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EXPERTS' CHOICE:

The editors whose job it is to know—recommend DYNACO

STEREOPHILE

In this perfectionist magazine's selection of Recommended Components in each issue, Dyna preamps, amplifiers, and the Dynatuner have consistently dominated Groups B and C in all applicable categories. In their own words: "Component categories are as follows: Class A — Highest in price and prestige value, top quality sound; Class B — Sonic quality about equal to that of Class A components, but lower in cost; Class C — Slightly lower-quality sound, but far better than average home high-fidelity; Class D — Good, musical sound, better than the average component system but significantly less than the best sound attainable."



HI-FI BUYERS GUIDE 1966
The top three Shoppers Special recommendations are clear:

- Maximum Fi — PAS-3, 2 Mark IIIs, FM-3
- Music Lovers — PAS-3, Stereo 70, FM-3
- Most Fi Per Dollar — SCA-35 and FM-3



POPULAR SCIENCE — 1963 and 1964

"The Low-Down on Hi-Fi Stereo" in September 1963 picked the Dyna PAS-2 preamp and the Stereo 70 amplifier for their top-most system at \$700 "selected to please the true hi-fi buff" with the further comment "It was the unanimous opinion of the panel that you could spend well over \$1000 and not get any better sound from your records."

The "Low-Down on Hi-Fi Stereo Tuners" in September 1964 picked the Dyna FM-3 in both major categories. It was one of the three assembled tuners over \$150 selected as "outstanding buys," and one of two tuners which were ranked as "definitely the best of the under-\$150 kits."



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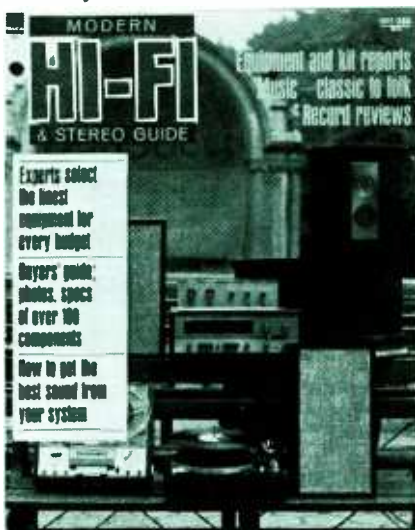
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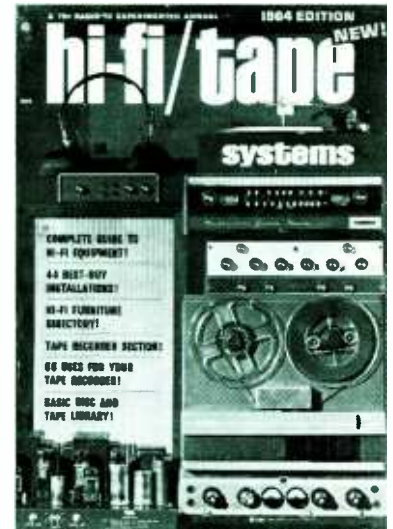
for quality, performance and value!

Modern Hi-Fi & Stereo Guide '64
"Experts Choose The Most Sound For The Money" with the Dyna SCA-35 in 3 out of 6 systems, and the PAS-3 with 2 Mark IIIs, and the FM-3 separately picked in two other systems.



HI-FI TAPE SYSTEMS 1964

"Editor's Choice Of Hi-Fi Systems": "Maximum Fi — The Dyna . . . (FM-3, PAS-3 and 2 Mark IIIs) . . . is the least expensive way to obtain state-of-the-art performance. Music Lovers — The Dyna . . . (FM-3, PAS-3 and Stereo 70) . . . has been recommended by more experts, and their nephews, than any other hi fi system. We don't hesitate to join the parade knowing that we run no risk whatever that anyone will be unhappy with the expenditure. Most Fi Per Dollar—This makes it three in a row for Dyna but we won't apologize. The SCA-35 is the finest low powered amplifier on the market, delivers 16 watts from 20 to 20,000 cycles at less than 1% distortion and below 3 or 4 watts the distortion is unmeasurable."



Many audio magazines have published detailed test reports on Dynaco amplifiers and tuners which have verified their consistent ability to meet or exceed specifications. But specifications alone are never able to fully define comparative performance in the home, and such reviews never make comparisons. The interpretation of those statistics is left to the purchaser. The magazines quoted here are some of the independent publications which have chosen specific Dyna music systems in combination with ancillary equipment by other manu-

facturers. Never before has such a modestly-priced selection been so widely recommended and acclaimed.

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Magnetic Educator

Sir:

Glenn Gould's article "The Prospects of Recording" [April 1966] is sure to create a considerable amount of controversy among your readers. The provocative marginal comments from the galaxy of music experts that accompanied the article is proof enough of this. I felt that the essay was a wonderful and well-reasoned exposition of the problems and challenges facing musicians and recording companies in the future. Besides giving valuable insights into the practice of present-day recording techniques, Mr. Gould casts light on the differences of execution and approach between recorded and live performances. Regardless of how one reacts to Mr. Gould's conclusions, one cannot help but be prodded into reevaluating past ideas and concepts as well as seriously pondering on what the future has in store. By instilling these reactions Glenn Gould has certainly earned the title of "magnetic educator."

*Norman C. Chapman
Calabasas, Calif.*

Sir:

The goal of art is perfection—and, as Glenn Gould points out in his revealing and sensible essay "The Prospects of Recording," recordings are a great gift to the musician in realizing this ideal. Mr. Gould's determination to give no public recitals and to concentrate only on recording reflects his pursuit of perfection. This voluntary retirement from the concert stage was most certainly not a sudden decision on his part; the seeds were undoubtedly planted several years ago when, as I recall, he expressed a profound dislike of applause as an unruly interruption in the moods and thoughts created by the music.

While reading Nathan Broder's review of two recent recordings of Bach's *Art of the Fugue* in the same issue, I was reminded that Gould's organ version (Columbia ML 5738/MS 6338)—for me the most sublimely stimulating recording of this masterpiece—is still incomplete. I am impatiently waiting the second disc in this project.

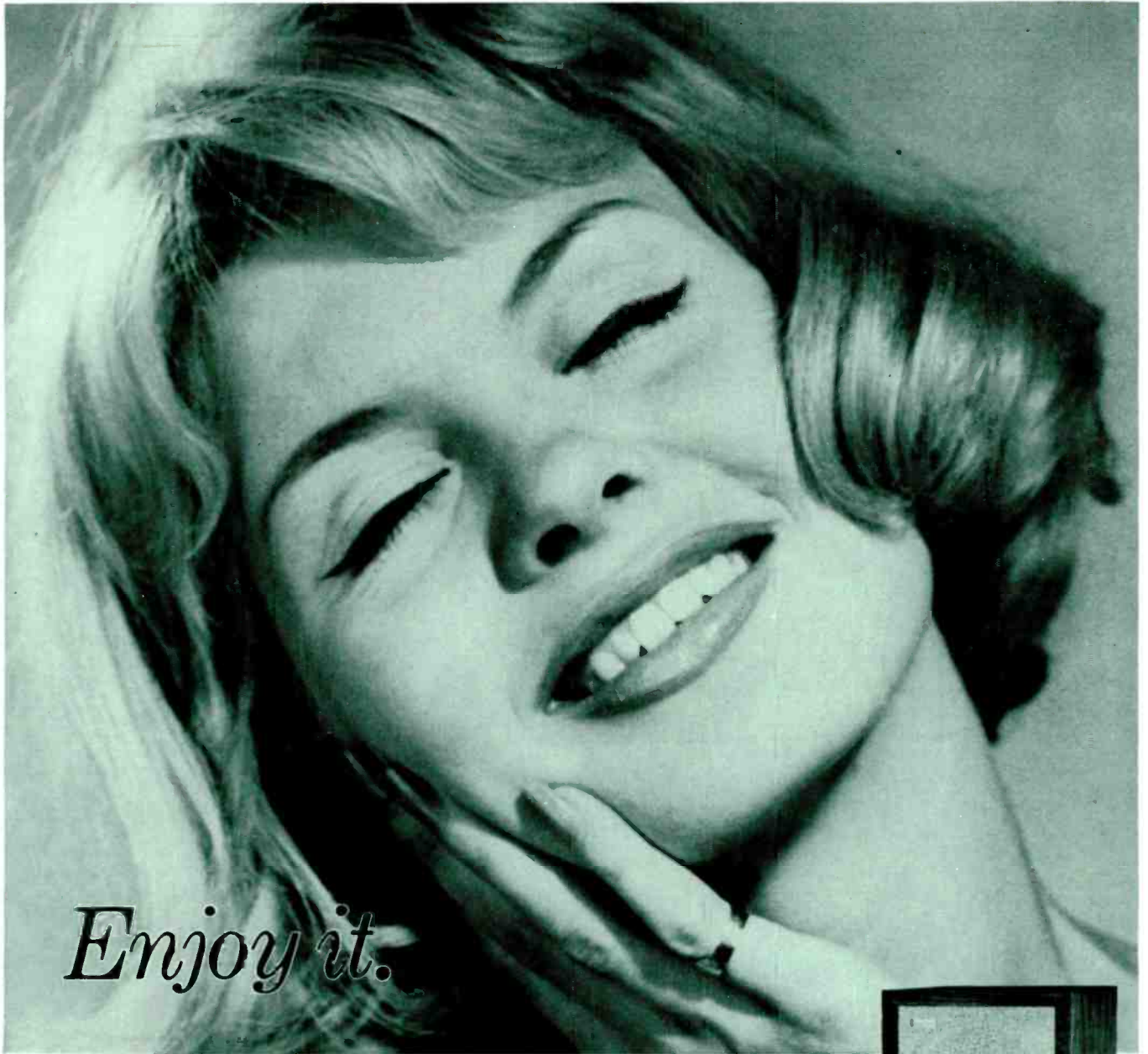
*David W. Harris
Collingwood, Ont.
Canada*

Sir:

By what I am sure is sheer coincidence, your April issue contained a convincing

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



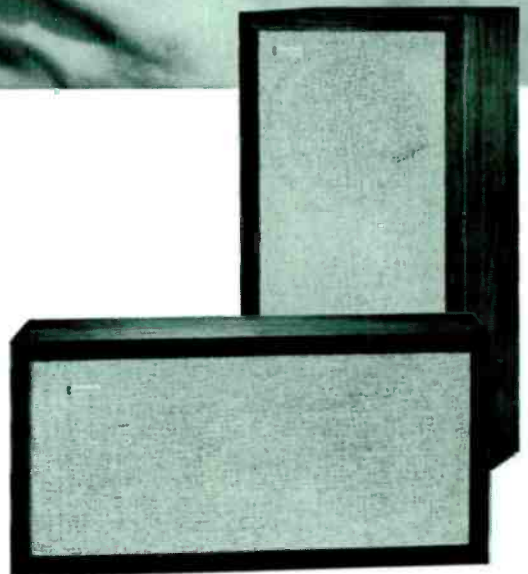
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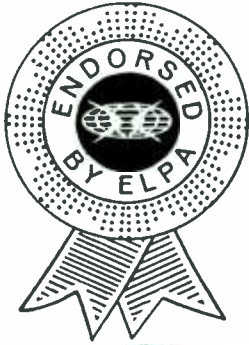
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LETTERS

Continued from page 8

illustration of a tape editor's power over what the listener finally hears when he puts needle to vinyl. Glenn Gould, in his remarks on the practice of tape splicing, cited the A minor Fugue from his recording of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I as an example of a superior recording obtained by combining two mediocre takes in a manner imperceptible to the listener. This same performance of the A minor Fugue is the only one of the twenty-four fugues in Book I that critic Nathan Broder singled out for special praise in his review of Gould's recording (on page 90 of the same issue). Indeed, Broder praises Gould specifically because "all the wealth of detail is clearly presented with no faltering in the constant motion."

Certainly the "wealth of detail" was provided by the pianist; but a good deal of the credit for the "constant motion" must go to Gould's collaborator, the tape editor. I think that this sort of manipulation takes us a long way from what Bach (and other composers) had in mind when they wrote their masterpieces.

Brent A. Reid
Vancouver, B.C.
Canada

Unkind Cut

SIR:

In your April issue, Bernard Jacobson, reviewing the new recording of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra by George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra, noted with some rancor a cut of 130 bars of the fifth movement of the work, adding "This was presumably done in order to accommodate a generous fill-up in the shape of Janáček's delightful brass-happy Sinfonietta. . . ."

Why should Mr. Jacobson presume that Columbia Records should be so crassly commercial and insensitive to artistic taste as to make such a cut simply to accommodate another work on one of its records? It is unfortunate that, when an alternate reading of the score is presented, a critic should automatically question the integrity of the record company.

The explanation for Mr. Szell's cut (which is mentioned in the album notes) is simple. Bartók sent Mr. Szell the original score in manuscript form for his comments and advice, and Mr. Szell made various suggestions, including the cut in the last movement. He always performs the Concerto for Orchestra in this form. At the time of the recording, it was suggested that he might record the work in full, according to the printed score, but he objected to this, pointing out that the record would not then be a true reproduction of his reading of the Bartók Concerto.

A close examination of the score would show that it would be impossible for Columbia to have made this cut simply by removing the 130 bars in

Continued on page 12

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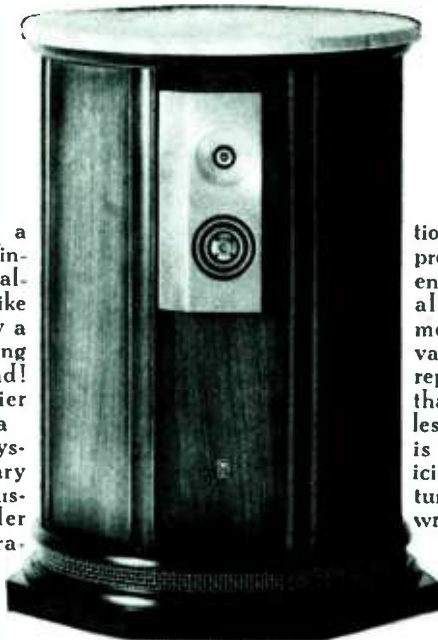
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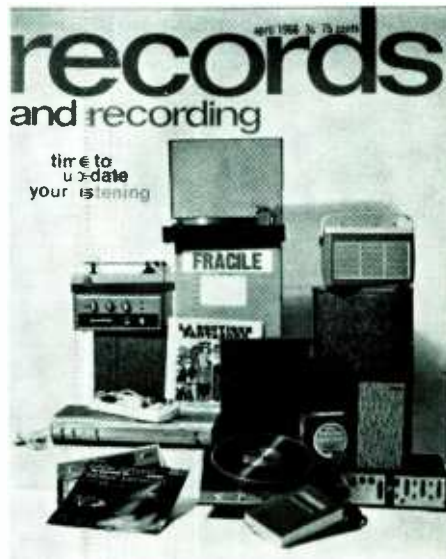
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records and recording

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CIRCLE 49 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 10

question, since the Szell performance involves repetition of eight bars plus an additional repetition of one bar four times, together with a huge orchestral *ritardando*—something that cannot be achieved in any editing cubicle. Surely Mr. Jacobson did not also presume that Columbia rewrote the score and persuaded George Szell to go along with its economic machinations.

Paul W. Myers
Producer, Columbia Masterworks
New York, N.Y.

Mr. Jacobson replies: "Three years and a half spent, some time ago, working for record companies perhaps made me too ready to question their integrity where cuts are concerned, and I accept Mr. Myers' rebuke on this point. But I did not suggest that this particular cut was effected by tape editing, and if what I said gave any such impression I am happy to have the opportunity of correcting that too. The fact remains that no adequate justification is offered either in Mr. Myers' letter or in the album notes. 'Apparently, Bartók gave some latitude to conductors, allowing them to make deletions' can hardly be described as a confidence-inspiring pronouncement. That Bartók asked for advice does not mean he was bound to accept it, and Mr. Myers says nothing of the composer's reaction to this suggestion. It would seem likely in a case of this kind that the advice desired would relate to matters of orchestration, not of form; and in the absence of any statement that Bartók specifically approved this cut, I can only continue to deplore it."

Correction: The 4-track tape cartridge player pictured on page 59 of last month's issue, mistakenly attributed to Craig, is actually a product of Automatic Radio.
Editor

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NOTES

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS



Bernstein's First Opera Recording: Verdi's *Falstaff*, with Fischer-Dieskau

VIENNA

AS I CAME OUT of Vienna's Südbahnhof one day last spring, I saw a familiar face staring at me from a poster: tousled hair, sage, quizzical eyes. "*Zu Gast in Wien: Leonard Bernstein*," the

printed legend read, and, discreetly, in the lower right-hand corner, was CBS Records' trademark. Actually, posters weren't necessary to make Maestro Bernstein's presence here known: he was conducting Verdi's *Falstaff* at the Staatsoper to sold-out houses, there were television interviews, articles in the press, parties. And, in the midst of it all, he was finding time to make not just one recording, but three.

From the point of view of Bernstein's worldwide audience, the most important result of the Vienna sojourn will be his recording debut as a conductor of opera, with the Staatsoper *Falstaff* cast headed by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau in the title role. "It was the combination of the two things, the recording and the theatre performances, that brought me here," he told me, when I managed to have a few minutes with him in the living room of his hotel suite. "I love conducting opera. I'm right up there on the stage with them all the time."

Obviously, he also loves the job of recording opera. To anybody familiar with recording-session

tensions, the *Falstaff* project seemed miraculously easygoing. At the first session, Act I, Scene 1 was on the schedule. Bernstein was in the Sofiensaal half-an-hour early, sitting at a piano in a corner of the room, playing the third movement of Mozart's B flat Concerto, K. 450, which he was taping between work on *Falstaff*. The players of the Vienna Philharmonic began to drift in, some of them greeting the Maestro, who nodded, or waved if he had a free hand at the moment. Fischer-Dieskau appeared, all smiles, followed by Erich Kunz (Bardolf), Murray Dickie (Pistol), and Gerhard Stolze (Doctor Caius). As the engineers did some last-minute adjusting of the microphones, the conductor ran through a bit of the scene with the orchestra. When they reached the baritone's falsetto line "*To son di Sir John Falstaff*," half the orchestra players sang it, in wobbly sopranos: the other half broke up. The session got down to business, and after another run-through and some more shifting of microphones, a take was made.

Later, when I was introduced to Fischer-Dieskau and told him that I had come to report on the recording sessions, he said, shaking his head: "How very difficult for you! Nothing is happening."

Falstaff Without Fuss. Nothing was happening but the creation of a complete opera recording. While out in the hall the *Continued on page 16*



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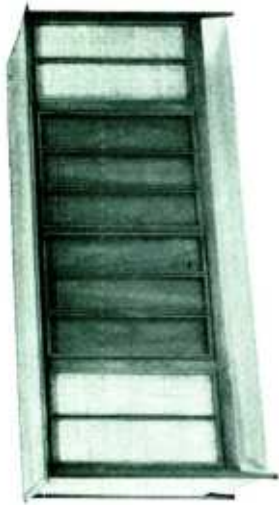
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orchestra and singers and conductor were proceeding almost gaily, back in the control room the Decca/London team, headed by Erik Smith, was worrying about the quality of the sound. How much orchestral detail? The beauty of the *Falstaff* score lies in the infinite little details, brief instrumental comments that are sometimes lost in the opera house but must be captured on records, without losing the over-all ensemble. This concern explains the fact that during the apparently effortless first session there were finally three takes of the scene, though to a listener in the auditorium the first might well have seemed just about perfection. By the end of that session, Mr. Smith and his associates were as happy as the performers.

The *Falstaff* recording will be a Columbia (CBS in Europe) album, made on Decca/London equipment by Decca/London people. In return for its collaboration, Decca/London will have the services of Bernstein—otherwise exclusively a Columbia artist—for two records: the Mozart Concerto (which he plays and conducts) coupled with the *Linz Symphony*; and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, which Bernstein also programmed in concert here, with Fischer-Dieskau and the American tenor James King.

