.

• LYRICHORD LL 98. LP. \$4.98.

This is a reissue of a disc originally brought out here by Vox and then cut out of the catalogue. The restoration of No. 57 to the list of available cantatas would have been more welcome if the performance in question were less stodgy and the recording better. Scherchen's version of No. 32, on Westminster, seems to me superior to the present one on several counts. N.B.

BACH: *Cantatas: No. 32, Liebster Jesu; No. 79, Gott der Herr*

Bazia Retchitzka (in No. 32), Ingeborg Reichelt (in No. 79), sopranos; Annelotte Sieber-Ludwig (in No. 79), contralto; Dieter Wolf (in No. 32), Jakob Stämpfli (in No. 79), basses; Laubach Choir; Chamber Orchestra of the Sarre, Karl Ristenpart, cond.

• • MUSIC GUILD S 5. SD. \$4.87 to members; \$6.50 to nonmembers.

Miss Retchitzka sings pleasantly and Wolf steadies down a bit after a wavering start, but both singers are too far from the microphone for proper balance with the instruments. Since No. 32 is a "dialogue" for soprano and bass, the lack of presence in both voices here is serious. For this reason, and even more because of a generally more imaginative approach, the Scherchen performance on Westminster seems to me to be pref-

erable. In No. 79, with its outstanding opening chorus and lovely duet, Miss Sieber-Ludwig sings her aria with uncertain intonation, but the other soloists are competent and the chorus firm-toned and well balanced. This side, too, would

have benefited by more presence. Printed German texts are provided, but no English translations. N.B.

BACH: *Cantatas: No. 82, Ich habe genug; No. 159, Wir geben hinan!*

Annelotte Sieber-Ludwig, contralto; Jakob Stämpfli, bass; Laubach Choir; Chamber Orchestra of the Sarre, Karl Ristenpart, cond.

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Stämpfli has a smooth bass of warm and appealing quality. In No. 82, a solo cantata made notable by two very beautiful arias, he has powerful competition from Fischer-Dieskau (on Archive) and the late Mack Harrell (on RCA Victor). But in No. 159 he has the field to himself, so far as the domestic catalogue is concerned. Outstanding here are an aria in which the alto spins a florid line about the great chorale usually called *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden*, sung in separate lines by the unison sopranos, and a deeply moving bass aria with an extremely expressive oboe obbligato. Stämpfli sings this affectingly. The alto sounds rather thin and pale, but part of this impression may be due to the fact that both soloists (and Stämpfli in No. 82) are a little too far back for proper projection and balance with the orchestra. Otherwise, the sound is good. N.B.

BACH: *Sonata for Violin and Clavier, in E, S. 1016*

†**Handel: *Sonata for Violin and Continuo, No. 4***

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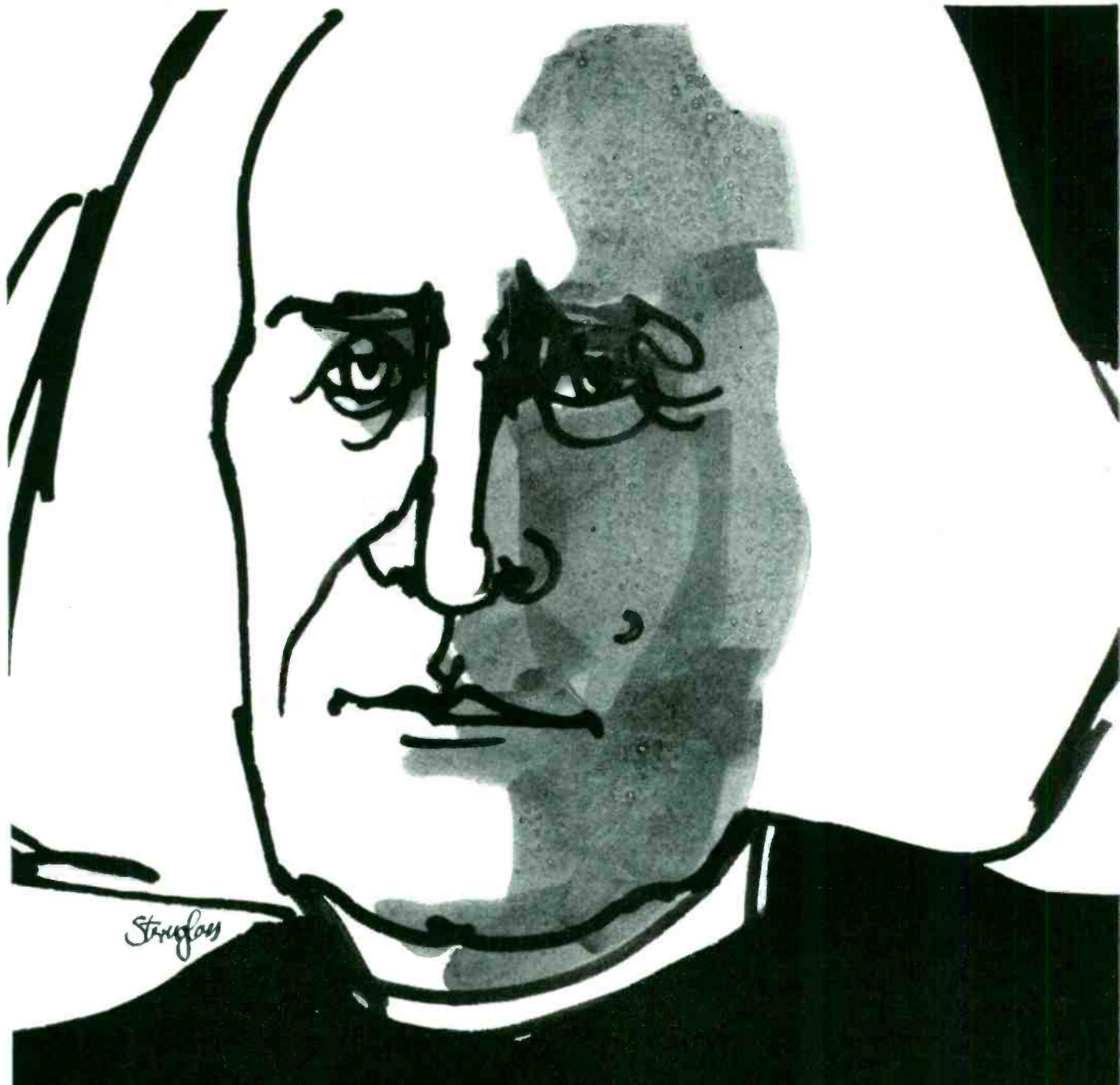
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tone is attractive and neither too fat nor too thin, the intonation is accurate, and one has the feeling that there is technique to spare. There are moments in the slow movements of the Handel when Klimov seems on the verge of using too much vibrato, but as a rule he draws a fine line, with enough nuance to keep it constantly alive. This is fine, clean fiddling, and makes one eager to hear what Klimov can do in other types of music. Good sound. N.B.

BARLOW: *Night Song*—See Loefler: *Deux rhapsodies*.

BEETHOVEN: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in C, Op. 15; No. 2, in B flat, Op. 19; No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37; No. 4, in G, Op. 58; No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor")*

Leon Fleisher, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

- EPIC LC 3788/91. Four LP. \$4.98 each.
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BEETHOVEN: *Concerto No. 4, in G, Op. 58*

Glenn Gould, piano; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5662. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6262. SD. \$5.98.

For a feature review of these recordings, see page 77.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 61*

Zino Francescatti, violin; Columbia Sym-

phony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5663. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6263. SD. \$5.98.

This is Walter's third recording of Beethoven's violin concerto. (Joseph Szigeti was his collaborator in the first two.) Both the previous sets held a dominant position in the catalogue as long as they were sonically competitive, and this stereo version is worthy to repeat their success. Francescatti (whose statement of this music with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra was a monument of the early long-play lists) was equally deserving of a return engagement in this score. The present conductor and violinist make a good combination.

The common failing of concerto performances is that the soloist dominates the over-all conception, which is too often planned to display him at an advantage rather than to present a balanced exposition of the totality of the work. That Bruno Walter will stand for no such nonsense in Beethoven is obvious, and Francescatti is not the man to ask for it in any case.

The greatest asset of this performance, it seems to me, is that it is in every respect symphonic in character. There is nothing prefatory and tentative about the gradual unfolding of themes from the mysterious opening drumbeats. The music flows in the richness of life, pausing to greet the arrival of the solo violin, but then marching bravely on with the noblest and most profound exchanges taking place between the participants. To receive such a performance from Walter in his eighty-fifth year is a miraculous gift to all of us. As for Francescatti, quite apart from projecting his musical authority, he achieves remarkable clarity of line and accuracy in pitch. If compared with Stern's playing in the only really competitive stereo edition, Francescatti makes Stern sound as if he were crying in his beer. (Stern really isn't, of course. It's just that he cannot outpoint a man to whom the purest classicism is second nature.)

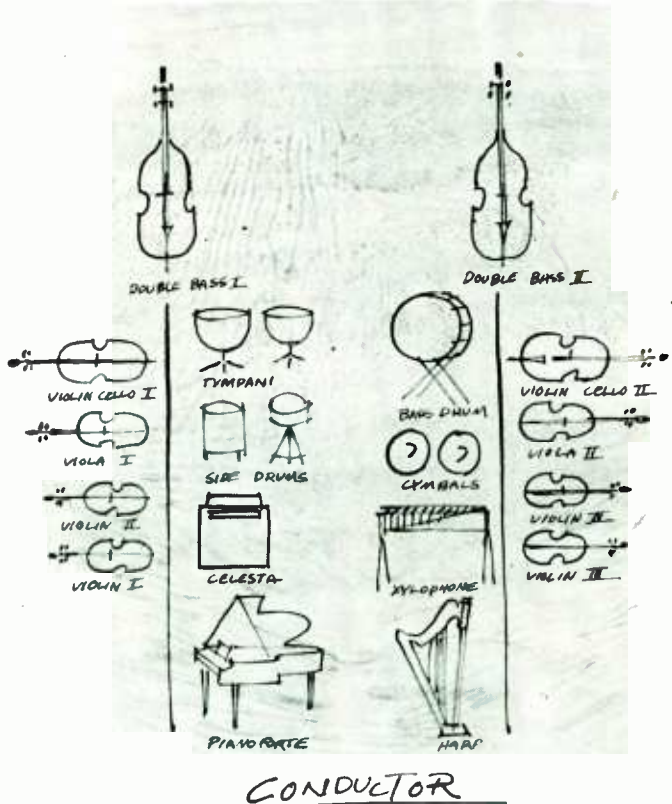
The recorded sound is robust and pleasing, but some may want to adjust the treble controls to achieve a less biting string tone. R.C.M.

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

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5666. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6266. SD. \$5.98.

The Ormandy *Eroica* provides interesting contrast to the recent predominance of dry, lightly inflected performances of the score. For Ormandy this symphony of 1803 looks ahead to the century to follow rather than back to the one that has closed. A broadly effluent delivery is thus appropriate, and before the work is over we are given some passing glimpses of the Venusberg. For those who enjoy Beethoven in the dress of later days, the performance will appear sumptuous and satisfying. The first movement (complete with its repeat) is most successful of the four, although the Funeral March is nothing less than notable for the quality of its ensemble playing. What is lacking is the clarity of contour, the sure propulsive thrust, the intensity of drama one finds in the greatest



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Berlin Philharmonic. The conductor is Herbert von Karajan. The result is dazzling. And the brilliant sound is pure and natural.

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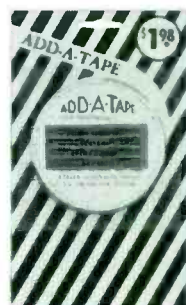
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realizations of this music. One is always fearful that melting, voluptuous elements will intrude where it is absurd for them to appear, and in the finale one's fears are realized.

The engineering provides a big, somewhat "soft" sound with balances tilted towards the strings. It fits the Ormandy style better than it does the Beethoven orchestration. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.

- ANGEL 35945. LP. \$4.98.
- • ANGEL S 35945. SD. \$5.98.

The older Klemperer performance, Angel 35330, is quite a bit better than this one, although not so well recorded. (Its sound, however, is distinctly up to high-fidelity standards and generally agreeable.) The remake is rather like one of those university press books in which every sentence has been so carefully edited for the right balance of words that there is no longer any sense of movement in the language; every time your eye passes a period it enters into a new semantic design. Thus there are phrases here which, taken individually, are marvels of tonal sculpture. What is missing is the sense of thrust that can bind a series of statements into a whole.

(Once more Klemperer keeps the strings

pizzicato to the end of the slow movement. It sounds strange. The contrast provided by bowing the final notes is a necessary one. R.C.M.

BERLIOZ: *Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5648. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6248. SD. \$5.98.

In the early days of LP, my favorite recording of the *Symphonie fantastique* was Ormandy's. Now he replaces it with this thoroughly up-to-date version. Since those early days, there have been many *Fantastiques* to challenge his, but this new one—vigorous, colorful, free of mannerisms, and magnificently played—belongs with the top group. Conductor and orchestra reach the highest level of artistry in their sensitive yet dramatic presentation of the slow movement, highlighted by some exquisite woodwind solos. (Unfortunately, the mood is broken by splitting this movement between the two disc sides, a drawback avoided by only two or three recorded editions.) Only the final movement seems to lack the fire and excitement it should have.

The Columbia engineers have done a superb job of making this performance come alive on discs. The directionality of the stereo version adds to the dramatic effect, again especially in the third movement. P.A.

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

Geza Anda, piano; Berlin Philharmonic, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18683. LP. \$5.98.
- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138683. SD. \$6.98.

Although Anda and Fricsay unite here to deliver a carefully prepared performance, it seems to lack an over-all unity of conception. The opening movement suffers particularly in this respect: one is conscious of many beautiful details, but Fricsay pauses here, Anda there—and the music sounds like a string of Slavonic dances rather than a traditional sonata-allegro essay. The other sections of the work suffer less from the elasticity of tempo and waywardness of interpretation, but even in those parts I would have preferred a tauter, less self-conscious approach.

Deutsche Grammophon's engineering provides clean, lightweight sonics. The dual-channel version puts the acoustic frame farther back and emphasizes the brass; the monophonic recording is more traditionally Brahmsian since it provides a more blended sound, with the string tone prevailing. H.G.

BRAHMS: *Double Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 102*

Jascha Heifetz, violin; Gregor Piatigorsky, cello; Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.

- RCA VICTOR LD 2513. LP. \$5.98.
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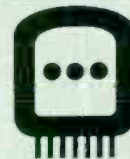
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for the conscientious reviewer! Only a few months ago, Columbia released an exquisite recording of the Double Concerto by Francescatti, Fournier, and Bruno Walter. Now, along comes another magnificent recorded performance. The earlier one was somewhat more relaxed, with the accent on lyricism. Here, there is as much lyricism, but the tempos are a trifle brisker, the accents more incisive. Francescatti and Fournier were in ultrafine form; but then there's only one Heifetz, whose playing is as flawless as ever and whose tone retains its unmistakable silken quality. Piatigorsky, who has made so many recordings with Heifetz, is a perfect collaborator, thoroughly understanding the chamber

music requirements of this work and offering an interpretation with its own individual strength. Wallenstein and the anonymous orchestra provide an admirably integrated background, and the engineers have produced a natural-sounding recording, with the two soloists fairly close, just to left and right of center, as they were on the Columbia disc.

Choice between the two versions is really impossible. Columbia charges a dollar less and includes Walter's unsurpassed reading of the *Tragic Overture*. RCA's edition is one of that company's specially designed de luxe Soria albums. I, for one, would feel unhappy if I had to part with either disc. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Serenade No. 1, in D, Op. 11*

Symphony of the Air, Leopold Stokowski, cond.

- DECCA DL 10031. LP. \$4.98.
- DECCA DL 710031. SD. \$5.98.

For some inexplicable reason, two of Brahms's most delightful orchestral creations, the early Serenades in D and A, are very seldom played, either in concert or on records. At the present time, the catalogue lists only Decca's old recording of the Serenade in D by Thomas Scherman and a newer but inferior one of the Serenade in A by Carlo Zecchi. We owe Stokowski a big vote of thanks, therefore, for bringing the D major Serenade so vividly to life in one of the most refined, sensitive, and musicianly readings he has produced in years. The accent here is definitely on Brahms, not on Stokowski, and the conductor has the Symphony of the Air playing with superb polish. One wonders, however, why he took the trouble to repeat the long exposition of the first movement, yet omitted the repeats in the brief Scherzo.

Decca's sound is not always as pure as it might be. There is more spaciousness in the stereo edition, but there is little directionalism here: and on the first side most of the sound seems to emanate from the left and center, with a slight fuzziness in the highs. These, however, are minor flaws in a beautiful, long overdue, and most welcome release. P.A.

CHOPIN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 2, in B flat minor, Op. 35; No. 3, in B minor, Op. 58*

Artur Schnabel, piano.

- RCA VICTOR LD 2554. LP. \$5.98.
- RCA VICTOR LDS 2554. SD. \$6.98.

This disc gives us Rubinstein's first recorded performance of the great B minor Sonata as well as the long-needed replacement for his old (and not highly satisfactory) edition of the Op. 35. Both of these renditions belong at the summit of this performer's work for the phonograph.

Rubinstein's art has here entered a new phase: although the superb brio of his playing remains, as well as its youthful vitality (just listen to the jauntness imparted to the Scherzo of the B minor!), the prevailingly majestic tone of these interpretations tells us that this is no longer a young man's reading. The almost Parisian nonchalance has now disappeared from Rubinstein's playing, and in its place one finds a deeper, more subjective, innately Slavic form of expression. Both sonatas are here given a breadth and width of scope that are the unmistakable products of ripened mastery.

The B minor Sonata is resplendently interpreted throughout. I have never heard (nor can I imagine hearing) a firmer, more luscious-sounding first movement than the one on the present disc, and the finale goes with grand effect. Perhaps the Largo is a shade more sublime and inward in the old Lipatti edition, but Rubinstein does wonders here in subduing his basically extroverted musical personality.

That personality comes to the fore in the dramatic B flat minor, and I found myself occasionally taking issue with certain details. For example, some of the retards in the first movement struck me as excessive, there is some arbitrary



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rubato in the trio of the scherzo, and the pace for the *Marche funèbre* is extremely measured. As a whole, however, Rubinstein's new version of this Sonata must rank as a great performance. The pianist's technique is superb throughout both works, and the piano tone is simply wonderful.

The de luxe Soria packaging includes an elaborate booklet with articles on the music by Rubinstein and Abram Chasins, as well as numerous photographs and illustrations. H.G.

DEBUSSY: *Berceuse héroïque; D'un cahier d'esquisses; Estampes; Images (Books I and II)*

Daniel Ericourt, piano.

- KAPP KCI 9061. I.P. \$4.98.
- • KAPP KC 9061S. SD. \$5.98.

Ericourt has many interesting things to say about this music; he has tone, technique, and temperamental affinity. Most important of all, he shows admirable discretion in displaying his powers.

The music on this second volume of Kapp's projected complete piano music of Debussy is all of a different nature than the earlier-issued Preludes—an album which, after several months, I find wears extremely well—and Ericourt is much more romantic in his treatment of the present material and considerably more dramatic. The pianist stresses the rhythmic elements—one could almost say the *Ibèrian* elements—and he allows his *cantabile* greater rubato leeway. *Mouvement* has here a vividly persistent gyrating energy which contrasts beautifully with the slower pieces in the *Images* set. Ericourt's interpretation of *Soirée dans Granade* is novel in that it stresses lyricism and rhythmic freedom rather than rigidly emphatic accent. Sophisticated pedaling combined with undulating accelerations of tempo produces a torrid, hurricanelike *Jardins sous la pluie* (and, incidentally, offers interesting comparison to Werner Haas's rendition of the same piece, in which the rain issues forth with water-sprinkler evenness). But for all its originality, Ericourt's artistry never seems eccentric. His superb authority and conviction is manifest throughout.

Kapp has furnished superior engineering, and the disc makes one eager for the next release in the series. H.G.

DELIBES: *Coppélia: Selections. Sylvia: Selections*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Robert Irving, cond.

- CAPITOL G 7245. I.P. \$4.98.
- • CAPITOL SG 7245. SD. \$5.98.

Again we are given the only too familiar ballet twins, but this time with several distinctively fresh features. The selections aren't confined exclusively to the usual suites; those from Act I of *Coppélia* include the *Thème slave varié* and *La Prière* from the *Divertissement* No. 20, as well as the more expected *Prélude*, *Mazurka*, *Valse lente*, *Ballade de Lépi*, and *Csardas*; those from Acts I and III of *Sylvia* include the *Andante* No. 16b, as well as the usual *Chasseresses*, *Intermezzo*, *Valse lente*, *Pizzicati*, and *Cortège de Bacchus*. The prominent violin parts in the *Ballade* and *Andante* are played in richly romantic fashion by no less a soloist than Menuhin. Irving leads the golden-toned

Philharmonia Orchestra with exceptional balletic grace, expressiveness, and verve. And, perhaps most persuasively of all, the warmly expansive, auditorium-authentic recorded sonics are both an aural delight and exhilaration—restoring much of the pristine appeal which these engaging pieces must have had for their very first hearers. R.D.D.

ENESCO: *Sonata for Piano, No. 3, in D, Op. 24*—See Mozart: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 21, in C, K. 467*.

FALLA: *El Sombrero de tres picos. La Vida breve: Interlude and Dance*

Teresa Berganza, soprano (in *El Sombrero*); Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

- LONDON CM 9292. I.P. \$4.98.
- • LONDON CS 6224. SD. \$5.98.

Just how far sound recording and reproduction have progressed in less than a decade hardly can be more vividly demonstrated than by playing in rapid succession the opening bars of *The Three-Cornered Hat*, first in the lavishly praised 1952 I.P. then in the same company's present stereo edition, with the same conductor and orchestra. Throughout, Ansermet plays the score more lustily than ever before and with a keener sense of its mordant humor; the Swiss orchestra now spices its invariable virtuosity with a more spontaneous exuberance; and Berganza's brief solos capture far better than Suzanne Danco's the provocative gypsy sultriness of the Miller's wife. Furthermore, the present recording gives the sonics an entirely new palpability, as well as added dimensionality, and in the climactic later outbursts they achieve breathtaking dramatic power, size, and above all "presence." Despite considerable reverberance, the more sharply focused miking here provides a less natural concert hall illusion than in Ansermet's recent *Scheherazade*, but it endows the work itself with an immediacy, impact, and gusto ordinarily attainable only in the theatre.

Current stereo disc processing still seems unable to eliminate every suggestion of background rumble or hum, but that is a minor handicap in such generally high level music. On the other hand the new practicability of more efficient space utilization permits the inclusion of an encore in the form of a proudly vibrant—yet after the strenuous ballet relatively relaxing—Interlude and Danza No. 1 from *La Vida breve*. R.D.D.

FAURE: *Quartet for Piano and Strings, No. 1, in C minor, Op. 15*
+ Schumann: *Quartet for Piano and Strings, in E flat, Op. 47*

Leonard Pennario, piano; Eudice Shapiro, violin; Sanford Schonbach, viola; Victor Gottlieb, cello.

- CAPITOL P 8558. I.P. \$4.98.
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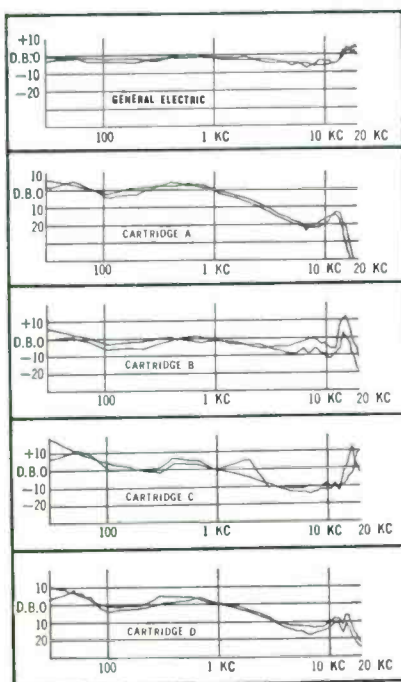


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CIRCLE 53 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

By Conrad L. Osborne



PUCCINI

IF ORDERED ACQUISITION of recorded repertoire is our goal, the operas of Puccini can quickly be divided into three categories. In the first category are the basic repertory items—the operas that will be performed in a major house in the course of nine seasons out of ten and which possess an almost universal appeal. These are, of course, *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly*. *Bohème*, in fact, appears to be replacing *Faust* as the most popular of all operas: folk who cannot abide the lyric stage in general express a fondness for it, and many record collectors whose shelves are burdened chiefly with jukebox fodder own at least a highlights version. The recorded editions of the opera reflect the entire range of approaches to it, from the velocity of Toscanini to the deliberation of Beecham. Fortunately, one of the very best (my personal first choice, as it happens) is available in stereo (London OS 25201). It has superb direction by Serafin; a splendid cast headed by Tebaldi, D'Angelo, Bergonzi, Bastianini, and Siepi; and matchless sound by the engineers. More stereo versions are in the offing, but no one will go wrong with the London.

Despite the castigations of Joseph Kerman and a schedule of performances that long ago passed the aesthetic saturation point, *Tosca* seems to have lost none of its hold on operagoers or record buyers. Unfortunately, neither of the stereo presentations (RCA Victor LSC 6052 or London OSA 1210) constitutes a satisfactory performance. The Victor features a below-form Milanov, and though there is plenty of good vocalizing from Bjoerling and Warren, neither artist is really in his best element. The London performance is heavy-handed and obvious in both its singing and conducting, and only some fine moments from Tebaldi (also in below-par condition) provide partial compensation. With the choice bound to widen soon (Angel has announced a version with Cavalli, Corelli, and Gobbi), I would counsel a prospective buyer to exercise patience, meanwhile latching onto a copy of the old Angel monophonic performance (3508 B/L) with Callas, Di Stefano, and Gobbi, under Victor de Sabata. As to *Butterfly*, there is no problem at all—simply march out and purchase a copy of the Capitol album (SGCR 7232) with its fine sound, its sensitive, if leisurely, direction by Gabriele Santini, and above all its stunning singing by De los Angeles, Bjoerling, Sereni, and a competent supporting cast.

With these three staples in hand one can afford to proceed slowly into the second category of Puccini's operas—the full-length works recognized as major artistic achievements but not greeted with wholehearted welcome by the general public. These are, in my own order of descending merit, *Manon Lescaut*, *Turandot*, and *La Fanciulla del West*. All three are operas of more than ordinary interest, but few collectors will care to have all three unless funds are virtually unlimited.

I fear that in the case of *Manon Lescaut*, the stereo collector is up against it, for the only extant stereo version (London OSA 1317) is, on balance, inferior to the Victor and Angel monophonic sets. This is a pity, for *Manon*, which was Puccini's first public success, remains one of his most intense and original creations, and there

is not even a highlights version available in stereo to give us at least the great arias ("*Tra voi belle*"; *Donna non vidi mai*"; "*In quelle trine morbide*"; "*Guardate, pazzo son*"; and the overpowering final scene) in some semblance of continuity. The London performance does, however, offer some effulgent singing by Tebaldi, and for her admirers this will be enough. For others, and those not content with monophonic sound, perhaps the wisest thing is simply to move on to Puccini's last opera, *Turandot*. RCA Victor's set (LSC 6149) is certainly the choice here, for Nilsson, Tebaldi, Bjoerling, and Tozzi, under Leinsdorf, are in nearly every way superior to Borkh, Tebaldi, Del Monaco, and Zaccaria, under Erede, for London. RCA's sound is not flawless, but it conveys a good deal more sense of a stage performance than London's (OSA 1308), which was an early stereo effort. Those intrigued by the composer's sentimental Western, *La Fanciulla del West*, have two interesting versions to choose between: London's (OSA 1306) and Angel's (S 3593 C/L). My own choice would be London, largely because I think that Tebaldi's Minnie is superior to Nilsson's, both as vocalism and as vocal acting; it is surely more idiomatic. Del Monaco is also at the top of his form, and the sound is splendid. Angel's version, though, is not at all a poor one, and Andrea Mongelli makes a much more menacing and believable a figure of Sheriff Jack Rance than his opposite number on London, the rich-voiced Cornell MacNeil. London has released a single-record highlights version, taken from the complete set, which contains most of the really fine passages from this, Puccini's weakest full-length opera.

This brings us to consideration of the three one-acters designed for performance as a tryptich in a single evening: the melodramatic *Il Tabarro*, the bathetic *Suor Angelica*, and Puccini's only comedy, *Gianni Schicchi*. This last, a delightful work, is the only one of the three to have been recorded in stereo; happily, the production (Capitol SGAR 7179) is a very fine one, well engineered and featuring sterling work from Gobbi and De los Angeles in leading roles. It is contained on a single disc, and should be welcome in any Puccini library.

Collections of arias can, of course, be used to fill some of the gaps in the opera repertoire. Since nearly all of Puccini's memorable music was written for either soprano or tenor, one can be sure of owning practically all the great arias by purchasing just two records. For the tenor selections, there is Richard Tucker's all-Puccini recital for Columbia (MS 6094), solidly sung and well recorded. For the soprano arias two all-Puccini discs are available: Eileen Farrell's (Columbia MS 6150) or Virginia Zeani's (London OS 25139). Miss Farrell is the greater vocalist, though not at her best on this record; Miss Zeani is the more idiomatic interpreter. (Unhappily, Licia Albanese, perhaps the most inimitable interpreter of the composer's soprano roles over the past two decades, has not recorded so much as a single aria in stereo, though her fine monophonic Puccini recital is still available on RCA Victor LM 2033.) Renata Tebaldi, Anna Moffo, and Leontyne Price also devote substantial portions of successful stereo recitals to Puccini selections, and the singing of all three can be recommended highly.

all but one of the previous editions of the Fauré and all but two of the Schumann.) The reason for the success of the Fauré work is very simple: it is constructed in an easily accessible format, is full of high spirits, and abounds with lovely, long-spun melodies. The Schumann, on the other hand, has been unfairly maligned—it is, to my mind, a rather more substantial creation than the composer's hackneyed quintet in the same key.

This disc, I believe, marks Pennario's first recorded excursion into the realm of chamber music, and he handles the assignment with real distinction. Some of the pianist's solo recordings, for all their brilliant technique and impeccably

schooling musicianship, have, nevertheless, been somewhat overreserved and lacking in temperament; here, his solid dependability is just the thing needed to bind these pieces together. Moreover, Pennario's infallible sense of give-and-take prevents him from overpowering the more delicate string sonorities. The ardent impetuosity of the other players complements his approach, and he seems to be relishing the collaboration from beginning to end.

The Schumann performance is a complete triumph, and it very neatly eclipses the somewhat overripe Festival Quartet edition for RCA Victor and the wiry, brusque, Demus-Barylli for Westminster. The Fauré is a bit inert at the outset,

but thereafter improves substantially. The scherzo has delectable whimsy, while the fourth movement goes with fine swagger. In this work, however, the present group does not quite equal the superbly dynamic New York Quartet reading on Columbia.

The stereo has elegance and spread, but intimacy is maintained at all times. I hope that Capitol will give us further recordings from this fine ensemble. H.G.

FRANCK: Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A—See Mozart: Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 33, in E flat, K. 481.

GLAZUNOV: The Seasons, Op. 67

Concert Arts Orchestra, Robert Irving, cond.

- CAPITOL P 8551. LP. \$4.98.
- • CAPITOL SP 8551. SD. \$5.98.

It's been so many years since I've heard the complete Glazunov score (first recorded in the 78-rpm era by the composer himself) that I'm rather shocked to find how old-fashioned and synthetic it now seems—except perhaps for the hard-driving *Bacchanale*, sweeping *Waltz of the Cornflowers and Poppies*, and the dainty *Snow Waltz*—when heard apart from a stage spectacle. Yet Irving (who earlier recorded portions of this music in Ashton's *Birthday Offering* ballet for Angel) again demonstrates his undiminished personal relish for it and a defter than ever skill in making the most of its *ancien-régime* elegancies. Except for considerable surface noise in my copies of both editions, the brightly colored performance is given crystalline recording, but the vibrant stereo version conveys the theatrical expansiveness of the work far better than the seemingly thicker and darker LP. Even the latter, however, effectively supersedes the antiquated monophonic version by Desormière which has been retained up until now in the Capitol catalogue, while the stereo surely matches—and probably surpasses in graciousness and warmth—the only other existing SD edition of the complete score, that by Albert Wolff for London. R.D.D.

GOUNOD: Faust: Ballet Music—See Offenbach: Gaité Parisienne.

HALEVY: La Juive

Frances Yeend (s), Rachel; Alberta Hopkins (s), Princess Eudoxie; Miklos Gafni (t), Eléazar; Nico Feldman (t), Prince Leopold; Henri Renaud (b), Ruggiero; William Wilderman (bs), Cardinal Brogni; Charles Ruiz (bs), Herald. Chorus: Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Erasmo Ghiglia, cond.

- DA VINCI DRC 100/02. Three LP. \$15.
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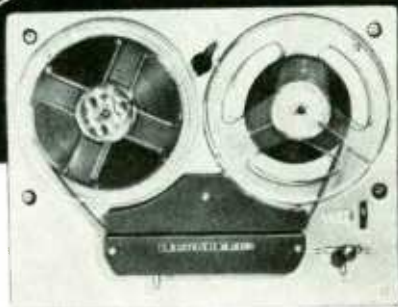
Jacques Halévy's *La Juive*, once one of the Metropolitan's most consistent attractions, has not been done at that house since the season of 1935-36. For the past twenty years, it has been as dead as the operas of Meyerbeer or Spontini. The Chicago Lyric announced plans a few years ago to revive it for Richard Tucker, but the idea has been shelved.

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filled with processions, ceremonies, and opportunities for elaborate scenic display. Scribe's libretto—though certainly set with passionate sincerity by Halévy—is grandiose and melodramatic. The conflict is between Eléazar, a Jewish goldsmith, and Cardinal Brogni. As background, it is necessary to know that some years previous to the opening of the story, Brogni had instituted a program which led to the deaths of Eléazar's two sons; shortly thereafter, Brogni's own home burned, carrying away his wife and (presumably) his daughter. In the first act, Brogni saves Eléazar and his daughter Rachel from a mob, the Jews' offense having been to ignore a celebration in honor of the Prince Leopold, and to

practice trade on a Sunday. Despite Brogni's clemency, Eléazar refuses the Cardinal's offer of friendship. In Act II, we meet Prince Leopold disguised as a commoner named Samuel, not in order to appear poor (the usual tenor motive), but in order to appear Jewish. Leopold is, in fact, attracted by Rachel, and reasons that she cannot allow herself to love a Christian. Rachel's suspicions are aroused when Leopold disperses a crowd that threatens the Jews, but she nevertheless invites him to celebrate the Passover in Eléazar's home. The Passover celebration is interrupted by the arrival of Princess Eudoxie, who, as it happens, is betrothed to Leopold, and is after a precious stone that is in Eléazar's posses-

sion, which she wishes to present to Leopold. She and Eléazar bargain over the stone, Leopold/Samuel hides, and Rachel grows more suspicious. After singing an aria, Rachel confronts Leopold and demands clarification; he confesses that he is a Christian. They vow to flee together, and even manage to win Eléazar's consent to marriage. For Leopold, though, this takes the affair a step too far, and he rushes away. In the third act, Eléazar and Rachel come to the imperial palace, where a royal banquet is in progress, to deliver the jewel, which Eudoxie gives to Leopold. But Rachel publicly denounces Leopold as her clandestine lover. An ensemble follows, at the end of which Brogni excommunicates Leopold and condemns him to death, along with Eléazar and Rachel.

At the beginning of Act IV, Eudoxie visits Rachel in the court of justice and pleads with her to take sole responsibility for the affair with Leopold. At length, Rachel consents. Brogni offers clemency to Eléazar and Rachel if they will adopt Christianity, but they refuse. Eléazar then reveals to Brogni the fact that the Cardinal's daughter did not perish in the fire, but was saved by a passing Jew; but despite Brogni's brokenhearted supplications, Eléazar refuses to disclose her whereabouts. After the Cardinal's departure, Eléazar sings his great aria, "*Rachel, quand du Seigneur*," wherein he expresses the irony of the fate that forces him to sacrifice his foster-daughter. Act V takes place in a public square, where the mob is looking forward to seeing the offenders boiled in oil. Eléazar, learning that Rachel's false testimony has saved Leopold, asks her to save herself by renouncing her religion, and even tells her that she is not Jewish by birth, but a Christian. She again refuses, and leaps into the cauldron. Eléazar triumphantly tells Brogni that Rachel was his own daughter, and goes to his death as the opera ends.

Whether all of this would prove attractive to a contemporary audience, I cannot say—though I suppose that if we will accept *Gioconda*, we will accept anything. It is certainly difficult to imagine a stylized or "modernized" production of any sort—*La Juive* would just about have to be presented in full panoply. Musically, it is an attractive and powerful work. There are several standout arias that will be familiar to collectors—Brogni's "*Si la rigueur*," and Malediction, Rachel's "*Il va venir*," and Eléazar's "*Rachel, quand du Seigneur*." In addition, several ensembles—chiefly at the ends of acts—are quite exciting, notably the duet for Leopold and Rachel and the ensuing trio with Eléazar (Act II), the sextet and chorus at the end of Act III, and the confrontation between Eudoxie and Rachel. Nearly the whole score is constructed with a sharp eye to dramatic effect, and the orchestration has a certain richness, though it is clumsy and uneven. Some of the cuts made in this version seem unfortunate, at least from a dramatic standpoint. An important scene between Rachel and Leopold is omitted, and the final tableau is truncated to a ludicrous point: even if the omitted music is not of the highest quality, it would provide a continuity that is absent here.

Regrettably, the Da Vinci recording can do no more than suggest the opera's potential effect. Three of the leading singers achieve a level of marked competence—Frances Yeend, William Wilderman, and a young coloratura named Alberta Hopkins. Of them, however, only

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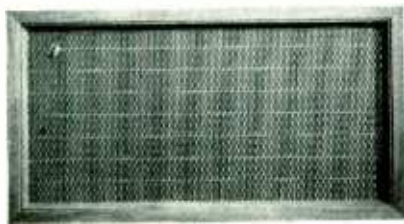
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EMIL GILELS, piano

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SCHUMANN: Sonata No. 1; PROKOFIEV: Sonata No. 2	ALP 163
TCHAIKOVSKY: Concerto No. 1	MK 1532
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Wilderman has the stature required by the demands of the score, and his singing here is too monochrome to bring the role of the Cardinal to real life. The voice of Miklos Gafni has suffered grievously since he was last heard on records (in an operatic recital which disclosed a pleasing, flowing tenor with a bit of trouble at the top). He forces and drives his instrument mercilessly, and renders nearly everything in obvious imitation of Martinelli, who coached him in this role and, one suspects, has given him some vocal instruction as well. His French is execrable, as is that of several other cast members. The orchestra and chorus are sloppy and frequently inaudible—in fact, when Wilderman launches into a richly sung "Si la rigueur," the harp accompaniment simply disappears. It sounds very much as if tapes made in two different places (Florence and New York, to judge by the credits) have been dubbed together to avoid the expense of transferring the entire cast to Florence—understandable, but artistically indefensible. The sound is, otherwise, cramped and dull.

Da Vinci's ambitious plans for recording Meyerbeer operas are laudable, but better musical and technical solutions must be found if the series is to be of any service. The present set can be recommended only to those who are willing to overlook poor performance and recording in the interest of discovering, at least in outline, an intriguing grand opera.

HANDEL: *Music for the Royal Fireworks*

†Woodcock: *Concertos for Soprano Recorder and Orchestra, in C: for Oboe and Orchestra, in E minor*

Telemann Society Orchestra and Band, Richard Schulze, cond.

- Vox DL 750. L.P. \$4.98.
- • Vox STDL 500750. SD. \$4.98.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 76.

HANDEL: *Sonata for Violin and Continuo, No. 4*—See Bach: *Sonata for Violin and Clavier, in E, S. 1016.*

ISAAC: *Four Pieces*

†Obrecht: *Missa Fortuna desperata*

New York Pro Musica Motet Choir and Wind Ensemble, Noah Greenberg, cond.

- DECCA DL 9413. L.P. \$4.98.
- • DECCA DL 79413. SD. \$5.98.

Heinrich Isaac, who died in 1517, spent some years in the service of Lorenzo de' Medici. One of the four pieces included here is the Flemish composer's lament on the death of his great patron, *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam?* It is one of his finest works, a beautiful and deeply felt threnody. In complete contrast is the rowdy carnival song, *Donna di dentro*: here the Boys' Choir from the Church of the Transfiguration in New York joins the Pro Musica forces in belting out the music with much gusto. The other two Isaac works are instrumental: a lively setting of a Flemish song, *In meinem Sinn*, and a piece named after its basic theme, *La mi la sol*, which undergoes interesting transformations.

The Mass by the Dutchman Jacob Obrecht (1452—1505) is based on a

chanson-tune popular at the time, which appears in one guise or another in various sections of the Mass. The penetrating performance brings out the lovely quality of much of this music. There is rhythmic verve in appropriate sections—the Hosanna, for example, where a remarkable effect of celebration is achieved. Throughout the Mass, Mr. Greenberg deploys his forces so as to introduce variety and contrast; instruments are used sparingly and with discretion. Except for a moment or two in some of the three-part sections (Christe, Benedictus), where a low voice is uncertain in pitch, the performance is first-rate, as is the recording in both versions. N.B.

JANEQUIN: *Choral Works*

Montreal Bach Choir Society, George Little, cond.

- Vox DL 710. L.P. \$4.98.
- • Vox STDL 500710. SD. \$4.98.

According to the notes, this is the first commercial recording by the Montreal Bach Choir Society, a group of thirty singers organized in 1951. The Society is to be congratulated on the fine showing it makes here, as well as on its adventurousness in choice of repertoire for its debut on discs. It presents eighteen *chansons* by Clément Janequin, who was born about 1490 and died in the 1560s. These include the celebrated *Chant des oiseaux* and *La Guerre* and some others that have been recorded before, but also a fair number of pieces that do not seem to be otherwise available on records. They all make delightful listening, whether they are swift little pieces as light as froth, or poetic ones of more significance. The group sings with good tone and accurate intonation; the ensemble is precise and well balanced. There is considerable dynamic nuance; some of the heartier pieces are marked by unflagging drive and a rather metronomic rhythm that is not so apparent in the quieter works, which are done more flexibly. Satisfactory sound. N.B.

LOEFFLER: *Deux rapsodies*

†McCauley: *Five Miniatures for Flute and Orchestra*

†Barlow: *Night Song*

Armand Basile, piano; Robert Sprenkle, oboe; Francis Tursi, viola (in the Loeffler); Joseph Mariano, flute (in the McCauley); Eastman-Rochester Orchestra, Howard Hanson, cond. (in the McCauley and Barlow).

- MERCURY MG 50277. L.P. \$4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90277. SD. \$5.98.

The *Deux rapsodies* may be Charles Martin Loeffler's best work, even though it no longer seems to fit the character of the fantastic poems by Maurice Rollinat. *L'étang* (The Tarn) and *Le Cornemuse* (The Bagpipe), after which its parts are named. But Loeffler's elegant workmanship still has much to say for itself here, and his search for pungent, colorful, yet perfectly transparent effects still possesses much fascination. In short, the Loeffler of the *Deux rapsodies* has everything in common with Ravel except genius. The performance is superb, and so is the recording.

The pieces by William McCauley and Wayne Barlow outside are too trivial to warrant discussion. A.F.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

McCAULEY: *Five Miniatures for Flute and Orchestra*—See Loeffler: *Deux rapsodies*.

MONTEVERDI: *Il Ballo delle ingrate*

Emma Tegani, soprano; Claudia Carbi, mezzo; Luigi Sgarro, bass; Chorus; Orchestra da Camera da Milano. Ennio Gerelli, cond.
• Vox DL 650. LP. \$4.98.

A reissue of a disc originally brought out by Vox in 1953, this is a highly charged performance, perhaps overemotional in spots, but with many affecting passages. As with all of Monteverdi's surviving stage works, much depends upon the edition used. As far as the music itself is concerned, the Vanguard version, prepared by Denis Stevens, seems much closer to what the Mantuan court may have heard when this ballet was first produced in 1608. But that version would have benefited by an infusion of some of the warmth these Italian singers bring to the music, and the sound here is still good. Vanguard supplies the Italian text with an English translation; Vox furnishes no text at all. N.B.

MOZART: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 21, in C, K. 467*

†Enesco: *Sonata for Piano, No. 3, in D, Op. 24*

Dinu Lipatti, piano; Lucerne Festival Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
• ANGL 35931. LP. \$4.98.

In the notes for this recording Walter Legge explains that the Mozart was played at Lucerne in the summer of 1950, in what turned out to be Lipatti's last appearance with orchestra (already a very sick man, he died a few months later). The concert was broadcast, and after a nine-year search Legge and Mrs. Lipatti found a tape that had been taken off the air by an amateur. The present recording is a reproduction of that tape, improved by a year's work on the part of Angel's engineers. It is a remarkable performance for a man who was so close to death. Under other circumstances, the engineers would undoubtedly have improved certain balances, particularly between the piano and orchestra, but the sound, while not ideal, seems acceptable. This is also true of the Enesco Sonata (recorded from a 1943 broadcast), a work in the post-Impressionist style with an amusing first movement, a languid, improvisational Andantino, and a rather thin finale. The disc is to be welcomed as a touching memento of the young Rumanian pianist. N.B.

MOZART: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 33, in E flat, K. 481*

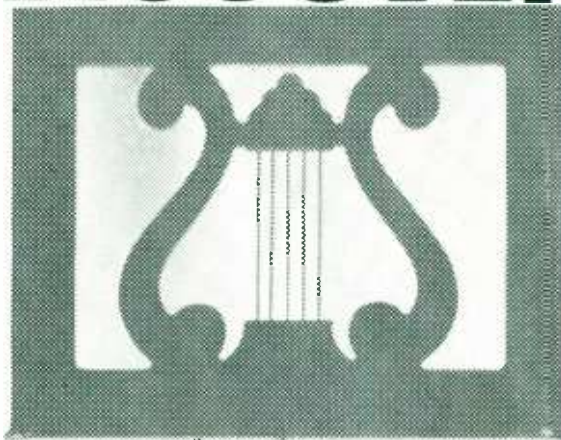
†Franck: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A*

Erica Morini, violin; Rudolf Firkusny, piano.

• DECCA DL 10038. LP. \$4.98.
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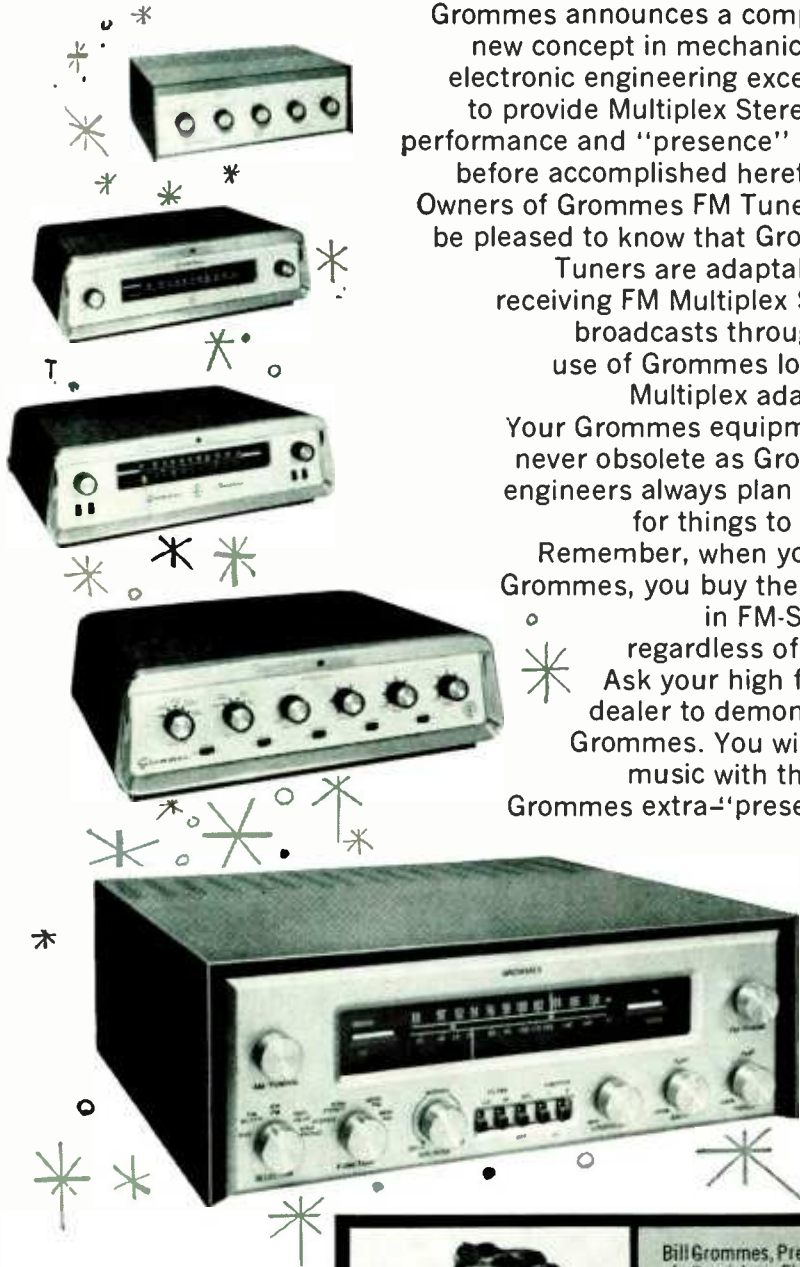


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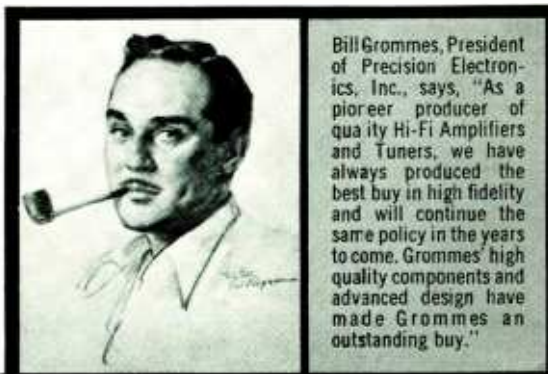
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the piano part is the more important. Miss Morini defers to her partner, but when the fiddle is uppermost, as in parts of the Adagio, she draws beautifully shaded song from her violin. Firkusny plays here crisply and cleanly but not dryly; the musicality in the phrasing coupled with a sparing use of the pedal results in first-class Mozart playing. In the Franck—surely one of the most romantic of violin sonatas—both players, equal now, are completely immersed in the spirit of the work and perform it with great sensitivity and intensity. This latter quality is not achieved at the expense of good taste: Miss Morini indulges in no smearing or sliding. Firkusny's articulation of rapid figures is immaculate, yet he brings out the inner voices that Franck wanted brought out. Excellent sound. N.B.

MUSSORGSKY: Boris Godunov (excerpts)

Prologue and Coronation Scene; I Have Attained the Highest Power; Boris/Shuisky Dialogue and Clock Scene; Farewell and Death.

Mildred Allen (s), Feodor; Stanley Kolk (t), a Boyar; Howard Fried (t), Shuisky; George London (b), Boris. Columbia Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. Thomas Schippers, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5673. LP. \$4.98.
• COLUMBIA MS 6273. SD. \$5.98.

This record is evidently intended as a document of Mr. London's recent Russian tour, which found him in the unique position (for an American) of singing Boris in Russian on the stage of the Bolshoi—and quite successfully, to judge from newspaper reports. It was in a performance of *Boris* in the original at the Wiener Staatsoper that Mr. London first attracted international attention, and he has remained one of our leading exponents of the title role over the last decade. In a sense, this goes against nature, for London's is not a true bass voice. His range easily covers the notes involved, however, and his dramatic sense makes up for at least part of the lack of vocal weight.

The passages chosen here are the standard excerpts, recorded by most of the prominent basses of the last thirty years (Chaliapin, Kipnis, Pinza, Rossi-Lemeni). They comprise all the scenes built around Boris himself. In much of the music, London's voice sounds a trifle stiff and his acting a trifle calculated, but he shakes loose of both problems in the final scene, which is movingly done. Howard Fried is not the most unctuous of Shuiskys, but he brings some welcome tenor metal to his scene with the Tsar. Schippers paces things well, and the sound conveys the rich colors of the (Rimsky-Korsakov) orchestration. C.L.O.

OBRECHT: Missa Fortuna desperata
—See Isaac: *Four Pieces.*

OFFENBACH: Gaité Parisienne (arr. Rosenthal)
†Gounod: *Faust: Ballet Music*

Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Georg Solti, cond.
• LONDON CM 9285. LP. \$4.98.
• LONDON CS 6216. SD. \$5.98.

Solti seems furiously intent on playing Offenbach's popular ballet score louder,

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more precisely, and more vehemently than anyone else; the London engineers seem determined to stretch a bit further the maximum frequency and dynamic-range capacities of stereo disc grooves. The now glassily sharp-edged, now thunderously floor-shaking sonics test to the utmost one's eardrum resilience and intestinal fortitude. All this makes even the most brilliant of earlier display versions sound relatively pale and gentle. Although many scoring details and counterthemes are spotlighted in higher relief than ever before, the music tends to become a sheerly physical workout rather than an intoxicating refreshment, and under the cruel microscope of such crystalline stereoism the tonal qualities of the Royal Opera House Orchestra reveal as much coarseness as glitter. After such melodramatic frenzy (which continues unabated even into the slighter *Faust* ballet), it's a relief to return to the insouciant lilt and sparkle of the Fiedler version of *Gaîté*. R.D.D.

RAVEL: *Daphnis et Chloë*

Chorus of the Schola Cantorum; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5660. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6260. SD. \$5.98.

Coming so hard on the heels of the wondrously atmospheric and eloquently restrained Munch re-recording of last month, Bernstein's complete *Daphnis* seems particularly idiosyncratic and nervously tense. His reading is characteristically impassioned, exhilarating in many of its vividly italicized scoring details, and breathlessly exciting in its urgent drive; yet over-all it is too erratic and episodic either to achieve true coherency or to convey the music's full evocative magic. Even more disturbing is the lack of richly integrated sonic qualities in the performance itself, particularly in the failure of the somewhat characterless choral singing to blend homogeneously with the instrumental textures, and in the fondness of individual woodwind and strings soloists for excessive vibrato. Curiously, the cleanly brilliant, wide-range recording sounds relatively more effective in monophony; or, to put it another way, the usual virtues of the dual-channel medium (so essential to impressionistic music like this) do not seem to be fully exploited in the SD version. R.D.D.

ROUSSEL: *Bacchus et Ariane, Op. 43: Suite No. 2*—See Walton: *Belsbazzar's Feast*.