The good humor of *Falstaff* spilled over into the Mozart sessions. After a sticky passage in the slow movement, while waiting for the engineers to check some equipment, Bernstein amused himself by banging out the opening bars of the opera. The violins took it up for a moment, and there was a flash of Veridian wit that illuminated everyone's working afternoon. Between the Vienna Philharmonic and Leonard Bernstein there seemed open, warm admiration, visible in the smiles which gleamed from podium to the serried music desks and back again. ("Viel mehr nyaaaa," Bernstein says to the tuba, then to the whole orchestra, "Also . . . let's make it.") He is proud of having, for *Falstaff*, achieved a sound that is more Italian than Viennese; the atmosphere in the recording sessions was distinctly U.S.A.

The first session demanded the presence of only four of the principals. From the second session on, the scene was more crowded, with the arrival of Regina Resnik (Quickly), armed with various knitting bags and thermos bottles; the Italian contingent, comprising Rolando Panerai (Ford), Ilva Ligabue (Alice), Graziella Sciutti (Nanetta); the Spanish tenor Juan Oncina (Fenton), to whom the conductor spoke in a kind of *West Side Story* polyglot: "*Mucho cuidado, Juan. . .*" With nine and ten singers in ensemble, with sound effects, with two guitarists sitting in the center of the stage to play Alice's lute number, the activity reached the brink of confusion—but never fell over it. And the schedule was tight: only nine three-hour sessions for an extremely complicated work. Of course, the recording benefited from the weeks of preparation in the opera house

(and this could be a hint to other companies).

Bernstein Says Yes. Will there be other Bernstein opera recordings? When I asked this, the subject smiled broadly. The Vienna Opera wants Bernstein back. On the piano in his hotel room were the score of *Mefistofele* and *Le Prophète*, two of the many operas that the Staatsoper management has suggested. But a more serious candidate is *Der Rosenkavalier*, which Bernstein would like to do for the Staatsoper with Luchino Visconti as stage director (Visconti directed the *Falstaff* and was making plans for a London production of *Rosenkavalier* while he was here). If Bernstein came back to Vienna for another opera, would he also record it? "I've got the bug now," he answered. The reply seemed sufficiently affirmative.

In the dressing room at the Sofiensaal, just before I left Vienna, I was saying goodbye to Fischer-Dieskau. I asked him if there was anything he particularly wanted me to say about his feelings concerning this *Falstaff* recording. "Just write that it's all wonderful fun," he said. Then, pointing across the room to Bernstein, he added, "With him." More smiles.

WILLIAM WEAVER



**Soprano Raskin
And the Fine Art
Of Das Lied**

A warning has been circulating around New York concert circles of late that, unless you happen to be a very, very celebrated European artist, you'd better think twice before you plan a Lieder recital. And the singers seem to have taken it all to heart: not only have the number of *Liederabende* dwindled year by year, but successful ones have been the exception. Happily, there are some singers undaunted by the portents—conspicuous among them being the American soprano Judith Raskin, whose Lieder recital here last December was, from all reports, a critical delight. Although Miss Raskin's credentials are impeccable (a former member of the New York City Opera, a lyric soprano in excellent standing with the Met, the recipient of flattering notices for her performances in a goodly number of oratorio and opera recordings on Decca, RCA Victor, and Columbia—not to mention being the mother of two bouncy teen-agers), they do not necessarily point to inevitable triumph in the fragile business of Lieder singing. So, in order to observe Miss Raskin at work, I dropped in at Columbia's East 30th Street studios one evening while she was recording an all-Schubert recital. (An apt companion to her recent

Continued on page 18



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NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 16

Mahler/Mendelssohn set, the new disc will also be issued on the Epic label.)

Schubert by Raskin. When I arrived, the soprano was just launching into the haunting and haunted strains of *Auf-lösung*. The first take was too melodramatic for accompanist George Schick's taste. "After all," he reprimanded. "this is Schubert, not Wagner." Miss Raskin seemed relieved. "Well, that's good: as long as it's Schubert, I can do it." Another try produced more satisfactory results—the soprano scaled her voice down considerably, but without sacrificing the tragedy of the song's final cadaverous command: "*Geh' unter. Welt.*" Communicating the elusive message of a Lied before a bare microphone can sometimes be a difficult proposition. When Columbia's recording producer Paul Myers felt that more spontaneity was in order, he collected all those who happened to be handy, from the piano tuner to the singer's husband (New York psychiatrist Raymond Raskin), to form an impromptu audience—or cheering section, as Dr. Raskin put it.

The finished disc will be a judicious selection of the familiar and the less frequently performed songs. At first only Schubertian rarities were to be included, but later Miss Raskin decided on some songs that have been old friends of hers for years. "*Wohin, Der Neugierige, Ständchen* . . . they have all been part of my life ever since student days; it's true they have been recorded often in the past, but I wanted to do them my way, too, before branching out into the esoteric." Miss Raskin feels that projecting the words of a song is of vital importance—especially when singing for an audience unfamiliar with the German language. "It's not enough just to capture the mood of the song; each word must receive proper weight and inflection within the musical phrase. Believe me, when the composer is Schubert

this is not an easy matter—his simplest songs usually present the biggest challenges for an interpreter." This particular interpreter has met challenges before now, and her admirers have no doubt of her continued success. P.G.D.



French Audio Fair Comes of Age

The eighth annual international "Festival du Son," held as usual in the pleasant old Palais d'Orsay hotel, may be remembered as the one that finally did the trick—i.e., hauled the French public, no longer skeptical although still clutching its pocketbook, into the modern world of high fidelity. The increase in the number of visitors was clearly evident, and so was their new seriousness: an hour after closing time on the last evening of the five-day show the crowd was still milling through the five floors of exhibits. The demonstrators of equipment had the snappy air of men who were at last in business.

"Festival du Son": Business. Much of the credit for this achievement must go to the Syndicat des Industries Electroniques de Reproduction et d'Enregistrement, which organizes the festival and which through the sometimes lean years since 1959 has never relaxed its standards for the equipment displayed and demonstrated. Some credit must also go to the French national radio network, which has had the courage to build its FM stereo stations ahead of time and to insist on educating its listeners. Indeed, the importance of radio in recent developments is underlined by the fact that this year the Berlin and Cologne stations and the British, Yugoslav, Japanese, Italian, Swiss, and Swedish networks joined the French broadcasters as official participants in the festival.

Foreign manufacturers—American, British, German, Japanese, Swiss, Danish, Norwegian, Belgian, and Dutch—still accounted for two thirds of the equipment exhibited and still tended to establish the criteria by which festival visitors judged French products. But a significant number of domestic firms were on hand with complete high-fidelity systems, offered at prices that seemed very reasonable to customers previously resigned to the necessity of paying duty on everything.

The official figures on trends revealed a phenomenon which, since a third of the exhibitors were French, may or may not be international: the rapid conversion to transistors apparent during the past three years seems now to be slowing down. Only forty-four per cent of the amplifiers and preamplifiers presented were transistorized, and only sixty per cent of the FM stereo tuners. A lot



Judith Raskin: impeccable credentials.

Continued on page 20

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 18

of small and medium-sized loudspeakers were on display, but my impression was that most of the attention went to the big ones. The customers appeared to be spending a good many man hours getting that hall-in-your-head sound from headphones. Commercially recorded music on tape, a fairly recent thing over here, made an impression. So did organs, which were part of the festival for the first time, and were played better than acceptably by the demonstrators.

"Festival du Son": Entertainments. The new seriousness was evident in the attendance at the series of morning lectures on technical questions. And not all of the questions were technical: Charles Bruck, the permanent conductor of the Orchestre Philharmonique, joined with avant-garde composer Michel Philippot (who is also one of the producers of musical programs for the French radio) to animate a discussion of "truth" and "poetry" in the high fidelity realm.

The recording industry, which has always seemed to me rather overlooked—although not unheard—at these festivals, got a better break this year. In addition to the award of Grands Prix du Disque by the Académie Charles Cros, which is always the first item on the first day, and the usual announcements of new records, there was a public taping of the *Tribune des Critiques de Disques*, a lively program on the French radio. Five critics participated, and had the rare pleasure of hearing themselves applauded by a partisan audience. The subject was the various stereo versions of *Die Fledermaus*.

As always, there were live programs to balance the recorded kind and to serve as a basis of comparison. Denise Monteil, Georges Liccioni, and Robert Massard (all of the Palais Garnier) sang a sampling of numbers intended to trace the history of opera from Gluck to Puccini. There were recitals and concerts in the Grand Salon by, among others, violinist Ruggiero Ricci, pianist Andor Foldes, guitarist Narciso Yepes, the string quartet of the French radio, and Roland Douatte's Collegium Musicum. One night everybody stayed until one in the morning, listening to and watching flamenco singers and dancers and a group of popular artists.

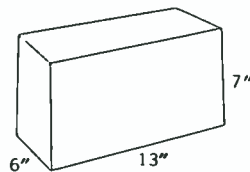
ROY McMULLEN



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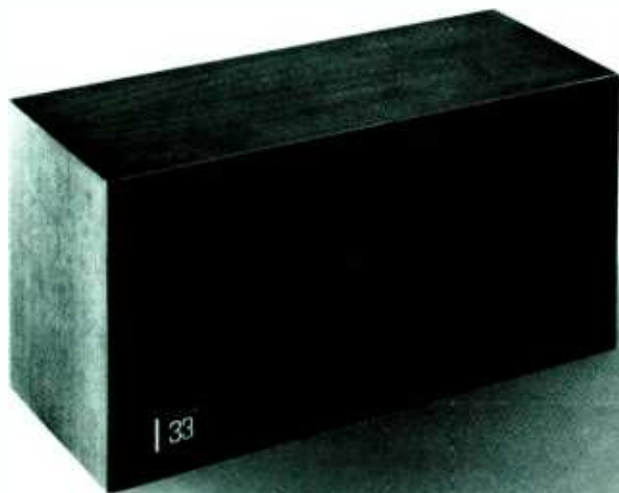


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"Persuasive Percussion—1966." Command All-Stars. Command RS 895, \$5.79 (SD).

Ars longa, vita brevis. . . . It's a shock to be reminded that almost seven years have passed since the first of the "P . . . Percussion" spectaculars took the audio world by storm. The new one boasts shrilly of its added technical attractions: 35-mm magnetic film masters and "Dimension-3" elimination of the hole-in-the-middle. But while the sonics themselves are bigger, brighter, more glassily sharp and vividly "present" than ever before, and while the pseudo-center channel enlarges ping-pongery to ping-pang-pongery, nothing—including the once revolutionary use of a black-and-white abstract jacket design—is really novel any longer. Command's noted team of star players is as expert as ever, but the departure from the firm of its founder, Enoch Light, seems to have included also the withdrawal of this series' original arranger, Lew Davies. And while successor Jack Andrews is professionally skilled, his scoring fanciness not only makes that of Davies seem straightforward in comparison but seldom musters valid *musical* justifications for its over-contrived ingenuities. To be sure, there are occasional imaginative moments (in *Bye Bye Blues/Rain*, *Everything's Coming Up Roses*, and a *Never on Sunday* that stars Tony Mottola on mandolin), and I perked up my ears in delight over every bass trombone solo by Paul Faulise. But it's evident here that the shoes of Light and Davies aren't easy—if at all possible—to fill.

"Think Young." Camarata and His Orchestra. Coliseum DS 51001, \$4.98 (SD). Also 4-track 7.5-ips tape, CLL 93001, 34 min., \$7.95.

What Camarata's big orchestra, including strings and at least eight of the former ten "Tutti's Trombones," does here is to demonstrate how much more musical interest there is in some of the current teen-age hit tunes than most of their rock-and-roll or folk-rock versions would ever have given one to realize. Indeed a couple of the tunes in this program are made to sound simply magnificent in quite "straight" but superbly sonorous performances. I found myself going back to repeat again and again the delectable *I'll Never Find Another You*, a buoyant *Sunshine Lollipops and Rainbows*, and an imaginative *Goin' out of My Head*. Though most of the others are less effective, there are at least some fine moments in *Ferry 'Cross the Mersey*, *Cast Your Fate to the Wind*, *A Ticket*

to Ride, *All Day and All Night*. In both disc and tape editions the stereoism is extremely marked (an informative diagram of the spaced-out recording setup, which has the strings off in a separate room, is provided), the reverberation is minimal, and the sonic qualities are rather hard as well as brilliant. As usual, the stereo disc modulation level is considerably higher than that of the tape. And even when they are equalized, the tape's high end isn't quite as sharp, although its mid and low ranges are warmer—in this case further enhancing the innately rich brass choir sonorities which are the program's most distinctive attractions.

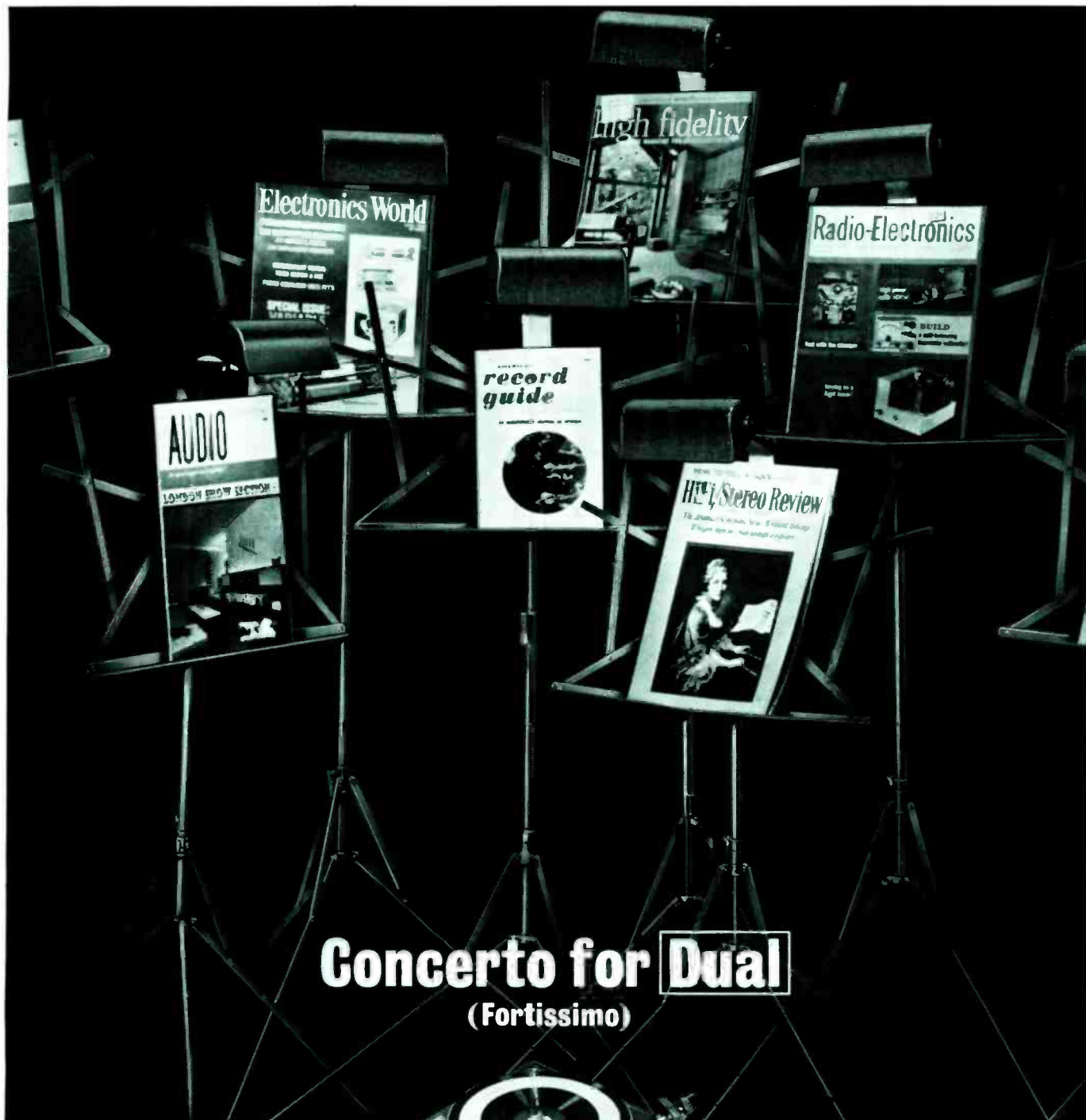
"All-Time Favorite Marches." Ithaca College Band, Walter Beeler, cond. Golden Crest CR 4073, \$5.98 (SD).

"Marches from the Movies." Band of the Grenadier Guards, Capt. Rodney Bashford, cond. London PS 434, \$4.79 (SD).

My purpose in coupling these releases is not to compare performances—the expert Mr. Beeler's amateur players are by no means inferior in precision and intonation to the celebrated British ensemble, though they can't approach the latter's far more refined and varied tonal coloring—but to contrast repertoires and the sound each has been given. Here the Ithacans appear strictly as a marching band, playing standard selections which represent both such popular favorites as *El Capitan*, *Father of Victory*, and *Under the Double Eagle*, and such bandmen's favorites as the gratefully idiomatic *Chicago Tribune* by Chambers, *His Honor* by Fillmore, *Il Bersagliere* by Boccalari, plus several less distinctive marches by Losey, Brockenshire, Hall, Seitz, and Bennett. The British bandmen, on the other hand, disport themselves mainly in rather fancy transcriptions of Hollywood tunes, topped by a fine *Col. Bogey (River Kwai)* in patrol style, an ultrabright *Guns of Navarone*, and a delicately bright *Children's Marching Song* from *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness*. Most of the other pieces are of little musical consequence (they're also sometimes surprisingly slapdash in performance). There is even more marked contrast between the honest, transparent, robust Golden Crest stereo recording and London's supercrystalline, ultrastereoisitic, and otherwise spectacular engineering. The latter actually utilizes the now familiar Phase-4 techniques, although the American edition is not so labeled and costs a dollar less than Phase-4 stereo releases normally do.

R. D. DARRELL

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George Finola: "Jazz of the Chosen Few." New Orleans Originals JM-65-4, \$5.00 (LP). New Orleans Jazz Museum, 1017 Dumaine St., New Orleans, La. 70116.

There is a disarmingly unprofessional charm about this disc which permits one to overlook its awkward moments and to react with a special warmth to its good spots. George Finola, a twenty-year-old self-taught cornetist, is assistant director of the New Orleans Jazz Museum. The "chosen few" whose music is of particular interest to him are Bix Beiderbecke, Frankie Trumbauer, Eddie Lang, Miff Mole, and others of their circle in the last half of the Twenties. His interest is not in actual re-creation or imitation—he simply works in the same general style. With a group of contemporary New Orleans musicians, which includes Raymond Burke (clarinet), Armand Hug (piano), and Danny Barker (guitar), Finola has chosen to play such period pieces as *Hot Lips*, *My Pet*, *Blue and Brokenhearted*, and *My Melancholy Baby*. As a group, the band has moments of uncertainty in ensemble attack and occasional unsteadiness in some tempos. The attractively relaxed *Blue and Brokenhearted* hints at the kind of performance the group may eventually achieve after a little more experience together. At present, however, the major interest centers on a few soloists—Armand Hug, whose piano solos have so much compelling life and spirit that they can pull together even the group's weaker pieces; Danny Barker's chorded and single-string guitar solos; and young Finola. The cornetist has his roots in Bix but he plays with a gentleness that is closer to another Bix-oriented cornetist, Johnny Wiggs of New Orleans, than to the eruptive Bix himself. He comes through particularly well on an inviting ballad, *Sheila*, and on *Melancholy Baby*, which opens with the verse ad lib and then eases into a rhythmic chorus. Burke switches from clarinet to tenor saxophone on a couple of pieces, phrasing much as he normally does on clarinet and using the soft, mellow tone favored by most New Orleans tenors. Finola's interest in developing the sort of soft and persuasive jazz that Trumbauer and Bix were exploring has validity, as indi-

cated by *Blue and Brokenhearted*, but this band still has some work to do before it can fully live up to its intentions.