SCHUMANN: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 129*

†Tchaikovsky: *Variations on a Roccoco Theme, Op. 33*

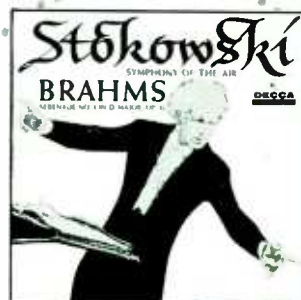
Mstislav Rostropovich, cello; Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, cond.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18674. LP. \$5.98.
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London during the Leningrader's memorable visit there last year, is altogether magnificent in matters of technology and accompaniment, and Rostropovich himself is splendid too (as, indeed, he was on the earlier release). Although this cellist's virtuosity is capable of taking the breath away, he is not at all a showy player. His leisurely and extremely inward interpretation of this problematical concerto refinds me in many ways of Wilhelm Furtwängler. There is the same serenity here, and the same hypersensitivity that characterized the late conductor's best work. Of course, such an approach deprives one of certain qualities present in the interpretations of other cellists. In the Fournier-Sargent recording (Angel) the cellist's romanticism is, for example, a bit more fully blown and luxuriant—sunshine rather than moonlight, while Starker and Giuliani (also Angel) achieve an altogether more brilliant and kinetic reading. But let me hasten to add that Rostropovich and Rozhdstvensky produce a superlative rendition fully competitive with the best.

In the Tchaikovsky Variations, Rostropovich gives the virtuoso writing a charm and effortless humor which are sheer delight. Fournier's splendid account of this piece is in more conventional bravura style, but it lacks some of this version's sophistication. As in the Schumann, the orchestral work is on a rarefied level, with beautifully detailed woodwinds adding wit and sparkle to the performance.

The first-rate spacious sound needs a slight treble boost. H.G.

SCHUMANN: *Quartet for Piano and Strings, in E flat, Op. 47*—See Fauré: *Quartet for Piano and Strings, No. 1, in C minor, Op. 15*.
SIBELIUS: *Four Legends, Op. 22*

U.S.S.R. Radio Symphony Orchestra, Tauno Hannikainen, cond.
• MK-ARTIA 1558. LP. \$5.98.

The *Four Legends* are early Sibelius, written between 1893 and 1895, and like so much of this composer's music were inspired by the Finnish epic, the *Kalevala*, and deal with the exploits of its hero, Lemminkäinen. Since the two or three first-rate recordings of these tone poems once in the catalogue (most notably one by Ormandy) have all been deleted, this new version, excellent in every respect, is most welcome. The Finnish Hannikainen, onetime associate conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and now conductor of the Helsinki City Symphony Orchestra, has long been recognized as a Sibelius expert. He manages to bring out all the drama and color in this music, and he has the Russian orchestra playing in top form. Furthermore, the recorded sound is a notch above the average quality we have come to expect from behind the Iron Curtain. Even though unavailable in stereo, this is an important Sibelius release. P.A.

SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 5, in E flat, Op. 82; Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 7*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
• ANGEL 35922. LP. \$4.98.
• ANGEL S 35922. SD. \$5.98.

Von Karajan's earlier Angel recording of

these two works seemed to me a rather flabby, overrefined treatment of the rugged Northern music. I am happy to report that the new version is a considerable improvement. The conductor treats the symphony quite soberly, especially the opening section, but there is plenty of spirit in the Scherzo, flexibility in the *Andante mosso*, and in the finale a telling combination of vitality and nobility. Some of the former flabbiness does appear in the opening of *Finlandia*, but the main body of the tone poem is full of the requisite strength and drama. Among the best features of this disc is the extremely polished performance of the Philharmonia Orchestra, a joy from beginning to end. The reproduction mirrors that sound most faithfully, though there is little difference between the mono and stereo editions—the former imparts more than the usual sense of dimension, while the latter is slightly below average in this respect. P.A.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Elektra*

Inge Borkh (s), *Elektra*; Marianne Schech (s), *Chrysothemis*; Ilona Steingruher (s), *The Overseer*; Renate Reincke (s), *The Confidante*; Jean Madeira (ms), *Clytemnestra*; Cvetka Ahlin, *Margarete Sjostedt*; Sieglinde Wagner, *Judith Hellwig*; Gerda Scheyrer, *The Maids*; Fritz Uhl (t), *Aegisthus*; Gerhard Unger (t), *A Young Servant*; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), *Orestes*; Fred Teschler (bs), *Orestes' Companion*; Siegfried Vogel (bs), *An Old Servant*. Chorus and Orchestra of the Dresden Staatsoper, Karl Böhm, cond.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 8690/91. Two LP. \$11.96.
- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLP 138690/91. Two SD. \$13.96.

For a feature review of this album, see page 75.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.

- CAPITOL G 7250. LP. \$4.98.
- • CAPITOL SG 7250. SD. \$5.98.

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5649. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6249. SD. \$5.98.

To Beecham this music is a drama which advances from scene to scene to its resolution, and he unfolds it in that manner with logic and clarity and—above all—respect for the total design. The battle section is not allowed to get out of hand and, indeed, Beecham gives it a structural coherence and sense of direction such as I have not often heard. Yet it is in the final pages, made all the more poignant for me by the fact of Beecham's own passing, that the deepest emotional communication takes place. I do not believe in people performing their own requiems, but the hero's farewell is here worthy of its protagonist.

I remember a time when Ormandy could give us a *Heldenleben* of comparable seriousness, and he made at least one recording capable of reminding us of that fact. Nowadays he seems to regard the piece as a vehicle for showing off the gorgeous sounds he can produce with the strings of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Listen to the insipid playing in the "Critics" section of this new disc,

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or the senseless uproar that passes for the battle scene, and you will probably feel as I do that with repeated performances he has lost interest in the work.
R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Capriccio italien, Op. 45; Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32*

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5658. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6258. SD. \$5.98.

These two popular orchestral works are ideally suited to Bernstein's fiery style and the virtuosity of the New York Philharmonic. As a result, they emerge with telling brilliance. This is one of the rare instances, too, where *Francesca da Rimini* is presented in its original uncut version. The mono edition is adequate, but the stereo is truly outstanding—directional, wide-spaced, and realistic. Here is a first-rate showpiece for your two-channel equipment. P.A.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33—See Schumann: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 129.*

THOMSON: *The Plow That Broke the Plains: Suite. The River: Suite*
Symphony of the Air, Leopold Stokowski, cond.
• VANGUARD VRS 1071. LP. \$4.98.
• • VANGUARD VSD 2095. SD. \$5.95.

The Plow That Broke the Plains and *The River* were educational-documentary films made for the Farm Security Administration of the Department of Agriculture in the dust-bowl days of 1936 and 1937. Some perceptive New Deal



official turned over their cinematography not to a professional film maker but to Paré Lorentz, movie critic of the old *Life*, and the music was entrusted not to an experienced film musician but to Virgil Thomson, who had never previously written for pictures. The result was a pair of the greatest films in history, and two of the finest scores. The films are still being widely shown on the college and art-house circuit, a quarter of a century after they have discharged their social duty, and the scores are among the very few compositions for the American screen to take an honored place in the concert repertoire.

The scores are full of folk tunes and original tunes in folk style handled with that luminous orchestration, wit, clarity, and fervor which are so characteristic of Thomson. Along with the ballets of Copland they are the classic masterpieces of American topographical music produced by the Roosevelt era,

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but, unfortunately, they are somewhat mishandled here. The recording is excellent, but Stokowski plays the music as if Thomson were a disciple of Gustav Mahler rather than an admirer of Erik Satie. A.F.

VICTORIA: *Missa pro defunctis; Magnificat IV Toni*

Choir of the Choral Academy (Lecco), Guido Camillucci, cond.
 • Vox DL 690. LP. \$4.98.

This recording was originally released by Vox in 1955. As was pointed out in these pages then, the performance is a mediocre one. The misleading labeling (this is not merely a Mass but an Office for the Dead) has been retained, and the old notes have been reprinted unchanged, errors and all. This magnificent work is much better served in the recording by the Netherlands Chamber Chorus on Angel. N.B.

VIVALDI: *Beatus vir (Psalm 111)*

Friederike Seiler, Lieselotte Kiefer, sopranos; Herbert Graf, tenor; Bruno Müller, Hermann Werdermann, basses; Chorus and Orchestra of the Stuttgart Academy, Hans Grischkat, cond.
 • LYRICHORD LL 95. LP. \$4.98.

This is a reissue of a recording that originally came out in 1952, under the Vox label. The work is a kind of cantata, unified by the use of the arresting theme of the opening section as a refrain in seven of the nine movements. There are one or two other striking sections, like the fourth, "Exortum est," but the gem of the work is the sixth section, "In memoria aeterna," an extraordinarily expressive movement of great beauty. The performance cannot be accused of excessive insight or finesse, and the choral sopranos are thin and quavery; but the sound is still acceptable—and there are no sopranos in that lovely "In memoria." N.B.

VIVALDI: *Concertos (8)*

Soloists; I Musici.
 • EPIC SC 6040. Two LP. \$9.96.
 • • EPIC BSC 111. Two SD. \$11.96.

Half of these are solo concertos, for oboe (P. 42), for bassoon (P. 137), and for flute (P. 203 and 440); the other half are double concertos, for pairs of violins (P. 28), flutes (P. 76), mandolins (P. 133), and oboes (P. 302). All but P. 28, so far as I can discover, are already available on discs, but none can be said to be well known. It is a good selection: only P. 76, it seems to me, is routine; all the others have at least one movement that should keep Mr. Robbins Landon from extending to the Venetian priest the imprecation he recently tossed at some baroque concertos ("A Pox on Manfredini," HIGH FIDELITY, June 1961). There are pathos and drama in the finale of P. 42 and the third movement of P. 302, the latter one of the relatively uncommon concertos by Vivaldi with a slow-fast-slow-fast pattern.

Sometimes, as in the first and last movements of P. 137 and the finale of P. 440, not very interesting solo passages are framed by arresting ritornels. P. 440, with its idiomatic flute part, is otherwise on a high plane throughout. The slow movement of P. 203 is a lovely

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aria for flute, and the fast movements of P. 28 have breadth and nobility.

As is usual with the Musici, the performances are warm and vital, and they have been given spacious and resonant recording. Also as is usual with this group, the harpsichord is sometimes so faint as to be practically inaudible. In the double concertos the solo instruments are recorded on separate tracks, making the stereo version more than normally superior in effect to the mono. N.B.

VIVALDI: *Concertos (26)*

New York Sinfonietta, Max Gberman, cond.

• OR • LIBRARY OF RECORDED MASTERPIECES, Vol. 1, Nos. 10-12, Vol. 2, Nos. 1-3. Six LP or SD. \$8.50 each on subscription; \$10 each, nonsubscription.

When Max Gberman announced a couple of years ago his giant plan for recording all the works of Vivaldi, there was considerable raising of eyebrows among those who had some notion of the scope of the project. Complete-works series of other prolific composers had been announced and even begun—and then been forced to discontinue by the exigencies of a marketing situation at once disorganized and tightly controlled, as well as by a lack of sufficient interest on the part of the record-buying public. But Gberman damned the torpedoes and launched his series, after carefully armor-plating it with performances and recording on a high level of technical quality, with elaborate notes on the individual works, and with the scores bound into the albums. The group of discs listed above brings the number of albums issued so far to fifteen, containing sixty-five works, and it is good to know that the redoubtable Mr. Gberman shows no sign of wavering. On the contrary, he has been emboldened by the success of this series to start others—a complete Corelli, for example, and all the symphonies of Haydn.

One of the questions raised by Mr. Gberman's original plan was whether all the approximately five hundred known instrumental works by Vivaldi were worth recording. It's still a good question, but the partial answer presented by those recorded so far is emphatically that most of them are, at least in my opinion. Take the batch of twenty-six works under consideration. Only six or seven of them are run-of-the-mill pieces throughout, and these are cannily scattered through the group so that no single disc contains more than two of them. All the others seem to me to be well worth repeated hearings.

There is great variety of instrumentation here—solo concertos not only for violin, flute, oboe, and bassoon but also for mandolin and viola d'amore; double concertos, for pairs of violins, trumpets, and mandolins; multiple concertos for various combinations of instruments; works for string orchestra; and chamber compositions, including three for a quartet of flute, oboe, violin, and bassoon with continuo. An unusually striking work is P. 359 (in Vol. II, No. 2), for three oboes, two horns, violin, strings, and continuo. Here, between portentous unisons, the solo instruments come on-stage singly or in pairs, for all the world like *entrées* in a ballet, performing their solo turns or *pas de deux* and exiting gracefully. Even the chamber works have their surprises: the finale of P. 105 (in Vol. II, No. 3), for instance, is a highly

inventive set of variations on the theme of the same work's Largo.

But Vivaldi seems to have reserved some of his best ideas for the "concertos" for string orchestra. The slow movement of P. 438 (in Vol. I, No. 10), for example, deals with graver matters than usual in Vivaldi, and the opening movement of the same work has a dramatic urgency; P. 127 (in Vol. I, No. 12) is a superior piece throughout, beginning with a strong and effective fugue, continuing in a songful Andante, and concluding with a playful finale; other fine compositions of this type are P. 197 (in Vol. II, No. 1) and P. 280 (in Vol. II, No. 3). But to detail all the felicities to be found in this group of discs would extend this review to unmanageable length.

The performances are uniformly first-rate. All the soloists are excellent. They are too numerous to list, but I must mention Robert Nagel and Melvin Broiles, the trumpeters in P. 75 (on Vol. II, No. 3), because one seldom hears in recordings of baroque trumpet music such clear, clean, and consistently on-pitch playing with no sign of strain. Again, as in previous volumes, a decided advantage is the imaginative realizations of the continuo parts as played on the harpsichord by Eugenia Earle. Aside from some sharpness in the finale of P. 233 (in Vol. I, No. 11), the sound is very good. In the double concertos and in the works for string orchestra, where there is much dialoguing between first and second violins, stereo is practically mandatory. It is only in the concerto for two mandolins (P. 133, in Vol. I, No. 11) that the obvious separation is not heard. N.B.

WALTON: *Belsbazzar's Feast*
 †Roussel: *Bacchus et Ariane, Op. 43: Suite No. 2*

Walter Cassel, baritone (in the Walton); Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5667. LP. \$4.98.
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Sir William's brilliant, swashbuckling, crowd-pleasing oratorio is here given one of the most hair-raising and rabble-rousing performances in its history, superbly recorded. The Roussel on the other side is very good, too. In it the composer, consciously or subconsciously, plays the game beloved of all workers in the arts—"In the Manner of. . ." Here is Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloë* as it might have been written by Richard Strauss. A.F.

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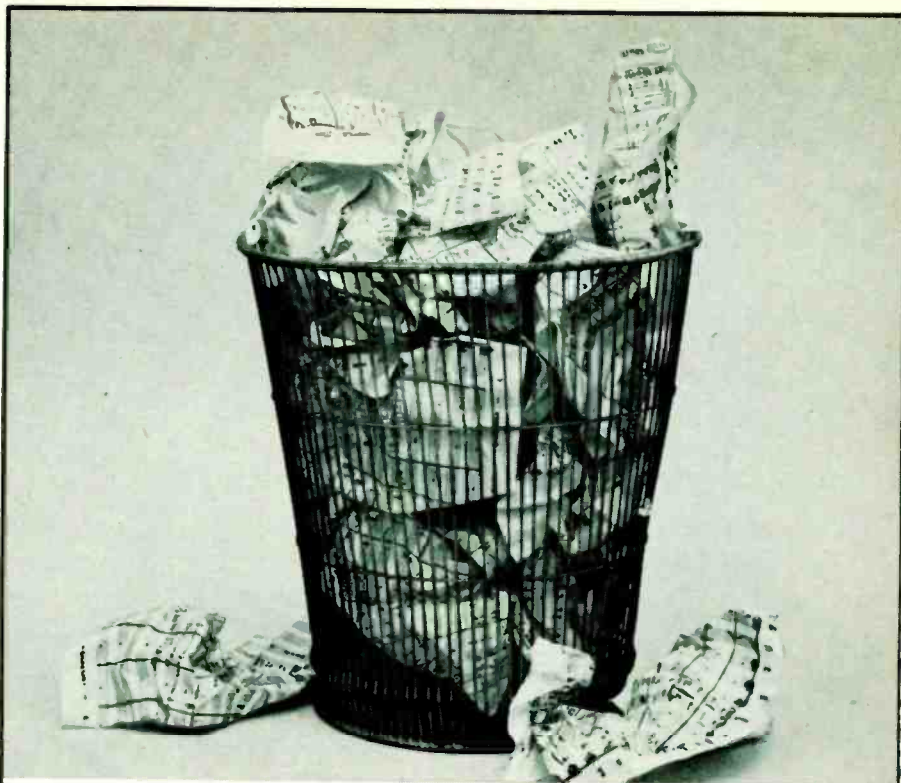
Rossini: *La Gazza ladra; La Cambiale di matrimonio*. Mendelssohn: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The Fair *Melusina*. Berlioz: *Le Corsaire*.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.

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SR 90212—stereo; MG 50212—monaural.
SOUSA ON REVIEW: Twelve Marches. Eastman Wind Ensemble, Fennell.
SR 90284—stereo; MG 50284—monaural.



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miss Sir Thomas Beecham. One of these is the refreshing new life he breathed into works many of us had grown tired of hearing. Heaven knows, there have been enough live and recorded performances of the *Gazza ladra*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Corsair* Overtures; but in Sir Thomas' life-giving hands they sounded almost as fresh as if they were being played for the first time. Certainly is this true of *La Gazza ladra*, whose second principal theme is handled with extraordinary refinement, delicacy, and obvious loving care. The less familiar *La Cambiale di matrimonio*, which Beecham recorded once before, is as light and frothy as whipped cream, a description which might also apply to the *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture, and there is a wonderfully smooth account of the flowing *Fair Melusina* Overture. Only *Le Corsaire* is a tiny bit disappointing. Beecham's is a fine reading; but considering the fact that he was a Berlioz specialist, one misses the expected fire and tension. Perhaps this is the fault of the reproduction which—while clear, well defined, and widespread in all the other works—sounds just a trifle muddy here. On the whole, one can wish most fervently that Capitol will discover some more Beecham "favorites" in its vaults.
 P.A.

JULIAN BREAM: "The Golden Age of English Lute Music"

Pieces by Batchelar, Cutting, Bulman, Dowland, Holborne, John Johnson, Robert Johnson, Morley, Rosseter.

Julian Bream, lute.
 • RCA VICTOR LD 2560. LP. \$5.98.
 • • RCA VICTOR LDS 2560. SD. \$6.98.

Although one should not judge a book by its cover, the magnificent packaging of this gala Soria series album appro-



propriately proclaims the jewel-like richness of the superb disc within. Thurston Dart's scrupulously thorough essay, "The Lute and Its Music," includes a survey of published music written for that instrument, a history of the lute itself with regard to the historical background from which it evolved, and a technical, yet always intelligible explanation of the system of tablature (the mode of notation in which this music was written). We are also given lavish reproductions of Holbein the Younger, Baschenis, Zanguidi, and other artists.

The music, and Mr. Bream's performance of it, have the same glow and patina as the accompanying artwork. As Mr. Dart notes, most of the best-known Elizabethan composers neglected the lute as an instrument, and the bulk of its repertory was produced by men whose backgrounds remain obscure. In any case these selections are superbly resource-



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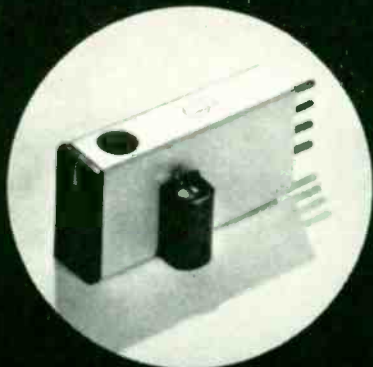
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ful, temperamentally varied, and genuinely reposeful. Mr. Bream's artistry has a spacious serenity and tonal resource, combined with technical mastery and rhythmic vitality. Listening to his playing here afforded me rare pleasure.

RCA's engineering has captured the deep, full tone of Mr. Bream's lute with stunning presence and clarity. Only the noisy little bump that intruded upon the groove surface of the Rosseter galliard marred the perfection of this disc. H.G.

ALFRED DELLER: "Deller's Choice"

Alfred Deller, countertenor; Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichord and organ.

- VANGUARD BG 612. LP. \$4.98.
- • VANGUARD BGS 5038. SD. \$5.95.

Mr. Deller presents here a posy of mostly baroque pieces "both rare and rewarding," as the disc's subtitle puts it. I don't know that Bach's *Bist du bei mir* is exactly rare, but it certainly is rewarding in Deller's caressing performance, and so are some of the other numbers, which include Schütz's optimistic *In te, Domine, speravi*; Purcell's elegy on the death of Queen Mary, *Incassum, Leshia*, with its curious harmonic progressions; Pelham Humfrey's *A Hymn to God the Father*, a simple, affecting setting of eloquent words by John Donne; and Handel's lovely "Dove sei," from *Rodelinda*. Scattered among the vocal items are keyboard pieces by Matthew Locke, Frescobaldi, and Froberger, the last-named being represented by a particularly interesting Toccata on a chromatic subject that falls and rises. The sound is quite as good in the mono version as in the stereo.

N.B.

GREGORIAN CHANT: *Missa in Festo Assumptionis B. M. V.*

Nuns Choir of the Benedictine Abbey Unserer Lieben Frau (Varensell).

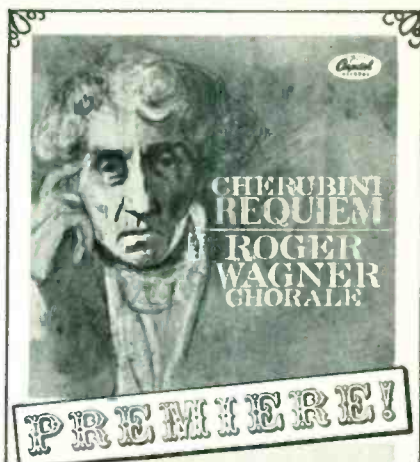
- ARCHIVE ARC 3152. LP. \$5.98.
- • ARCHIVE ARC 73152. SD. \$6.98.

Here the entire Mass for the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is presented by what Archive calls a "nuns-choir" of a German convent. Although the form of this Mass was established as a result of a decree by Pope Pius XII in 1950, most of the music in it—including all of the Ordinary—is taken from the old Gregorian repertory. The well-rehearsed choir achieves considerable flexibility in the treatment of the supple lines, and the unnamed female soloist sings with a pure tone and the appropriate style. Some intonations are sung, and the Oration, Lesson, Epistle, etc., are chanted, by a priest. The sound seems slightly magnified, in some curious though not unpleasant way, and there is occasional distortion on high notes, this latter fault being less noticeable in the mono version than in the stereo.

N.B.

PAVEL LISITSIAN: *Song Recital*

Handel: *Xerxes: Ombra mai fu*. Schubert: *An die Musik; Der Atlas*. Schumann: *Dichterliebe: Ich grolle nicht; Die alten, bösen Lieder*. Ravel: *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée; Chanson romanesque; Chanson à boire*. Tchaikovsky: *We sat together: None But the Lonely Heart; The Fearful Moment*. Kabalevsky: *Shakespeare Sonnets, Nos. 153 and 30 (Cupid lay by his brand; When in the sessions of*



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CIRCLE 36 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

sweet silent thought). Rachmaninoff: *In the Secret Silence of the Night; A Dream; Oh, I Pray, Do Not Go!*

Pavel Lisitsian, baritone; Naum Valter, piano.

• MK-ARTIA 1556. LP. \$5.98.

The first side of this record practically duplicates the first half of the program which Mr. Lisitsian chose for his Carnegie Hall recital two seasons back. He is not at his most impressive in this music, partly because he is a rather ordinary stylist, and partly because the prevailing quality of his voice, which might almost be described as tough, is of no special advantage. All the same, the even legato and the voice's impressive ring make a strong impression.

It is on Side 2 that this record becomes most valuable. To the Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff songs—so frequently done so badly—Lisitsian brings great feeling without a trace of sentimentality; in these selections, the unusual color spectrum and dynamic range of his instrument are brought more into play. The two Kabalevsky settings are new to me, as I suspect they will be to most American collectors. They are interesting in a late nineteenth-century way, intelligently thought out in terms of modulation and dynamic contrasts. Lisitsian sings them both magnificently. Valter's accompaniments are certainly adequate, though he brings no particular penetration to the *Lieder*; the sound is clear, with prominence given the voice.

I hope that MK-Artia will be able to offer a program designed to show this singer's virtuosity, for in several Italian arias ("*O sommo Carlo*," "*Di Provenza*") and some Armenian songs he has demonstrated that for sheer vocal flexibility, variety of timbres, and pinpoint dynamic control, he is without peer among today's baritones. C.L.O.

DAVID NADIEN: "*The Virtuoso Violinist*"

Pieces by Kreisler, Paganini, Paganini-Kreisler, Sarasate, Tartini, Veracini, and Vieuxtemps.

David Nadien, violin; Boris Barère, piano.

• KAPP KCL 9060. LP. \$4.98.

• • KAPP KC 9060-S. SD. \$5.98.

Nadien, like Jascha Heifetz, could be labeled "The Salvador Dali of the Violin." His playing stresses a lean, vaulting sound with a very rapid vibrato (some of his high notes could cause glasses to shatter!), and his interpretations are characterized by the same slickness and aloof symmetry which one finds in the work of that famous painter. Although Nadien produces a gleaming and rich tone, his playing has a wider dynamic range and greater variety of bow technique than is usually encountered in present day violinism. (Nadien's pianissimos are especially noteworthy; they have a gigantic weight concentrated on an area no bigger than a pinhead). Although I am sure that this performer's nervous intensity would, unless modified, make for uncomfortable listening in the classics, all of the music on this disc (save, possibly, the Tartini) benefits from just such an approach.

Sarasate's Introduction and Tarantella is listed on the record label but not on the jacket cover; it is one of the high spots in the present recital. Excellent annotations and superb engineering further grace this release. If you are a

fancier of fancy fiddling, this disc should not be overlooked. H.G.

ROSA PONSELLE: "*Soprano assoluta*"

Songs and arias by Bizet, Romani, Mascagni, Verdi, Mozart, Spontini, Bellini, Rossini, J. Strauss, Buzzi-Peccia, Valverde, Bland, Kreisler, Mana-Zucca, Meyerbeer, Puccini, Schubert, Denza, Wagner, Monro, R. Strauss, Cilea, Tchaikovsky, Paladilhe, Chopin, Luzzi, Sandoval, DeFalla, and Pergolesi.

Rosa Ponselle, soprano; piano: orchestra.
• Asco A 125. Two LP. \$7.96.

The reservations which I voiced in August concerning Asco's two-disc Martinnelli album apply with even greater force to this issue. Practically none of this material represents Ponselle at her best, and much of it represents her at her very worst—"The Big Brown Bear," for example, is simply an embarrassment. Most of the worthwhile selections have been available before on LP; the one fascinating performance here made commercially available for the first time is the privately made 1954 version of "*Senza Mamma*" from *Suor Angelica*—a most effective rendition of the aria. A very large share of the numbers listed were recorded in a similar fashion—some in the singer's home as she sat at the piano—at a time when she was no longer making public appearances; most of these performances are precious or overwrought, and the sound of the recordings leaves a great deal to be desired.

I would counsel the Ponselle fan to seek a copy of RCA Camden's two-record "Art of Rosa Ponselle," which effectively demonstrates the singer's true stature. C.L.O.

ANDRES SEGOVIA: "*Maestro Segovia*"

Pieces by Albéniz, Anonymous, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Milan, D. Scarlatti, Sanz, Sor, and Torroba.

Andrés Segovia, guitar.
• Decca DL 10039. LP. \$4.98.
• • Decca DL 710039. SD. \$5.98.

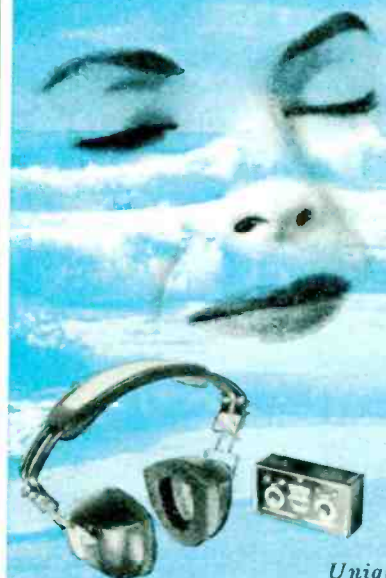
The late Wanda Landowska once caused a minor tempest when she recorded a Chopin Mazurka on the harpsichord. Now the great Segovia has performed the equally unlikely feat of playing a Mendelssohn *Song Without Words* on the guitar. Unfortunately, the instrument's lack of sustaining power causes the music to totter and thump, so that even this artist's finesse cannot make the little piece sound palatable in the new form. The Minuet from Haydn's String Quartet, Op. 76, No. 1 also ranks here as simply a curio. Segovia, to be sure, plays all of the notes, but the tempo he adopts (probably from necessity) is ludicrously slow. The rest of the disc is devoted to more appropriate literature, and the guitarist's fine-grained mastery is superbly in evidence throughout. His playing may not be as athletic as that of some gifted younger guitarists, but it has incomparable tonal felicity, nuance, and limpidity.

The stereo version has a bit more twang and presence than the monophonic pressing. The latter, however, is just a shade more ingratiating in tone, and there is less background noise. H.G.

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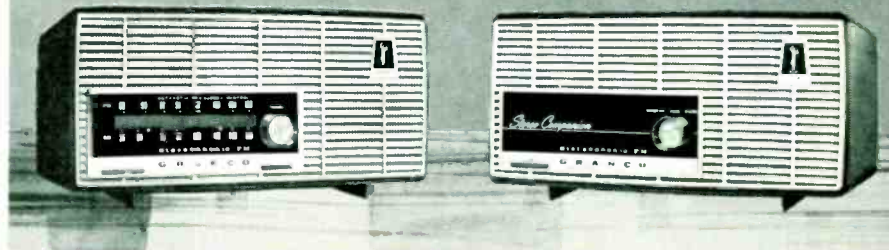
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The Lighter Side



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Fifteen Years of Minstrelsy

From the Big Daddy of Balladeers

"The Best of Burl Ives." Decca DXB 167, \$7.62 (Two LP).

THE YEARS since World War II have seen a steady stream of albums by Burl Ives flow across the record counters. In addition to several 78-rpm collections of folk ballads, he has made no fewer than seventeen LPs—virtually all for Decca. Honoring this long and fruitful collaboration, his home label has now released a two-disc set that surveys fifteen years of Ives's art.

In a sense, Burl was the precursor of the current folk revival that has set guitars twanging from the

Village Vanguard to the hungry i. In 1944, the burly balladeer scored a smash hit in the Theatre Guild's *Sing Out Sweet Land*: he sang two selections, *The Blue Tail Fly* and *The Foggy, Foggy Dew*, that not only regularly brought down the house but also gained him national fame. Although Richard Dyer-Bennet, John Jacob Niles, and others had coteries of devoted followers scattered from coast to coast, Ives was the first minstrel to transmute folk ballads from esoterica into the public

domain via Hollywood and network radio. Concealed here is a neat irony: folk ballads, generally the products of proletarian bards, had to be reintroduced to the milieu that had nourished them.

On the heels of this success, Ives decided to broaden his horizons. Turning to straight acting, he won an Oscar for his role in the film *The Big Country* and earned critical plaudits for his portrayal of Big Daddy in Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. But he never neglected his first calling: new albums of folk ballads kept turning up at regular intervals. They still do.

Burl is blessed with a clear, sweet voice and a personality that projects warmth. His accents ring with the heart and soul of all America, and when he sings of hard times and hard luck he sings from experience. The twenty-four ballads in this set display virtually every facet of Ives's art. Fittingly enough, he leads off with *Blue Tail Fly*—still as merrily vivacious as ever. *Aunt Rhody*, *Old Dan Tucker*, and *The Erie Canal* display nineteenth-century American balladry at its best. An Ives tour of Ireland a few years back is reflected in the bitter *Mrs. McGrath* and in *Brennan on the Moor*,

a splendid narrative ballad of an outlaw-hero. Yet to me Ives is at his very best in the poignant Appalachian lament *Down in the Valley*. Elizabethan English, medieval metaphors, and the poetry of the high mountains all meet in this haunting plaint. I know of no one else who so completely captures its lyric loneliness.

Unfortunately, the set ends limply. For the past five years, Ives has been taking recorded excursions into country music—via Nashville and The Grand Ol' Opry—and into saccharine heart-wrenchers. Happily, Decca spares us the nasal bathos of his Nashville period, but lacerates the sensibilities with an item called *That's My Heartstrings*—a nauseating festoon of clichés about “my boy” that would make even a scoutmaster retch. An equally emetic entry from World War II, *Rodger Young*, proves only that Tin Pan Alley can even rake a buck out of the casualty lists.

Nonetheless, no admirer of the popularized folk ballad should be without this album. On its evidence, Ives remains the Big Daddy of the balladeers. The sound is generally excellent, although a few bands lifted from vintage releases show their age. O.B.B.



Robert Russell Bennett

The Sea Brought Terrifyingly Alive

“Victory at Sea,” Vol. 3. Orchestra (and sound effects), Robert Russell Bennett, cond. RCA Victor LM 2523, \$4.98 (LP); LSC 2523, \$5.98 (SD).

SOME DISCS are born best sellers; some are boosted to that state by promotional campaigns; a very few achieve it by grass roots appeal and word-of-mouth tributes. In this last category no success story has been more astonishing than that of the “Victory at Sea” record series. Certainly it could hardly have been foreseen back in 1953, when—not long after the first run, in twenty-six half-hour episodes, of the NBC television-film documentary—RCA Victor issued “the” (note: not “a” or the “first”) orchestral suite, for which Robert Russell Bennett expertly mined his long original score of Rodgers’ most distinctive tunes and set-pieces:

Guadalcanal March, *Hard Work and Horseplay*, *Beneath the Southern Cross*, etc. Yet, this robust music gradually won wide acceptance as a unique representation of Americana, and—with reruns augmenting the fame of the TV series itself—“more” was insatiably demanded.

So Bennett reexplored for sequel materials, and although the pickings were thinner (*Fire on the Waters*, *Allies on the March*, etc.), the Second Suite of 1958, now aided immeasurably by the dramatic immediacies of stereo recording, was not only a hit in its own right but a stimulus to the even more successful stereo revival of the original (now First)

suite in 1959. And the sale of both works continued to snowball so impressively that, despite the obvious limitations in remaining materials, genuine "public demand" has made a third installment inevitable.

Musically, of course, Vol. 3 lacks such notable attractions as the first suite contained, and even more obviously than was true of the second disc in the series the present episodes (*Rings Around Raboul*, *Full Fathom Five*, *Ships That Pass, Two If By Sea*, and *The Turning Point*) are primarily dramatic background settings. Accordingly, they are ingeniously fleshed out by three supplementary features: 1) the inclusion of powerfully evocative battle and other pertinent sound effects, drawn from Navy archives and used here with overwhelming effectiveness, often as integrated "action" elements in the music itself; 2) a handsome fifteen-page bound-in booklet of commentary and wartime photographs; 3) a concluding "Symphonic Scenario" which concisely recapitulates the nine "basic themes" (most of which first appeared in the original suite) that represent Rodgers' most valuable contributions to the over-all work.

This coda recapitulation also summarizes the vital role of Bennett, who has throughout transmuted the composer's raw, undoubtedly sketchy, materials into consistently taut, intricately woven, and epically panoramic orchestral fabrics. The success of both TV and record series would surely have been impossible without his shaping, coloring, enriching, indeed truly creative craftsmanship.

By its very nature, this third album—in fact a mélange rather than a suite—is a souvenir and display record. Yet as such it puts most spectaculars to shame by its sheer vividness and impact. Technologically, the ultrabold recording is electrifying even in monophony; in the most broadspread and planget of stereo it brings the illimitable war-wracked skies and sea of the Pacific terrifyingly alive. If not a record that many listeners will want to replay frequently (any more than Stravinsky's *Sacre* bears daily repetition), it provides—especially in conjunction with the earlier LSC 2335 and 2226—a quite incomparable musical-sonic-historical experience transcending what is normally thought of as entertainment. R.D.D.

"Stereo 35/MM." Enoch Light and His Orchestra. Command RS 826, \$5.98 (SD).

With this spectacular recording, Enoch Light's Command label has crossed one more threshold to the ultimate in sound-on-disc. By applying new recording techniques to an old process (recording on 35-mm magnetic film), Mr. Light has given us stereo sound of remarkable transparency, tremendously wide dynamic range, and wide transient response—and this with almost complete freedom from distortion or background noise. Furthermore, the carefully controlled stereoistic effects, even the intentionally widened separation on some numbers, seldom lessen the extraordinary breadth and depth of sound achieved. Happily, the musical appeal of this sonic spectacular is well up to the level of the aural excitement. Familiar may be the term for such show tunes as *The Man I Love*, *I'll See You Again*, *Love for Sale* and others in the same genre, but Lew Davies' perceptive and often ingenious arrangements give them a decidedly fresh appeal. I especially liked his settings for *You Do Something to Me* and *Zing Went the Strings of My Heart*, where the piquancy of the string writing is particularly delightful.

In short, this recording (made in Carnegie Hall, incidentally) is a triumph of the recording engineer's art. I can wish for nothing, except perhaps for less immediate microphone placement throughout. I do not find the sound of a flutist breathing very musical. J.F.I.

"My Heart Sings." Sarah Vaughan; Orchestra. Mercury MG 20617, \$3.98 (LP); SR 60617, \$4.98 (SD).

In the past Sarah Vaughan's pops albums have been imbued with too many jazz touches and vocal mannerisms for my

taste, but I readily succumbed to her ravishing singing on this unashamedly pops program. With a view to exploiting the present lush quality of her voice (under superb control), Miss Vaughan has selected a program top-heavy with slow, romantic ballads, with only two songs, the upbeat *Slow Down* and a lightly jazz-inflected version of *My Ideal*, providing any change of pace. I have never before heard this singer inject so much warmth and sincerity into her work as she does in these ballads; she seems really to be singing from the heart, and it's all pretty wonderful. It is almost unfair to single out individual songs from such a superb series of performances, but these versions of the quasi-religious *The House I Live In* and *Through a Long and Sleepless Night* really demand special praise. J.F.I.

"Rainy Night in Tokyo." Hachidai Nakamura; Orchestra. Capitol T 10287, \$3.98 (LP); ST 10287, \$4.98 (SD).

By contrast with the usual dross marketed as mood music, *Rainy Night in Tokyo* glitters like old, soft gold. The selections will strike a nostalgic note in anyone who has ever wandered the twisting side streets off The Ginza and will provide those who have not with a memorable surrogate. Hachidai Nakamura preserves the Oriental character of his Japanese pops by using stringed samisens, kotos, flutes, and drums front and center, but unobtrusively leavens them for Western tastes with a battery of massed fiddles. The whole tone of the program reflects a kind of diffuse Nipponese sorrow—the last of the cherry blossoms falling to earth, the last of the snow melting in May. You will, I think, find this an intriguing and sometimes haunting disc. Stereo adds further depth and richness to a faultless mono version;

either edition is recommended without reservation. O.B.B.

"Stereo Action Goes Broadway." Dick Schory's Percussion and Brass Ensemble. RCA Victor LSA 2382, \$5.98 (SD).

This is one of the best programs yet to feature "the sound your eyes can follow," since Schory, as always, is unexcelled for the musical as well as sonic interest of his timbre combinations and contrasts; for his amusing yet always tasteful arrangements and performances (topped here by a wondrously hoedownish *Keep A-Hoppin'*, witty *It's Legitimate*, melodramatic-scena treatment of *Hernando's Hideaway*, atmospheric *Camelot* and *Bali Ha'i*, zestful *I Got Rhythm* and *El Sombrero*); and for the big-hall acoustical authenticity of his expansive stereo recording. Best of all, he is one of the few to appreciate the potentialities (and limitations) of moving sound sources, and to choose and shape his materials so as to make these dramatically meaningful. No small part of the sonic intricacies here results from the inspired exploitation of antiphonies and crisscrossing tonal stands, as well as of such descriptive effects as the rising drawbridge in *Camelot*. R.D.D.

"Mucho Gusto." Percy Faith and His Orchestra. Columbia CL 1639, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8439, \$4.98 (SD).

Faith's talent for glittering arrangements which refurbish old favorites with an appealing freshness is strikingly demonstrated in this program of Mexican music. His new musical look is particularly becoming on such favorites from below the Rio Grande as *Maria Elena*, *Perfidia*, and *Bésame Mucho*, and no band of Mariachis has ever been handed such glowing settings as Faith has arranged for lesser-known regional works like

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Las Mananitas, La Negra, and the stately *La Chaparrita*. Into this Mexican mélange, Faith has introduced one of his own compositions, *Mucho Gusto*, replete with flaring trumpets, whistles, and whip cracks; it's as lively as a Mexican jumping bean and as idiomatic as the rest of the music. The stereo version is outstandingly good, and is certainly the one to own. J.F.I.

"Jump Up Calypso." Harry Belafonte; Chorus: Orchestra. Ralph Hunter, cond. RCA Victor LPM 2388, \$3.98 (LP).

In this album, Belafonte is back doing what he does best—the songs of the West Indies. His program combines calypso with straight Caribbean ballads such as *Kingston Market* and features a lovely, swinging Christmas song, *The Baby Boy*. Arrangements tend towards the elaborate, but Belafonte himself preserves a clear, uncluttered vocal line. This is the idiom of Belafonte's original environment and of his first great hits; on his home grounds the master is unbeatable. His fans should delight in this performance, and so should almost everyone else. Glowing sound. O.B.B.

"The Greek Way." Gus Vali and His Orchestra. United Artists UAS 6148, \$4.98 (SD).

Here is a genuine sleeper among recordings made primarily for foreign-language audiences: both a consistently engaging representation of Anatolian-American popular songs (topped by the magnificently tuneful and atmospheric *Maharajah*, but including the scarcely less delightful *I'll Take Two, Shee, Bird, You Want To Dance*, etc.), and a confirmation of the universal appeal of the bouzoukia—that Grecian cross between mandolin and guitar which was starred so effectively in the film score of *Never on Sunday*. Three of these incisive instruments are featured here in a vivacious ensemble which also includes flute, clarinet, saxophone (substituting surprisingly well for traditional Greek or Turkish reed pipes), and percussion. The timbres are at once novel and appetizing; the performances are dazzling and exotic without ever seeming unintelligibly alien; and the clean, brilliant, if somewhat hard stereo recording captures the spirited instrumental interplays (the metallic twanginess of the bouzoukias in particular) to perfection. Indeed the program as a whole has musical and sonic attractions far transcending parochial appeals. R.D.D.

"The Immortal Victor Herbert." Robert Shaw Chorale and Orchestra, Robert Shaw, cond. RCA Victor LM 2515, \$4.98 (LP); LSC 2515, \$5.98 (SD).

I have been listening to recordings of this music for more than thirty years, and I have no hesitation in saying that these are the finest vocal performances of Herbert's operetta music I have ever heard on disc. Although the enormous success of this project must be due to the superb teamwork of everyone concerned, I should like first to draw attention to Robert Russell Bennett, for his splendid orchestral and choral arrangements. These are richly and robustly scored, and weightier, musically, than those of Herbert himself; but what makes them so distinctive is Bennett's uncanny ability to retain the period flavor of Herbert's music without permitting it to sound terribly dated. Equally eye-opening is the choral work of the

Robert Shaw singers, who swing into the rousing Herbert tunes and choruses with such enthusiasm that the sweeping melodies and pounding rhythms are, quite literally, breath-taking. The quartet of soloists also do a grand job with the numbers assigned them. Particularly memorable are Saramae Endich's performance of *If I Were on the Stage* (the three-part song scena that concludes with *Kiss Me Again*) and Calvin Marsh's sonorous and determined *I Want What I Want When I Want It*. RCA Victor has wrapped up these fifteen Herbert numbers, some of the composer's greatest songs, in spectacular sound. I listened first to the mono version, and did not see how the stereo could be better. I don't find that it is . . . but this sort of Mexican standoff ensures everyone of a superb recording. J.F.I.

"Guitar Lament." Al Viola, guitar. World Pacific WP 1408, \$4.98 (LP).

"The Most Exciting Guitar." Roy Lanham; rhythm group. Dolton BLP 2009, \$3.98 (LP).

Guitar fanciers could hardly ask for two more sharply contrasted recorded recitals than this disparate pair: one a group of moody soliloquies dreamily spun on a concert guitar; the other of display pieces twanged out on the metal-stringed, near-bodiless instrument (with electronic amplification, natch!) beloved in the rock 'n' roll set. The latter player, Roy Lanham, backed by a bassist and drummer, is brashly energetic, and there is little aurally attractive in his narrow gamut of wiry timbres, yet he plays with so much gusto that even his extravagances are amusing. The exuberant country-style elaborations on *Wildwood Flower* and *Where or When* represent him at his best; those on the *Kerry Dance, Old Joe Clark*, etc., are often strident and overfancy, yet never lacking in powerful fascination.

Al Viola is no less closely miked, but seemingly more richly recorded—although this may be a consequence of his warmer, more delicately colored, and infinitely more sonorous tonal qualities, as vibrant and nuanced as I've ever heard in any, even the most famous, guitar recordings. Musically, there is little substance here, for these mostly meditative doodlings vaguely based on such pop songs as *Black Coffee, Comme ci comme ça, Lover Man*, etc., aren't particularly imaginative. But sonically, this is sheer aural balm. R.D.D.

"Russian Folk Songs," Vol. 3. The Piatnitsky, Siberian, Ural, and Voronezh Folk Choruses. Monitor MF 351, \$4.98 (LP).

Volume Three of Monitor's continuing series of Russian traditional ballads shares the excellence of its predecessors. A potpourri of vocal ensembles present the songs of their respective regions in what are doubtless definitive renditions. Melodies run an appealing gamut from gaiety to heartbreak: the soft sadness of *I Should Have Stayed Single* and the melting love lyrics of *Oh My Sweetheart, Fair Maiden* provide singularly memorable bands on an outstanding disc. The reproduction is generally fine, with only occasional thin passages. O.B.B.

"Frère Jacques, Alouette, and The Favorite French Songs For Children."

Martine Havet and The Fleur de Lis Singers. Kapp KS 3249, \$4.98 (SD). The background of Martine Havet and her chorale is unknown to me, and

Kapp's album sleeve remains maddeningly mute. But, in any case, Mlle. Havet offers a freshly conceived, thoroughly delightful program of French children's songs—than which there are none more immediately appealing. When indicated, the chorus even manages to sound like a group of adolescent girls—which it very well may be. Neatly delineated stereo sound rounds out an ingratiating hour, but Kapp provides us with no translations and only partial texts. The purchaser can merely voice a bewildered *pourquoi?* O.B.B.

"Thunderstorm and Other Sounds-In-Motion of American Life." Riverside XK 8005, \$5.98 (SD).

Probably inspired by E. D. Nunn's famous "Echoes of the Storm" for Audiophile Records (recently reissued, by the way, in stereo as well as monophony under the ConcertDisc label), this latest release in Riverside's "Fortissimo" series, which avoids inner-groove distortion by playing from the inside out, is one of the most vividly realistic collections to date of natural and man-made sound effects: a thunder-and-rain storm, Coney Island carrousel, Maryland tobacco auction, sportscar race (at Maryland's Marlboro raceway), the field maneuvers of a John Deere Model "M" farm tractor, the booming departure of the *Queen Mary*, and, perhaps most amusing and home-spun of all, an Ossining, N. Y., street parade of fire engines and amateur fire company bands. Some of these are closely, some distantly miked; and for all the crystalline clarity and precise directionality of the flawless stereo recording, here there is a supreme naturalness that I find far more satisfying and evocative than artificial sensationalism ever can be. R.D.D.

"Sing to Me, Mr. C." Perry Como; Mitchell Ayres and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2390, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2390, \$4.98 (SD).

In this recorded re-creation of the spot in his TV program known as "Medley Time," the amiable Perry Como vocally meanders through six medleys (nineteen songs) requested by members of his vast TV audience. The songs are particularly well suited to his informal, leisurely way of handling a song, and they place no great strain on the Como voice, which is as pleasant to listen to today as it was ten years ago. Backed by the indispensable Mitchell Ayres Orchestra and guitarist Tony Mottola (the Ray Charles Singers are used only to introduce the theme song), these relaxed performances should delight any Como fan. J.F.I.

"Reginald Dixon at Blackpool's Mighty Tower Ballroom Organ." Capitol T 10285, \$3.98 (LP); ST 10285 (SD).

In the realm of the "Mighty Wurlitzer," there are few American theatre organists who can match the easy skill, tasteful variety of registration, restraint in the use of percussive effects, and general jaunty-ness of Britisher Reginald Dixon. His present program of pops and light classics (*Cherokee, Canadian Capers, Jalousie, Sabre Dance*, etc.) is conventional enough, but the instrument used is unusually tractive tonally (of course infinitely superior to the electronic substitutes for true pipe tone so popular in this country), and it has been recorded with sharp-focused authenticity in monophony, with warmer expansiveness in full-blooded stereo. R.D.D.



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"Dixieland Doin's." The Four Lads; The Swingin' Nine Minus Two. Kapp KS 3254, \$4.98 (SD).

The Four Lads serve up a surprisingly appetizing feast of polite Dixieland, when one considers that show tunes are not often considered good provender for such a banquet. Among the more successful numbers are *The Surrey with the Fringe on Top*, *Mountain Greenery*, *Wouldn't It Be Lovely*, and—most surprising of all—*Mr. Goldstone*, a Jule Styne song from *Gypsy* which few people will even remember. If the sole entrant from the movies, *High Noon*, fails to work out as successfully, it is the only miss in an interesting experiment. The foursome, long successful as pops singers, are completely at home in their new medium; and with the nonet of jazz musicians blowing some pleasant, if rather subdued, Dixieland accompaniments, the record provides a most agreeable, off-the-beaten-track experience. J.F.I.

"The Ol' Calliope Man at the Fair." Sande and Greene Fun-Time Band. Reprise R 6004, \$4.98 (LP); R9 6004, \$5.98 (SD).

If you can be amused by as unlikely a combination of qualities as those of chromium-plated corn-balls, this will be your prize novelty record of the year. Purportedly a nostalgic evocation of backcountry-fair carousel and band music, complete with folksy jacket-notes by a hayspeedy "ol' calliope man," this is actually the product of the sharpest of city-slicker arrangers and players. As such it is extremely clever, deftly integrating the expert calliope, tuba, xylophone, banjo, etc., solos in seemingly free-for-all performances complete with deliberate wrong notes, hoof claps, heehaws, slide whistles, and other comic effects beloved by the "livery-stable" bands of yesteryear. Silly as it all may be, its unbounded humor and éclat are impossible to resist, especially in the warmer and more piquantly timbre-differentiated stereo version, which is much more attractive than the brasher, harder-toned LP. R.D.D.

"Ain't That Weird?" Brother Dave Gardner. RCA Victor LPM 2335, \$3.98 (LP).

Dave Gardner, RCA's favorite comic, sounds a bit overstylized in this latest release. His southern accent has crept down a few more degrees of latitude: the unction of his delivery has thickened. Brother Dave deals largely in broad ironies and affects a preacherlike pose. It seems to me that in the routines on this disc, however, he relies too heavily upon inflections and key phrases (e.g. "It don't make no difference. Beloved!") to milk his laughs. But perhaps this impression stems from the naked fact that his talent overshadows that of his writers. He draws the bead with skill and squeezes the trigger with professional timing, but his punch lines scatter all over the target: few strike dead center. Nevertheless, Brother Dave is an unctuous antidote to an unctuous age. O.B.B.

"Jackie Gleason's Lovers' Portfolio."

Capitol WBO 1619, \$9.96 (Two LP); Capitol SWBO 1619, \$11.96 (Two SD). If you need a little help with your romance, Jackie Gleason, that old master of mood music, here has just the thing to help you over the rough spots. This two-record album is designed to create and sustain all the moods Gleason considers essential to a successful, romantic

evening. Soft, pleasing piano solos take care of the preliminary *Sippin'* interlude, followed by a lively spell of Dixieland intended for just plain *Listenin'*, or perhaps for filling in any awkward lulls in the dinner conversation. When the mood for dancing overtakes you, the Gleason Society Dance Orchestra is on hand with an excellent program that may easily keep you on your feet longer than you anticipated. When the final phase of the evening arrives, the romantic and unobtrusive piano solos return to handle the period of *Music for Lovin'*.

The evening is not assured of complete success, however, unless certain other social amenities are observed, and in a rather Emily Post-ish way Gleason points out the necessity for fresh flowers, impeccable linen, gleaming crystal, polished silver, and candlelight. Potables are, of course, *de rigueur*, and Gleason assumes you own a well-stocked bar—preferably of the name-brand liquors he lists (although, at the same time, he doesn't give you credit for knowing how to mix even a Martini). Of course, if your date decides she just wants a beer, don't depend on this music to further the romantic proceedings. J.F.I.

"Songs Father Taught Me." Father Joseph Dustin. C.S.S.R., His Red Hot Banjo, and Ensemble. Riverside RLP 97509, \$4.98 (SD).

These vivacious, brightly recorded *divertissements* (*Roll On Mississippi*, *Humoresque*, *Glow Worm*, *Bill Bailey*, *Paddlin' Madeline Home*, etc.) are diverting enough entertainment featuring zestful, well-controlled banjo playing and occasional breathless but idiomatic vocals, backed up by rhythm banjo, piano, bass, and drums—which scarcely explains why the disc is already a best seller, in the Detroit area at least. That is the result of local pride in the soloist, whose vocation is that of a priest in the Redemptorist Order—the eighteenth-century founder of which, St. Alphonsus Liguori, was a harpsichordist of some contemporary renown. R.D.D.

"The Vagabond King." Judith Raskin; Mario Lanza; Chorus; Orchestra, Constantine Callinicos, cond. RCA Victor LM 2509, \$4.98 (LP).

Friml's swashbuckling operetta about France in the days of François Villon and Louis XI has never fared well on records, and this new presentation, one of the late Mario Lanza's last recordings, does nothing to rectify the situation. In truth, it is neither better nor worse than a previous RCA Victor recording, featuring Oreste (and what ever happened to him?) and Jean Fenn, which was quickly deleted from the catalogue. Even with, or perhaps because of, the use of the echo chamber, it is soon apparent that Lanza was not in good voice when the recording was made; and as the work progresses, the deterioration in the singer's equipment becomes increasingly obvious, noticeably in the Gigli-like sobs in *Love Me Tonight* and the anguished outbursts in *Song of the Vagabonds*.

Against this pathetic performance, the excellence of Lanza's partner, Judith Raskin, shines more brightly. Although she has few chances to display her cool, bell-like soprano, she makes the most of those opportunities in a performance distinguished for excellent taste and a good sense of style. If the record has any other distinction, it lies in its presentation of two numbers from the score seldom recorded: *Love for Sale* (not to

be confused with Cole Porter's sophisticated ditty of the same name), and *Hunting*, a chorus number strongly reminiscent of the composer's *Totem Tom Tom* from *Rose Marie*. The recorded sound (mono only) is fuzzy and inclined to edginess. J.F.I.

"Sounds of Speed: A Special Sampler." Riverside RLP 9S-6, \$1.98 (SD).

"Sounds of Sebring, 1961." Riverside RLP 95023, \$5.98 (SD).

"Farewell to a Formula." Riverside RLP 95022, \$5.98 (SD).