Chico Hamilton: "El Chico." Impulse 9102, \$4.98 (LP); S 9102, \$5.98 (SD). For the past decade, Chico Hamilton has managed to discover a succession of strongly individualistic musicians to serve as a front line to his suavely powerful drumming. The Hamilton group as of August 1965, when this set was recorded, included three striking musicians who can rank with the best in any of his earlier groups. The most striking, and the one who carries the bulk of the load, is Hungarian guitarist Gabor Szabo. His work is striking not only because it swings with an imposing forcefulness, but because of the very unusual tone he uses—a dark, heavy, ringing sound that suggests nothing so much as that traditional Magyar instrument the cymbalom. Szabo's playing is surging and vital in a most unexpected treatment of *Marcheta*, but it does not come off as well in his moderately slow version of *People*. Hamilton uses the powerful and vibrant attack of his bassist, Albert Stinson, as a lead and foil to Szabo's guitar with extremely interesting results all through the set. The third soloist is Sadao Watanabe, the Japanese flutist and alto saxophonist whose work first began attracting attention in this country while he was attending the Berklee School in Boston. His playing has the pungently expressive quality almost essential in these vital surroundings.

Jimmy Heath Quintet: "On the Trail." Riverside 486, \$4.79 (LP); 9486, \$4.79 (SD).

The warm, full tone and smooth flow of Jimmy Heath's tenor saxophone have never been displayed on records to such excellent advantage as they are in this attractive collection. Backed by an excellent group—Wynton Kelly on piano, Kenny Burrell on guitar (sharing most of the solo space with Heath), Paul Chambers on bass, and Al Heath (Jimmy's brother) on drums—Heath plays an unusual program which uses some off-beat material. The disc includes a pro-

Continued on page 26

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

The new KLH* Model Twelve is the result of some pointed questions about what kind of improvements might go into a speaker system designed for perfectionists.

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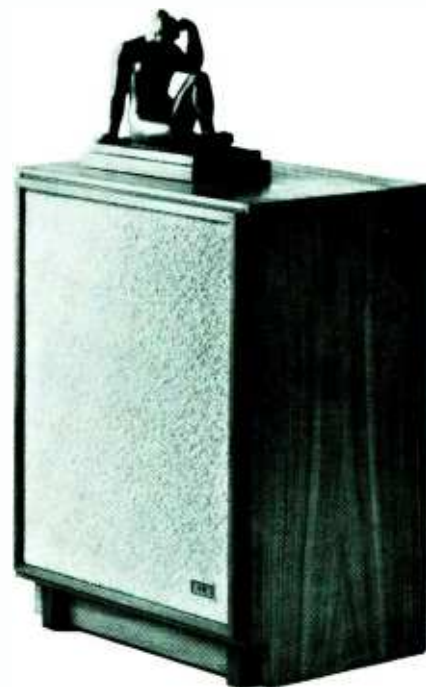
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JAZZ

Continued from page 24

vocative treatment of Ferde Grofé's *On the Trail*, an imaginative and attractive original aptly called *Cloak and Dagger*, a gorgeous, all-but-forgotten ballad, *Vanity*, some meat-and-potatoes swinging, and a version of *All the Things You Are* which begins matter-of-factly, but builds into a series of remarkably strong improvised choruses.

Milt Jackson: "And the Big Brass." Riverside 478, \$4.79 (LP); 9478, \$4.79 (SD).

For all of Milt Jackson's fully justified reputation as a forthright swinger on vibes, some of his most distinctive work has been done in relatively placid surroundings. Without disturbing the basic mood, Jackson has an ability to bring to these settings a startling amount of fire. In this collection, Melba Liston has written warm, dark big-band backgrounds, which allow Jackson to display his pearls on velvet. The backgrounds are threaded with such contrasting colors as a soaring French horn by Julius Watkins, the propulsive force of Major Holley's tuba, Clark Terry's distinctively pungent trumpet, and some beautifully shaded brass ensembles. But still it is Jackson whose momentum, even in a slow ballad such as *Flamingo*, lifts the pieces and carries them along. There is a deceptively casual air about his playing. It seems so off-hand at times that it comes as a shock to realize, in the middle of a phrase, how strongly he is swinging on, say, *Extraordinary Blues* (which is a delightful variation of his familiar *Bags' Groove*) or on Buddy Johnson's essentially balladistic *Save Your Love for Me*. Miss Liston and Jackson are a highly complementary couple and, between them, they have created a distinguished disc.

Roland Kirk: "Slightly Latin." Limelight 82033, \$4.98 (LP); 86033, \$5.98 (SD). If Fats Waller had been a man with a horn, he might have been an early version of Roland Kirk. Kirk's high spirits, his scorn for convention, and the driving ebullience of his performances have never been more Waller-ish than they are in this set. With only three brass instruments and a pair of percussionists added to his usual quartet, Kirk has created ensemble attacks that have the imposing, explosive power of a full-sized big band. Having set his voicings for strength and body, Kirk places himself in the midst of them, shouting (the urgent joy of his "Walk it! Walk it!" is pure Waller), blowing his peremptory whistle, and sampling his incredible array of instruments (this time it's tenor and baritone saxophones, manzello, piccolo, flute, and—something new—a chanter, which produces a thin, sweet, singing sound). In the romantic ballad *It's All in the Game*, he plays tenor saxophone with what seems to be a characteristic robust abandon until you become aware of the discipline involved. Whether it's a Latin tempo (*Juarez*), a gospel beat (*Shaky*

Money), exotica (*Safari*), or out-and-out swing, Kirk is the core of the performance, full of zest, humor, imagination, and authority, driving everyone to reach for his emotional level. In this Kirk reminds us that he once worked with Charlie Mingus, and his handling of an ensemble of this size may be influenced by that experience. There is a difference, however, in that Kirk, while equaling Mingus' high pitch, still maintains a firm hold on the over-all structure.

Rare Bands of the Twenties. Historical Records No. 6 and No. 7, \$5.00 each (1.P). Historical Records, Box 1, Canarsie, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11230.

For collectors of early jazz bands, these two discs are apt to be even more rewarding than the first set released by Historical Records. The bands on No. 6 include Luis Russell's Hot Six (with Kid Ory, Barney Bigard, Albert Nicholas), a Jack Purvis group (with Coleman Hawkins, J. S. Higginbotham, and Adrian Rollini), a fine Jabbo Smith group, and the exuberant Washboard Rhythm Kings (masquerading as the Chicago Hot Five). No. 7 is highlighted by the Blue Ribbon Syncopators (a band with a big, burly, Southwestern sound—although it apparently came out of Buffalo, N. Y.), Williamson's Beal (*sic*) St. Frolic Orchestra (a Memphis group), Cecil Scott's famous Bright Boys (with Dicky Wells, Frankie Newton, and Bill Coleman), and Tiny Parham's band. The ensembles are sometimes rough and ready but they are strongly rhythmic and the soloists are almost always convincing. Considering that the records were made between 1926 and 1929, the sound in most cases is surprisingly good. The few selections which have rough surfaces or thin sound usually offer compensation in some really fine solos.

Don Redman: "Master of the Big Band."

RCA Victor LPV 520, \$4.79 (LP). Don Redman was of enormous consequence to jazz as an arranger and leader and, with less consequence but great charm, as saxophonist and vocalist in the 1920s and early '30s. From the mid-'30s on, he became increasingly involved with journeyman commercial work. One side of this disc presents Redman at his peak (as leader of McKinney's Cotton Pickers). On the other, he is en route to the ordinary, leading his bands of the late 1930s. On the Cotton Pickers side, only three numbers are by the genuine Pickers—the remaining five are by a brilliant pickup band which Redman brought together in New York to fulfill a Cotton Pickers recording date. This pickup band is distinguished not only because it includes Fats Waller, Coleman Hawkins, Joe Smith, Sidney De Paris, and Benny Carter, but because they play the Cotton Pickers' arrangements with the kind of clean ensemble impact that would normally indicate close familiarity. Redman is heard on this side mostly as a sly, murmuring conversational vocalist—a charming delivery particularly when Waller's piano is tickling lightly behind

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

I don't understand my Oscar



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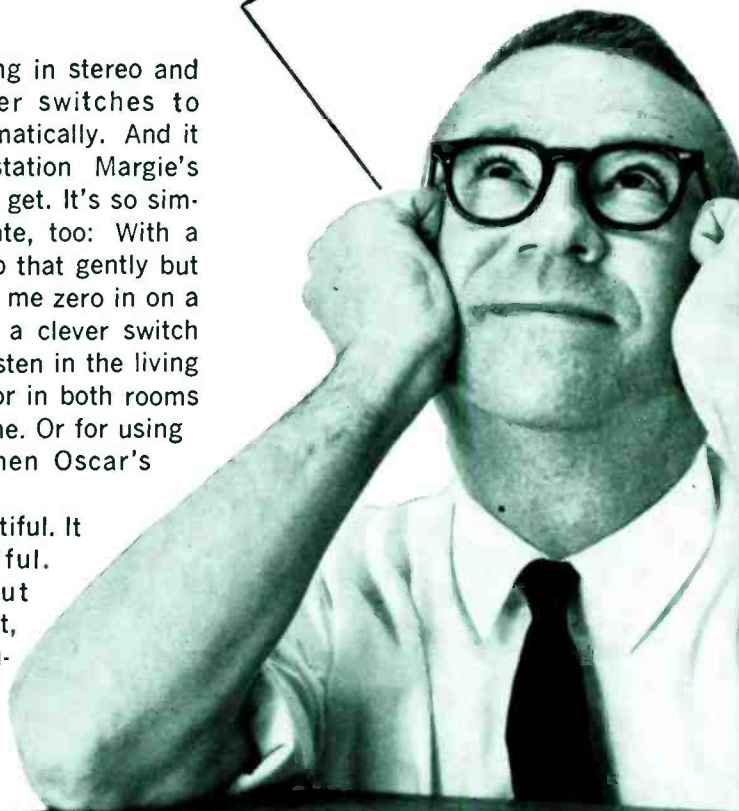
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broadcasting in stereo and the receiver switches to stereo automatically. And it gets any station Margie's receiver can get. It's so simple to operate, too: With a tuning knob that gently but firmly lets me zero in on a station. And a clever switch that lets me listen in the living room, or den, or in both rooms at the same time. Or for using earphones, when Oscar's talking.

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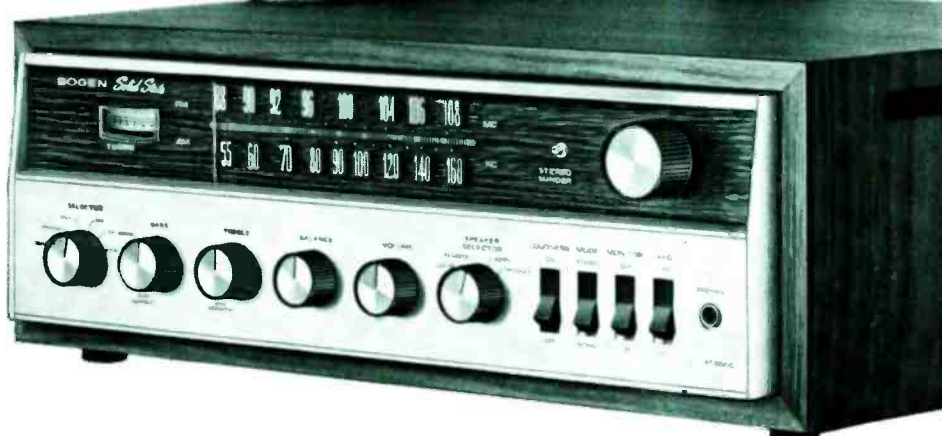
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JAZZ

Continued from page 26

him. Both this pickup band and the regular Cotton Pickers (with Rex Stewart playing muted trumpet) were, under Redman's direction, superb big bands—and the evidence is on this disc. Redman's bands of 1938-40, on the other hand, were relatively routine swing bands, given to jivey novelties. This collection includes a good version of Redman's theme, *Chant of the Weed*, and several examples of Redman's pleasant skill as a soprano saxophonist. But the band's failings are most evident when it tackles such jazz standards as *Milenberg Joys* and *Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble* with quite ordinary results.

Sammy Rimington: "George Lewis Classics." Jazz Crusade 1005, \$4.95 (LP). When Charlie Parker died, a contemporary gagster wondered what the saxophonists at Birdland would play now that they had nobody to steal from. For more than a decade England's traditionalist clarinetists have been living in similar fashion on George Lewis' style and repertoire. Rimington is no exception; the Lewis influence is there all right, but Rimington adds qualities of his own to the style. Playing with an English rhythm section which includes Barry "Kid" Martyn on drums, Rimington walks right into the lion's mouth by playing a program of pieces associated with Lewis (*Red Wing*, *Peoria*, *Ciribiribin*, even *Burgundy Street Blues*), and emerges as an individual musical personality. Rimington plays the Lewis style with a stronger and more positive attack than his model and his over-all scope is broader. In addition there are other influences here which one does not find in Lewis' work: Rimington, for instance, gets into a swing riff on *St. Philips Street Blues*. This is a pleasant and enlightening set, played with airy assurance.

George Shearing Quintet: "Rare Form!" Capitol 2447, \$3.79 (LP); S 2447 \$4.79 (SD).

George Shearing has devoted himself so completely to bland, simplistic, mass appeal performances for almost fifteen years, that I was really startled to hear some of his work on this disc. Along with what has become standard Shearing triviality (*Over the Rainbow*, *They All Laughed*, *Look No Further*), the Shearing of old—the blithe, perceptive, and tremendously swinging Shearing—suddenly rises out of *Hallucinations*, *Station Break*, *Why Not*, and (a real echo of the past) *Bop*, *Look*, and *Listen*. The presence of Gary Burton on vibes must have something to do with this, for Shearing, working with Burton, even sounds a bit more like his old light-hearted self on the routine pieces and he plays a pleasant ballad, *Sunny*, with feeling instead of slogging listlessly through it. Shearing, in the late Forties and early Fifties, was a most engaging pianist and it seemed a tragedy that his success had to be bought at the cost of stifling his exceptional talent. It's good

to know that the talent has actually survived intact and has now produced a Shearing record of genuine interest.

Fats Waller: "Valentine Stomp." RCA Victor LPV 525, \$4.79 (LP).

This is the second collection of Waller material in Victor's Vintage series and, like the first (LPV 516), it is an inimitable blend of Waller's wild humor, his irony, his superb piano playing, and the joyous attack of his little band of the mid-Thirties. For variety, there is an *I Got Rhythm* by a Waller big band in which Hank Duncan, playing second piano, rattles out a good solo despite badgering comment from Waller; but Duncan's solo only proves to be a setup for one by Waller which, for sheer swinging dexterity, is all but incredible. There are also some solo pieces by Waller—a fine *Valentine Stomp* and rather matter-of-fact (for Waller) treatments of *Love Me or Leave Me* and *I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling*. But the meat of the disc is found in the Waller small-group selections with Al Casey's deft guitar, Herman Autrey's needling trumpet, and Waller himself poking into everything—singing, shouting, playing, making *Sugar Blues* credible, openly appalled at the lyrics of *The Girl I Left Behind Me*, but never allowing anything to interfere with the pure joy of his piano work.

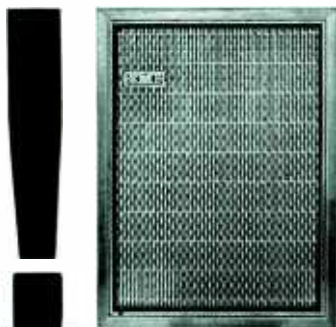
Randy Weston Sextet: "Randy!" Bakton 1001, \$4.98 (LP); S 1001, \$5.98 (SD).

Randy Weston's six-piece group plays this collection of strongly rhythmic and melodic Weston originals with all the power and thrust of a big band. Weston himself is an unusually assertive pianist who adds meat to the rhythm section and makes every brief solo meaningful. But he also has a saxophonist, Booker Ervin, who has a strongly emotional style and a trumpeter-flugelhornist, Ray Copeland, who can hold his own with both Weston and Ervin. Between them, they give the ensemble passages a wallowing solidity and, along with solos that are notable for making their points and then moving on, they continually lend attractive accents to the selections. Weston, like Duke Ellington, has a strong sense of musical color, building a blues waltz, a powerful ballad or, more often, a catchy riff with bright splashes, exotic shadings, and a texture which, particularly in Ervin's solos, can almost be felt. The sextet has been together for quite a while and their knowledge of each other's capabilities makes these performances move in a positive fashion that no *ad hoc* group could achieve. JOHN S. WILSON



HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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10B FM Stereo Tuner—rated by Hi Fi/Stereo Review magazine, "I have never seen a tuner to compare with it...so outstanding that it is literally in a class by itself."

7T Solid State Stereo Console—a solid state component unequalled in performance, versatility and flexibility.

8B Dual 35 Stereophonic Power Amplifier—American Record Guide magazine says, "The Marantz 8B is a logical choice for ears that demand the best sound for now and for the future."

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CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

AUDIO REACHES THE SUPERMARKET

According to Paco president Sol Sparer, his company is about to take a novel step in the merchandising of audio components—selling kits in the neighborhood supermarket. In keeping with the way other products have been successfully marketed in these stores, the Paco units will be made available piecemeal as twenty-two separate sub-kits, one a week until the buyer has completed the project.

The first sub-kit, costing only \$1.00, contains a complete set of tools, including the all-important soldering iron. Each subsequent packet—of which the last few comprise a speaker system—will cost \$3.99. The work of wiring and assembly, Sparer told us, has been geared for the complete novice and “if the set doesn’t work on completion, we’ll put it in shape for a nominal \$5.00 fee.”

The kit has been test-marketed by Paco in retail outlets in Tennessee, Florida, and Virginia. Public response in these locales, Sparer feels, augurs for acceptance of high quality sound gear by consumers who have not been reached by conventional high-fidelity merchandising. And this market, he adds, is ready for good monophonic sound in the form of an FM receiver—which is what the first kit will be. Eventually the firm will offer “anything electronic for the home—an intercom system, maybe a small electronic organ.” At press time the choice of the supermarket chain through which the kits will be sold had narrowed to a few giants, so don’t be surprised if, on your next trip to a local emporium, you espy an audio display amid the fruit-juice cans.

MUSICAL CHAIRS

—IN STEREO

Almost as private as headphones, but offering padding for all parts of one’s anatomy as well as sound at the ears, is the new Berkline stereo chair. A Lear-Jet 8-track tape player is fitted into its side, and you are serenaded by two small speakers installed beneath the upholstery fabric on the back. The tape unit is similar to those sold for cars, but modified to run on household current via an AC line cord. Special jacks at the rear permit connecting the speakers to other sound sources, such as an FM or TV receiver, or to the power amplifier of a component stereo system.

At the relatively low output levels that are ample for in-the-chair listening, and even for eavesdropping a few feet away from the chair, the sound of this padded system has an easy, clear quality—not an audiophile’s dream perhaps, but enjoyable nonetheless. Controls on the swing-out deck permit tailoring the volume, tone, and channel balance to one’s taste; once adjusted and playing, the deck may be recessed into the side of the chair; a section of fabric on its underside matches the upholstery.



Seven chair styles have been announced by Berkline, a company with three factories in Morristown, Tennessee and a branch in West Springfield, Massachusetts, which for years has been manufacturing special-purpose (and ordinary) chairs. Rockers, recliners, lounge chairs, swivel chairs, occasional chairs, even a three-seater sofa all will be offered with built-in stereo. Prices start at about \$250 and vary according to the style of chair and fabric chosen. So far these units are available only at furniture dealers’, who also stock, or can order, the cartridges for the tape system. A sampler cartridge is included with each chair.

Two of Japan’s audio giants, Pioneer and Sony—the one claiming to be the world’s largest manufacturer of loudspeakers, the other entering the high fidelity component market for the first time—have set their sights on America’s audiophiles.

Sony, despite its name (based on the Latin word for sound, *sonus*), has been known here chiefly for its video products and, except for the Superscope tape recorders, has never previously aimed for the serious high fidelity market. The company is now rectifying that oversight with a vengeance. Its new line of high fidelity components—aimed at the well-heeled, quality-minded listener—consists of an integrated and a power amplifier, both fifty watts per channel; a turntable with built-in servo-system to regulate its speed; a moving-coil cartridge said to put out four millivolts; both a twelve-inch and a sixteen-inch arm; and a three-way speaker system. There are no tuners or receivers as yet but these will, reportedly, come later.

According to a company spokesman, the new high fidelity components have been made especially for the American market; they are not simply imports of models already available elsewhere.

Pioneer, on the other hand, has long been exporting its medium-priced high fidelity components to Southeast Asia, Australia, Africa, Europe, Canada, and Central and South America—almost every place, it seems, but to the United States (although a minute number of its Model SX-1000T transistorized receivers have trickled here too). Indeed, only one group of American consumers has really become familiar with the Pioneer brand name. These are the GI’s in Vietnam, Korea, Okinawa, and other hotbeds of stereophony in Southeast Asia.

American manufacturers of audio packages are, however, very much aware of Pioneer as a source of “parts,” and many have been including Pioneer speakers in their own products. The Tokyo-based firm claims a producing capability of a million and a half speakers a month. (Only a fraction of Pioneer’s speakers could be termed high fidelity, most of them being designed for transistor radios, walkie-talkies, and television sets.) Some well-known automobile tape carrier players on the American market, such as the Craig Panorama, are manufactured by Pioneer.

Now the company is about to enter the American high fidelity field under its own name (“Pioneer,” by the way, is the Japanese appellation, written in *kana* and coming out an eclectic Pioneer Kabushiki Kaisha, meaning Pioneer Company, Ltd.). The first component, due in a month or two, will be a solid-state receiver. If the first product offering secures a foothold here, a second wave can be expected from among Pioneer’s many speakers and speaker systems, its turntables, arms, and cartridges, and even its headphones.

Continued on page 35

Space-age Scott FET design improves AM as dramatically as it does FM



New Scott 382 Receiver lets you hear more stations, more clearly! 65-watts/Space-age FET circuits in both AM and FM/Only \$339⁹⁵

Scott engineers are constantly on the search for new developments to continually improve a near-perfect product.

After experiencing the miraculous improvements FET's brought to FM, Scott engineers applied amazing new FET circuitry to Wide-Range AM. The result — the new 382 AM/FM stereo receiver — incorporating, for the first time anywhere, a Field Effect Transistor AM circuit along with Scott's astonishing FET FM front end. Introduction of this new model marks the first real improvement in AM circuitry design in more than a decade.

AM Comes of Age

Recent improvements in AM broadcasting equipment, plus the Federal Communication Commission's decision to split AM and FM programming, have given audiophiles renewed interest in superior AM reception. Introduction of the new 382 now brings Scott FET sound to the exciting news, sports, current events and music broadcasts available only on the AM band.

Scott AM Has Advanced FET Circuits

Advanced Scott 382 circuitry incorporates Automatic Variable Bandwidth, a unique feature which automatically adjusts tuner bandwidth to the quality of the incoming signal. The bandwidth automatically narrows for best reception of weak, distant stations, blocking out noise and interference. When tuned to stronger stations, the bandwidth automatically broadens, providing full frequency wide-range reception. In addition, the new Scott Automatic Gain Control circuit, which increases tuner sensitivity when incoming signal decreases, also increases resistance to cross modulation as the signal gets stronger.

Field Effect Transistor FM Lets You Hear More Stations, More Clearly

The 382 utilizes revolutionary new Field Effect Transistor circuitry for maximum FM sensitivity with virtually no cross modulation, no drift, no more problems caused by changing tube characteristics. Scott is the first, and only, manufacturer to use this important advance in solid-state design.

Scott's all silicon IF strip provides three stages of true IF amplification for strong as well as weak signals plus three additional stages of IF limiting action, giving optimum selectivity and stereo separation.

Direct-Coupled Silicon Output Amplifier Section

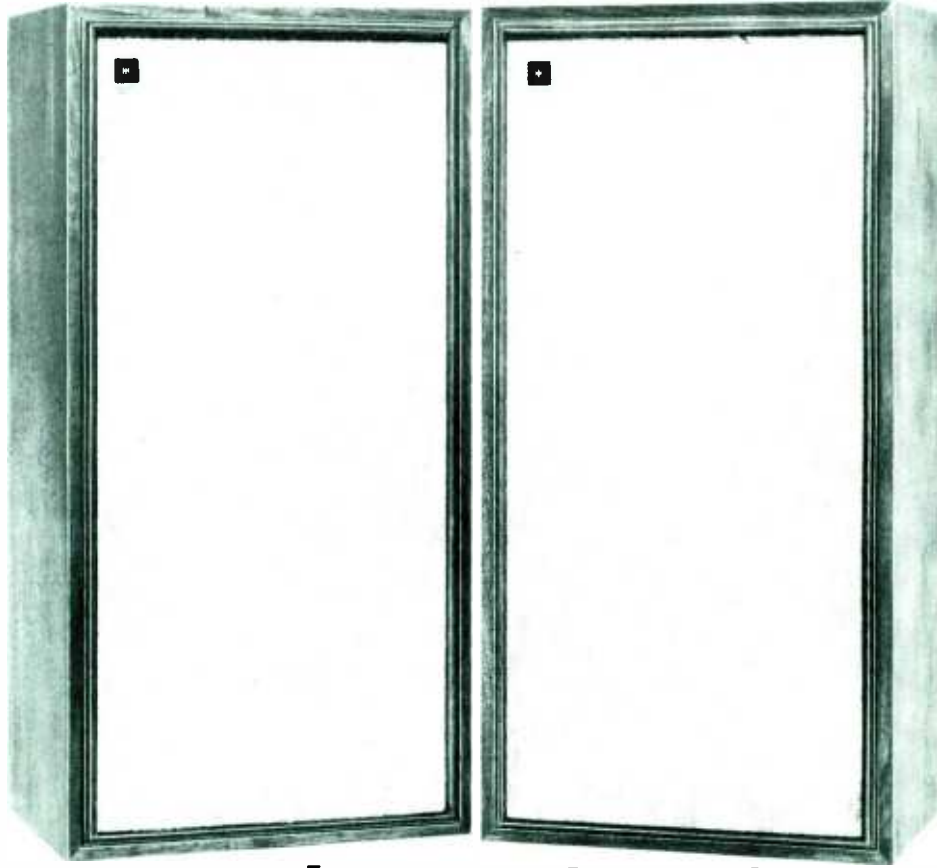
Output and driver transformers, major causes of diminished power and distortion, are eliminated from Scott's radically new direct-coupled solid-state amplifier design . . . allowing more power over a wider frequency range, with virtually no distortion.

The 382 includes these popular features found in the most expensive Scott components: Tape Monitor switching, Speaker switching with provision for remote speaker selection, switched front panel stereo headphone output, front panel stereo balance switch, separate-channel clutched bass, treble, and volume controls, fully automatic stereo switching with indicator, and precision tuning meter.

382 Specifications: Usable sensitivity, 2.5 μ v; Harmonic distortion, 0.8%; Drift, 0.02%; Frequency response, 18-25,000 cps \pm 1 db; Music Power rating per channel (4 ohms), 32½ watts; Cross Modulation Rejection, 85 db; Stereo separation, 35 db; Capture ratio, 6.0 db; Selectivity, 40 db. Price \$339.95.

Have you seen the only speakers designed specially for use with solid-state components? →

Only the new Scott S-8 is designed for solid-state components!



Only the new Scott S-8 is designed with Controlled Impedance!

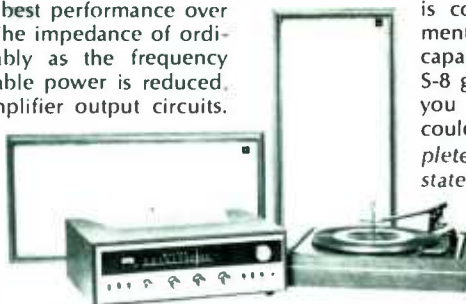
Scott engineers have developed a new kind of speaker system, specially designed for finest performance from solid-state components. Of all speakers now on the market, regardless of price, only the S-8 is completely compatible with new solid-state equipment. Here is why:

Solid state amplifiers and receivers give best performance over a fairly narrow range of load impedance. The impedance of ordinary speakers, however, varies considerably as the frequency changes. With increased impedance, available power is reduced. Lowered impedance may overload the amplifier output circuits.

Even the most expensive speakers available today were designed for tube equipment where impedance is controlled by output transformers. These speakers do

not offer, for example, 8 ohms impedance to the amplifier at all frequencies. In fact, the impedance can vary from as little as 2 ohms to as much as 20 ohms at different frequencies.

Now, Scott has designed an 8-ohm speaker system specifically for use with transistor components. The impedance range is controlled by integrated engineering development of both speakers and crossover to match the capabilities of today's solid-state equipment. The S-8 gives you the kind of sound you wanted when you bought transistor components. What more could you ask? The price? Only \$69.95, each. Complete system, including S-8 speakers, Scott 382 solid-state AM/FM stereo receiver, and automatic record changer, well under \$540 at most dealers.



Scott... where innovation is a tradition

SCOTT®

For further information and specifications on the new Scott S-8 speaker system, write:
H. H. Scott, Inc., Dept. 226-06, 111 Powdermill Road, Maynard, Mass. Export: Scott International, Maynard, Mass.

**For complete spec sheet and fully illustrated
1966 Guide to Custom Stereo, circle Reader Service #100**

Continued from page 32

So much for the high- and medium-priced markets. While it may be more coincidence than collusion, the only other Japanese high fidelity components available to any extent on the American scene are those of Kenwood, a generally lower-priced line. Kenwood's receivers, tuners, and amplifiers have been offered to American consumers for some two years now. Its parent company in Japan, Trio, makes the rest of the high fidelity system as well, including cabinets. If the latest American-Japanese harmonic developments open up the U.S.A. market to the transducer ends of Japanese production, Kenwood is already prepared.

Another major manufacturer of high fidelity equipment in Japan is Sansui. A few American dealers have imported a handful of Sansui's receivers, tuners, and amplifiers, but this company has not expended much energy over here. And Sansui has no American organization. Not yet, that is.

SOUND YOU CAN SEE

A kit that enables you to view the magnetic tracks recorded onto tape is being offered by Reeves Soundcraft. Known as Magna-See, it contains a chemical solution which, when applied to a recorded tape, reveals the pattern of the oxide coating on the tape. Thus, you can study the tape to check on such factors as your recorder's head alignment, track uniformity, balance, and head wear. Moreover, with a little practice, one can begin to discern specific program passages to make tape editing easier and more precise. Drop-out areas show up readily, as do differences in the intensity of sound recorded in multitrack work.

Packed in a neat plastic case, the kit contains a half-pint can of the Magna-See solution, a tray in which to pour it for immersing the tape, and an eyepiece magnifier for close-up study of the tape. Also included are three slides and a roll of transparent adhesive tape for those who want to get really serious and examine their tapes under a microscope, or—by covering a section of recorded tape with adhesive tape and then stripping it off—to make a permanent record of the tracks (the pattern will have been transferred to the sticky tape). Although introduced originally for professional use, the \$12 Magna-See kit strikes us as a fascinating and useful accessory for the serious tape hobbyist.



Tape dip for viewing the tracks.

Equipment IN THE NEWS



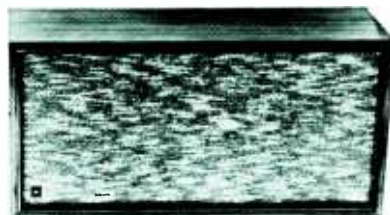
Viking Stereo Compact tape recorders now are available with detachable speakers to comprise a complete tape sound system. For carrying, the speaker sections fit over the deck in luggage or suitcase form. Named the Model 880 Stereo, it is a three-head machine with a solid-state electronics center installed under the transport and offering 10 watts output. Each speaker system comprises a 5-inch woofer, 2½-inch tweeter, and dividing network. The new 880 lists at \$439.95.

CIRCLE 158 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Sherwood's S-8800 receiver is, according to the mid-West manufacturer, "the industry's most powerful all-silicon FM stereo receiver." The amplifier in this set is rated for 100 watts music power at 8 ohms; 130 watts at 4 ohms. It uses the same FM circuitry found in Sherwood's S-3300 stereo tuner, which the manufacturer rates for an IHF sensitivity of 1.6 microvolts. Tuning meter, stereo indicator, headphone jack, and other features are included.

CIRCLE 162 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Scott's newest speaker system, the S-8, is a compact air-suspension type said to be designed specifically for use with solid-state amplifiers—thanks to its use of what Scott calls "controlled impedance" (CI). Details of CI were not disclosed, but the firm claims that the S-8 maintains a nearly constant impedance throughout its frequency range as opposed to the variations found

in "ordinary speakers" which "may degrade the full performance possible with transistor amplifiers." First of a new series of CI speakers, the S-8 is priced at \$69.95.

CIRCLE 163 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Bozak's first amplifier combines on one chassis a five-channel mixer and a 50-watt power output circuit. Representing the speaker manufacturer's entry into electronics, the Model CMA-5-50 (cost, \$257.50) is a solid-state unit with modular plug-in circuit cards which can adapt its inputs for high- or low-level signals. Although basically designed as a monophonic amplifier for professional and commercial sound work, the CMA-5-50, Rudy Bozak tells us, can serve as a home music system amplifier inasmuch as its performance and response are on a par with high quality home-type units. In any case, additional electronic products can be expected from Bozak.

CIRCLE 161 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Yet another Miracord, the Model PW-50H, is being readied for the market by Benjamin Electronics. Compared with existing Miracords, the PW-50H boasts a restyling and new performance features—including a brand-new tone arm with a stylus overhang adjustment, an integral cuing device, a calibrated antiskating knob, improved tracking force and arm balance adjustments, and hysteresis motor. Price, less cartridge and base, is \$149.50.

CIRCLE 157 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Records from an equipment manufacturer? KLH thinks that this makes sense and has released a 12-inch stereo sampler album titled "Music To Listen

Continued on next page



Coming to your
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the all-new,
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MIRACORD 50H

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CIRCLE 8 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

EQUIPMENT IN THE NEWS

Continued from preceding page

to KLH By." One side contains classical, the other, lighter selections—all chosen for their sonic qualities and designed to show off or to show up a sound system. Naturally, KLH believes its own equipment will sound mighty good playing this album. We've played in on several systems and can vouch for its sonic authenticity; it has, in fact, some of the cleanest and widest-range sound we've yet heard on any disc. Price is \$2.98 at all KLH dealers.

CIRCLE 160 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



A very low-cost amplifier kit, Model KT-630, is available from Lafayette. Rated for 30 watts music power, it has inputs for magnetic and ceramic phono cartridges, tuner, and an auxiliary high-level source. Speaker impedances include the usual 4, 8, and 16 ohms. The amplifier uses tubes yet is fairly compact. Price is only \$39.95 in build-it-yourself form.

CIRCLE 156 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Low-cost semiconductor cartridges have been announced by Sonotone. Using a signal-generating element of silicon, the new pickups are offered as a means of upgrading what the firm calls "low-priced, high volume production phonograph systems—those utilizing marginal amplifiers and speakers." Prices start at \$19.50 for a pickup with double sapphire needle; \$23.50 for one with a sapphire and a diamond. A technical brochure, analyzing performance in four typical phonographs, is available from the manufacturer.

CIRCLE 159 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Removable globe speakers highlight the new Project G-2 stereo system offered by Clairtone of Canada. The globes are light enough in weight to permit lifting and repositioning anywhere in a room for best sound. The G-2 contains a Garrard Lab-80 turntable, stereo tuner and stereo control amplifier designed by Clairtone itself and preinstalled in a cabinet which also has record storage space. Cost is \$995.

CIRCLE 155 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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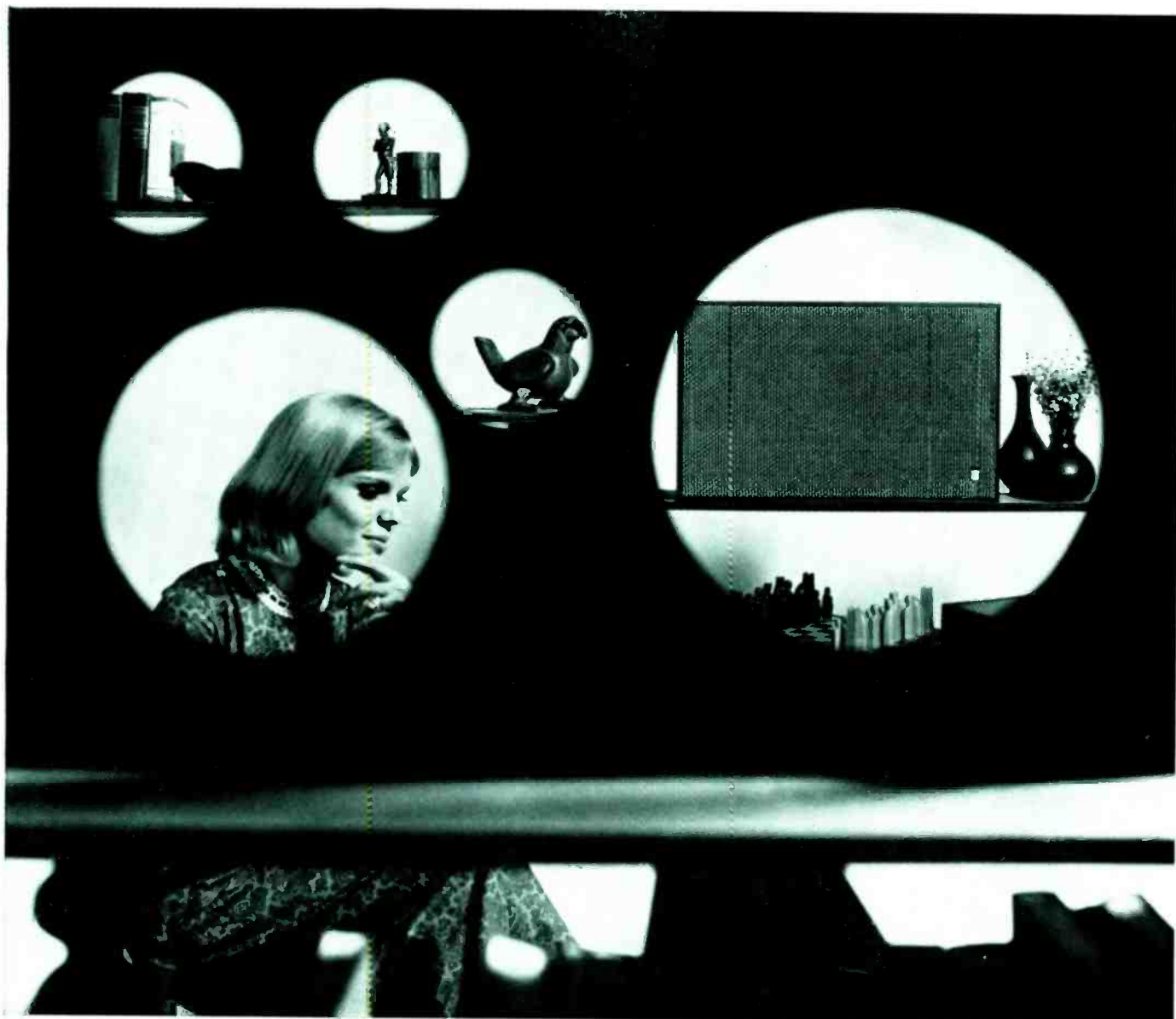
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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



Listen!

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Count speakers if you wish. You'll find five in the Jensen TF-4 speaker system. But the number isn't quite as important as the one big sound you get from this unit.

If you must know, this 4-way, slender shelf speaker system includes a high-compliance, 10-inch

FLEXAIR® woofer, an 8-inch mid-range, two tweeters, and Jensen's exclusive SONO-DOME® ultra-tweeter.

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range of your hearing.

Talk to your Jensen dealer about the dollar value of the TF-4. Act a little surprised when he tells you it's priced under \$136.00 for oiled walnut, even less for unfinished hardwood. After all, it does have five speakers.

Jensen

Jensen Manufacturing Division, The Muter Company
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CIRCLE 34 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

This is the AT60, quite possibly the "best buy" among automatic turntables, considering how much this excellent unit has to offer. There's a true dynamically balanced tone arm of the most advanced tubular aluminum construction . . . a precision stylus force adjustment . . . an arm system which could track flawlessly at 1/2 gram . . . a balanced, heavy-cast turntable . . . and the other outstanding features shown below. Then . . . consider that the AT60 sells not for \$100.00, or even more . . . but for \$59.50 . . . and you will begin to realize that a record-playing instrument of such calibre at this modest price could have been developed only by Garrard. More than 50 years of leadership, supported by the great advantages of established volume, substantial manufacturing facilities, and vast engineering resources . . . combine to make the AT60 the exceptional purchase which it is.