Drawn from its long and authoritative series of documentaries, Riverside's special sampler lives up to its claim of a "remarkable variety of racing sounds, covering every variety of motor sport": Sebring and Grand Prix contests, hot rods and dragsters, karts, historic Mercedes cars, Bonneville speed trials, etc. For its range of sounds and vehicles, for the illuminating notes by Barrett Clark, as well as for its consistently vivid, clean-cut technology, this is an ideal introduction to the curious domain of fast-car documentations.

The other two releases, fine as they are of their kind, are likely to hold the interest of *aficionados* only. One is the twelfth in the Sebring series, won last March by Hill and Gendebien in a factory Ferrari, and liveliest in its candid pit stop conversations and driver interviews; the other is a memorial collection of warm-up and practice sounds recorded a year ago in the preliminaries to the final competition of 2½-litre Grand Prix cars—a race documented earlier in Riverside RLP 95021.

R.D.D.

"60 Years of the Music America Loves Best," Vol. 3 (Popular). Various Artists. RCA Victor LOP 1509, \$1.98 for a limited time only (LP).

As the title indicates, this third bargain-price release in RCA Victor's retrospective series is less heterogeneous than the earlier volumes in that it is confined to pop selections and artists ("classics" are represented in a companion disc, LM 3574). Included are such memorabilia as Vernon Dalhart's *Prisoner's Song* and Sir Harry Lauder's *A Wee Doch an' Doris*; early-career samples of the singing of Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, and Harry Belafonte; and examples of the hit performances which won fame for the bands of Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw, Bunny Berigan, Tommy Dorsey, and Hal Kemp. Fine as many of these remain, it is now Ted Weems's (and whistler Elmo Tanner's) *Heartaches* which unexpectedly carries off top honors. In the re-recording the original scratch has been almost, if not quite, eliminated, but unfortunately at the cost of whatever highs the less ancient originals once boasted. R.D.D.

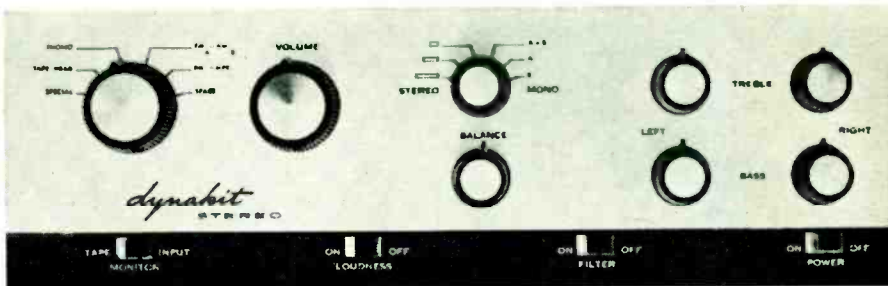
"Everybody Loves the Lover." Sacha Distel; Frank DeVol and His Orchestra. Columbia CL 1647, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8447, \$4.98 (SD).

Sacha Distel, whom Europeans consider the greatest jazz guitarist since Django Reinhardt, makes his American recording debut as a troubadour, sans guitar, in a program of romantic American ballads. Singing is obviously a late love in the rather stormy career of this artist, and the recent switch to vocalizing is fairly obvious here; although the voice is dark and rather rich, and the singer has a talent for projecting the meaning of the lyrics of his songs, his style lacks

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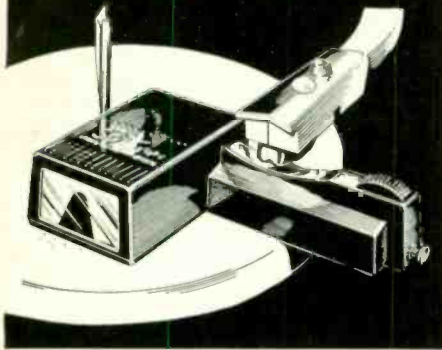
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individuality or variety. The performances suffer from a monochromatic flatness, in spite of efforts to give them color and a certain amount of Continental charm. The liner notes, in a flight of fanciful hyperbole, suggest that France has sent us another Chevalier. Trenet, or Montand. Unfortunately, the recorded evidence does not support the claim.

J.F.I.

"Maggie's Theme." Medallion Strings, Emanuel Vardi, cond. Medallion MS 7527, \$5.98 (SD).

The title song in Vardi's incongruous yet fascinating combination of well-nigh symphonic sonorities and a jukebox beat has been one of the recent "hot singles," and the rest of the program aspires to the same distinction. This is an odd combination of crudity and sophistication for a musician of the erstwhile violinist's caliber, but he brings surprisingly rich tonal distinction to many of the otherwise blatant performances (those of *Goodbye Again*, *The Bilbao Song*, *Summer Love*, and *Gloria's Theme*, in particular), all of which are recorded ultra-stereoisotically, brilliantly, and robustly.

R.D.D.

"Come Swing with Me." Frank Sinatra; Orchestra, Billy May, cond. Capitol W 1594, \$4.98 (LP); SW 1594, \$5.98 (SD).

Among the last of Sinatra's recordings for Capitol, this disc contains some of the most lethargic, even indifferent performances this artist has given in many years. Even the vitality of the Billy May arrangements fails to lift the singer out of the doldrums. The slow, relaxed numbers sound almost lifeless, while the swingers have very little of Sinatra's usual thrust. Capitol's sound is faultless, but I'm afraid this hardly compensates for the dreary vocalizing.

J.F.I.

"Lena at The Sands." Lena Horne; Orchestra, Lennie Hayton, cond. RCA Victor LPM 2364, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2364, \$4.98 (SD).

The chic veneer that overlays all of Miss Horne's work when she is facing an audience is again conspicuous in these recorded mementos of a Las Vegas nightclub stint. It seems as if the singer is far more interested in dazzling her audience with a glamorous personality and flashing smile than in genuinely applying herself to her material. The serious songs here, as well as the show tunes included in the three medleys offered, are all treated in a glossy and highly superficial way. Only when the performer feels she has a number particularly geared to nightclub habitués does she really seem to come to grips with a song. This occurs twice in the course of the present program—once when she projects the string of *double-entendres* that runs through *Don't Commit the Crime*, and again when she revels in the suggested ribaldry of *You Don't Have To Know the Language*. Unfortunately, neither song seems worth all the effort expended.

J.F.I.

"The Percussive Twenties." Eric Rogers and His Orchestra. London SP 44006, \$5.98 (SD).

This is the second of London's new and highly touted Phase 4 Stereo records to reach me, and I am unable to be any more enthusiastic about it than I was about the recent Ted Heath disc. I admire the excellence of the sound *per se*, but I am dismayed at the manner in

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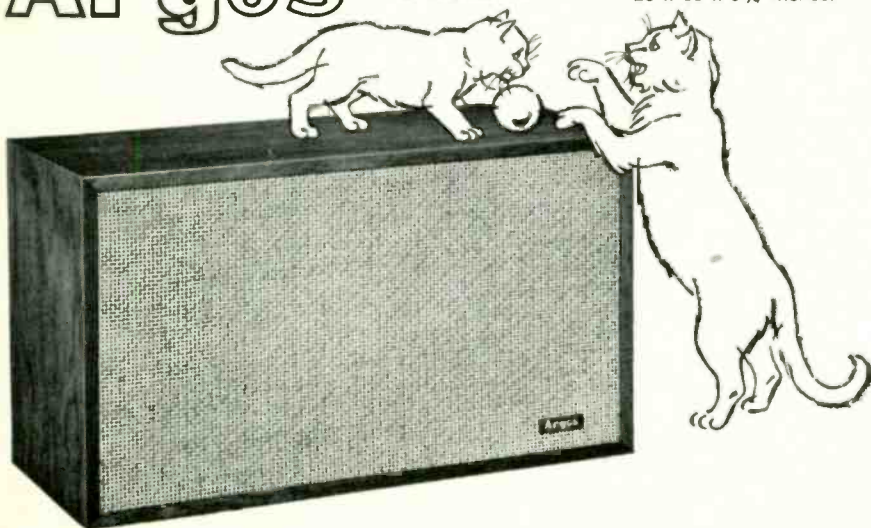
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which it has been manipulated. Some slight efforts have been made to simulate the style of those days and some of the arrangements have a period air, but both have been sabotaged for the sake of spectacular stereo effects. Two items stand out in my mind: incongruity of the sirens, horns, bells (Mrs. O'Leary's cow?), and machine-gun bursts that have been introduced into *Chicago*; and *Tea for Two*, ruined at the outset by the anachronistic introduction of the sound of a dial telephone (in the mid-Twenties). The recording was made in England; and if anyone is really interested in giving us in modern sound a picture of the music of the Twenties, I'm sure there are enough of Savoy Orpheans or Debroy Somers 78s around which could be reconstructed to give us a re-creation rather than a travesty. J.F.I.

"Whatever Julie Wants." Julie London; Orchestra. Liberty LRP 3192, \$3.98 (LP).

Whatever Julie wants, what she most needs, in my opinion, is a brand-new routine. Mewing her way like some little sex kitten through a series of fairly innocuous ditties and trying to turn them into something provocative. Julie provides some entertainment the first two or three times around; but after the thirteenth essay, the performance becomes a little boring. You couldn't listen to Mae West for that number of times either. J.F.I.

"The New I Love Paris." Michel Legrand and His Orchestra. Columbia CL 1640, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8440, \$4.98 (SD).

It should be stated that this is a remake, not a reissue, of Legrand's best-selling LP of 1954 entitled "I Love Paris" (Columbia CL 555), deleted from the catalogue several months ago. The perfectly good sound on that disc is entirely superseded by the sonics of this new recording. Legrand's homage to *la ville lumière* is still often on the explosive side, but I fancy that the performances themselves have more precision and warmth than on the earlier issue. The program remains the same, except for *Paris Canaille*, which has been expunged from the new album. J.F.I.

"Shelby Flint." Valiant LPS 401, \$3.98 (SD).

Faulting Shelby Flint's voice offers no challenge: it is very small, very breathy, limited in range. Nonetheless, Miss Flint is an effective and moving vocalist—perhaps because she is so obviously sincere, perhaps because, for all its shortcomings, her voice is basically true and sweet. The program she has chosen reflects a catholicity of taste leavened by due regard for her intimate style. Particularly pleasant are *Heather on the Hills*, *Scarlet Ribbons*, *Lavender Blue*, and Miss Flint's recent popular hit *Angel on My Shoulder*. I myself enjoyed this record, but I suggest listening before buying. Unfortunately, the engineers have provided an overdose of echo, probably in the interests of pseudo realism for somebody's \$39.98 "hi-fi." O.B.B.

"Invitation to Music." Elie Siegmeister, author-narrator. Folkways FT 3603, \$5.95 (LP).

Composer-lecturer Siegmeister's essay into music education here is a very elementary primer in appreciation, a straightforward exposition of the rudi-

ments (melody, rhythm, harmony, counterpoint, and tone color) which goes no farther than two- and three-part form. It is, however, effectively illustrated by a catholic range of examples from modern composers and jazz as well as from the more conventional folk music and classical repertoires. Some of these are played on the piano, serviceably enough, by Siegmeister himself; others in orchestral performances which scarcely sound professional enough to have been transcribed from standard recordings. But this last is no serious handicap to an otherwise extremely useful and informative lesson which, although obviously designed for children, is so sensible and un-mannered that no novice adult can fail to profit by it too. R.D.D.

"Songs of Inspiration." Arthur Godfrey; Godfrey Choristers; organ; harp. Signature SM 1056, \$3.98 (LP).

Godfrey is back and Signature has him. The hymnlike airs he sings in his somewhat restricted bass-baritone include *The Little Brown Church*, *Blest Be the Tie That Binds*, and *Beautiful Isle of Somewhere*. There is a rather contrived Sunday School ambiance to the proceedings, underlined by recitations of psalm and a poem in overunctuous tones. The recording engineers, however, have produced a showcase of brilliant sound and velvety surfaces. O.B.B.

"Starlight Fantasie." Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra. Miklós Rózsa, cond. Capitol P 8553, \$4.98 (LP); SP 8553, \$5.98 (SD).

Somewhere along the line, these four familiar orchestral *chevaux de bataille* seem to have been deprived of adequate sonic sustenance. Whether this is the fault of the engineers, who have contrived a low-level recording in which microphone placements seem too distant, or of conductor Miklós Rózsa, who seems determined to keep his orchestral forces under wraps throughout, I am unable to decide. Certainly none of these roof raisers makes the impact it should, and the performances of Liszt's *Préludes*, and Tchaikovsky's *Marche slave* are inexcusably dull. Brahms's *Hungarian Dance No. 4* and the pulsating Enesco *Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1* fare a little better, though by no stretch of imagination could either performance be called exciting. J.F.I.

"Percussion Parisienne." David Carroll and His Orchestra. Mercury PPS 2008, \$4.98 (LP); PPS 6008, \$5.98 (SD).

Can-can cover girls and some of the most piquant Parisian tunes make this program a strong candidate for best-sellerdom, but the routine novelty arrangements and hard-driven, overman-nered performances by the thirty-two-man band aren't likely to leave many discriminating listeners happy with their purchase. Except in a jumping *Twentieth-Century Drawing Room* (based on *La Cinquante*) there is scant zest or imagination here; the featured clashing harpsichord and wheezing accordion or concertina timbres get very tiresome; and I don't know when I've heard parts of *An American in Paris*, *Gaîté parisienne*, and *La Boutique Jantastique* travestied more crudely than by the erstwhile tasteful and musically intelligent Carroll. Even the ultrabright recording has an unpleasantly biting edge in both LP and SD versions. R.D.D.

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JAZZ



Sweet Emma Barrett: "The Bell Gal and Her Dixieland Boys." Riverside 364, \$4.98 (LP); 9364, \$5.98 (SD).

Sweet Emma herself is an indifferent pianist and singer but the band she leads has tremendous drive, thanks to a front line including Percy Humphrey on trumpet, Jim Robinson, trombone, and Willie Humphrey, clarinet. These sturdy soloists (backed by an excellent rhythm section made up of Emanuel Sayles, banjo and guitar, McNeal Breaux, bass, and Josiah Fraser, drums) sail through a sure-fire program topped by a sterling performance of that old chestnut *Chinatown*, and stride in confident fashion through *Down in Honky Tonk Town*, *Just a Little While To Stay Here*, *Tishomingo Blues*, and a version of *Saints* which, on sheer lustiness of attack, won over this violently anti-*Saints* listener.

Ray Bryant Trio: "Cona Alma." Columbia CL 1633, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8433, \$4.98 (SD).

Having established himself as an all-purpose pianist, at home in anything from Dixieland to hip linearity, Bryant seems now to be going through a striptease process in which he is shedding his various acquired cloaks to reveal the real, individual Bryant. The basic Bryant is, apparently, a very honest descendant of Art Tatum, with the sensitive touch, the easy virtuosity, and the casual, welding runs characteristic of Tatum. Yet it is also evident that Bryant stands at a professional crossroads: he is just as inclined to veer towards the bland, pop techniques of George Shearing as to move in the more inspiring ways of Tatum. From either point of view, these are good performances. The only ominous note is the feeling that his essays into simple facility may prove attractive enough to lure him down the dead-end path Shearing has chosen to follow.

Ray Charles: "The Genius After Hours." Atlantic 1369, \$4.98 (LP); S 1369, \$5.98 (SD).

Charles has stretched himself in so many directions—as raucous rhythm and blues performer, slick pop artist, vocalist and pianist—that a Charles disc these days can be a very uncertain quantity. This one, fortunately, focuses on Charles the pianist, and, on the whole, places him in good surroundings. He plays with four groups: his regular small band, a condensed version of this group, and with two trios, one drawn from his band and another filled out by the late Oscar

Pettiford on bass and Joe Harris, drums. No matter what the setting, Charles's piano is at the center of things; he is, to put it succinctly, superb. He plays magnificent blues, brilliantly swinging up-tempo pieces, and one thoughtfully evolved ballad, *The Man I Love*. It is as fine (and varied) a group of jazz piano performances as one could ask for, supplemented by a couple of well-directed saxophone solos on both tenor and alto by David Newman.

Lou Donaldson: "Light-Foot." Blue Note 4053, \$4.98 (LP).

Donaldson is an alto saxophonist who plays with melodic directness and disdains the strange, the harsh, and the grotesque. His major flaw is an off-handedness, a blandness that allows much of his work to slip by without leaving any noticeable impression. He plays several pleasant standards here (*Walking by the River*, *Green Eyes*, etc.) and plays them well and appreciatively. But the net effect is so slight, so un compelling, that the listener is never drawn back to them. He also includes a swinger, *Light-Foot*, and a blues, *Hog Maw*, and shows his well-developed skill in both these veins. His pianist, Herman Foster, is a refreshingly high-spirited relief from the "soul" pianists who plod through most recorded blowing sessions nowadays, but he has a habit of building all his solos to block chord climaxes which become just as boring as "soul" thumping.

The Jimmy Giuffre 3: "Fusion." Verve 8397, \$4.98 (LP); 68397, \$5.98 (SD).

The strangely foot-loose and unresolved career of Jimmy Giuffre glances off at a new tangent here. Apparently he has abandoned the explorations of the roots of jazz which occupied him for several years and which produced a series of somnolent, jiggling pieces that lurched around in a monotonously repetitious manner. Now Giuffre has joined the far-out wing of jazz. But here, playing with Paul Bley, piano, and Steve Swallow, bass, he retains at least one element developed earlier when his clarinet was teamed with guitar and valve trombone—an earnest, muddy monotony. Giuffre mumbles dolorously most of the time on the lower register of his clarinet while Bley and Swallow throw in miscellaneous bloops and thumps. Occasionally—on *Jesus Maria*; *Cry, Want*; and *Used to Be*—Giuffre pulls himself up to a plaintively pastoral level. These performances seem to have no relationship to jazz aside from the fact that they are the work of three musicians usually associ-

ated with jazz and are issued as part of the Verve 8000 series which is normally devoted to jazz.

Milt Jackson and John Coltrane: "Bags and Trane." Atlantic 1368, \$4.98 (LP); S 1368, \$5.98 (SD).

Here we have two of the current jazz invulnerables blowing freely. If it pleases you to hear musicians as skillfully swinging as Jackson and Coltrane solo at great length in a variety of contexts with no need to be concerned with anyone else, this is the disc for you. The selections include two blues by Jackson, Dizzy Gillespie's *Be-Bop*, and a pair of ballads, *Three Little Words* and *The Night We Called It a Day*. The accompanying rhythm section is made up of Hank Jones, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; and Connie Kay, drums. This is nothing more than a blowing session, albeit a superior one even though Jones takes some of the solo space.

The Jazz Brothers: "Hey, Baby!" Riverside 371, \$4.98 (LP); 9371, \$5.98 (SD).

The influence of Horace Silver is strongly evident in this young quintet from upstate New York. The charging, crackling attack associated with Silver's quintet is evident here, particularly in the lifting exultant drumming of Roy McCurdy. The two brothers indicated in the group's name, Gap and Chuck Mangione (piano and trumpet, respectively), are capable but minor cogs in this machine. The rhythmic stimulus is McCurdy, and the important solo voice is tenor saxophonist Sal Nistico, who plays with tremendous digging drive. With its stimulating horn, this group outdoes its prototype.

The Jazz Crusaders: "Freedom Sound." Pacific Jazz 27, \$4.98 (LP).

The Jazz Crusaders are four young musicians from Texas Southern University in Dallas (augmented on this disc by Jimmy Bond, bass, and Roy Gaines, guitar). The basic quartet—Wilton Felder, tenor saxophone; Wayne Henderson, trombone; Joe Sample, piano; and Sticks Hooper, drums—has a strong, swinging attack which is wasted to a great extent here because so much attention is devoted to ordinary, undistinctive material. Several of the selections are in the hokum gospel vein currently found on almost every Pacific Jazz disc, and the inclusion of *Theme from "Exodus"* is an obvious play to the pop audience. When they get away from clichés, the group is boisterous and vital, showing

some reflections of the Jazz Messengers and, more often, of a Horace Silver style—with better horns than Silver's. Pianist Joe Sample reveals an interesting turn of mind as composer with the title piece, *Freedom Sound* (which avoids the triteness the name implies), and trombonist Henderson gives promise of being a really vigorous player. The great potentiality of the Jazz Crusaders is inherent in the fact that the best things on this disc are their own materials—not the routine reflections of others.

The Jazz Five: "The Hooter." Riverside 361, \$4.98 (LP); 9361, \$5.98 (SD).

This English quintet derives a reasonably individual ensemble sound from the combination of tenor and baritone saxophones that comprises its front line. Harry Klein's strong, warm baritone creates much of the group's character both through the fluidity of the solo work and through the rich, dark bottom he brings to the ensemble passages. The tenor, Vic Ash, shows occasional strength as a soloist but lacks Klein's full-bodied tone and attack. Their material, unfortunately, is rather routine except for a piece called *The Hooter*, a lustrous, minor theme that skillfully skirts the clichés of gospel-inspired hokum.

Stan Kenton: "The Romantic Approach." Capitol T 1533, \$3.98 (LP); ST 1533, \$5.98 (SD).

This first product of Kenton's new band, which includes a section of mellotrons, gives his cause as a jazz performer no support. There is not a note of jazz interest on this disc. It might conceivably appeal to the Liberace audience. The set is made up of a series of familiar ballads played at agonizingly slow tempos in lumbering, stodgy, repetitive arrangements.

Red Mitchell: "Rejoice." Pacific Jazz 22, \$4.98 (LP).

Following the trail of other such skilled bassists as Oscar Pettiford and Ray Brown, Red Mitchell has ventured into pizzicato cello. He does well by it, too, drawing out some guttily swinging ideas. But cello-plucking throughout an entire disc creates an inevitable monotony, and this is not relieved by Jim Hall's guitar and Jimmy Bond's plucked bass, both so similar in timbre. The only contrast provided is by pianist Frank Strazzeri, who evolves jabbingly percussive solos in an impressively stark style that could stand up well even in more interesting surroundings.

David "Fathead" Newman: "Straight Ahead." Atlantic 1366, \$4.98 (LP); S 1366, \$5.98 (SD).

Newman, a saxophonist in Ray Charles's band, is accompanied by a non-Charles rhythm section—Wynton Kelly, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; and Charlie Persip, drums. The six selections are evenly divided to feature Newman on tenor saxophone, alto saxophone, and flute. He is a warmly capable performer on tenor, somewhat shrill and aimless on alto, and an earnest piper on flute. All the selections are far too long for his solo capabilities.

Speckled Red: "The Barrel-House Blues." Folkways FG 3555, \$5.95 (LP).

Speckled Red, or Rufus Perryman, is one of the more genial relicts of the

blues now being rediscovered by several of the recording companies. He may still have some powers as a pianist and vocalist but this recording, made at a concert in Denmark, fails to reveal them. In fact, the blend of exuberance and ineptness here suggests that Red was either drunk or pulling the audience's leg. Everything is done in a rowdy, slapdash manner that has a brief, superficial charm but quickly becomes tiresome. It's one thing to fake your way through a supposedly original blues, but when one attempts standard pop tunes, as Red insists on doing, and is very vague about both the tune and the lyrics, a listener can justifiably wonder why the performer has bothered to choose this particular selection. One miscue in a concert might be understandable, but a succession of

them is unforgivable and their preservation on a disc passeth all understanding.

Jim Robinson and His New Orleans Band. Riverside 369, \$4.98 (LP); 9369, \$5.98 (SD).

This band, one of the series recorded in New Orleans by Riverside last January, is very much like the familiar George Lewis band in which Robinson played a stalwart role. To point up the connection, the set opens with *Ice Cream* which, even though it was done practically to death by Lewis, is played with blithe freshness by this group. Robinson has a fine lead trumpet in Ernie Cagnolatti, while his clarinetist, Louis Cottrell, has a gentler, mellower style than Lewis. Four selections are taken from the rep-

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erty of Sam Morgan's band, with which Robinson played in the Twenties, and one of these, *Whenever You're Lonely*, is given a haunting performance. The set as a whole is uneven; the group sometimes lacks cohesion in its ensembles and the playing is occasionally lackluster. But when these men get moving in the same direction they produce fine jazz.

Jack Sheldon: "A Jazz Profile of Ray Charles." Reprise 2004, \$4.98 (LP). The program chosen to depict this "Jazz Profile" may come as something of a shock to anyone who is sufficiently ancient to have listened to music before 1960. The tunes on the first side are *Am I Blue*, *Just for a Thrill*, *Basin Street Blues*, *When Your Lover Has Gone*, *Cherry*, and *Moonlight in*

Vermont. Side 2 is very similar. What have these tunes got to do with Ray Charles? They are, one learns from the liner notes (signed by Ray Charles), tunes "closely associated with me," but since it is quite possible that most listeners will associate them with other performers, this attempt at a profile must necessarily be misty in the extreme. Taken at face value, the performances are generally colorless and come to life only in the brief solo appearances by Marty Paich, on organ, who plays in a simple, unaffected style.

Arbee Stidham: "Arbee's Blues." Folkways FS 3824, \$5.95 (LP); "Tired of Wandering." Prestige/Bluesville 1021, \$4.98 (LP).

Arbee Stidham is a blues singer and gui-

tarist who, in a broad sense, fits into the Mississippi, country-bred style typified by Bill Broonzy. He lacks Broonzy's strength of musical character, however, and apparently can be swayed by his surroundings. On the Folkways disc, accompanied by Memphis Slim on piano and organ and Jump Jackson on drums, his singing is strong, steadfast, and monotonous. But on the Prestige/Bluesville collection, with the much more sensitive and far less rigid accompaniment of John Wright, a brilliant blues pianist; Leonard Gaskin, bass; the same Jump Jackson, drums; and King Curtis, a rockingly willowy tenor saxophonist, Stidham sings with more shading and variety and reveals himself as a blues man with an honest cry in his voice. The group helps to lift him with effectively repeated riffs (as the accompaniment on Folkways does not) and Wright intersperses Stidham's singing with some excellent blues piano. For Wright's work alone, the Prestige disc certainly is worth hearing. But Arbee Stidham, on this album, shows his mettle as one of the superior latter-day country-derived blues men.

Kid Thomas: "And His Algiers Stompers." Riverside 365, \$4.98 (LP); 9365, \$5.98 (SD).

Thomas Valentine, the sixty-five-year-old trumpeter known as "Kid Thomas," is the leader of a current New Orleans band that can rekindle even a faltering interest in jazz. The music is basic and timeless—music meant for dancing, for good times. The Kid is a vital, crackling trumpeter whose only real flaw is a tendency to be carried away by his own exuberance. His clarinetist, Albert Burbank, is, from what I hear on this and other recordings, the most exciting jazzman on this instrument playing today. His every phrase is charged with excitement and, unlike Kid Thomas, he can fulfill all the promises he makes. Trombonist Louis Nelson is less consistent but does well in smooth circumstances, and drummer Samuel Penn gives the band a rollicking push. The program is an interesting mixture of blues, old standards (*That's a Plenty*, *Panama*), and pop standards (*Dinah*, *Confessin'*, and an eminently successful *Smile*, *Darn Ya*, *Smile*). One cannot say that this set is without flaws, but it is honestly carefree, well directed, and sure to give pleasure.

Jimmy Witherspoon: "Spoon." Reprise 2008, \$4.98 (LP).

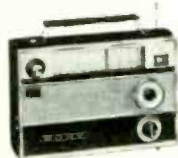
Witherspoon has adapted his lusty, Kansas City-based blues shouting to a program of well-chosen pop standards. Unlike Joe Williams, whose latest disc is somewhat similar, Witherspoon sees pop standards as songs that are just as worth singing as any blues and he abandons none of his expressiveness in making the change. When a shouting approach is suitable, he shouts (*I'm Beginning To See the Light*), but in most cases his singing is mellow and melodious, with a warmly engaging beat. Major contributions to the success of this collection are made by Bob Florence's unusually good arrangements, most of them both imaginative and extremely appropriate, and by an excellent assemblage of musicians who not only work extremely well together as a group but, individually, take some delightful short solos. These ingratiating soloists include Gerald Wilson, Gerry Wiggins, Teddy Edwards, and Si Zentner.

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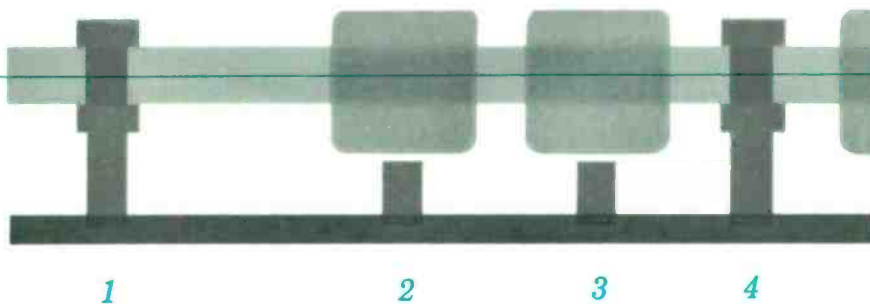
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NEW PRECISION TAPE TRACKING in the 1200 Series required tracking techniques in the tape guidance system previously used and associated only with professional recorders and multi-track instrumentation tape equipment. The key to these techniques is providing perfect alignment of the tape from the time it leaves the "supply" reel until it reaches the "takeup" reel. This is lost in most 4-track recorder construction when the stamped metal plate (conventionally used in home-recorder construction) strains or warps out of alignment from the weight of the motor, clutches, flywheel, and other mechanical assemblies that hang from this top plate. The kind of alignment necessary for narrow-track recording requires the stability of a professional-type, die cast frame — micro-milled in one operation so that the tape guidance system and head assembly are mounted on the same reference plane. And that's exactly what Ampex has done in the 1200 Series. We call it **FINE-LINE** alignment. You can see it by looking under the top plate. You can hear it when you record and playback 2- and 4-track stereo tape or 4-track monophonic tape. It costs slightly more, but is lower cost in the long run. On the average, Ampex-built recorders outlive lower-cost machines two to three times.

Ampex adds a major contribution to 4-track recording and reproduction with the introduction of **FINE-LINE** alignment in the 1200 series 2- and 4-track stereophonic and 4-track monophonic tape recorder/reproducers



THE FINE LINE AMPEX 1200

The New 1200 Series Includes over 170 changes in design to provide highest performance and trouble-free operation. Among the major feature and construction advantages are:

- (A) Exclusive, automatic tape take-up — eliminates the annoying problems of hand threading.
- (B) Built-in mixer — 4 inputs (2 mic, 2 line) for professional recording techniques.
- (C) Master selector switch — permits simple changes from stereo to mono, choice of individual track, A-B comparison of original and recorded program, sound-on-sound, automatic shut-off.
- (D) Constant holdback tension — provides equal tension throughout reel of tape.
- (E) Selective Erase Head — permits increased monophonic flexibility with sound-on-sound, language study, etc.
- (F) Precision recording level meter — for accurate, professional quality recording, reads both channels by simple switching — provides easy comparison and balancing of recording levels.
- (G) Exclusive "Auto-Set" shut-off — offers choice of 2 automatic shut-off positions for unattended recording or playback.
- (H) Convenient speed change (3¾-7½) — rugged, dependable.
- (I) Professional recording electronics — (similar to Ampex 351 series broadcast recorder) insures professional recording quality.
- (J) Directional selective braking — provides quick, positive stops without stretching thin-base tapes.
- (K) Heads — separate erase, record, playback for optimum performance in each function.
- (L) Tape transport — a precision system of constant-holdback tension, powerful 4-pole uniform-speed motor, and capstan assembly provide mechanical specifications (wow & flutter) comparable to broadcast recorders.
- (M) Die cast frame.
- (N) Tape position Indicator.

SPECIFICATIONS The Ampex 1200 incorporates the widest range of abilities ever built into a single unit:

RECORDS 4-track stereophonic

4-track monophonic

PLAYS

4-track stereophonic

2-track stereophonic

4-track monophonic

SPEEDS records and plays at 3¾ and 7½ ips with up to 8 hours, 32 minutes of monophonic recording or playing.

RECORDING INPUTS: High impedance inputs (radio—phono—TV—auxiliary). Approximately 0.25 v rms for maximum normal recording level; high impedance (600μv) microphone inputs.

PLAYBACK OUTPUTS: Approximately 0.75 volts rms from cathode follower with tapes recorded to maximum normal recording level.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 50-15,000 cps ± 2 db at 7½ ips; 50-8,000 cps ± 2 db at 3¾ ips.

SIGNAL-TO-NOISE RATIO: Better than 55 db at 7½ ips; Better than 50 db at 3¾ ips.

FLUTTER AND WOW: Under 0.2% rms at 7½ ips; Under 0.3% rms at 3¾ ips. (Measured according to American Standards Association.)

TIMING ACCURACY: Perfection of pitch to within ⅓ of a half-tone.

HEADS:

Manufactured to the same standards of precision that exist in Ampex broadcast and recording studio equipment. Surfaces are lapped flat within 10 millionths of an inch, resulting in uniform performance characteristics throughout the life of the head. Stereo head gap alignment: the one head gap in the stack with respect to the other is held within 20 seconds of arc, equivalent to less than 10 millionths of an inch — a degree of precision achieved through use of a unique process involving micro-accurate optical measurements within a controlled environment. Head gap length is 90 millionths of an inch.

DIMENSIONS: Portable cases 9" x 15" x 17½". Unmounted recorder 13" x 6½" depth below top plate, 1¾" above. Recorder weight 36 pounds.

POWER REQUIREMENTS: 117 volts, 0.9 amperes, 60 cps (recorder); 117 volts, 0.5 amperes, 60 cps (amplifier-speaker).

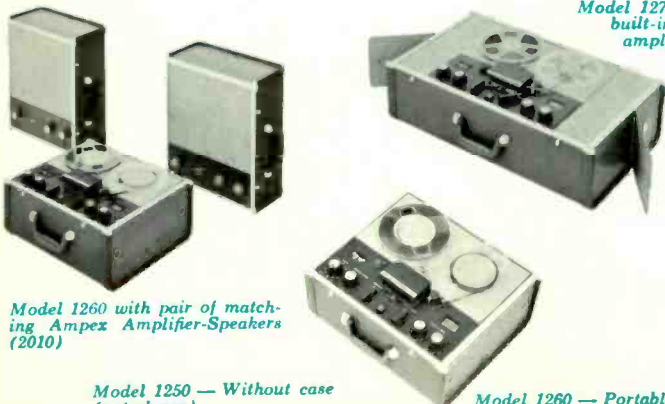
SPECIFICATIONS STANDARDS:

(1) These technical specifications accurately reflect the true performance of every unit off the production line, not a hand-picked sample.

(2) These are professional specifications, measured by professional equipment standards and instruments and are comparable to those used in broadcast and recording industry.

As such, most of these ratings are conservative and individual units may be found to exceed these published specifications. These specifications are not comparable to "sales literature specifications" often used in consumer recorder merchandising.

Model 1270 — Portable with built-in matched pair of amplifier-speakers



Model 1260 with pair of matching Ampex Amplifier-Speakers (2010)

Model 1250 — Without case (not shown)

Model 1260 — Portable

AMPEX

THE FINE LINE AMPEX 1200



the Tape Deck

Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL

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

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68*

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2074. 46 min. \$8.95.

Tremendously impressive on a first casual hearing, this *echt-Wiener* Brahms First (originally released on discs as part of the "Vienna Philharmonic Festival" collection of nearly two years ago) stands up less well to analytical and comparative study. Von Karajan's heavy-handedness, excessively dark colorings, and yearning expressiveness become more and more oppressive, and even the magnificently full-blooded stereo recording seems unable to bring any real lucidity to the orchestra's dense and weighty sonic textures. I still prefer by a wide margin Bruno Walter's brighter, steadier, and more passionate version (reviewed here in 4-track tape form last June), but admittedly there are many listeners, particularly those of European background, for whom Von Karajan's treatment may seem more satisfactorily Brahmsian.

**HAYDN: *Symphony No. 104, in D*
†Mozart: *Symphony No. 40, in G minor, K. 550***

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2080. 50 min. \$8.95.

Originally included in the 1959 de luxe Soria collection, "Vienna Philharmonic Festival," these two symphonies were acclaimed as outstanding examples of the present-day—Karajan regime—Viennese tradition of orchestral playing. In that respect at least they are still unexcelled, for if the sumptuously rich stereo recording is perhaps less transparent and airborne than the best current examples, it remains an impressive sonic documentation of the orchestra's distinctive tonal qualities. There is tremendous breadth and weight here, but also some of the most gracious lyricism (from the woodwinds in particular) ever captured on records. Such grandeur and elegance, together with Von Karajan's characteristic precision and finesse, may make the last "London" symphony seem more Beethovenian than Haydnesque, but the work has seldom sounded more nobly eloquent—even to those who prefer the leaner, more humorous treatments by Beecham and Wöldike. (In any case, the former is untaped and the latter's 2-track Vanguard reel of 1957 is, lamentably, out of print.)

The G minor symphony performance is no less impressively powerful, but purists are likely to find it too large-scaled and dense for all its admirable delineation of detail, and for them the tense vitality of the reading will never quite convey the music's essential intimacy and passionate tenderness. However, there is no truly ideal version available on tape, and Von Karajan's undoubtedly will appeal to a wider audience than either the more orthodox reading by Ludwig for Everest or the almost chamber-scaled, somewhat old-fashioned one by Boult for Westminster.

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4, in G*

Sylvia Stahlman, soprano; Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.
• • LONDON LCL 80075. 54 min. \$7.95.

I have seldom heard, on or off records, a more potent blend of musical and sonic attractions than that which makes this radiant performance so completely spellbinding. Everything seems matchlessly *right*: Solti's deeply personal feeling for both the *grazioso* piquancies and the heart-wrenching poetry of the music; the Amsterdammers' exquisitely colored and warmly glowing playing; and perhaps above all the purity of the recorded sonics—luminous stereoism at its finest. And not the least of the technological merits here are those of the tape processing itself, encompassing some of the most ethereal *pianissimos* on record unflawed by any intrusion of background noise or reverse-channel spillover (clear proof that the noise problems which have plagued many London tapes in the past *can* be solved).

Emerging from so magical an experience, I shrank at first from returning to the Reiner tape version I had praised so highly last February. But, while comparisons reveal distinctively individual treatments of almost every detail, Solti's miraculously "right" approach proves not to be the only legitimate one; if Reiner's lacks such ineluctable tenderness and sweetness, it boasts dramatic force and tautness, and more mordancy in the grotesqueries of the second movement. In addition its more closely focused stereoism exposes even more clearly many of the scoring felicities—particular those of the percussion section in low- as well as high-level passages. It is perhaps only in the last movement that the naïve exultancy of Sylvia Stahlman's singing (in close fidelity to the score instructions: "*mit kindlich heiterem Ausdruck; durchaus ohne Parodie!*") together with Solti's own humor and fervor, raise the London version to a definite superiority. In any case, both versions are well-nigh ideal, and if Solti's is more emotionally moving, each of them convinces us that

(in the words of the *Knaben Wunderhorn* text):

*Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
die unsrer verglichen kann werden.*

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Scheherazade, Op. 35*

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
• • COLUMBIA MQ 388. 46 min. \$7.95.

Bernstein is doubly handicapped here, first, by attempting so familiar a war-horse before his broadly romantic interpretative conception has fully matured and cleansed itself of arbitrary tempo and phrasing idiosyncrasies; second, by the appearance (since the original 1959 release of this version on discs) of both the magnificent Reiner edition for RCA Victor and the recent Ansermet-London disc edition which sets entirely new stereo-sound standards. Yet even with these later two masterpieces fresh in my ears, and despite my irritation over Bernstein's mannerisms and the outright schmaltziness of John Corigliano's violin solos, I still found much to admire here, particularly in the sometimes serenely lyrical, sometimes elastically vivacious third movement. The full-blooded recording is also impressive at times, if never as overwhelming as Reiner's or as superbly natural as Ansermet's, but it is plagued by more *preecho* and background noise than are normally characteristic of Columbia's tape processing. I can't honestly recommend the work except to the conductor's devotees, and then only with serious qualifications; yet, flawed though it is, this still holds the promise that someday we may have a really great Bernstein *Scheherazade*.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Don Quixote, Op. 35*

Pierre Fournier, cello; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.
• • EPIC EC 815. 39 min. \$7.95.

This first tape version of the master tone-poet's most complex orchestral score is unique and incomparable in all respects—not only a superb reading of the fabulous score itself, but the most poetic evocation of the dream-haunted Don and his lusty earthbound companions I have ever heard. The celebrated joust with the windmills, the routing of the sheep, the rescue from the stream, and the illusory hobbyhorse flight through the air are all here in vivid dramatic detail, yet one is never conscious of such notoriously realistic stage effects for their own sake, so persuasively have they been integrated in the musical drama itself. Fournier, who once recorded the work with the great Clemens Krauss many years ago, again proves himself the most touchingly

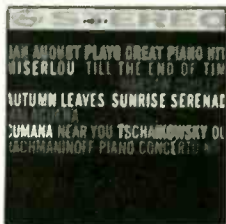
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idealistic of protagonists; the Clevelanders play as if inspired by an unusually expressive and personally involved Szell; and the sonics float buoyantly in airborne stereoism. In this revelatory recorded performance the work seems a wholly fresh creation, one infinitely richer and more rewarding than I had previously considered it to be.

DON COSSACK CHOIR: "Choral Masterpieces of the Russian Orthodox Church"

Krupitzky-Jaroff: *On the Shores of Babylon*. Wedel: *Confession*. Rimsky-Korsakov: *The Only Begotten One*; *Thy Dwelling Place*. Turchaninov: *The Last Supper*; *The Cry of Joseph*; *Pre-Easter Prayer*. Vorotnikov: *The Thief Forgiven*.

Don Cossack Choir, Serge Jaroff, cond.
•• DECCA ST7 9403. 45 min. \$7.95.

Jaroff's choir is best known for its exceedingly robust, if often melodramatic, performances of folk and traditional secular songs in which there frequently is as much shouting and whistling as straight singing—as exemplified in a current "Gala Russe" taping (Decca ST7 10026, 47 min., \$7.95) and the more rewarding "Russian Fair" reel reviewed here last July. The present Lenten church music program reveals to a far greater extent the power and warmth of the magnificent Russian voices in quieter, more sustained and expressive materials. These are hardly masterpieces, although Turchaninov's intricate and dramatic *Cry of Joseph* closely approaches that

stature, but Rimsky's settings of two Kiev chants are richly sonorous and moving, and most of the lesser works, while almost static in their glacially slow flow, are impressive for their devotional sincerity. Yet the prime appeal here is sensuous: that of luminous masses of glorious vocal sound, miraculously "floated" heavenwards.

JOHN CAGE and PAUL PRICE: "Concert Percussion for Orchestra"

Roldán: *Ritmicas*: No. 6, *Tiempo de Rhumba*; No. 5, *Tiempo de Son*. Harrison: *Canticle No. 1*. Russell: 3 *Dance Movements*: *Waltz*, *March*, *Fox Trot*; 3 *Cuban Pieces*: *Havannera*, *Rhumba*, *Tiempo de Son*. Cowell: *Ostinato Pianissimo*. Cage and Harrison: *Double Music*. Cage: *Amores*.

Manhattan Percussion Ensemble, John Cage and Paul Price, conds.
•• TIME ST/8000. 35 min. \$7.95.

This extraordinary collection outglitters even the best of the popular percussion *divertissements*, both in the ingenuity of its timbre explorations and the ultraclearity and brilliance of its strongly stereoeistic recording. It also illuminates a hitherto obscured period of vital creativity, when American composers were first discovering the intoxicating potentialities of percussive and concussive sonorities as a medium for serious musical expression. It's hard to realize now that Amadeo Roldán's subtly vivid *Ritmicas* for eleven Cuban instruments were composed in 1930—a year before Varèse's famous *Ionisation*; or that John Cage's recent avant-garde experiments were pre-

ceded, in 1943, by as poetic a mood-piece for prepared piano as the second one in *Amores*, or by pieces for tom-toms and wood blocks as amusing and delicately atmospheric as those that form the central movements of the same work. William Russell's more fragmentary and self-consciously hard-boiled dances of 1933 and 1939 now seem dated, as does to a lesser extent Cowell's fragile *Ostinato*—for all the cute bubblyness of its tuned rice bowls. But the 1941 Cage-Harrison *Double Music* for four players on all-metal instruments (including brake-drums, water-buffalo bells, and thundersheet) works up catchily to achieve surprising momentum. And Lou Harrison's vivaciously waltzlike first *Canticle* (1939) is a worthy companion to his larger-scaled *Canticle No. 3*.

The historical importance of the present program (with Alfred Frankenstein's valuable annotations) is enormous, yet even more significant is its sheerly musical—and sonic—interest. Technically, too, it is flawless in everything save the intrusion of slight reverse-channel spill-over into what should have been complete silence between several works: a processing weakness which is perhaps excusable considering the nature of the materials, but is nonetheless regrettable.

"Carnival": Selections. Starlight Symphony Orchestra, Cyril Ornadel, cond.
M-G-M STC 3945, 33 min., \$7.95.

"Theme from 'Carnival' and Other Broadway Hits." Mantovani and His Orchestra. London LPM 70047, 35 min., \$6.95.
Ornadel's genuinely symphonic orches-

tra, the brightly open and well-differentiated stereo, plus natural big-hall reverberance combine to give the *Carnival* tunes unexpected distinction. And there are effective contrasts, too, among the woodwind piquancies of *It Was Always You*, *Very Nice Man*, *Yes My Heart*, etc.; the rich string-dominated sonorities of *I've Got To Find a Reason* and *Golden Delicious*; and the rousing swing of *Direct from Vienna* and *The Sword, the Rose, and the Cape*. The Mantovani tape, more lusciously recorded, gives the *Carnival* theme more orthodox mood-music treatment, featuring an accordion soloist; many of the other Broadway hit pieces are overromanticized in familiar fashion. Yet for all their schmaltz and cuteness, some of them (*Till Tomorrow* and *Do Re Mi* in particular) are hard to resist, while the more imaginatively scored and zestful *I Feel Pretty* and *Ascot Gavotte* are interpretative as well as sonic delights.

"Donnybrook!" Original Broadway Cast. Clay Warnick, cond. Kapp KTL 41033, 47 min., \$7.95.

If all of Johnny Burke's score and lyrics were up to *I Wouldn't Bet One Penny*, *Wisha Wurra*, and *Dee-lighted Is the Word*, or if Eddie Foy could have been starred throughout instead of in these three pieces only, *Donnybrook!* would surely rank close to *Finian's Rainbow* and *Brigadoon*. As it is, the rest of the work is merely pleasant rather than striking, and the same might be said of the rest of the cast with the notable exception of the tart-tongued Susan Johnson (in her solo, *Sad Was the Day*,

and in the all-girl trio, *Mr. Flynn*, as well as in her engaging duos with Foy). Warnick's good-sized theatre orchestra plays with considerable vivacity, and in the brightly vivid recording is admirably balanced with the soloists and chorus. No special effort is made, however, to exploit the antiphonal potentialities of the markedly differentiated stereo channels.

"European Concert." The Modern Jazz Quartet. Atlantic ALP 1915 (twin-pack), 81 min., \$11.95.

It will may be that Messrs. Lewis, Jackson, Heath, and Kay have been even more fervent and imaginative in earlier recordings of some of the many originals and standards included here. Yet *Bluesology*, *Vendome*, *Bag's Groove*, and *I'll Remember April* still sound like outstanding chamber-jazz masterpieces—as do *It Don't Mean a Thing*, *I Remember Clifford*, and *'Round Midnight*, which are new (to me at least) in MJQ versions. In any case, niggling comparisons are hardly in place here, for the prime merit of this robustly recorded, rather closely miked, live concert in Scandinavia (one which includes the applause of a quiet but mounting enthusiastic audience) is the large-scaled and remarkably coherent sonic picture it provides of the matchless ensemble in the full assurance of its matured powers. Even the discreet spoken announcements are as rich in personality as they are different, while the playing throughout is a delight to both mind and ears. If you're not familiar with the MJQ's work, here is an ideally comprehensive and persuasive introduction;

if you already are, here is a summation of its most distinctive qualities.

"Get Happy." Ella Fitzgerald; orchestra, various conds. Verve VSTC 256, 33 min., \$7.95.

Ranking only just below her recent Arlen Songbook triumph, this lilting program is rich in examples of Ella's finest singing—especially in a superbly bubbly *Cool Breeze*, a lustily scattish *Blue Skies*, the piquant *You Make Me Feel So Young*, and one of the most original (yet suitable) treatments I've ever heard of the *St. Louis Blues*. The recording is full-blooded and broad-spread, and the scorings by Nelson Riddle, Frank De Vol, Russell Garcia, and Paul Weston (played by ensembles presumably under the individual arrangers' direction) sound spontaneously improvisatory in genuine—never mannered or extravagant—jazz idioms.

"Sing 'n' Clap Along with Ros." Edmundo Ros and His Orchestra. London LPM 70046, 29 min., \$6.95.

Belatedly joining the "sing-along" parade, Ros is as deft as ever in his cha-cha and merengue arrangements of *Get Me to the Church on Time*, *They Say It's Wonderful*, *Standing on the Corner*, etc., and again his notably crisp and colorful orchestra (brightly recorded with marked channel differentiations) proves that it's the best of its kind. The little vocal chorus here, however, is merely routine: the prime participation appeal is less to singing than to clapping or foot-tapping along to the irresistibly catchy Latin-American rhythms.

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High Fidelity Newsfronts



Super-System. What fidelitarian hasn't wondered at one time—upon surveying the array of components at a dealer's shop—how it all would sound if somehow everything could be carted home and hooked up to work all at once?

"It sounds quite good," admits Sol Goldstein of Brooklyn, who has done just about that. Mr. Goldstein, who represents something of an audio salesman's dream, has installed (in a 9- by 14-foot room) no less than ten amplifiers, seven electronic crossovers, three tuners, two tape recorders, a turntable with two arms and three cartridges, and eighteen speakers. The components are rack-mounted in businesslike fashion, with the speakers grouped to form a three-channel system. Between the equipment and Mr. Goldstein's growing collection of 3,000 records and tapes, there is precious little room for much more than a single couch, from which he does most of his listening. The sheer volume of sound available from the many speakers simply overwhelms any random deficiencies in the room's acoustics—which were on the "dead" side to begin with.

Of course, not all the program sources can be played at once, but whatever signal is selected goes through the formidable banks of preamps, crossovers, power amps, and speakers. Mr. Goldstein's speakers, by the way, represent virtually all the approaches to reproducer design and include compact acoustic suspension types, large baffles with huge cone woofers, various midrange units, and a liberal assortment of electrostatic tweeters.

"With the room already so crowded," we wanted to know, "where will you install your stereo FM multiplex units when you start them?" (Goldstein, obviously, is not a man to settle for *one* of anything.)

"For improvements in music reproduction," answers Goldstein, "there's always more room."

To which we can only add: Amen!

The Adventurer Returns. WQXR, New York, has reinstated its "Adventures in Sound" program, long a favorite among fidelitarians within the station's range.

The series, which went off the air in June 1959, has returned with twofold interest. For one thing, matters of audio and how they relate to music and its reproduction are again being handled by Chester Santon who, through the first six years of the series, managed to infuse lucid narrations with unflagging interest and a genuine concern for high-fidelity standards. For another, the new series touches off WQXR's long awaited venture into FM stereo broadcasting via the new multiplex technique. All this should make the weekly Thursday night session at WQXR one of the week's brightest hours.

Literature, Free and Otherwise. The new 1962 catalogues of the major distributors have been appearing, with their descriptions and photos of high-fidelity equipment occupying, as usual, the major portion of these ever burgeoning booklets. The new "Consumer Catalogue" issued by Radio Shack, 730 Commonwealth Ave., Boston 17, Mass., is this company's largest in recent years, boasting some 336 pages. Lafayette's 1962 catalogue (Lafayette Radio Electronics Corp., 165-08 Liberty Ave., Jamaica 33, N. Y.) is the fattest ever issued by this distributor, with 340 pages. Allied Radio (100 N. Western Ave., Chicago 80, Ill.) matches its 1961 catalogue with another volume of 440 pages.

Barzilay Furniture Mfg. Co., Inc., 17303 So. Western Ave., Gardena, Calif., has issued an attractive brochure picturing and describing its line of contemporary stereo high-fidelity furniture. Designed by Jack Benveniste, these units come in a variety of styles and sizes for housing components, with optional matching speaker enclosures.

Acoustic Research, Inc., 24 Thorn-dike St., Cambridge 41, Mass., has published its first comprehensive speaker catalogue which includes, in addition to general and technical information, samples of press comment on various AR models.

For the hobbyist and tinkerer, there's Audio Accessory Catalogue, A-401, issued by Switchcraft, Inc., 5555 No. Elston Ave., Chicago 30, Ill. This 12-page booklet describes recording mixers, speaker controls, numerous switches and adapters, and a full line of interconnecting cables.

For those who still are asking "Why Stereo?," EICO (Electronic Instrument Co., Inc.) 33-00 Northern Blvd., Long Island City 1, N. Y., has issued an illustrated brochure of that title.

The rising interest in tape recorders is seen in a 12-page booklet entitled "Things You Should Know About the Purchase and Servicing of Tape Recorders" and prepared as a public service by the National Better Business Bureau in coöperation with the Magnetic Recording Industry Association. Distribution is nationwide, through 900

high fidelity



Where Credit Is Due. Dr. Otto Bettmann, whose Bettmann Archive is well known as a rich source of prints and photos on virtually any subject, was himself the source of the photo which graced the cover of our October issue. Dr. Bettmann's stereo music wall was designed and installed by Melvin Gray of Gray Sound Corp. (441 Madison Avenue, New York 17, N. Y.) N. Y. C., who, incidentally, also was responsible for the Louis XV music wall shown on page 53 of that issue. And while we're at it, the sharply contrasting contemporary wall directly above Mr. Gray's was composed of Audax-Omni modular units, while the custom installation shown on page 52 was the work of Allied Radio, Chicago.

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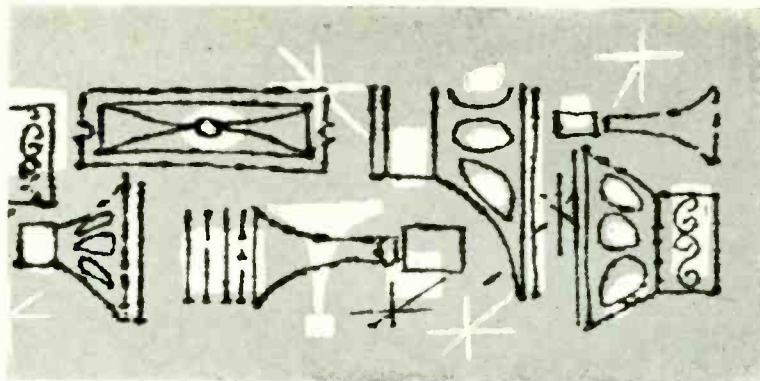
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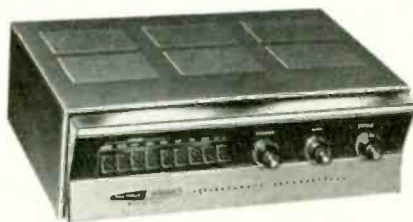
The Monster. Hartley Products Co. has introduced a 30-inch-diameter full-range speaker. Designed by Harold Luth, it employs the same magnetic suspension used in other recent Hartley speakers and features a hemispherical dome about the size of a grapefruit for high-frequency dispersion. The speaker is intended for installation in an enclosure measuring 48 inches high, 32 inches wide, and 16 inches deep. And it is dubbed, affectionately, "The Monster."