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CIRCLE 66 FOR READER SERVICE CARD



Contemporary Opera and the Foundations

AS INTERESTED OBSERVERS of the musical scene, we naturally ponder from time to time the subject of contemporary opera on records. But due to a small confluence of events, we've thought about it more specifically during the past couple of months. First off, we noted with pleased astonishment the extraordinary success of the New York City Opera's production of Alberto Ginastera's *Don Rodrigo*, which sold out not only its scheduled presentations but two extra "popular demand" performances. Second, we've of course been reading with close attentiveness the survey of Prokofiev's operas by the distinguished Italian critic Giuseppe Pugliese, which appears on page 44 of this issue.

Prokofiev is a universally recognized giant of twentieth-century music, and his operas are thus very much an exception to the general rule; several of them have proved worthy of repeated revival even outside the Soviet Union. Consequently, five of his eight operas have been recorded in some fashion at some time, though not all these recordings may be ideal from either the musical or technical standpoint. But whatever will become of an opera like *Don Rodrigo*? Here is a piece which, because it has scored an almost unprecedented popular success, may be retained by the City Opera for a few seasons. A year or two from now it might be performed by the San Francisco Opera or some other enterprising company, though its large scale makes it an impossible undertaking for most organizations. Very probably, once the momentum of the City Opera's production has slowed, *Don Rodrigo* will not be available even to those few thousand who are able to get into the theatre. As it happens, foundation support made the production possible in the first instance; how much more fruitful if an additional amount could have been granted for a recording of the work!

This case is symptomatic of the great failing of foundation support in this field to date: what is given is seed money, frequently in great amounts, but seed money all the same. Right now very large

sums are being allocated for the commission and initial productions of new works; but unless greater provision is made for the retention of a worthwhile work in the repertory over a period of time, and for its preservation in the form of a recording, it is entirely possible that in twelve or fifteen years there will be nothing to show for the money spent except an array of statistics.

It is incredible that there is no recording of Virgil Thomson's *Mother of Us All* or of Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah* (a work which has actually established itself as a repertory piece). And who is to say that operas which do not achieve this degree of acceptance should not be preserved in recorded form, at least for study purposes through library distribution? It will be asked why the major recording companies do not take on a larger share of this responsibility, and the answer is that because they are commercial corporate entities, they cannot justify the loss of large sums of money. Indeed, it is surprising how much contemporary opera has found its way onto commercial recordings—Columbia, especially, has gone considerably beyond the call of duty in this respect.

Clearly, this is an area in which some subsidization by foundations is indicated. To be sure, foundation support has already made certain recordings possible, by paying for musical costs while the record company assumes production expenses. Thus, the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University helped with the release of Hugo Weisgall's *The Tenor*, while the Koussevitzky Foundation assisted with Douglas Moore's *The Ballad of Baby Doe*. In fact, if one looks closely, one will find some form of subsidization behind a majority of such projects; but whether or not an opera is recorded has depended too often on who knows whom or on other haphazard factors, and little attention has been paid to the matter of assuring proper distribution and longevity to the recordings that have been made.

Sowing seed is of small use if you then forget the water and fertilizer.

A VISIT TO NEW ENGLAND'S

OLDEST SUMMER FESTIVAL



The Shed at Norfolk

SIXTY YEARS AGO this month, New England's oldest continuing music festival dedicated a handsome new shed. Today, in effect unaltered, the shed still stands.

This progenitor of the summer festivals now proliferating in nearly every corner of the rural landscape had its beginnings back in 1839, when young Robbins Battell came home from Yale to settle down on his well-to-do family's place at Norfolk, Connecticut, in the foothills of the Massachusetts Berkshires. While at the university, Battell had acquired a keen taste for all the arts (he was an excellent flutist among other accomplishments), and he naturally viewed life without music as unthinkable. Before long, he was participating in impromptu concerts on the village green, and by 1851 he was a conductor for the Litchfield County Musical Association, which presented concerts not only in Norfolk but in the neighboring towns of Litchfield and Winsted.

Robbins Battell's passion for music was passed on to his daughter Ellen, who in 1895 married Carl Stoeckel, son of Yale's first professor of music. The Stoeckels too established themselves in Norfolk, occupying the mansion known as Whitehouse (so named long before the more famous residence in Washington, D.C.) and filling it with valuable books, paintings, and *objets d'art*. In 1899, they conceived the idea of establishing a festival as a memorial to Mrs. Stoeckel's father, but by this time Whitehouse itself was too small to play host: the Litchfield forces which owed their genesis to Robbins Battell had grown to number more than 700 members. For a few years the group presented its concerts in the Winsted Armory, an auditorium seating 1,445, and later it performed in quarters adjacent to Whitehouse. The latter, however, proved inadequate, and by 1906 the present acoustically superb, 1,200-seat shed had been built on the Stoeckel estate as a home for the Litchfield County Choral Union and Norfolk Music Festival.

The first two decades following the shed's completion proved golden ones. Sergei Rachmaninoff performed there, as did other celebrities of the day, among them Fritz Kreisler,

BY HARRIS GOLDSMITH



A student ensemble concert is in progress. Except for gala faculty events, Norfolk's audiences tend to prefer stage bleachers to the more formal auditorium seats, here empty.



Sibelius clad for Connecticut's summer.

Alma Gluck, Louise Homer, Emma Eames, Emilio de Gogorza, Edward Johnson, Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler, Maud Powell, Lillian Blauvelt, Efrem Zimbalist, and Lillian Nordica. The roster of composers who came to Norfolk was equally impressive. Jan Sibelius wrote his *Oceanides* especially for performance at the festival, making his only trip to America to conduct it there, in 1914. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was inspired to compose his *Tale of Old Japan* when on a trip to Norfolk he saw a mass of rhododendrons growing by the roadside. At a later date, Coleridge-Taylor was commissioned by the Stoeckels to compose a Violin Concerto. When it proved impossible for him to come from England to be present at the performance, his portrait was hung in the center of the stage while Maud Powell played the work. At its conclusion, she graciously shared her applause with the life-sized but inanimate proxy. Others whose works received world premieres at Norfolk were Horatio Parker, George Chadwick, Henry Hadley, and Max Bruch. The Norfolk Orchestra in those days was comprised chiefly of players from the New York Philharmonic. It must have been a fine one, to judge from Sibelius' glowing comments in letters he wrote to friends about his voyage to the Connecticut community.

The death of Carl Stoeckel in 1925 nearly saw the demise



The Litchfield County Choral Union rehearses all winter for its annual concert at Norfolk.

of Norfolk's music making. His widow felt unable to continue the arduous task of maintaining the large-scale festival by herself, and for some years only the loyal members of the Choral Union were on hand to keep the shed active. However, a less gala but in many ways more valuable phase in Norfolk's history was to come. When Ellen Battell Stoeckel died in 1939, her will stipulated that the Connecticut property be used for the establishment of a summer school of music and art, to be administered by a Board of Trustees in cooperation with Yale University. Thus for a quarter of a century the lovely pastoral setting has enjoyed a constantly rejuvenating intellectual and artistic influence.

The faculty of the Norfolk school is made up largely of Yale personnel, and students are accepted only from among graduates of music conservatories and other institutions of higher learning. Credit towards advanced academic degrees is generally granted for work accomplished. This summer, for the first time, all students will be on full scholarship. Foreign students are encouraged, all applications are carefully screened, and many must of course be turned down. The Norfolk curriculum centers on composition, theory, and chamber music, and instructors take turns teaching the various groups, thereby assuring the students the benefit of divergent approaches and personalities. Music of the



Messrs. Schwartz, Parisot, Davenny, Wilson, Meier, and Erle—all of the Yale faculty.



Whitehouse. At left, the main entrance. Below, the handsome interior displaying part of the valuable Stoeckel art collection. As Norfolk's Music Director, Keith Wilson resides in the mansion. Here he is coaching a wind quintet.

twentieth century receives considerable emphasis but not at the expense of a solid grounding in traditional fields.

This year, the festival will present its usual weekly faculty concerts featuring such Yale "regulars" as Broadus Erle, David Schwartz, Aldo Parisot, Ward Davenny, and Keith Wilson. Gustav Meier will direct two orchestral concerts, and will lead portions of other evenings. Two concerts will be devoted entirely to chamber music, and that intimate art form will, as always, figure prominently in all the festival's activities. Paul Ulanowsky will again be on hand to coach young singers (and to give pianists valuable advice in that little understood realm of accompanying). Oboist Robert Bloom will once more be present as guest instructor and performer. The Litchfield County Choral Union will hold its annual concert on the grounds, and finally there will be the semiweekly concerts given by the students. In this visitor's estimation, the latter—which are open to the public without charge—constitute some of the high spots of the Norfolk season. One might, indeed, find the level of competence and comprehension shown by some of these young people occasionally staggering. A rendition last year, for example, of Bartók's First String Quartet was one of the most memorable I have experienced, both technically and artistically. Who would have guessed that two of the ensemble's members had never even heard a Bartók Quartet before this assignment?

The shed at Norfolk is no merely decorative monument to past patrons of the arts. It is, rather, the continuing reaffirmation of one New Englander's conviction that the making of music is a vital concomitant of living at any place and in any season.



Battell House serves as mess hall and office.



*The
Unknown
World
of*
Prokofiev's Operas

By Giuseppe Pugliese

ANYONE TODAY UNDERTAKING a study of Serge Prokofiev is immediately faced by a number of complex problems, still unsolved, and by many disturbing questions, still unanswered. Much has been written about Prokofiev, but much of it is dubious and unsatisfactory, hasty, oversimplified. At times I have wondered whether this situation is due to a misunderstanding of the problems themselves—or to a fragmentary knowledge of Prokofiev's *opera omnia*, of the decisive, critical issues at the basis of his art.

Two of these issues are particularly important. One is the development of the composer's craft, and therefore comprehends all the aspects of his music that critics have so long debated: from the nationalism to the Europeanism of his style; from his initial, revolutionary experiments to the traditional positions of his last years; from his contribution to the evolution of contemporary musical language to the moral and spiritual themes of his poetic world. The second issue—and it is this to which I shall address myself here—concerns Prokofiev's works for the theatre. Inasmuch as four of his eight operas, three of his eight ballets, all his film music and incidental music for the theatre were composed after his definitive return to the Soviet Union, this fundamental sector of his work is directly involved in the alleged retrogression of his later work and has been most subject to critical prejudice. Indeed, the severity of most Western writers towards Prokofiev's operas would be inexplicable were it not for the fact that their knowledge of these pieces—excepting *The Love*

for *Three Oranges*—is both recent and incomplete.

If, of course, one considers Prokofiev merely a minor figure in the musical panorama of our century, an *enfant terrible* who never grew up, then his operas can be dismissed out of hand. But if one is convinced, as I am, that Prokofiev is one of the greatest composers of our century, then surely his operas cannot be ignored simply because we do not know them.

THE CATALOGUE which Prokofiev himself made of his works lists one hundred and thirty-eight numbers over a period from 1907, when he was sixteen, to 1953, the year of his death, and includes eight operas: *Maddalena*, Op. 13 (composed between 1911 and 1913, never performed); *The Gambler*, Op. 24 (1915-17; first performed at the Théâtre de la Monnaie, Brussels, April 29, 1929); *The Love for Three Oranges*, Op. 33 (1919; Chicago Opera, December 30, 1921); *The Fiery Angel*, Op. 37 (1919-27, first staged performance, Teatro La Fenice, Venice, September 14, 1955); *Semyon Kotko*, Op. 81 (1938-39; first performed, Stanislavsky Theatre, Moscow, June 23, 1940); *Betrothal in a Monastery (The Duenna)*, Op. 86 (1940; first public performance Kirov Theatre, Leningrad, November 3, 1946); *War and Peace*, Op. 91 (1941-52; first performed in concert form on June 7, 1944, Moscow; at the Little State Academy Theatre for the Leningrad Opera on June 12, 1946; second version, with cuts and changes in eleven scenes, at the Maly Theatre, Leningrad, April

1, 1955); *The Story of a Real Man*, Op. 117 (1947-48; first performed, at a private run-through, Kirov Theatre, Leningrad, December 3, 1948).

In the face of such a body of work, to speak of an authentic vocation for the theatre seems to me merely a statement of fact. The vocation was born with the composer, who attempted his first opera at the age of nine, and never abandoned him; at the end of his life he was at work on the definitive version of *War and Peace*. Each of the seven operas from *The Gambler* to *The Story of a Real Man* anticipates or concludes a decisive period in Prokofiev's adventurous stylistic journey. In two of those works, *The Gambler* and *The Fiery Angel*, he drove to its extreme consequences the searching anxiety which lashed his imagination, with poetic and stylistic results that one cannot find elsewhere in his canon, even among the boldest European experiments.

The Gambler is Prokofiev's real debut as a mature opera composer. Preceded by certain fundamental orchestral and instrumental achievements (the *Scythian Suite*, *The Buffoon*, the first two piano concertos), this opera is the first, great synthesis of Prokofiev's restless, aggressive, but by now masterful musical youth.

Drawn from Dostoyevsky's short novel, the libretto is by Prokofiev himself, assisted for the fourth act by his friend B. N. Demchinsky. As to the musical structure, the name of Mussorgsky, among others, has been mentioned—the abstruse, almost hermetic Mussorgsky of *The Marriage* fragments. The reference is acceptable, though irrelevant; all influences are shattered by the opera's powerful originality. To my mind, Prokofiev had never written anything bolder, more poetically original, and, if I may use the term, more "futuristic." No one

had gone so far in the direction of an expressionistic music theatre (*Wozzeck*, we must remember, was composed between 1917 and 1921, performed only in 1925). From the vocal writing, almost always a highly varied, pungent prose, to the instrumental writing, inexhaustible in its resources of rhythms and timbres, *The Gambler* has a constant dramatic quality, at times ironic, impregnated with a bitter humor, at times bathed in a poetic, suffering lyricism, the most original lyricism of Prokofiev.

The Gambler's four acts (six scenes) underline Prokofiev's importance in the musical theatre of our century. They reveal the intuitions of genius with which he anticipated expressionistic opera (to give one small, telling example: the few measures of Prince Nilsky, a minor character; in them you hear the Prince's relationship with *Wozzeck's* Captain, that same, ambiguous, asexual vocality). But *The Gambler's* importance as an opera is not merely historical. I know few operas of the last half-century that share its operatic pace, that narrate and dramatize so faithfully in music their chosen story: few operas with characters so well defined, so alive—from the protagonist to the other main figures, the General, Pauline, the grandmother (a splendid portrait), to the minor ones, also acutely drawn, like the Marquis and Astley; few operas, finally, that contain whole scenes of such absolute poetry, or such impressive dramatic sections (the finale of Act I, the casino scene in Act IV, or the second part of the same act).

As for Prokofiev's style in *The Gambler*, it is disconcerting, even today. Here is an overwhelming vitality, a refined insouciance, an aggressive eclecticism, a generous violence, a fascinating hybrid quality (note the established limits: Tchaikovsky to Puc-



A scene from The Love for Three Oranges, as produced by the New York City Opera.

cini), all firmly held together by that formidable connective tissue, Russian folk music, and by the highly original characteristics of the language.

From this point on there were various developments, transformations, variations along Prokofiev's artistic path—and the seven operas summarize them more completely than any other group of his works—but he always remained true to himself. Those critics who have tried to equate Prokofiev's submission to Soviet bureaucracy with a supposed regression in his music have forgotten—if they ever knew—the true nature of the modernity of Prokofiev's language; and in the end, therefore, they have misunderstood the process of simplification to which he submitted that language, that style, and not only in the operas. Above all, these critics have failed to understand the elements that assure the unity of Prokofiev's stylistic development, of his poetic world.

BARELY THREE YEARS separate *The Gambler* from *The Love for Three Oranges*, a brief period which produced, among other things, two symphonic masterpieces, the *Classical Symphony* and the *Third Piano Concerto*. and a group of elegant, delightful chamber compositions. And yet the difference between the two operas makes them seem very far apart. We do not have to justify the composer's abandoning the incandescent atmosphere of *The Gambler* for the fairy-tale surrealism of his opera; this move is explained by the psychological eclecticism possessed by every true artist. If, however, one insists on finding a link, one can discover it in the two works' humor: dramatic, expressionistic in *The Gambler*, legendary and surrealistic in *The Love for Three Oranges*, the same humor that inspires some of Prokofiev's greatest lyrical moments.

By now, *The Love for Three Oranges* can be considered a "modern classic." In this opera we have one of the happiest encounters of the musical the-

atre of our century: that between the fabled, surrealistic, corrosive grotesquerie of the eighteenth-century Venetian Carlo Gozzi, author of the original story, and the aggressive humor of Prokofiev, which can freeze in a Cartesian formal rigor or relax in the most subtle, meditated, nostalgic, and—we may as well say it—Bartókian lyricism. From this encounter a masterwork is born, where the weaknesses are few and brief, the prolixities are slight, and where one finds the synthesis, filtered but not disenchanting, of the composer's previous experiences—the momentary overcoming (or, if you prefer, the voluntary rejection) of *The Gambler's* expressionistic violence but no lessening of that opera's instrumental mastery.

With *The Love for Three Oranges*, the composer is also looking ahead—to the near future, to certain parts of *The Prodigal Son*, for example, and to the more distant future of the *Second Violin Concerto* and *Peter and the Wolf*.

The third opera in order of composition is *The Fiery Angel*. Once again Prokofiev also prepared the libretto, drawn from a novel published in 1907 by the Russian symbolist Valery Bryusov (1873-1924). A note on this novel, by the author, summarizes also the opera's argument: "The *Fiery Angel*, a true story wherein we hear of the devil, who more than once, in the shape of a luminous spirit, appears to a maiden and drives her to commit a number of sinful actions; wherein are described the practices, contrary to God's will, of magic, alchemy, astrology, cabalism, and necromancy; wherein we read of the maiden's sentencing by His Eminence the Archbishop of Trier, and also of meetings and conversations with the knight and three-times doctor Agrippa von Nettesheim and with Doctor Faust, all narrated by an eyewitness." We need add only that the action is set in the obscurantist Germany of the sixteenth century.

At one of the most difficult moments of his life as a composer, a time of crisis in his art, a time of disheartenment and searching, Prokofiev wrote his most daring opera, reached the most advanced point in his timbric language. Drawing inspiration from the unadulterated expressionistic *Stimmung*, he created a music drama with a tension and an expressive strength amazing even now. From the esoteric atmosphere, illuminated by livid flashes, amid the exorcisms and spells of his "fiery" subject, Prokofiev was able to achieve a coherent representation in the ambit of the most exacerbated musical expressionism.

No composer in the theatre had ever before plumbed such depths. With dramatic and poetic results he lifted the veil from the potent Freudian unconscious and portrayed it in music of equal power. He felt the supernatural intensely (the seance scene, in its ghastly perfection, is an unsurpassed masterpiece) and could depict it with near-tangible conviction. In thirty years of incessant work Prokofiev was to follow the most divergent paths, writing over a hundred compositions, including many remarkable scores, numerous masterpieces, but to me the summit of his greatest and boldest experi-



The New York City Opera Fiery Angel, 1965.



From *War and Peace*, Act III: this Moscow production honored the 1917 Revolution.

ments remains *The Fiery Angel*. Some scholars, on the other hand, assign this position to *The Gambler*, seeing in the score of *The Fiery Angel*—despite its strong expressionistic suggestions—the beginning of that process of clarification and simplification which Prokofiev was to pursue and deepen to the end of his life.

After *The Fiery Angel*, after his journey through the dark abyss of expressionism, the composer probably had only two alternatives: conversion to serial music, acceptance of the dodecaphonic system; or a return to the surface, to the sunlight. Prokofiev chose the second alternative, the more difficult. In this decision, rather than in acquiescence to political authority, we must seek the explanation for the art of his Soviet period.

IN THE DECADE between *The Fiery Angel* and *Semyon Kotko*, the first opera written after his decisive return to Russia in 1938, Prokofiev produced about fifty works, in which we can trace the gradual process of simplification and recognize the constant, substantial fidelity of his language to the tonal system. *Semyon Kotko* was only the first, highly valid operatic synthesis.