Knobs Out of Sight. The new Heath-kit AA11 "de luxe" stereo preamplifier incorporates two design concepts novel to high-fidelity kits. One is a series of

push buttons as well as volume, bass, and treble controls, are located on the front panel. "Secondary" controls, such as channel balance, blend, filters, and the like, are hidden behind a hinged cover on the lower half of the front panel. Details on this, and other new kits in the Heath line, are available from the company.



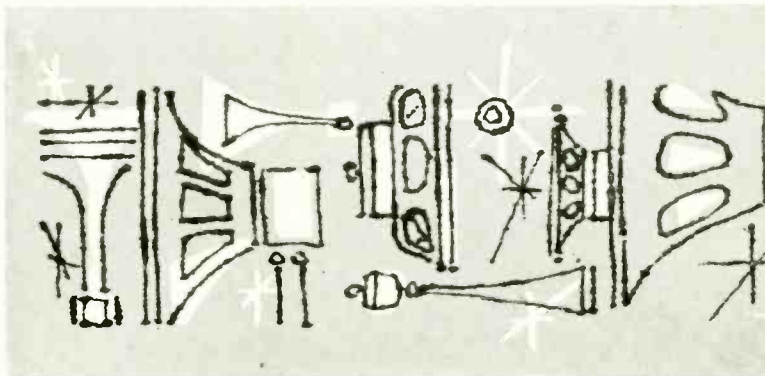
Factory-built with remote control.



Kit with push-buttons.

Remote Control From Canada. A Canadian-designed and -manufactured high-fidelity component imported into the United States can be rigged for wireless remote control. The Clairtone C-1000R is a stereo "all-in-one" with AM and FM tuners, provision for multiplex adapter, and dual 35-watt control amplifiers. The optional CXR control unit can be used to transmit control orders to the main chassis. Among the attractive "direct control" facilities are 12 light-up push buttons.

push buttons for selecting programs. The other is the division of operating controls into two distinct physical groups. "Primary" controls, which include the



CIRCLE 39 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

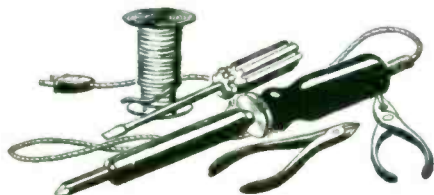
Stereo with Transistors. Stromberg-Carlson has announced an all-transistor multiplex adapter for converting FM tuners to stereo reception. The \$40 unit, while designed primarily for existing S-C tuners, may—according to a company spokesman—be usable with other makes of tuners since its unique circuitry renders it largely insensitive to variations from tuner to tuner. The new adapter, reportedly based on S-C's experience with long distance telephone transmission systems, has no controls, and measures 3 in. by 5 in. by 1½ in. It is the "plug-in-and-forget" type, says S-C.

Back to the Grafonola. For those who can accept such modern innovations as stereo only when tempered by a hefty dose of nostalgia, the designs introduced by Guild Radio and Television Corp., Inglewood, California may have some interest. An odd assortment of Early American replicas house new machinery for music reproduction. Thus, a transistor radio is built inside an old-fashioned



Morning Glory on center channel.

teakettle. Other models include sets reposing inside old wall telephones, gingerbread bins, spice chests, and bonnet boxes. And something which is inspirational or just plain wild—depending on how you look at it—is an automatic stereo record player disguised as an old Grafonola, complete with wind-up crank and Morning Glory speaker horn. In this all-transistor unit, the old horn actually is used to house a "center channel" dynamic speaker, with a pair of left and right speakers mounted along the sides of the box. And the old crank handle serves as a radio station selector. Isn't progress wonderful?



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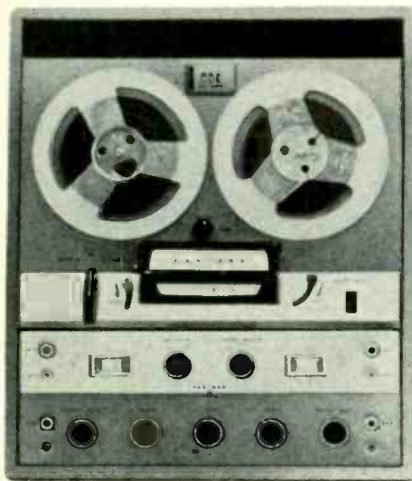
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THE WAGNER OPERAS

Continued from page 60

Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Eugen Jochum, cond. Decca DX 131, Four LP.

—"Bridal Chamber" scene only. Emmy Bettendorf, Lauritz Melchior. Included in "Lauritz Melchior—50th Anniversary, 1911-1961." Asco 121, Two LP.

Das Rheingold (1854)

During the six years between the completion of *Lohengrin* and the commencement of work on *Das Rheingold*, Wagner produced no music. Yet these years must be considered the most important of his artistic life, for this period saw the creation of *Siegfried's Death*, a drama which is for all practical purposes identical with the *Götterdämmerung* libretto. The world of this drama would not allow for the employment of the lyrical vocal style of *Lohengrin*. Its style and mood required a new kind of musical-dramatic form to project its meaning. Instead of fathering a single opera based on *Siegfried's Death*, Wagner's six-year withdrawal from the composition of opera eventually resulted in *The Ring of the Nibelungen*, the cycle of four operas which Wagner required to give cumulative expression to his final concept of the operatic form.

There is no room here for a complete description of the innovatory genius which fills the pages of this stupendous tetralogy. For that I refer the reader to Ernest Newman's writings and, of course, to a study of the music in its historical context. A few points, however, are worth making.

The concept of leitmotiv appears in germinal form in earlier Wagner operas. There its function is primarily identification, and it remains fairly static, simple, and predictable. In *The Ring*, leitmotiv could be called the essence of the technique, for it has been evolved into an elaborate system of "presentiment and reminiscence"—i.e., within a few bars, Wagner may refer to a whole series of events, personages, and ideas, mingling them according to the dictates of the text. The *Ring* libretto, then, could not make use of arias in the accepted sense. A declamatory style predominates, as it must, and the orchestra becomes the explicatory tool of the action.

In *Das Rheingold*, leitmotiv serves a somewhat simpler function than in the works which were to follow. Here is described, as it were, the youth of the gods and their cohorts. The characters—particularly Wotan—are as yet mere shells, uncomplicated and motivated by comparatively simple desires. The great emotional conflicts are reserved for *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*; the operas become more complicated in style and full in characterization as the cycle progresses, for each drama following *Das Rheingold* is a continuation and amplification of its predecessor.

Readers of these pages will be familiar enough with the praise critics unambiguously heaped upon the London set. It is a team effort *par excellence*, in which only one character stands out in relief, the striking Alberich of Neidlinger. The entire cast is, to be sure, strong in all points, each member displaying artistry which would be a credit to any production of the opera. Solti, his orchestra, and London's inspired en-

gineers set about to bring us *Das Rheingold* in all its musical and sonic glory, and they have succeeded magnificently. Musically, this set reminds me of the old Fritz Busch-Glyndebourne Mozart sets, in which the keynote was unity of conception rather than the attractions of the individual performer.

Since the appearance of this indispensable complete recording, Electrola has released a disc of excerpts which is indeed a sorry affair. We hear the opening scene skillfully projected by a charming trio of nymphs and a strong Alberich. The remainder of the disc is drawn from the final scene, and is decidedly second-rate in performance. Kempe, one of our outstanding Wagner conductors, is extraordinarily uninspired on this occasion, lacking dramatic spirit and hewing to some maddeningly sluggish tempos. He is not helped by a hammy, forced, and vaguely pitched Donner, or the heavy and rough Froh. The Wotan strains so mightily for his notes that the shape of the music is lost. The Loge, while adequate, is no match for London's Svanholm, who for once does not take a *Heldentenor* part and displays his great gift for characterization.

—Oda Balsborg, Hetty Plümacher, Ira Malaniuk (Rhine Maidens), George London (Wotan), Gustav Neidlinger (Alberich), Eberhard Wächter (Donner), Set Svanholm (Loge), Paul Kuen (Mime), Kirsten Flagstad (Fricka), Claire Watson (Freia), Jean Madeira (Erda); Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. London A 4340, Three LP; OSA 1309, Three SD.

—Excerpts. Lisa Otto, Melitta Muszely, Sieglinde Wagner (Rhine Maidens), Ferdinand Frantz (Wotan), Benno Kusche (Alberich), Josef Metternich (Donner), Helmut Melchert (Loge), Rudolf Schock (Froh), Johanna Blatter (Fricka); Orchestra of the German State Opera (Berlin); Rudolf Kempe, cond. Electrola E 80470, LP; STE 80470, SD.

Die Walküre (1856)

Most of us make excuses for a less than ideal *Rheingold*, *Siegfried*, or *Götterdämmerung*, while demanding great feats of singing, acting, and conducting in *Walküre*. The primary reason for this is that the "Second Day" of *The Ring* contains the most "show-stoppers" of any single component part of the cycle. Certain portions—the first-act concluding scene with its "Winterstürme" and "Du bist der Lenz," the "Ho-jo-to-ho!" of Act II, Act III's Valkyries' scene and "Abschied"—are familiar to many who have not heard the work in its entirety. In addition, this opera, containing as it does such "popular" scenes, is frequently performed outside the context of the tetralogy. The appeal of its human relationships also figures in bringing about a frequency of presentation at some houses which seldom, if ever, mount the entire *Ring*.

In the one complete recorded *Walküre*, Furtwängler's conducting is one half of a truly great performance, the kind of leadership we justifiably expected from this supreme spokesman for the composer. It is cruel to be forced to admit that no matter how much one may admire his tremendous achievement, its value is minimized by a cast which fails to rise to the level of his conception. Rysanek and Suthaus are ill at ease in their parts. Too much of the soprano's singing is hooty and not squarely on the note, and she misses the exalted, youthful personality of the character she portrays. Suthaus is lacking in the kind of lyricism

required, and no amount of intelligence—a quality he indisputably possesses—can compensate for his labored delivery, his tendency to cloud pointed vocal phrases and to resort to the big scoop. Mödl likewise makes one aware of her understanding of the music; but again there is too much audible effort. Frantz is neither godlike nor touchingly human. His Wotan does not realize a fraction of the figure's tenderness and dignity, particularly in the "Abschied." Only Klose and Frick sound equal to their tasks, and they have brought more to their roles on other occasions.

Earlier this year, it was announced in these pages that a complete version was expected from RCA before the year's end, with a most promising cast: Jon Vickers, Rysanek (perhaps in top form), Rita Gorr, Nilsson, Hotter, and Karajan. It seems worth waiting for.

Traubel, Melchior, and Toscanini unite to give us an interesting Act I, Scene III. The less than spectacular success of this release is, I feel, attributable chiefly to the conductor's insistence on the ultimate in clipped tension until he reaches "Winterstürme," when the music becomes more expansive. The contrast is so great that the scene becomes reminiscent of a long recitative leading into an aria. Toscanini's way is without doubt exciting, but I question the suitability of his method to the music at hand. It also succeeds in quashing a measure of Melchior's uncanny ability to sustain a long phrase. Traubel's enormous voice overwhelms the music, and this makes her an unhappy choice for Sieglinde.

I speak for many in asking for a prompt re-release of the great Bruno Walter-led Act I with Lehmann, Melchior, and List. I hope it is not too extravagant a wish to expect Angel to package this Act I with the first LP exposure of the accompanying Act II, which is at least as mighty an accomplishment. The Act I singers are joined by Marta Fuchs, a superb Brünnhilde, Klose's incomparable Fricka, and the resplendent Wotan of Hotter. The conducting is shared by Walter and Bruno Seidler-Winkler.

London has recorded the first and third acts, complete, in stunning stereo. Musically, neither adds to our knowledge of the opera. Knappertsbusch, to quote an old patent-medicine ad, is "Listless, Logy, and Half-Alive." Flagstad, like Traubel, is suited neither by voice nor temperament for Sieglinde, while Svanholm is torpid.

Solti's pacing gives the third act what little distinction it has; yet I do not feel that he has bothered to penetrate the surface of the score. It is impossible for me to evaluate the Valkyries' jamboree at the beginning of this act (or of that "Ho-jo-to-ho!" business in Act II) for it is a scene which usually makes me hide face in hands for embarrassment. Once these ladies have withdrawn, we are left in the presence of Otto Edelmann's Wotan, which quite fails to convey the humanity of the role and the poignancy of the relationship with Brünnhilde. Flagstad is icy of temperament, but there is much to admire in her tonally luscious singing.

The listener participates in the life drama of Brünnhilde and Wotan as set forth by Nilsson and Hotter (Angel). The soprano is compelling throughout, but it is Hotter who constantly inspires awed admiration. His voice was already audibly work-worn at the time (1958)

Continued on next page

NOVEMBER 1961

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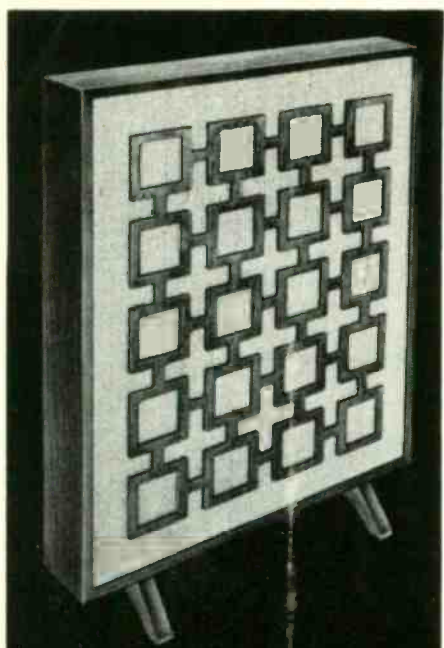
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THE WAGNER OPERAS

Continued from preceding page

of this recording, but his supreme artistry overcomes this difficulty in masterly fashion. This is a vocal characterization which reinforces my opinion of Hotter as the supreme Wotan of today. Hearing his delivery of the glorious passage "Denn einer freie die Braut, der Freier als ich der Gott!" in the "Abschied" is an experience impossible to forget, and his whole performance nearly makes us oblivious to the inappropriately miniature conducting of Ludwig.

In the *Todesverkündigung* of Act II, which Electrola has issued on a single 10-inch disc, Flagstad is dignified, forceful, and in superb voice; and she is partnered by a Svanholm in much better than average vocal estate. Böhm collaborates with somber power to make this a distinguished addition to the Wagner discography. The same artists, this time under Solti, are heard again in this scene on the fourth side of London's Act III set. The newer attempt is inferior on all counts, save that of reproduction.

Angel has, via its "Great Recordings of the Century" series revived a notable Wagner interpretation of the past. Frida Leider's tonally ravishing and completely unaffected "*War es so schmächtig*" supplication leads, after a lengthy cut, into "*Du zeugnest ein edles Geschlecht*"; she is then joined by the Wotan of Friedrich Schorr and the scene is heard, virtually complete, to conclusion. The soprano's voice as preserved here is one of the great pleasures the phonograph has to offer. As for Schorr, I can easily understand the veneration in which this singer was held. His voice was produced with an ease which it would seem none of the Wotans of today can approximate. Yet this most technically accomplished Wotan of them all is too much the aloof, stern god, too little the creature of flesh, blood, and feeling. It is, after all, through the conflict of Wotan's status as a deity and his earthly emotion that the character becomes such a glowing creation. This disc also allows us to hear Leider's "*Ho-jo-to-ho!*" and Wotan's preface to it. For those who are fond of this music, I can safely say it is projected here with extraordinary skill. In any case, without this record a Wagner collection is incomplete.

In passing, Decca's Act I is a crashing bore. Müller was far past her prime when these sessions took place, and the expert Windgassen seems to have had his mind on other things. The conducting is either influenced by this pedestrian spirit or the cause of it.

— Leonie Rysanek (Sieglinde), Ludwig Suthaus (Sigmund), Martha Mödl (Brünnhilde), Margarete Klose (Fricka), Gottlob Frick (Hunding), Ferdinand Frantz (Wotan); Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Electrola E 90100/04, Five LP.

— Act I, complete. Kirsten Flagstad (Sieglinde), Set Svanholm (Sigmund), Arnold van Mill (Hunding); Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond. London A 4229, Two LP; OSA 1204, Two SD.

— Act I, complete (with excerpts from *Götterdämmerung*). Maria Müller (Sieglinde), Wolfgang Windgassen (Sigmund), Josef Greindl (Hunding); Württemberg State Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Decca DX 121, Two LP. — Act I, Scene III (with excerpts from *Götterdämmerung*). Lauritz Melchior,

Helen Traubel; NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victor LM 2452, LP.

— Act III, complete; "*Todesverkündigung*" from Act II. Flagstad (Brünnhilde), Svanholm (Sigmund), Otto Edelmann (Wotan); Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. London A 4225, Two LP; OSA 1203, Two SD.

— Act III, Scene III (with excerpts from *Der Fliegende Holländer*). Birgit Nilsson, Hans Hotter; Philharmonia Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond. Angel 35585, LP; S 35585, SD.

— Scenes from Acts II and III (with excerpts from *Götterdämmerung*). Frida Leider, Friedrich Schorr; Berlin State Opera Orchestra, Leo Blech, cond. Angel COLH 105, LP.

— "*Todesverkündigung*" only (with excerpts from *Tristan und Isolde*). Flagstad, Svanholm; Philharmonia Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond. Electrola E 60619, 10-in. LP.

Tristan und Isolde (1859)

Contrary to the opinions expressed by Robert C. Marsh in his review of the recent London *Tristan* [HIGH FIDELITY, April 1961], I find that edition not even faintly competitive to the Angel version. The London has in Nilsson a great, fiery Isolde, portraying the character with a far greater degree of temperament than does Flagstad, and, in her own way, being just as convincing; and London's engineers have reproduced the sound of the Vienna Philharmonic splendidly. That, in my opinion, is the extent of the album's merits.

Uhl is, to me, an inadequate Tristan. He seems to be sight-reading his part, singing words, syllables, and individual notes rather than verbal-musical phrases. The voice is too small, a failing particularly apparent in the final act, where no amount of trying can make his acting seem passionate and agonized. It is only forced into sounding pinched in its attempt to rise above Solti's screaming orchestra. I prefer Angel's Suthaus from start to finish. The latter has never been an ideal *Heldentenor*, some of the faults discussed in connection with his Sigmund being also evident here; but the role of Tristan is far more congenial to his talents. Suthaus is a passionate, intense, and moving Tristan, who, in spite of major shortcomings, deserves the highest praise. Unlike Uhl, he understands every inflection of meaning in the part. Similar contrasts can be made between other members of the two casts. London's Resnik does not have the gifts to carry her through the high tessitura of Brangäne's part, and her extreme caution seems to signify her understanding of this failing. Angel's Thebom, on the other hand, has no such problems and she is able to make of Isolde's companion a subtle and emotionally varied figure. Van Mill has listened, I fear, to too many remarks concerning the dullness of Marke's part and has decided to leave it at that. In addition, his fast and loose handling of the notes makes me uncomfortable. Again, I prefer Angel's Marke, Greindl. Tom Krause is an effective Kurwenal for London in the final act, a distinctly unimaginative one in the first act. He is a singer of decided promise, but never a match for Angel's unique and unusually exciting Fischer-Dieskau.

This brings us to what may be the most important point of all, the conducting. No amount of comment regarding the "modern" conception of Solti versus the "old-time" conception of

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Furtwängler can make me consider Solti's work communicative of the sublimity of the score. Furtwängler molds the opera's lines with a plasticity, a sweeping romanticism that is far more meaningful in terms of the drama than the clipped, obvious, and shallow approach of Solti. Solti's leadership ignores so much of the opera's sensuousness that I am able to derive only minimal pleasure from the London set. Not only is his handling of the entire third act open to question, but the bland prelude, the very unaware handling of the orchestra during Brangäne's warning—in which Furtwängler's men croon for all they are worth—and the whole of the final portion of Act II (from "O König") should send us running to Angel for a view of the score which is wholly compatible with the music and story of Tristan and Isolde.

In short, Nilsson's Isolde is magnificent, and London's engineers have done what little is possible in terms of stereo effect for this opera. To my mind, Angel's *Tristan* is the outstanding complete Wagner performance on records, and its sound (mono only) is fine.

A record which deserves some attention is that issued by DGG featuring the entire Act II "love duet," starting some measures before "Isolde! Tristan! Geliebter!", and ending at "höchste Liebeslust." The "Liebestod" follows. Varnay's Isolde features far too strident a top to allow her to be a genuine challenger to Flagstad and Nilsson. Varnay's middle and lower voice are richly impressive, however, while her understanding of the part is on a level with anyone's. She is partnered by Windgassen, for my taste the best of current Tristans. The Brangäne is unexceptional, and the conducting routine. Nevertheless, the principal singers are highly successful in bringing their duet to us with its yearning and passion intact. DGG's sound is superb, particularly in the stereo edition.

—Kirsten Flagstad (Isolde), Ludwig Suthaus (Tristan), Blanche Thebom (Brangäne), Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (Kurwenal), Josef Greindl (Marke), Rudolf Schock (Young Sailor); Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Philharmonia Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Angel 3588 E/L, Five LP.

—Birgit Nilsson (Isolde), Fritz Uhl (Tristan), Regina Resnik (Brangäne), Tom Krause (Kurwenal), Arnold van Mill (Marke), Waldemar Kmentt (Young Sailor); Singverein der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. London A 4506, Five LP; OSA 1502, Five SD.

—Excerpts from Acts II and III: Astrid Varnay (Isolde), Wolfgang Windgassen (Tristan), Hertha Töpper (Brangäne); Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Deutsche Grammophon LPM 19193, LP; SLPM 136030, SD.

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (1867)

For good humor, pointed satire, sharp characterization, and heart-warmingly lovely music, few operas can compare to *Die Meistersinger*. It has been and will probably remain the one work of Wagner's which is appreciated in full by those who are not necessarily of the Wagnerian persuasion. The opera makes demands of its performers which are, in the main, different from those of *The Ring*, *Tristan*, etc. While, in terms of sheer physical endurance, *Die Meister-*

singer is not cruelly demanding, it requires in terms of characterization as much as, if not more than, any other of the composer's works.

Each of the three complete versions on the market has much to recommend it, but the real competition is between London and Angel. The former contains what can be called the modern measuring rod for the role of Hans Sachs, Paul Schoeffler's magical characterization. There is such a wealth of warmth, strength, and understanding in his portrayal and vocalism that his presence alone is reason enough for owning this set. Güden's Eva is somewhat lacking in vocal weight, but she gives us a gem of vocal acting. Her scenes with Sachs are extraordinarily tender and suggestive. Dermota and Dönch are first-rate as, respectively, David and Beckmesser. The mellow age of Knappertsbusch is a blessing indeed. He keeps this *Meistersinger* filled with pulsating life, and a clarity which rules out grandiose effect in favor of gentle understanding. I do not mean to suggest that this is a small-scaled interpretation, but there is a certain chamberlike quality to the performance. Climaxes are organized and logically achieved rather than blasted out, and every segment of the score falls into place with as little strain as possible. The smaller roles are well taken, but I wish that Treptow and Edelman had not been chosen, particularly the former, for their vital parts. The tenor cannot master the technical requisites of his role; the voice is perpetually strained and unpleasantly nasal, and the singer has a tendency to whine when he should be passionate and manly. Edelman's Pogner is lumpy and monotonous. Yet in spite of such major weaknesses, this is a total achievement of the greatest importance.

Angel's more recent version features brighter and, in keeping with Kempe's views of the score, more expansive sound. It is a perfectly even production, without a single performance that is less than satisfying. Although Frantz, fine as he is, never rises to Schoeffler's vocal or dramatic heights, there is enough of the essential Sachs in what he does to make his efforts most gratifying. Grümmer's Eva has slightly more body than Güden's and as much sensitivity to the opera's situations. Schock does not have the full measure of unforced production and smoothness of the ideal Walther, and there is some shouting. But the voice is strong, and his Walther emerges a vital, dashing young man. Frick is dignified and fatherly, ever exhibiting his great vocal endowments; and the Beckmesser, in spite of moments of heavy caricaturing, is above average. Kempe keeps everything moving with polish and naturalness. Only Knappertsbusch's slightly deeper realization of the music's human qualities makes Kempe a second-best.

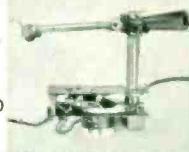
The Electrola is outclassed in most respects by London and Angel, but it too has an over-all strength and understanding which would honor most opera houses. With the exception of the Pogner, the singing and characterization are very good, in the case of Schwarzkopf and Kunz much more than that. Karajan's conducting lacks some essential warmth, yet breathes much life into the proceedings. Sonically, the set displays its age to a greater degree than the equally old London, but the live performance atmosphere, in spite of the usual drawbacks, is pleasing.

Continued on next page

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THE WAGNER OPERAS

Continued from preceding page

Decca's excerpts are, with a single exception, not much. The exception is the third-act quintet, sung with such beauty, and fervor that I am almost tempted to recommend the entire disc.

— Paul Schoeffler (Sachs), Hilde Güden (Eva), Karl Dönch (Beckmesser), Gunther Treptow (Walther), Anton Dermota (David), Otto Edelmann (Pogner), Else Schürhoff (Magdalene); Vienna State Opera Chorus and Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond. London A 4601, Six LP.
 — Ferdinand Frantz (Sachs), Elisabeth Grümmer (Eva), Benno Kusche (Beckmesser), Rudolf Schock (Walther), Gerhard Unger (David), Gottlob Frick (Pogner), Marga Höffgen (Magdalene); Combined Berlin Chorus, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Rudolf Kempe, cond. Angel 3572 E/L, Five LP.

— Otto Edelmann (Sachs), Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Eva), Erich Kunz (Beckmesser), Hans Hopf (Walther), Gerhard Unger (David), Friedrich Dalberg (Pogner), Ira Malaniuk (Magdalene); Chorus and Orchestra of the 1951 Bayreuth Festival, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Electrola E 90275/79, Five LP.

— Excerpts. Josef Herrmann (Sachs), Annelies Kupper (Eva), Wolfgang Windgassen (Walther), Richard Holm (David), Hertha Töpper (Magdalene); Various Orchestras and Conductors. Decca DL 9895, LP.

Siegfried (1869)

All Wagnerians are acutely conscious that the lack of a complete *Siegfried* on microgroove constitutes one of the glaring gaps in the catalogue. The difficulty of finding a first-rate singer for the title role is unquestionably an obstacle; but surely one of the large manufacturers could put us in its debt by making the entire opera, or at least a large sampling of it, available with some perhaps less than perfect tenor.

The only sizable—the word is used advisedly—segment of the opera available at present features Flagstad and Svanholm in the final scene of the last act, from Brünnhilde's "*Heil dir Sonne*" to conclusion. It constitutes a most dispassionate love scene. Flagstad's voice soars uninhibitedly, and Svanholm works up a modicum of interest as the scene progresses. But neither seems deeply involved, and the conducting is little more than the beating of time.

Max Lorenz once more displays fine singing and exemplary Wagnerian style in the "*Schmelzlied*" and "*Schmiedeli*" of Act I, adding further interest to the distinguished recital already mentioned in connection with *Tannhäuser*.