In a debate after the opera's stormy premiere, the composer made some statements which help illuminate all his later work and, in particular, the last four operas: "I had long wanted to write a Soviet opera, but I hesitated to undertake the job until I had a clear idea of how to approach the task. Besides, it was not easy to find a plot. I did not want a commonplace, static, trivial plot or, on the contrary, a plot that pointed too obvious a moral. I wanted live flesh-and-blood human beings with human passions, love, hatred, joy, and sorrow arising naturally from the new conditions." And he went on to make this important declaration: "I have paid

special attention to melody in *Semyon Kotko*, for I believe melody to be one of the basic elements in any musical composition. Any melody is easy to memorize if its design is familiar." These statements clarify Prokofiev's *ars poetica*—not a new creed but a creed reasserted.

In *Betrothal in a Monastery*, *War and Peace*, *The Story of a Real Man* Prokofiev achieves, in more defined and explicit terms, the intention propounded for *Semyon Kotko*. Certainly there are here the highly original stylistic and poetic "constants" of Prokofiev: the elegant orchestration, penetrating, even intellectual with its unmistakable solutions of rhythm and timbre; the irony, at times harshly grotesque; the shy, almost Ravelian lyricism; the drama, at times stunned, interior, at other times massive, aggressive. But there is also an apparent rejection of novelty for its own sake, a deepening lyricism, a quality sometimes Brahmsian. These are operas musically more complex than has been thought, operas on a grand scale, whose extremes—from Tchaikovskyan influences to the most original, *raffiné* modern solutions (though the modernism is now serene)—would seem irreconcilable if it were not for the imposition of the composer's own strong, unifying personality.

In these scores Prokofiev meditates and summarizes, in the radical simplification of his expressive language, several decades of Russian and European experiences. And the farther he moves from Europe, the closer he is to Russia—not uniquely Soviet Russia but the whole past of his country. So the Russian folk music, which had been intellectual, disguised, rigorously distilled in his earlier works, now gives way to the naked, open expansions of the song of the people—to which, nevertheless, Prokofiev gives new accents. At times, to varying extent and with varying results, these operas are grazed, flawed by patriotic rhetoric; but in two of them—*Semyon Kotko* and *War and Peace*—Prokofiev successfully

created a great, national fresco of unquestioned poetic validity.

The libretto of *Semyon Kotko* was drafted by the composer, assisted by Valentin Petrovitch Katayev, author of the novel *I, Son of the Working People* on which the text is based. A patriotic tale describing partisan fighting in the Ukraine during the German occupation in 1918, it has as its protagonist the artilleryman Semyon Kotko, who has returned to his native village after four years of war. Around him center all the other characters (more than twenty; large casts are typical of all Prokofiev's operas) and the various events—involving love, politics, fighting—which eventually culminate in a happy ending. In its uncut version, the opera is divided into five acts and seven scenes, more than three hours of music, rhapsodic in character, strongly choral, with epic intentions.

There can be no doubt about the work's unity and variety. The first act is idyllic, intimate, pastoral. The second is richer in contrasts: decisive rhythms, unmistakable timbres, frequent recurrence of "rhythmic speech," masterful counterpoint of voices, important scenes for the chorus, harsh irony, drama. The third act broadens and deepens the opera's dramatic development: from the lyrical opening to the beginning of the dramatic past (the splendid scene of Liuba's madness); in the fourth act the first scene alone guarantees greatness, fourteen minutes of some of the most original and profound music ever written by Prokofiev.

Betrothal in a Monastery marks Prokofiev's return to comedy after twenty years—not to the surrealistic, fairy-tale atmosphere of *The Love for Three Oranges* but to the more realistic, even naturalistic, world of farce, inspired by Richard Sheridan's *The Duenna*. The libretto is the work of the composer and his wife, Mira Mendelson Prokofiev: a comic-lyric opera in four acts and nine scenes. The scene is eighteenth-century Spain. The last act has a Boccaccio-like flavor, concluding with the marriage in a monastery of two young couples, a marriage stage-managed by the sly Duenna who in the process also succeeds in capturing a rich husband for herself.

For me, the two interesting aspects of this opera



Betrothal in a Monastery, a comic-lyric opera.

are the form the composer chose and the Iberianism he tried to invent in order to "place" the comedy musically. The results too often betray the effort involved. On the subject of the form, Prokofiev himself said: "In undertaking to write an opera on the subject of *The Duenna* I had first to decide which element to stress: the comic aspect of the story or the lyrical. I chose the latter. . . . The structure of Sheridan's play, with its abundance of couplets, enabled me to introduce many separate numbers—serenades, ariettes, duets, quartets, and large ensembles—without interrupting the action."

Despite the composer's words, it is hard to be convinced by his choice of the second, the lyrical, emphasis. The work lasts only a bit over two hours, but for the first time a Prokofiev opera seems over-long. Though there are numerous psychological subtleties, musical "winks," Stravinskyan elegance, easy declaration, instrumental refinement, the musical discourse to me seems to lack spontaneity, the images lack imagination. Finally, this most wearily European of Prokofiev's operas leaves us with a feeling of emptiness, of a banal intellectual game.

ALMOST AT THE SAME TIME that he was writing *Betrothal in a Monastery*, Prokofiev first thought in concrete terms of an opera based on Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. "On June 22, 1941," he wrote, "the German Fascists invaded the Soviet Union. I . . . turned to the idea I had been nursing for some time of writing an opera on the subject of Lev Tolstoy's great novel *War and Peace*. The pages describing the struggle of the Russian people against the Napoleonic hordes in 1812 and the expulsion of Napoleon's army from Russian soil had somehow a particular poignancy at this time."

Again with his wife's help, Prokofiev created the libretto, selecting scenes according to criteria he explained as follows: "The idea of writing an opera on the subject of *War and Peace* took possession of me, although I was aware of all the difficulties that awaited me. It was absolutely evident that such vast material could not be compressed within a single evening's performance. As I delved deeper into the novel, I saw more and more clearly that the events closely connected with the year 1812 had to form the basis of the opera, and that it would be necessary to abandon the opening."

Confused, even contradictory is the story of the various versions (three are mentioned) of *War and Peace* on which Prokofiev worked for the last twelve years of his life. My remarks here are based on an examination of the published score of the third edition (2 volumes, Moscow, 1958), much shortened from the earlier versions, and its recording by the Bolshoi Theatre Company, thirteen scenes without any act divisions.

Because of its dimensions and the seriousness of the composer's involvement, *War and Peace* represents Prokofiev's grandest, most ambitious effort. The numerous episodes, the many characters (about

Prokofiev's Operas on Records

FIVE of the best eras of the best unperformed).

e Oranges

Fata Morgana; T. Ninetta; T. Medvedeva L. Rashkovets (ms), Avnichewa (ms), Smeraldina; V. Erofeyeva (c), Linetta; V. Makhov (t), The Prince; B. Dobrin (t), Leandro; Y. Yelnikov (t), Truffaldino; I. Kartavenko (t), The Master of Ceremonies; I. Budrin (b), Pantaloon; V. Rybinsky (bs), The King; G. Troitssky (bs), The Magician Celio; G. Abramov (bs), The Cook; Y. Yakushev (bs), The Devil; M. Markov (bs), The Herald; Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Moscow, D. Dalgat, cond.
 • ULTRAPHONE ULP 121/22. Two LP. \$9.96.

V. Guerlovich (s), Fata Morgana; S. Khochevar (s), Ninetta; B. Glavak (ms), Nicoletta; B. Stritar (ms), Clarice; E. Karlovatz (ms), Smeraldina; V. Zikherl (c), Linetta; Y. Lipuschchek (t), The Prince; D. Chuden (t), Truffaldino; S. Shtrukel (t), The Master of Ceremonies; D. Merlak (b), Leandro; V. Yanko (b), Pantaloon; L. Koroshetz (bs), The King; Z. Kovack (bs), The Magician Celio; F. Lupsha (bs), The Cook; V. Dolnichar (bs), The Devil; S. Tzar (bs), The Herald; Chorus and Orchestra of the Slovene National Opera Theatre (Lubiana), Bogo Leskovich, cond.
 • EPIC SC 6013. Two LP. \$9.58.

Like all the original-language recordings made with Russian artists, Ultraphone's *Love for Three Oranges* is of special interest. For Western listeners, the performance here presents a style of interpretation, typically Russian, which avoids all preciousness, even refinement, to address itself to a dramatic realism, a substantial, expressive intensity.

I do not feel, however, that the chief characteristics of *The Love for Three Oranges*—that is, surrealism, poetic grotesquerie, rarefied irony—are suited to such an interpretation; and this feeling is borne out by the veristic perils into which some of the singers fall. In particular, the scenes of poetic magic suffer. On the other hand, the accent on realism also has its positive aspects, where the harsh, grotesque elements are concerned. No one can deny, moreover, the rigorous unity of style, the technical level of the performance, especially in the orchestral part, at times truly virtuoso.

The Epic performance is distinguished less by the bravura of any single performer than by the exceptional coherence achieved by the whole ensemble, by the

elegant, faithful balance of the interpretation. The dramatic pace of this excellent production derives from the rigorous, disciplined obedience of all the artists to the poetic demands of the enchanting musical fable. The merit, first of all, belongs to conductor Leskovich, who, with a technically skilled and rich-sounding orchestra at his command, succeeds in underlining with refinement, poetic elegance, and incisiveness the diverse aspects of the score. Also of particular note is the exemplary interpretation of the tenor Lipuschchek in the role of the Prince—a voice of much purity, pleasing in timbre, impeccable in diction. Mention should also be made of the basses and baritones, superior to the group of women's voices. The recording was made some years ago, but it remains excellent, all the same.

I myself would choose the Ultraphone set, for two reasons: first because of the better technical quality of the recording, and secondly for its authentic Russian idiom. [The Epic album has not been available in the United States for several years.]

The Fiery Angel

J. Rhodes (s), Renata; I. Kolassi (ms), The Sorceress, The Mother Superior; J. Collard (ms), The Woman Innkeeper; G. Friedmann (t), Glock, The Doctor; J. Giraudeau (t), Mephistopheles; P. Finel (t), Agrippa; B. Cottret (b), The Waiter, The Tavernkeeper, Matthias; X. Depraz (bs), Ruprecht; A. Vessières (bs), Faust, The Inquisitor; Chorus of Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française, Orchestra of the Théâtre National de l'Opéra (Paris), Charles Bruck, cond.
 • WESTMINSTER OPW 1304. Three LP. \$14.37.

This is the only recording of Prokofiev's expressionistic masterpiece, and we must therefore be grateful to Vega, the French firm which produced it, and to the artists who undertook the assignment, difficult from every point of view. Unfortunately the French, in which the performance is sung, in itself softens, attenuates the dramatic tension, the expressive violence and intensity of the opera.

A further criticism concerns conductor Bruck, who pays laudable attention to instrumental details, plumbing the most recondite depths of the score with admirable clarity and balance but in an impressionistic key rather than an expressionistic manner. One might object that the score in fact contains some impressionistic, even Debussyan suggestions (the humming chorus of the nuns at the beginning of Act V, derived from *Sirènes*), but these serve only to point up the over-all dramatic tension, the score's expressionistic *Stimmung*. Within this fundamental limitation, Bruck gives us a high-level performance, assisted by the excellent orchestra and chorus.

The criticism of Bruck applies also to Jane Rhodes in the chief role of Renata. Her interpretation is excellent in its intense vocality, its psychological refinement, its inner conviction. But Renata requires a demoniacal despera-

tion, a repressed but exacerbated violence, even a plastic deformation. The technical aspects of the recording are praiseworthy.

Semyon Kotko

L. Ghelovani (s), Sofia; T. Tougarinova (s), Liuba; T. Yanko (ms), Semyon's Mother; T. Antipova (ms), Trossia; A. Klestcheva (ms), Khivria; N. Gress (t), Semyon Kotko; N. Timchenko (t), Mikola; M. Stchavinski (t), Klembovski; N. Brillling (t), The Interpreter; G. Ostrovski (t), Second Haidamak; M. Kisselev (b), Tzariov; E. Dobrine (b), The Bandore-player; G. Troitzki (bs), Remeniuk; N. Pantchekhine (bs), Tkatchenko; D. Demianov (bs), Ivassenko; V. Zakhrov (bs), Wirchow; A. Lokchine (bs), First Haidamak; Chorus and Orchestra of the U.S.S.R. Radio, M. Zhukov, cond.
 • MK 214. Four LP. \$19.92.

This was the first of Prokofiev's operas to be recorded by Soviet artists, in the original. And it should be said at once that, with MK's *War and Peace*, it is one of the most successful complete recorded productions of Prokofiev's stage works. Here is a completely unified performance in which, with great balance, all the various, complex elements of the score are fused. But above all we perceive, with extreme clarity, the exemplary interpretative criteria of the artistic ensemble, criteria familiar to those who know the Bolshoi Theatre's editions of the great Russian operatic repertory. These artists scorn oversubtle nuances, a formalistic taste for detail; they aim instead, with great vigor and the most severe operatic spirit, at massive, epic relief, at virile expression, always rigorous, even in the episodes of the most intense lyricism.

The large cast, like the splendid chorus and excellent orchestra, seems completely involved in the plastic, intense poetic interpretation of the conductor Zhukov. The recording is technically very clear.

War and Peace

G. Vishnevskaya (s), Natasha; V. Patzkaia (ms), Sonya; H. Verbitz (ms), Akhrossimova; I. Arkhipova (t), Helen; V. Petrov (t), Besukov; A. Melnikov (t), Anatol; E. Kibbalo (t), André; N. Stchegolkov (b), Rostov; Pankov (b), Dolokov; P. Lissitzian (t), Napoleon; A. Krivtchenia (bs), Kutuzov; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre (Moscow), A. Melik-Pasha, cond.
 • MK 218. Four LP. \$19.92.

R. Vasovic-Bokacevic (s), Natasha; Cvejic (ms), Sonya; L. Vrsajkov (t), Akhrossimova; M. Miladinovic (t), Helen; A. Marinkovic (t), Pierre; Starc (t), Anatol; D. Popovic (t), André; Z. Cvejic (b), Rostov; N. Cvejic (b), Napoleon; V. Dimitrijevic (b), Dolokov; D. Djurdejevic (bs), Kutuzov.

Continued on page 105

fifty), the three and a half hours of music form a great fresco, a work of genius in which, along with *Semyon Kotko*, we find the best of the Prokofiev of the Soviet period, at least as far as the operas are concerned, and in which we recognize the serene, simplified synthesis of a Prokofiev ever less European and ever more Russian. I feel that *War and Peace* contains a series of episodes that belong, in their lyrical purity and musical invention, to the happiest, most lofty creative season of the composer, though we must remember that here Prokofiev was attempting the epic and to arrive at a definitive judgment we would have to know the opera in its longer, two-evening version.

The final, single-evening edition reveals a basic defect of proportion, of balance between the first part (*Peace*) and the second (*War*), which prevents the realization of the epic narrative. Eight scenes are devoted to *Peace*, to the private lives of the protagonists, their emotional problems, their sorrows and conflicts, almost exclusively conflicts of love (I say "eight" because Scene XII is also a nostalgic, poetic evocation of André's love for Natasha). In the five scenes devoted to *War*, Prokofiev affirms that the true protagonist is the Russian people, while the characters we have met are transformed by the war's events. But all this happens in a space too confined to allow an epic development and pace for the action.

Moreover—and this is my most important criticism—the best scenes, the most significant ones musically, are perhaps those devoted to *Peace*, while the war scenes, including the choral epigraph at the beginning, betray some weaknesses, some prolixities, and suffer, one would say, from a sincere, but uncertain attitude, a reluctance on the composer's part to be overwhelmed by patriotic rhetoric. The intention is fine, but the music is not free (not always at any rate) from overnoisy sonorous effects, from a descriptive technique that might be called impressionistic, oversimple, successful only in certain passages, as in the first part, in translating the various events of the war into strictly poetic terms.

Love is still a great character, sculptured in the manner of old Russian music; and he minor figures the soldier Karatyev must be overlooked. The eloquent grandeur, the pulse of certain themes (I am thinking of the moving and lovely threnody at the beginning of Act VIII: Borodino before the battle), certain choral bas-reliefs. There are also, on the one hand, certain sudden European musical refinements which Prokofiev seems to seek refuge, as if to defend himself from bombastic temptations, and on the other, new ideas permit this second part to be the opera in a way worthy of the noble aim.

By comparing the opus numbers, we see that twenty positions separate *War and Peace* from *The Real Man*, the fourth opera of the Soviet period and Prokofiev's last. In reality the two are much closer in time than the catalogue

would suggest (*The Story of a Real Man* during the delicate work of *Peace*), but they are very far

The opera's subject is taken from the same title by Boris Nikolaevich, which was in turn based on a real episode of World War II aviator named Alexei Meresyev. The hero is shot down behind lines and wounded in both feet, which are amputated. He is in despair at the thought of being unable to fly, but an old Bolshevik gives him a magazine article about a First World War pilot who managed to fly with only one foot. Alexei gains confidence, a goal. After the operation he is given artificial limbs; he learns to walk, even to dance, and, given a plane, he returns to the front. Now he feels that he can write to his fiancée, Olga, also in the army; they meet and reaffirm their love. This summary of the plot will indicate the risks Prokofiev faced, writing a popular opera, of frankly patriotic inspiration, trying to re-create in poetic terms an edifying true-life episode, weaving together the private lives and feelings of the characters with national events of great historic import. With *Semyon Kotko* he had succeeded; with *The Story of a Real Man* he failed.

Three weeks after the performance, a declaration was made at a Congress of Soviet Composers: "Prokofiev's music is in direct contradiction with the text and the theatrical action. The Soviet spectator is outraged to see the figure of a pilot, a war hero, as a grotesque marionette. Almost the whole opera is constructed on the basis of an unmelodic musical declamation and the few songs introduced by the composer cannot save the situation." On January 13, 1949, in *Izvestia*, V. Kukharsky condemned *The Real Man* even more severely as a "striking example of the artist's detachment from real life, composing his opera in the shelter of his ivory tower." But Soviet critics aside, in this opera we see all too evidently Prokofiev's concern with simplicity, which often becomes facility, with clarity, which becomes banality, with eloquence, which turns into noisy, empty gesticulation.

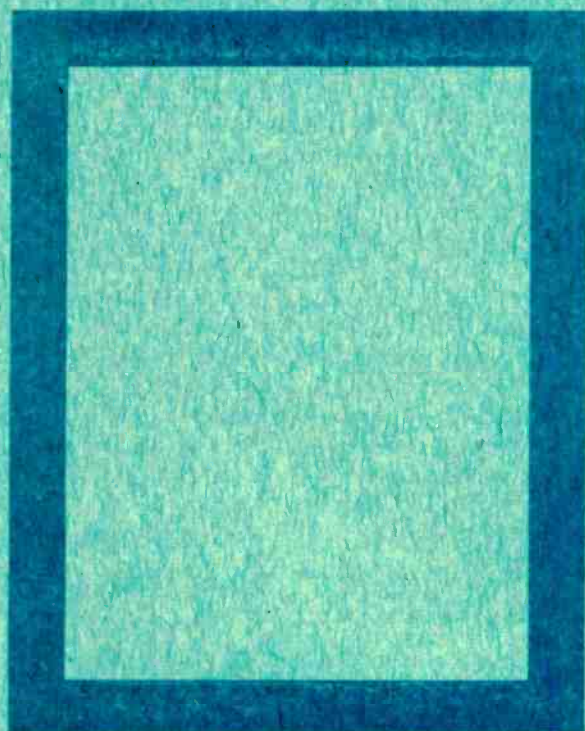
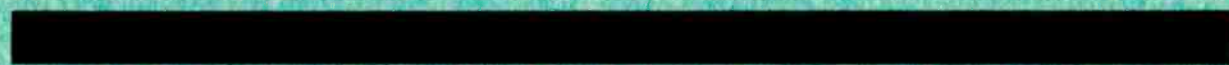
In *The Story of a Real Man*, Prokofiev draws openly, and to a striking degree, on folk music sources, trying to confine both vocal and instrumental discourse within the limits of an expressive elementariness. But the imagination seems tired, at times confused or unfocused, while, from a Western point of view, the propagandistic aims are all too apparent. Naturally, even in this work, the true Prokofiev is present. In spite of all the snares and difficulties, the great musician, the expert composer, the masterful orchestrator manages to utter some convincing words, to rediscover some of those happy moments which reflect, in the phrase of Michel Rotislav Hofmann, "the serenity of his maturity and the image of a man meditating upon his past." But there are traces also of suffering, of painful reflection, a weariness of spirit which is also the weariness, perhaps irreparable, of the artist himself.