Since no complete *Siegfried* seems to be on any company's imminent release schedule, a reissue by Angel for its "Great Recordings" series of the old 78 sets—which comprise roughly three-fourths of the opera—would be a masterstroke. These performances, like those of the old *Walküre* sets, were not totally of a piece; but all had immense gusto plus the central unifying feature of the great *Heldentenor*, Melchior, in what may well have been his greatest role. Schorr, Florence Easton, and Rudolf Bockelmann are further and considerable attractions in the sets conducted by Coates and Heger. — "Final Scene" only. Kirsten Flagstad, Set Svanholm; Philharmonia Orchestra, Georges Sebastian, cond. Electrola E 60545, 10-inch LP.

Götterdämmerung (1874)

The mighty finale of *The Ring* requires all the resources of the greatest singing (and acting), conducting, and orchestral playing that can be assembled at one time. The principal roles are exceedingly demanding of the voice and require a degree of dramatic awareness rare even in Wagner. The conductor is the foundation of the action, and must supply crushing strength, passion, tenderness, and dignity. In view of the incredible degree to which the leitmotiv governs this work, the conductor must be able to serve as the ultimate welder of the opera's innumerable individual dramatic strains into a coherent whole. His function is narrative as well as musical. The one complete recording is, by the hardly all-inclusive standards I have set, woefully deficient.

The original production heard on these discs took place as a series of broadcasts over the Norwegian Radio in 1956. As bad performances as this are not rare in European opera houses; but, praise be, they are not preserved. Even Flagstad suffers from this perpetuation, for her voice cannot cope with all the difficulties posed by the score. She is, however, still an artist worth one's attention, whose contribution might have been considered at least a warming tribute if a better supporting cast had been made available. Svanholm is obviously a professional; but his least appealing qualities are always to the fore. He slips and slides to his notes with such consistency that one feels this to be his manner by choice. Whenever Svanholm sings, I feel that he is producing two notes for every one that is written. As a result, Wagner's often syllabically loaded lines become unsupportably heavy. The other members of the cast are ghastly. Hagen is a great role, here given to a singer who does not seem to have progressed much further than the oratorio parts usually assigned to a member of the chorus. I feel no need to discuss the remainder of the cast. Fjeldstad is obviously not a seasoned Wagnerian. His work is unperceptive and lifeless. The combined orchestras push, blare, and heave with noble intent, and under a more suitable conductor might have sounded good enough. But their labors go for naught, as do six big London records.

Of the excerpts which immediately come to notice, Angel's reissue in its "Great Recordings of the Century" series of Siegfried's "*Narrative*" ("*Mime hiess ein mürrischer Zwerg*") and Brünnhilde's "*Immolation*" (starting at "*Schweigt eures Jammers*," a few pages before the usual "*Starke Scheite*") contains about as much vocal and interpretative magnificence as one is likely to find in this music. Melchior makes Siegfried's departure from life one of the most heart-breakingly beautiful scenes in all opera. If I were asked to name my single favorite Wagnerian interpretation on records, my vote would probably go to this one. Leider's "*Immolation*" would not rank far behind in my Wagner empyrean. The voice is exquisite—less dense than that usually associated with this role—and produced with astounding ease. Unfortunately, recording exigencies of the time (1928) force an excessively fast tempo at the beginning of this scene and necessitate omission of the orchestral postlude. But with such singing, carping would amount to monstrous ingratitude. The two conductors and the various minor supporting singers make valuable contributions; and the recorded sound—the Melchior scene dates from 1930—is amazingly clear.

Toscanini leads a moderately well-recorded performance of excerpts from Act I. His "Daybreak" is a bit square, but the ensuing Brünnhilde-Siegfried duet, "Zu neuen Taten," is a mighty outburst of passion. Traubel and Melchior pour forth rich, beautiful tones, while Toscanini integrates his orchestra powerfully with the voices. The "Rhine Journey" which follows is as energetic as one could wish, and stunningly executed.

Greindl and Frick manage splendidly, in their disparate ways, with Hagen's barbaric and thrilling "Call" ("Hoi-ho") from Act II. Greindl possesses a rough, rather shaky voice which he uses with enormous dramatic skill. The singer is admirably assisted by Rieger and his chorus. Frick is gifted with an even larger voice, and one that is beautiful as well as steady. If there is any flaw in his Hagen (the singer is also heard in the "Watch"—"Hier sitz' ich zur Wacht"—from Act I) it is that the voice is too appealing in itself to show us Hagen's evil character. Dramatically, Greindl's version is superior to Frick's. But I would recommend the latter to the listener, for it is very impressive vocally, features even better conducting and choral work than the Greindl, and is, with its highly desirable overside (see remarks above, under *Tannhäuser*), reproduced more to today's acoustical taste.

Several "Immolation" scenes, all starting at "Starke Scheite," deserve mention, although none is in a class with the old Leider. Flagstad-Furtwängler do not supply much caloric intensity, although the singer is in superb voice. What gives this disc real merit is the reverse side, wherein Furtwängler leads a fine "Rhine Journey" and a "Funeral Music" which belongs in every collection; it is majestically paced, with towering climaxes and a dramatic intensity that makes all other versions seem small-scaled and earthbound.

The "Immolation" by Traubel and Toscanini is artistically of the highest order, but so spoiled by inferior reproduction that it is not the strong competitor to the Leider that it should be.

Farrell and Munch have recorded the only version of this scene employing all the resources of modern engineering, including stereo. Singer and conductor are so little attuned to the music's dramatic implications, however, that their effort must be considered superfluous.

—Kirsten Flagstad (Brünnhilde), Set Svanholm (Siegfried), Egil Nordsjø (Hagen), Waldemar Johnsen (Gunter), Eva Gustafson (Waltraute); Oslo Philharmonic, Norwegian State Opera Chorus and Radio Orchestra, Oivin Fjeldstad, cond. London A 4603, Six LP.
—Siegfried's "Narrative" and Brünnhilde's "Immolation" (with excerpts from *Die Walküre*). Lauritz Melchior, Frida Leider: Chorus and London Symphony Orchestra, Robert Heger, cond. (in the "Narrative"); Berlin State Opera Orchestra, Leo Blech, cond. (in the "Immolation"). Angel COLH 105, LP.

—Excerpts from Act I (with excerpts from *Die Walküre*). Helen Traubel, Lauritz Melchior; NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victor LM 2452, LP.

—Hagen's "Watch" and "Call" (with excerpts from *Tannhäuser*). Gottlob Frick; Chorus and Orchestra of the German State Opera (Berlin), Franz Konwitschny, cond. Angel 35844, LP; S 35844, SD.

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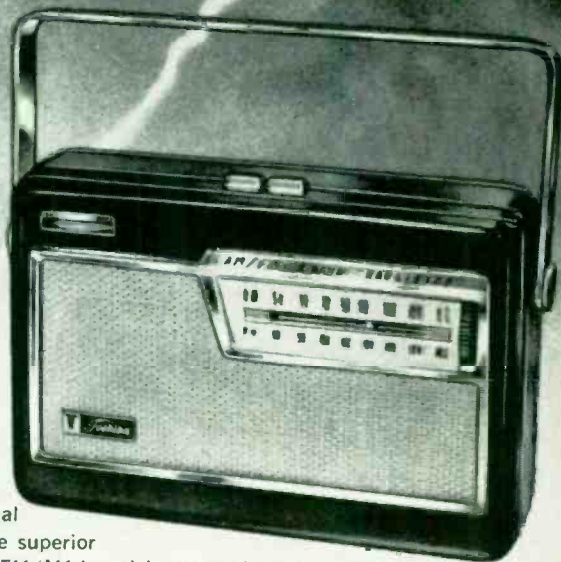
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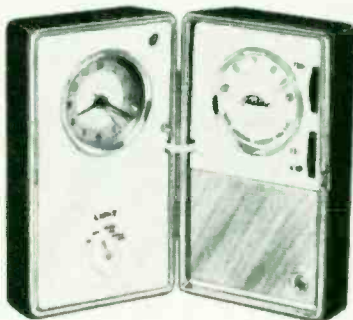
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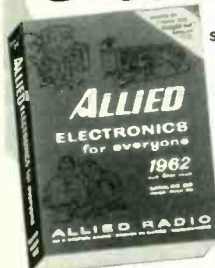
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THE WAGNER OPERAS

Continued from preceding page

—Hagen's "Call" only (with excerpts from *Die Walküre*) Josef Greindl; Chorus and Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Fritz Rieger, cond. Decca DX 121, Two LP.

—"Immolation" Scene (with "Rhine Journey" and "Funeral Music"). Kirsten Flagstad; Philharmonia Orchestra (in the "Immolation"), Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (in orchestral excerpts), Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Electrola E 90026, LP.

—"Immolation" Scene (with *Siegfried Idyl*). Helen Traubel; NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victor LVT 1004, LP.

—"Immolation" Scene (with *Prelude and Liebestod from Tristan*). Eileen Farrell; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond. RCA Victor LM 2255, LP; LSC 2255, SD.

Parsifal (1882)

The years have enhanced rather than dimmed the splendors of the 1951 Bayreuth *Parsifal*. It was one of the early causes for jubilation over the advent of microgroove recording, and it remains a reason for gratitude. Again, a few actual performance goings-on will have to be put up with. But in discussing a complete *Parsifal*, technical considerations have no place. The sound is acceptably clear and undistorted even in the loudest climaxes, and in any case it is unlikely that another version will soon come along.

On first hearing, Knappertsbusch's conducting seemed weighty and labored. With the passage of time, nearly everything he does begins to seem eminently right. Glowing images are conjured up; climaxes swell slowly and shatter us at their peak. The cast is flawless. Weber, London, Windgassen, Mödl, and Uhde have all contributed memorable performances; and the Bayreuth Orchestra and Chorus maintain a tonal grandeur the effect of which I am hard put to convey in words. Further comment could only amount to a lengthy list of superlatives. —George London (Amfortas), Ludwig Weber (Gurnemanz), Wolfgang Windgassen (Parsifal), Martha Mödl (Kundry), Hermann Uhde (Klingsor); Chorus and Orchestra of the 1951 Bayreuth Festival, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond. London A 4602, Six LP.

MODERN OPERA

Continued from page 56

tained that the present crisis in music is essentially harmonic, and this is true enough. But harmony and melody are ultimately inseparable, and in fact the melodic crisis is every bit as acute. For most of us the whole conception of a tune is rooted in cadences such as are only possible in basically diatonic harmony. Take any popular tune and it is immediately apparent that it revolves around and is given shape by its key, and present-day composers who are generally felt to be most "tuneful" are those whose harmonic idiom is most firmly diatonic. This is nothing new. In nineteenth-century music there is, generally speaking, an inverse relationship between

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chromaticism and tunefulness. Thus *Il Trovatore* is more "tuneful" than *Tristan und Isolde*, and *La Bohème* is more "tuneful" than *Elektra*.

Chromaticism bestowed the gifts of emotional intensity, and the huge romantic orchestra, with its sumptuous range of colors, was the chosen instrument of a rich harmonic idiom. But the price was paid in melody. The expressive range of romantic harmony enabled Wolf to write incomparably subtle settings of great poetry, but his songs are less tuneful than Schumann's. Strauss was among the first who first saw the rocks ahead. Deeply involved as he was in a whole century of romanticism, he tried in *Der Rosenkavalier* to pull clear of the extreme chromaticism he had approached in *Elektra* and by returning to a more diatonic idiom to recapture the main-springs of melody. But there is no turning back in life or in art, and it is probably not mere chance that from this moment his powerful creativity lost its impetus.

Schoenberg, a greater and more radical mind, pressed on and by dodecaphonic serialism means tried to establish a new basis of harmonic order. I do not want to argue the merits of serialism here, although on a purely empirical basis (and on what other should music be judged?) it seems to be abundantly evident that Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern have all written great works that justify dodecaphonic technique as a means of musical organization. But it is more doubtful whether they or their successors have yet succeeded in providing an answer to the melodic aspect of this harmonic crisis.

Berg and Schoenberg *did*, I hasten to add, write tunes. But the process of experiencing them as such demands a high degree of musical sophistication. It may be that time will bring more ready understanding and that succeeding generations will develop a growing facility for grasping nontonal melodies. The human ear is a miraculously elastic instrument, and while everybody is convinced that he can recognize a new tune when he hears one, in fact a new melodic idiom has often met with incomprehension at first. Today, however, we are still far removed from the point where the general operatic public will whistle the tunes of *Moses und Aron*, and in the meantime opera is placed in a much more difficult situation than symphonic music, which is not so directly dependent on melody or vocal line.

Yet I cannot bring myself to believe that opera as an art form is about to become extinct. Ages before the group of Florentine *dilettanti* first propounded their theory of *dramma per musica* at the end of the sixteenth century, man had used music to express drama in the Greek theatre, in African tribal rites, and in Christian liturgy. Music possesses a unique and mysterious gift to illuminate drama in a way that words alone can never do. Eventually man's need for music to express his profoundest feelings and to strike to a dramatic sphere where words cannot penetrate must lead to a revival of opera—if the silliest, the most sublime of all arts.

JOAN SUTHERLAND

Continued from page 53

Sutherland has always been devoid of self-importance and has had the reputation of being a good trouser, given to telling cheerful stories emphasized by digs in the ribs of the hearer, these two recent adventures have understandably caused some disquiet among her friends and colleagues. It isn't like her, they say. To the outside observer, however, it seems that these clashes are bound to happen in Italy when a new and foreign singer (who speaks very little of the language) challenges a native conductor on the subject of Italian music. Particularly would conflict seem inevitable when the conductor is a man of Gui's distinction and lifelong experience of the very repertoire Miss Sutherland is to specialize in—and who, incidentally, gave her the chance to sing the lead in *I Puritani* last year at Glyndebourne.

Joan Sutherland may be reviving the *bel canto* style, but few conductors these days are content to revive the traditional position of the old *bel canto* conductor—that of a colorless time-beater taking orders from everybody except the composer. But I have no doubt these things will be ironed out in time, and as Miss Sutherland gains in experience. In spite of her dazzling success she has not yet quite been able to sort out the good traditions from the bad habits of opera performance. I was reminded of this one evening last year when she and her husband came to dinner and I asked why, as Violetta, when she came to sing "*Amami, Alfredo quant' io t'amo, quant' io t'amo*" at Covent Garden, she sang the last ten syllables in the meaningless doubled-up time that has been common practice for so long instead of as it is written in the score. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Bonyng really knew why, when they came to think of it. The conductor did it that way (the same conductor who, ironically, was later involved in the Venice incident); it was traditional; it had to be done that way because the phrase was otherwise too long and too exhausting for the singer. The truth, it seemed to me, was that no real thought had been given at all to the question of why it should not be sung as Verdi wrote it, as Toscanini conducted it, and—significantly—as Callas sings it.

I doubt if one listener in a thousand ever notices whether this heartbreaking phrase is sung correctly or incorrectly, but it is in such matters of style that Joan Sutherland has not only unique opportunities to set a standard but an obligation to do so. With a voice of such splendor and rare quality she has the world's audiences eager to listen at her feet. Her job as an artist is to send them home knowing more about Verdi, Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti than they knew before they heard her. And Joan Sutherland, who admires and is inspired by Maria Callas above all her kind, I am sure will in the end recognize that in this lies the true Art of the Prima Donna.



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OPERA IN ENGLISH

Continued from page 63

accompaniment; the first tenor draws his sword, shakes his fist (the free one, that is), and looks very determined. Then he begins to sing, using all the force and brilliance he can command. After a moment he sings a very high note for all he's worth, brandishing the sword in a threatening manner. Now the second tenor returns, bringing with him a group of knights prepared for battle. The music becomes quite brassy, and both tenors and the chorus sing full blast. A red glow illumines the stage. The music reaches a climax, and the first tenor cuts loose with another very high note, while the others, singing under the high note, make warlike gestures of defiance. As the curtain comes down, everyone except the soprano rushes from the stage "amid a din of arms, the trumpet calling to battle" (as the Schirmer score has it).

Clearly, a fight is about to take place, and the tenor intends to give someone "what for" in no uncertain way. Moreover, he is disturbed enough to leave his bride standing at the altar. This much is fully apparent from what has taken place on stage, unless I am a total simpleton, and it is quite enough to make a very strong impression, provided that I am receptive to music and that the tenor is even reasonably good.

I submit that the total impression made by this isolated scene, even assuming an utter ignorance on the part of our audience, is far stronger than it would have been with "Di quella pira" translated into English. I submit that there is no possible combination of English words that could begin to convey the excitement of the bright, clipped Italian sounds, or that could fit the staccato accents of Verdi's music with any grace or strength. The tenor may stand there all night telling us of his determination and fury, but I won't believe it, because he will *sound* neither determined nor furious in a degree even approaching an Italian

rendition. In other words, "Di quella pira" is vastly more dramatic in Italian than it is in English, with or without an understanding of the words. It may be said that I have stacked the cards by selecting "Di quella pira," but this is at best a matter of degree. (The very same aria, incidentally, has been used to illustrate the virtues of opera in English.) I will concede that *Così fan tutte* suffers less by translation than does *Trovatore*, but I will not concede that it does not suffer, and seriously.

Naturally, I do not advocate ignorance as the key to enjoyment of opera. But there is no question of ignorance on the part of anyone willing to spend a half-hour with a libretto. (And this is a procedure I have found every bit as important with an English-language premiere as with an unfamiliar foreign work.) Recordings and radio broadcasts provide



magnificent opportunities for developing an intimate acquaintance with the union of text and music.

Surely we can grant that there is a place for foreign opera in English. Paisiello's *Il Re Teodoro in Venezia*, for example, was recently produced by the opera department of the Berkshire Music School at Tanglewood. Here was a totally unfamiliar work, not available on recordings or in score. No libretto can be had, no synopsis of the work is in print, even in the musical encyclopedias. Moreover, it was presented by relatively inexperienced singers, who—even with the most expert coaching—could not be expected to make certain points clear in a way that we might expect of, say, the troupe in *La Piccola Scala*. Put all these factors together and you have, I believe, a strong case for presenting the work in English. That is what was done; the translation was fortunately quite good, and the evening most enjoyable, even to us purists. Still, I do hope to hear it in Italian sometime, say with Sciutti, Berganza, Valletti, Monti, Panerai, Cappelletti, and Petri. It would certainly be more dramatic.

But is there really any excuse for opera in English at the Metropolitan, or in San Francisco, Chicago, or Dallas? I think not. These are great international houses, supposedly representative of the highest aesthetic standards. If one cannot hear opera in its most authentic, scrupulously artistic form at such houses, then where, short of a yearly Grand Tour, can one hear it? Is it not the true artist's duty to lead rather than follow? And if he must follow, can't he aim to please the connoisseur rather than the gentleman whose only claim to attention is the fact that he holds the price of admission?

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WANTED: Erna Sack, European Nightingale, Capitol-Telefunken 10-inch LP No. L-8000. E. M. Williams, P. O. Box 153, Edmonds, Wash.

AM INTERESTED in obtaining Stephens "Tru-Sonic" P-52 HF speaker system in 52-SD cabinet. Richard Buttery, 4530 S. Galapago, Englewood, Colo.

WANTED: PT6 Magnecord tape recorder with PT6 amplifier. R. B. Hutcheson, 140 Locust St., Winchester, Va.

WANTED: Altec-Lansing 412-A, new or used. B. Jaffe, 4238 Hinsdale Rd., South Euclid 21, Ohio.

WANTED: Stereo Recording Ampex or equivalent in new condition and reasonably priced. Philip Karn, 230 Division Ave., Lutherville, Md.

WANTED: Out-of-print Victor LP's: LM 1113 (Barber Sonata—Horowitz), LM1861 (Bloch Sonata No. 1—Heifetz). Must be in good condition. Richard Volpe, 18 Galusha St., Rochester 5, N.Y.

FOR SALE: 1—Dynakit PAS-2; 1—EICO HF-86. Both units \$90 FOB Oakland, Calif. Assembled. Wm. D. Johnson, 3404 Morcam, Oakland 19, Calif.

SALE: Teyte collection, Gigli Tosca, Kipnis Godonoff, Lehmann Rosenkavalier, Hans Hotter Flying Dutchman (LP). Many others, all excellent. James Mendoza, 324 East 19th St., New York 3, N.Y.

STEREO SYSTEM, Garrard, H-K amplifier, EV Aristocrats. Extra equipment, 2 EV Baronets, speakers, 2 H-K mono amps, Knight stereo amp. Write for details. Brian Wallen, 306 Sheldon, Rantoul, Ill.

NEW Heathkit monaural—stereo SP-1A preamplifier, \$10. Finished Rek-O-Kut wood base for N33H, B12H, B12GH, S8. Edgar E. Thompson, 324 Post Ave., Bldg. 5, Westbury, N.Y.

RACON 15" woofer, Coronet 6" midrange, Electrostat —3 tweeter in oak braced, heavy padded, infinite baffle, \$90. Greenfield, Harding Ave., White Plains, N.Y.

NO REASONABLE offer refused. Two (2) ten-watt amplifier from Ampex 960 systems. Excellent condition, shipped postpaid. Dr. H. Rostoker, 634 Bedford Drive, Palm Springs, Calif.

WANTED: Recording or tape dubbing of "Cyclotron Songs," circa 1945. Murray Bloom, 1836 Colby Ave., Apt. 3, Los Angeles 25, Calif.

EV Marquis III, Coronet, 1A speaker systems. Perfect condition, mahogany. Factory matched grills. Excellent stereo, year old. New, \$400. Best offer. Kelner, 2241 Plumb First, Brooklyn, N.Y.

WANTED Record 78 or 45 RPM, "Stars Are the Windows to Heaven," any artist. Joseph Holan, 703 Hayes St., Hazleton, Pa.

SALE: Arkay SP-6W stereo preamp, \$30; RCA: LM 6901, Beethoven Sym., \$15; LM 6801, Bach Clavier Comp., \$10. Both are perfect. Jack Peters, 2333 Penn St., Harrisburg, Pa.

DESIRE Columbia CL1000, "Calypso Carnival." Joseph L. Vogl, 112 Marion, Pasadena, Calif.

WANTED: Prewar live performances operas on tape. BBC Covent Garden, Glyndebourne, European Opera houses. Will trade, send details. John Codner, Apt. 2, 403 Mount Royal Ave., West, Montreal 8, Que., Canada.

SELL: Shure M3D, Grado "Master," Audio Empire 108, Shure 232 arm. Make reasonable offer for any or all, little used. Charles Wilkins, 510 College Place, Ypsilanti, Mich.

SELL OR TRADE: Ampex A-122 stereo recorder, Heath AW-1 audio watt meter, B.O. S-50 microphone. Want Magnecord 91C6910, 91C133 equalizers. Gene Blash, 1839 S. 12th Ave., Maywood, Ill.

AKAI Terecorder, Model M-5, with all accessories. Identical to Roberts 990 Stereo tape recorder except for automatic shutoff. Still under warranty. \$285 delivered. J. G. Petro, 674 Lindley Road, Glenside, Pa.

COLLECTOR'S ISSUE. Glenn Miller limited edition Victor LPT 6700. Edition H-703 first pressing. Excellent condition. Best offer. Elizabeth Robertson, 3635 Dewey, Omaha, Neb.

WANT TO BUY: Altec 355A amplifier; Roberts stereo 4-track recorder or equivalent; circuit diagram 1938 E.H. Scott X568 AM receiver to copy or photograph. Thomas McIntire, 501 Wright, Wilmington, N.C.

REK-O-KUT Model 120 monaural arm with Pickering (turnover) Fluxvalve cartridge. Cost \$72, sell \$20 or trade for "What have you?" Phil Gedaly, 41-15 50th Ave., Long Island City 4, N.Y.

FOR SALE: AR-3 Walnut \$150 (cabinet in good condition). Shure M-16 Stereodynamic (new stylus) \$60. George D. Ramig, 50 Kirkland, Webster, N.Y.

WANTED! Cabinet, Mahogany or Walnut for Fisher FM 90X tuner. A. W. Dover, Apt. 3K, 211-01 75th Ave., Bayside 64, N.Y.

WANTED AR-2A, Walnut. Must be mechanically perfect. James R. Hunsley, 408 East Healey, Champaign, Ill.

SALE: Fisher 70-RT FM-AM Tuner, Fisher 70-A 25-watt amplifier, Electro-Voice Regency III 3-speaker system, Thorens CD-43 record changer. All in A-1 condition. Just serviced. Alkema, 631 Alger S.E., Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

SALE: Opera sets and singles, star casts, 78 RPM, pre-war pressings. F. Gotthelf, 101 Elwood Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

EVEN SWAP: 15-inch Altec coaxial speaker, crossover—like new (602-A) for 15-inch Jim Lansing (D130)—good condition. Lyle S. Dayhoff, 734 Mary St., Belpre, Ohio.

2-TRACK prerecorded stereo tapes. 70% off list. Classical and popular. Perfect condition, original boxes. Write for free listing and prices. Fred W. Doyle, M.D., 10504 Montrose, Bethesda 14, Md.

FOR SALE: 78 RPM and LP recordings—swing, jazz oldies. Edward E. Orio, 1260 Avon Blvd., Cheshire, Conn.

A PRIVATE SONIC WORLD

Continued from page 67

hear the left channel only, as it does in headphone listening, but also—if usually at a slightly greater distance and low-intensity—the right channel; and vice versa, of course, for one's right ear. The sounds from both channels fuse in air rather than in one's head, whereas the converse holds true with headphones.

An attempt to reconcile what some psychoacoustic purists long have grumbled about—the confusion of sound that is neither "genuine stereo" nor "genuine binaural"—has produced at least one practical solution, introduced at the 1960 Audio Engineering Society convention, in the form of a simple network devised by Benjamin B. Bauer of CBS Research Laboratories. This network, inserted between playback amplifier and headphones, "leaks" controlled amounts of signals from one channel to the other, thus simulating the acoustical mixing that occurs with spaced-speaker stereo reproduction. The Bauer circuit has aroused considerable approval, and one or more manufacturers probably will obtain licenses to market it. Meanwhile, I have been using a home-made version of this network and find that it not only helps stereo-via-headphones to sound much more like normal loudspeaker stereo but also seems to produce less fatigue than my previous experience of headphone listening. Yet I am still not wholly convinced that either I or most other headphone listeners will want always to refrain from using headphones in the older, "uncorrected" way. Very likely, the Bauer circuit, if and when it is made generally available, will come to be preferred for extended sessions of music listening; but for sensational demonstrations, occasional sonic-thrill debauches, or detailed technical study of individual channel characteristics, the uncorrected approach will remain—because of, rather than despite, its anomalies—as tempting as ever.

In any case, the Bauer circuit seems to lend additional incentive to sonic adventures with headphones. Hapless music lovers who are denied normal companionship (or inflicted with its excess) are now granted an enriched solitude as well as an escape from distractions. The student can make more microscopic examinations of score patterns, timbre characteristics, and recording techniques—all uninfluenced by listening room acoustics and noise. And the imaginative listener may well find himself transported right into distant concert halls and opera houses. Whatever its uses, "stereo solitaire"—via headphones—seems to be a new and fully rewarding game on the familiar field.



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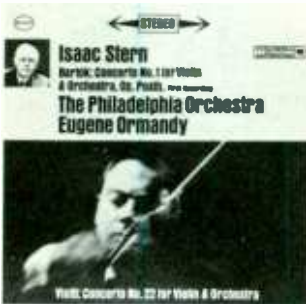
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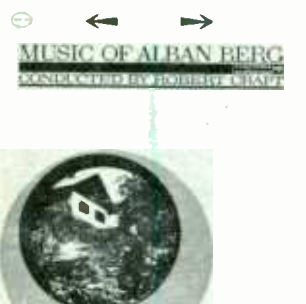
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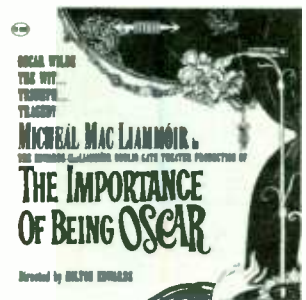


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