YOU CANNOT discuss speakers apart from their natural habitat. They function in a particular environment and with particular related equipment. In fact the most important single thing to keep in mind is that a speaker operates in a Janus-like manner. It is "looking" two ways at once, a fact that helps define its function and at the same time tends to complicate matters of choice and installation.

The speaker looks back at the amplifier driving it, not unlike a motor looking at its power source. The speaker, in a word, is an electromechanical load on the amplifier. Simultaneously, the speaker sees the room in which it is performing as a load on itself. This double role makes the speaker unique. Amplifiers and tuners perform in a manner that is fairly predictable on the basis of measurements, but a speaker's performance is not so readily delineated by the numbers. Change the amplifier driving a speaker, or move the speaker to another room or even to another part of the same room, and you are likely to get a different sort of sound. Get everything adjusted to a sonic T, invite a crowd in for the evening—and you will find that your carefully set up system doesn't sound the way it did earlier in the day. Ironically, the more sensitive or high-performing the over-all system, including the speakers, the more it is apt to reflect changes in program material, environment, acoustic ambience. (One leading speaker designer tells us that he has actually



A Special Section



LOUDSPEAKERS

THEIR CHOICE AND

INSTALLATION ●



BY NORMAN EISENBERG

measured differences in treble response according to the number of décolleté ladies present in the room: the human epidermis reflects the highs more than fabrics do.)

In view of these and similar considerations, the prospective buyer ought to be especially wary of two easy-way-out gambits to speaker choice. One, stemming from the "experts' panel" and "comparative test" approaches, is the notion that there is such a thing as a "best" speaker for all installations and for all listening tastes. This is based on the dubious assumption that because an impartial jury preferred Brand X you will, or ought to, prefer it too. The other, which at times has been touted by industry spokesmen less given to sober technical reflection than are their engineering confreres, proclaims that a particular design itself guarantees superior performance. This asks us to believe that because a new speaker employs such and such a magnet or is housed in such and such a box it must be *ipso facto* better than anything before. Relying on either or both of these oversimplifications may indeed get you a good speaker (i.e., a speaker well matched to your amplifier "in one direction" and to your room "in the other direction") but there's an equal chance that it won't.

This is not to suggest a complete relativism, a flat avowal that "anything goes." Any number of forms of distortion may be present in a speaker system; their magnitude, and the extent to which they interact to lend a "canned" quality to the reproduced sound, is discernible to the trained ear—and even to the untrained ear when a ready reference source is available. In any case, the "best" speaker actually is the one that sounds least like a speaker. That is to say, it produces a minimum of the sonic coloration effects associated with speakers; it is the one that suffers least from the design limitations inherent in transducers.

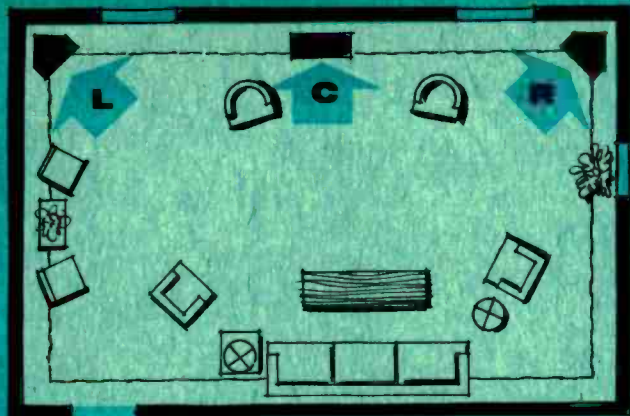
In truth it is easier to describe what a speaker should not sound like than what it ought to sound like, inasmuch as the ideal reproducer would have no characteristic sound of its own but would be a perfect translator. The bass would be clean, well articulated, firm and solid but not too heavy. The midrange would never honk, and the highs would not sound "squashed down." All the treble would be crystal clear, transparent, with a quality that engineers call "the breath of life": bright but never overbrilliant; well rounded; distinct but not piercing; full but not overpowering; well diffused but not withdrawn. Beyond these very general characteristics, things get to be more and more a matter of taste. For instance, one is tempted to include the concept of the well-balanced musical spectrum as a prime requisite of a speaker system—and yet what does "well balanced" mean to a concertgoer who for twenty years has had seats in the section of a particular hall that happens to favor the bass choirs of the orchestra (and a particular orchestra at that!)? What does "balanced sound" mean to the opera lover who frequents the boxes or mezzanine near stage left and whose concept of live sound is colored largely by the characteristic sonic blend of first violins and the upper registers of the human voice? I can offer either of these supposedly experienced listeners a speaker that is virtually flat over most of the range, that is installed in an acoustically correct enclosure, itself placed in what analysis tells us is the best spot in a given room—and both these listeners are apt to be dissatisfied with what they hear. One will prefer "more bass"; the other, "more highs." Indeed, it is mainly because of such variations in taste that most speaker manufacturers offer a wide variety of models—and it is why the serious listener ought not to regard any part of his room as either sacrosanct or taboo when it comes to positioning his speakers.

THE LOWS

Big Box or Long Throw?

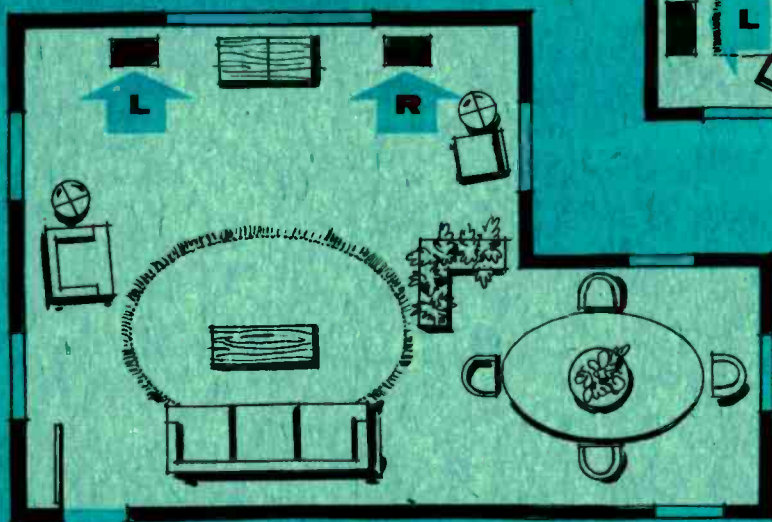
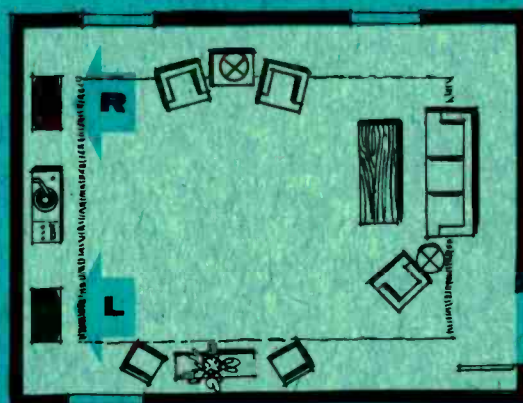
Speakers systems, as a rule, may be divided into "large" and "small"—denoting, respectively, systems that are loaded to a room by moving relatively large amounts of air, and those that move lesser amounts of air but do so more intensely. This difference centers chiefly on the design approach used for the bass reproduction. Why the bass? It happens to be a characteristic of sound waves that the lower their frequency (the longer their wavelengths), the more circular their radiation.

Thus, the low-frequency tones produced from both the front and rear of the diaphragm of a speaker have a tendency to flop around and meet at the edge of the diaphragm where—being exactly out of phase with each other—they cancel each other. The result is little or no bass. To overcome this acoustic short circuit, the opposing wave-trains must be prevented from interfering with one another. Out of this need have arisen three basic enclosure types, known as "infinite baffle," "bass reflex," and "folded horn." (These terms are defined in the accompanying glossary.) It is beyond the scope of this article to enter into a discussion of loudspeaker theory but briefly these all are "large" systems in that they rely on the use of big woofers or several medium-size woofers housed in enclosures at least five cubic feet in interior volume. The infinite-baffle systems typically employ a number of separate drivers; the others also use several drivers plus some form of indirect radiation: the driver "works" into a folded-horn structure, or its rear waves are made



Large room with fair amount of carpeting, draperies, upholstered furniture (and often many people) is apt to be on "dead" side acoustically. Ideal stereo in such a room is possible with left, right, and center speakers against long wall.

Normal room dimensions approach the theoretical ideal—furnishings are average between dead and live. Stereo can be adequate with L and R speakers placed as shown.



Odd-shaped room of live acoustic character presents several problems—best stereo can be expected only in part of such a room, and then only with deliberate care used in arrangement of furnishings. Use of more than two speakers may help.

to emerge from an auxiliary opening to reinforce the front waves. Whatever their exact workings, these systems all have at least one thing in common: they are amply loaded to the room, and the very air in the room acts as a kind of "damping" on the speaker diaphragm to help keep its instantaneous vibrations more or less in step with the signals from the amplifier. True, the infinite-baffle system which suppresses all but the direct frontal radiation of the diaphragm(s) has less loading, driver for driver, than folded-horn or bass-reflex systems; the difference, however, is a matter of degree and is readily compensated for by a little more clean

power (and possibly too a higher amount of "damping factor") from the amplifier.

In contrast, the small speaker systems as a rule employ only one woofer—and often it is smaller in size than the types customarily found in the larger systems. It gets its bite on the air in the room by moving a relatively smaller amount of air at its surface, but over a greater distance; its diaphragm, in other words, pushes and pulls over a longer excursion or "throw" than a conventional speaker. Obviously such a speaker has relatively little inherent acoustic damping. It is, in fact, initially built to be quite floppy, with a reso-

nance below the audible range; the small amount of air trapped in the small, sealed enclosure helps stiffen the cone to the point at which it can begin to respond to audible tones. The requisite damping in such a speaker must be designed into its electro-mechanical system, in terms of its voice-coil and

magnet structure relationships. Additionally, such a speaker system would seem to benefit from relatively higher damping factors in an amplifier—although just what constitutes high and low damping factors is a debatable point (as the discussion of speakers and amplifiers, later on in this article, makes clear).

THE HIGHS

Better When off the Beam

Midrange and high-frequency reproduction is less directly related to speaker system size than is bass reproduction. A tweeter is more or less mindless of baffling: the higher frequencies naturally tend to become more and more directional. While the tendency to “beam” suggests higher efficiency in getting the sound out into the room, it also creates a serious limitation. For one thing, if “untreated,” the highs would be most audible only in a direct line from the center axis of the speaker. For another, the natural “air” and temporal spacing of the component elements of a musical signal become, in a beam, severely compressed to produce a form of distortion heard as a hard, overly bright, unnatural kind of sound. Thus, a prime design aim of high-frequency drivers is to spread the sound, to widen the beam into more of a spray, even while maintaining (as much as is feasible, and commensurate with the balancing of the low-frequency speaker) a fair

degree of efficiency. How this is done again varies according to the particular approach of the system designer. Cone tweeters—small, light, and rigid—are aptly suited for high-frequency reproduction; the spreading-out is accomplished by the shape (the shallower, the more spread), or by small domes in the center that help spray the highs in all directions, or by “acoustical lenses” fitted over the cone to break up and diffuse the highs into the room. Some tweeters consist of a small non-moving member over a tiny diaphragm; these are known as compression drivers, capable of producing strong treble tones. Invariably such drivers are fitted with a flaring horn structure to couple the highs to the room and at the same time to help spread them evenly.

As a rule, the small speaker systems (“small” being dictated by the method used for bass reproduction) employ cone tweeters, the match to the woofer, in terms of efficiency and size, being most suitable. For the very same reasons, the larger systems often employ horn-loaded tweeters: they are better matched to the larger woofers in efficiency, and the already large enclosure needed for housing such woofers can readily accommodate the physically large horn-tweeter as well. As an alternate to horn-tweeters, the large infinite-baffle systems may employ an array of several (as many as eight in some units) cone tweeters which are arranged in such a way as to duplicate the dimensions, air-loading, and spread of a fair-size horn-tweeter.

SPEAKERS IN ROOMS

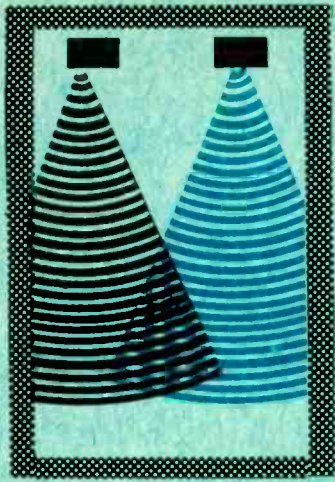
The Acoustical Mating

In terms of the listening room, the speaker system—of whatever type or size—must “relate” in two distinct ways. It must couple its bass energy to the room, and it must sufficiently diffuse its high-frequency energy into the room. In performing these functions, speaker system size as such is not a critical factor—except in the sense that the small speaker has to “work harder” and demands more clean power from the amplifier than does the larger speaker. Either type will perform at its best, how-

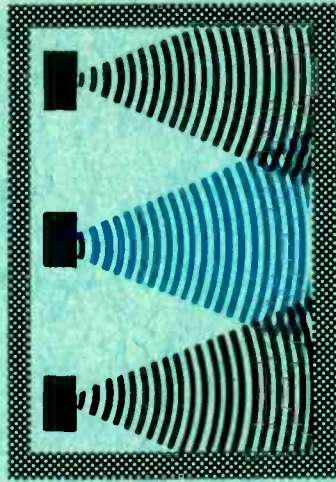
ever, when installed in the best location in a room.

“Best location” is no easy matter to pin down. Every room is unique, acoustically speaking. Its acoustic character is determined by many factors: dimensions, shape, furnishings, ambient noises that may mask or intermix with the reproduced sound, characteristic resonances that set up “standing waves,” sonic “holes” which seem to swallow up certain portions of the frequency spectrum that you are certain are being reproduced. Coping with these factors can involve: one, adjusting the room for balanced acoustic response; two, loading it with as much “speaker” (either in size or number of systems) as you can afford; and three, adjusting each speaker system for optimum response.

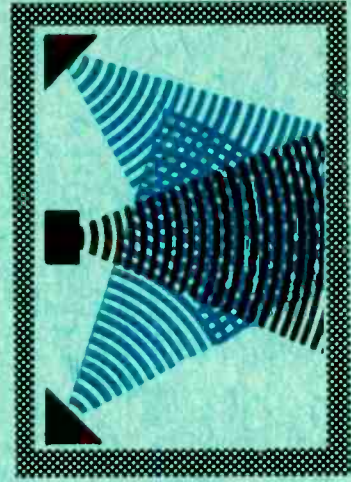
Adjusting a room generally means striking a balance between too dead or absorbent, and too live or bouncy and reverberant. A rug discreetly placed, draperies hung, large pieces of furniture moved from one position to another, sometimes even a



A



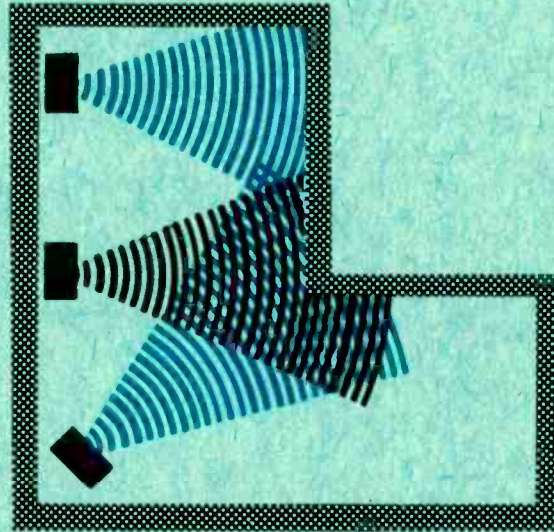
B



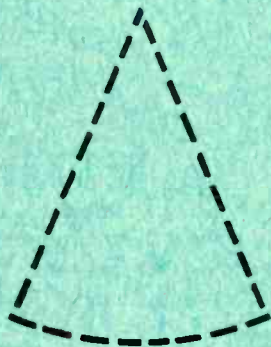
C



D



E



The sound emanation patterns shown here are generalized without reference to specific variations in speakers or in room conditions. The curve and side borders at the end of the triangular pattern from each speaker show that the sound has a characteristic and gradual "falling off" at an appreciable distance from the speaker; they do not imply any sharp demarcation. The plan shown for Room A is probably that most widely employed among owners of stereo systems. A good stereo effect is perceptible in a fairly large area of the room, is more pronounced closer to the speakers, takes on a more diffuse "sound spread" effect at the opposite end of the room. The same two speakers placed against the long wall, as in Room B, would offer a more separated stereo effect and, because they work into a shorter distance, they would sound more intense or "brighter." Excessive separation, in such a setup, can be overcome by using a center "fill" speaker, which begins to approach the "wall of sound" stereo effect. Angling the end speakers inward from the two far corners, or using systems designed expressly for corner placement, can further dramatize the stereogenics, as in Room C. Again, a center speaker helps enhance the sonic panorama. Sometimes—depending on the speakers and/or peculiarities of room acoustics or the particular arrangement of furnishings—a setup such as shown for Room D may be used. This too can furnish excellent stereo, although in a more limited area of the room. Odd-shaped rooms, such as the familiar L-shape depicted as Room E, require more experimentation; one recommended arrangement, using three speaker systems, is shown. Plan your own room: draw it to scale ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch representing 2 feet), and cut out the speaker-sound pattern; it can serve as a template for making up as many more as you need.

Venetian blind closed—any or all of these dodges can “tame” a room. In a predominantly live room (often a “family room” or a converted basement playroom), it may be especially desirable to break up the path of sound from the speaker by the use of intervening (and ideally, upholstered) furnishings—a technique that can eliminate standing waves to help smooth the bass response. To tone down a tendency for the highs to run wild in such a room, ceiling tiles also may help—especially if you have chosen a “bright”-sounding speaker. Tiles, on the other hand, are to be avoided in a normal living room; they most often will deaden the highs and unbalance the best of speaker systems. In a heavily draped, well-carpeted room or one with much upholstered furniture, small hard objects—vases, and the like—may help balance the acoustic response, especially in the treble region. Beamed ceilings, rows of bookshelves, pictures on the walls are desirable in such rooms.

The thing to keep in mind when installing speakers in a room is that the ideal, acoustically speaking, would be to make the speakers as much a part of that room as is possible. Place them so as to get the best coverage in terms of sound propagation, as well as for the desired stereo-

genics of depth and breadth (some suggestions are given in the room diagrams, page 53). The prevailing rule here is to locate them about eight feet apart, if a short wall is used. A more spectacular stereo image is possible by using the long wall—place the speakers farther apart and use a center-channel speaker to “fill the middle.”

Once located, the speakers should be tuned to their individual locations by the use of the level controls provided on most speaker systems. An innovation in this area showing up on some recent systems is a bass driver adjustment in addition to the long-used midrange and treble adjustments. The bass adjustment permits precise tailoring of the speaker system’s response with respect to its position: as a rule, the closer to a corner the more likely the need for reducing the bass; the closer to the center of a room the more the need for raising the bass. (Circular systems, for placement in spots other than against the wall, logically incorporate bass adjustments for this reason.) The bass tone control on an amplifier is unsatisfactory for this adjustment inasmuch as such a control invariably affects frequencies up to 500 or even to 1,000 Hz; thus attempting to adjust speaker bass with an amplifier control will also affect (adversely) the midrange.

SPEAKERS AND AMPLIFIER

The Electrical Mating

In mating your speakers to an amplifier, keep in mind the vital subject of clean power related to speaker efficiency. Here too, the size and acoustic character of a room play a part. In a small room or one that is fairly live—particularly if you’re not planning to listen at ear-shattering levels—even the so-called low-efficiency speakers can be adequately driven by low-powered amplifiers, so long as the latter offer clean power at low distortion across the best part of the audio spectrum. Naturally, in a larger room or one that is more acoustically dead, or in any room in which maximum volume levels with full dynamic range are desired, the small, low-efficiency speakers can take just about all the power you care to feed them. If the speaker manufacturer’s literature is not clear on this point, a chat with your dealer should clarify matters for you.

Whatever the amplifier chosen, make certain it is connected to each speaker system at the correct output impedance taps (unless it is a model with “universal” taps—that is, the same set serving for 4-, 8-, or 16-ohm speakers). Mismatching upward—that is, connecting, say, an 8-ohm speaker to the

4-ohm tap—causes a loss in the signal supplied to the speaker; in this instance, the loss will be 3 dB, or half the total voltage delivered to the speaker. A greater mismatch upward, of 4 to 1—connecting a 16-ohm speaker to a 4-ohm tap—produces a greater loss, on the order of 5 to 6 dB.

Mismatching downward—such as connecting a 4-ohm speaker to an 8-ohm tap, or an 8-ohm speaker to a 16-ohm tap—tends to draw more power from the amplifier, but you run the risk of an overload which can cause distortion or—by approaching a short-circuit condition—can even damage the amplifier. Remember too that as you add more speakers to the same amplifier output tap, you are decreasing the load handled by the amplifier (two 8-ohm speakers in parallel present only 4 ohms to the amplifier). Move the speaker leads to the appropriate tap. In some transistor amplifiers, it is downright dangerous to the amplifier to load down the output taps excessively; check the owner’s manual carefully on this point before running more than one speaker system on any one set of output taps.

Impedance suggests the subject of damping factor in an amplifier, itself pushed into audio news recently because of the unusually high damping factors of solid-state amplifiers, coupled with a disagreement among the experts as to just how important damping factor is. Damping factor itself is the ratio of nominal load impedance to the actual internal impedance of an amplifier. For instance, an amplifier’s internal impedance, at its 8-ohm speaker tap, may be only 0.8 ohms; the amplifier’s damping factor then is 10. All other things being equal, the higher the damping factor, the more control the

SPEAKING OF SPEAKERS

SOONER OR LATER, almost everyone who gets involved with speakers encounters new words, or old words that have taken on special meaning. Some of the more important terms are explained herewith.

ACOUSTIC POWER. Strictly speaking, this is the rate, expressed in watts, at which sound energy is dissipated into a room (by a musical instrument as well as by a loudspeaker). For practical purposes, it can be equated with "sound." The "acoustical watts" delivered by a speaker are always a much lower figure than the number of electrical watts supplied by the amplifier to drive that speaker; for instance, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acoustical watt produced by a speaker would fill an average room with very loud sound; to produce it, however, the speaker might require—depending on its efficiency—many times that much in electrical watts from the amplifier.

ACOUSTIC OR AIR SUSPENSION. A type of speaker system in which the confined air in a small sealed box is used to control the diaphragm of a speaker that has a relatively loose suspension. Such systems can be designed very compactly and still provide full bass response.

BAFFLE. The board or panel on which a speaker is mounted; the term also has come to mean the complete enclosure for a speaker.

BASS REFLEX. A speaker enclosure that has an auxiliary opening or "port" which permits low-frequency energy from the rear of the speaker diaphragm to emerge in phase with the front sound waves. The port must be tuned (its dimensions suited) to the resonance of the speaker itself.

CENTER CHANNEL. Also called "A plus B" or "phantom" channel, this is a mix of the normal left and right stereo channels which may be fed to a third, centrally positioned speaker system to enhance the sound spread when two stereo speakers are widely separated in a room. It also serves to pipe a monophonic version of a stereo program into another room.

CROSSOVER. A frequency, or frequencies, at which the larger part of the audio spectrum is divided and sent to respective drivers in a two-way or more complex system. Crossover can be accomplished "mechanically" by variations in the material and/or structure of a diaphragm; in the better, costlier systems it is handled by an electrical network.

DAMPING. Any force introduced into a speaker system to counteract its tendency to continue to vibrate after the signal from the amplifier has ceased or changed. Speakers are damped by their own mechanical friction, by the resistance of the air load into which they radiate, and by interaction electronically with the impedance of the amplifier powering them.

DAMPING FACTOR. The ratio between an amplifier's rated impedance (the nominal impedance of the speaker) and the amplifier's internal impedance—the latter being much lower in high fidelity amplifiers due to their use of negative feedback. The higher an amplifier's damping factor, the more the speaker is damped, although above a factor somewhere between 5 and 20 (depending on the type of speaker; see article), increasing the amplifier's DF has little or no effect on speaker performance.

DECIBEL. Abbreviated dB, this unit measures relative loudness of sounds as well as the ratio between two electrical quantities. From one to three dB is generally accepted as the smallest difference to the ear between two sounds. The total range of audible differences in sound has been given as 130 to 140 dB, which approximates or just exceeds the sound of a symphony orchestra playing tutti and fortissimo.

DIAPHRAGM. The moving member of a speaker—a cone or other vibrating piece—that works into the air to generate sound.

DIPOLE. Also known as doublet, this is a type of speaker system which radiates from both its front and rear. Some recent "thin-line" systems employ this technique. Full-range electrostatic speakers are by their very nature dipole radiators. For best results, a dipole speaker is generally installed at some distance from a wall.

DISPERSION. The extent to which a speaker distributes its high frequencies widely and evenly into the listening area. The highs tend to radiate in a narrow stream or beam unless special measures are taken. The smaller the diaphragm, the better (the less directional) its dispersion. Techniques for improving dispersion in speakers include: an acoustic lens (a small fitting of rings, vanes, or perforated plate) over the speaker; an auxiliary, stiff cone (a whizzer) in the center of a larger full-range speaker; loading a short horn or a slotted structure to the tweeter; shaping its center like a dome or "fried egg"; introducing various types of "plugs" and auxiliary

members around the tweeter; facing the tweeter upward or at an angle other than looking straight out into the room.

DRIVER. A single speaker without reference to its enclosure. A driver, or drivers, installed in an enclosure becomes a "speaker system."

EFFICIENCY. The ratio of signal output to input; in speaker terms, the acoustical watts produced by a speaker for a given number of electrical watts from the amplifier powering it. The lower a speaker's efficiency, the more amplifier power it needs to produce a given amount of sound. As a general rule, large speaker systems are more efficient than compact models although the importance to the listener of this difference depends on various factors (see article).

ELECTROSTATIC. A type of speaker that produces sound as a result of varying electrical charges between a movable diaphragm and fixed electrodes. The varying charge is obtained from the amplifier signals; the electrodes must be initially charged with voltage from the line. The electrostatic principle has been used for both high-frequency and full-range speakers; although it still remains a minority interest, it does represent the only significant challenge to the prevailing dynamic (moving coil) speaker. Electrostatic speakers require no enclosure in the conventional sense: only a frame to hold the flat sections in place.

ENCLOSURE. The housing or "cabinet" for a speaker system, designed specifically to permit the drivers in it to function at their best. For specific types, see ACOUSTIC SUSPENSION, BASS REFLEX, HORN LOADING, and INFINITE BAFFLE.

HANGOVER. A tendency for a speaker to vibrate after its driving signal is removed. Hangover is caused mainly by undamped resonances; its effect is to impair transient response and to muddy the bass.

HORN LOADING. A technique for improving the response of a driver and obtaining maximum efficiency from it. A horn-loaded enclosure is one in which the bass from the woofer travels through a hornlike structure before it emerges into a room. Front horn loading for the bass is used in the most elaborate horn speaker systems; rear horn loading, with the front of the speaker permitted also to radiate directly, is used in some systems.

IMPEDANCE. The opposition, or load, involved in the transfer of energy. The best transfer takes place when the speaker's input impedance is that of the amplifier's output. Because the impedance of a speaker actually varies with frequency, and is typically higher at the bass end, the speaker's impedance rating is a nominal one and actually applies to most, but not all, of its response range. The use of several drivers in the system and of a properly designed enclosure helps keep impedance fairly level across the spectrum.

INFINITE BAFFLE. A type of speaker system in which the rear sound waves are completely suppressed or absorbed so that there is no chance of bass loss due to cancellation by the rear sound waves of the front sound waves. Good infinite baffle systems imply the use of sturdy woofers with fairly low natural resonances and their installation in very rigid, well-sealed, and fairly large enclosures.

L-PAD. A level control recommended for use with remote or extension speakers; it has two variable resistive elements that keep the impedance constant when volume is changed.

PHASING. The correct phasing of several drivers (so that they all vibrate "in step" with one another) in one system must be presumed to have been taken care of by the manufacturer. What remains for the installer is to connect both stereo speaker systems to the amplifier so as to be "in phase" with each other. All high fidelity speaker systems that we have seen in the past few years are marked for polarity, and thus the danger of connecting them out of phase hardly exists any more. In any case, out of phase speakers produce somewhat less bass and also may seem to be too widely separated. Reversing the leads to one system will correct this.

SUSPENSION. Also known as "surround," this term refers to the physical material between the outer edge of a speaker cone and its frame. "Soft" suspensions are used in speakers designed for compact systems; they permit relatively long excursions for bass response. Such speakers also are termed high-compliance or long-throw speakers.

VOICE COIL. Known in Britain as a speech coil, this is a small coil of wire—usually copper or aluminum—which, together with a surrounding magnet, is the heart of the modern dynamic loudspeaker. Signals from the amplifier enter the voice coil, causing it to vibrate. These movements in turn are transmitted to the diaphragm to produce sound. The thickness of the wire and the number of turns determine the voice coil's resistance, which is pretty much what the input impedance of the speaker will be rated for—usually 4, 8, or 16 ohms.

signal exercises over the speaker diaphragm motion.

In any case, most experts point out that damping factor in an amplifier is of itself no criterion of performance—particularly in that as damping factor is increased (due to lower internal amplifier impedances), the effective improvement in controlling speaker movement soon reaches a point of diminishing returns. A change in damping factor much above 10 is generally held to be of little or no significance with respect to most speaker systems. At the same time, it also is generally felt that an increase in damping factor from 1 up to 20 will have a greater effect on any speaker in a completely sealed cabinet than the same increase will have on a speaker in a vented or horn-loaded enclosure. The effect on the sealed-cabinet system is to “tighten” the bass and generally help clean up the speaker’s transient response. The effect on a vented-cabinet system is similar, except that a well-designed system of this type (that is, one whose bass is fairly well controlled to begin with, not muddy or overly “rolling”) not only does not need very high damping factors in an amplifier but may actually produce less apparent bass if it is overdamped. In other words, underdamping produces muddy bass; overdamping, thin bass. The small, air-suspension type of speaker systems seem to benefit more from relatively higher damping factors in an amplifier, but other performance characteristics such as power output, low distortion, stability, and so on remain the primary determinants of sonic quality. The large infinite-baffle systems benefit too, but the need is not as great. And the bass-reflex systems need high damping from the amplifier least of all.

One more point on the amplifier: if you are using dissimilar systems for the two stereo channels, you ought to get an amplifier that has independent tone controls for each channel, and a balance control. Although the speakers will have been previously adjusted (with their own controls) with respect to the room, differences in program material may require subsequent adjustments for the most satisfying stereo effect. If so, do not hesitate to use those controls. There is nothing “correct” about leaving controls in their (presumably) “flat” positions at the expense of decidedly uneven response to your ears.

Actually, problems of power and correct hook-up are not as formidable as they seem at first glance—and vast numbers of stereo owners are enjoying their stereo systems simply by following the manufacturer’s instructions furnished. A good deal of even the minimal effort associated with high fidelity componentry has also been obviated by the recent trend to integrated components, or preengineered “partial systems.” On a grand, all-out scale, this trend is best exemplified today by two products. One is the “energizer-reproducer” offered by James B. Lansing—in which the basic or power amplifier is preinstalled in the back of a speaker enclosure. The power rating of this amplifier has been chosen by JBL engineers to suit the requirements of the speaker system, and removable

circuit boards are supplied to provide optimum damping relationships. Another system of this type is the Acoustech X—an electrostatic speaker which is supplied with an integrated basic amplifier, the characteristics of which are precisely tailored for best performance with the electrostatic panel.

A similar approach, on a more modest scale, is evident in some of the “modular” systems in which the response of the amplifier is deliberately adjusted to complement known peaks and dips in the response of the speaker systems supplied; the result is an acoustically balanced output. Integration of a sort also figures, obviously, in package sets and in complete stereo consoles, but I feel that here the line must be drawn. True, it is not as heavy a line as once prevailed—the better consoles today do sound cleaner and do, for the most part, boast more refined innards. But as a class they do not deliver, for me, real high fidelity sound or genuine stereo. The chief limitation still is in the fact that the speakers are housed in the same cabinet as everything else: the danger of acoustic or mechanical feedback imposes a necessary limit on full bass response, and in any case you simply cannot get real stereo from speakers no more than five or so feet apart unless you listen very close to the set. At an appreciably normal distance from the set, the stereo effect all but vanishes. Finally, you are paying for the cabinetry; and dollar for dollar, you can do better, in terms of pure sound, with separate components or even with a modular system in which the speakers are separately housed.

Which brings us to the last consideration, probably your first: shopping for speakers. Assessing the sonic quality of a speaker system can be a fruitful adventure if you choose the right dealer. His shop, to begin with, ought to resemble acoustically as much as possible an average living room: shelves, rugs, normal furnishings all help. Large undraped glass surfaces, such as display windows, do not help; they tend to mask the true upper response of a speaker by offering too much of a hard, reflecting surface. A speaker deficient in highs can thus seem to have more “zip”; this same speaker in your well-upholstered living room may sound dull and lifeless. You can evaluate the dealer himself by offering to show him a plan of your room, its dimensions and its furnishings. If he seems genuinely interested (rather than brusquely dismissing it with the suggestion that you “just listen to this \$29.95 special I have”), you have won half the battle. If he further permits you to play your own records as audition material (rather than something he has pre-selected to wow you with), consider him your ally. Finally, if he lets you select a pair of speaker systems on approval, with a return-for-exchange agreement or at least an understanding that he will modify them (if custom built) or help you relocate them in your room if need be—you have triumphed: such a dealer is a genuine friend. Clasp him to your stereo soul, and don’t quibble over spending a few dollars more vis-à-vis Cheap Charlie down the street.

WHO SAYS THE KLIPSCHORN® IS SO GREAT?

Only the people who have heard one and that takes in some pretty important people.

The Klipschorn® has been chosen as the most advanced state of the loudspeaker art at the Brussels World's Fair, at the American Exhibit in Moscow and in demonstrations to the most critical scientific and musical ears in the world. Always the response is the same. "This is the finest reproduced sound we have ever heard."

WHY IS THE KLIPSCHORN® SO OUTSTANDING?

The Klipschorn® has the lowest distortion and widest full power frequency response of any speaker system in the world... 1/10 of 1% FM distortion* from 30—20,000 cycles per second at over 115 decibels of sound output. It is actually able to radiate fundamental tones down to 25 cycles.

Each speaker goes through exhaustive testing to insure its ability to deliver undistorted, full power sound. All testing is personally supervised by Mr. Klipsch in a laboratory/listening room especially designed for the purpose.

The construction of a Klipschorn® is a handcrafted job. It takes over 30 hours of a skilled-cabinet-maker's time to construct the extremely complicated bass horn and its allied cabinetry.

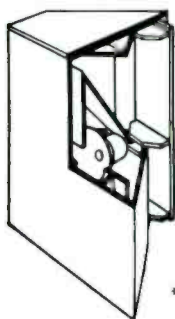
The Klipschorn® is offered in a wide range of fine hardwood, hand-rubbed finishes comparable to that found on the highest quality grand pianos. Satin lacquer and oiled finishes are also available.

The Klipschorn® is a loudspeaker created without any compromise. It contains three carefully matched horns. These horns were developed and combined with only one thought in mind... the finished product must offer the closest possible identity with original sound.

THE BASS HORN (WOOFER)

The Bass Horn which occupies the solid looking bottom portion of the loudspeaker, is of the Klipsch folded/corner horn design. It has an air column large enough to reproduce, without distortion, and at full power, the lowest note of the pipe organ (32.7 cps). No other bass speaker of comparable, or smaller size has ever achieved this. Miniaturized bass speakers are on the market but no one has yet invented a miniature 32-foot wave length.

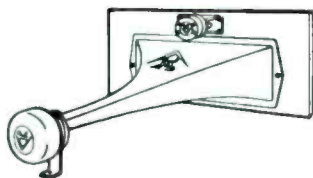
The construction of this horn is beyond compare. Nearly 288 screws, plus other fastening devices, plus high grade ad-



hesives, are used to make the horn as rigid as possible. Also each bass horn is checked with a water manometer to insure absolute air tightness of the rear air chamber.

THE MID-RANGE HORN (SQUAWKER)

The mid-range horn operates from about G above middle C (400 cps) to well beyond the highest fundamental on the piano. This horn, over 2 feet long with its driver attached, has gone through some 15 years of research and development. The massive



cast horn is of straight-axis design and is completely free of the irritating distortion which occurs in reflexed horns. The horn is mounted on a specially designed flange which effectively increases the horn's mouth area and adds measurably to its smoothness of response... less than 6 db. variation from 400 to 5,000 cps.

THE HIGH FREQUENCY HORN (TWEETER)

The highly refined horn tweeter takes over at 5,000 cps and extends to 18,000 cps with variations of less than 6 db. This horn tweeter is mounted on the same flange to which the mid-range horn is fastened.

THE KLIPSCH BALANCING NETWORK

This network has been designed to provide the best match between the 3 horns in the system and also to act as a dividing network.

ONLY THE KLIPSCHORN® REPRODUCES THE FULL RANGE AND DYNAMICS OF A SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

A special concert was staged in which Klipschorns® reproduced, at original loudness, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. This was a live vs. recorded concert and the majority of the large listening audience could not tell the difference between the live orchestra and the sound of the orches-

tra as reproduced by Klipschorns®.

To the best of our knowledge, no other commercially available high fidelity loudspeaker has passed such an arduous test.

KLIPSCH HIGH EFFICIENCY ALLOWS YOU TO USE LOWER POWERED AMPLIFICATION

The sound output of the Klipschorn® is approximately 10 decibels higher than the best direct radiator enclosure type systems and is 20 decibels higher than typical systems.

A 10 watt (2 for stereo) amplifier is adequate for home use and has proved ample for audiences of 900 people.



In reproducing the full Hartford Symphony Orchestra, only 2 watts peak power feeding each of two Klipschorns® in stereophonic array were used. This may seem difficult to believe if you are accustomed to the typical loudspeaker system, but you will be quickly convinced once you hear a Klipschorn® Wide Stage Stereo System.

OUR PHILOSOPHY: TRY IT BEFORE YOU BUY IT!

We sincerely hope you will listen to many systems before you purchase. Don't be fooled by advertising claims. We are confident that once you have heard the Klipschorn®, you will be satisfied with nothing less.



**KLIPSCH
& ASSOCIATES**
Box 280
Hope, Arkansas
71801

Please send me complete information on the Klipschorn® loudspeaker system. Also include the name of my nearest Klipsch Authorized Audio Expert.

KLIPSCH & ASSOCIATES
BOX 280
HOPE, ARKANSAS 71801

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

OCCUPATION _____ AGE _____

*In Klipsch speakers all forms of distortion are minimized—especially AM and FM distortion which are many times as objectionable as simple harmonic distortion. Technical papers available on this subject.

CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Perfection results from CHOICE...NOT CHANCE

Since no single phono cartridge can be all things to all people, we earnestly recommend that you employ these individual criteria in selecting your personal cartridge from the broad Shure Stereo Dynetic group:

YOUR EAR: First and foremost, listen. There are subtle differences in tonality that beggar description and are quite unrelated to "bare" specifications—yet add immeasurably to your personal listening pleasure.

YOUR EQUIPMENT: Consider first your tone arm's range of

tracking forces. Too, keep in mind that the cartridge ordinarily represents the smallest monetary investment in the system, yet the ultimate sound delivered depends *first* on the signal reproduced by the cartridge . . . "skimping" here downgrades your *entire* system.

YOUR EXCHEQUER: Shure cartridges cover the entire economic spectrum. And they are ALL Shure in quality, all Shure in performance. Even the least costly has received copious critical acclaim.

BEST SELLER



MODEL M3D

Where cost is the dominant factor, the M3D provides extremely musical and transparent sound at a rock-bottom price. The original, famous Shure Stereo Dynetic Cartridge . . . with almost universal application. Tracks at pressures as low as 3 grams, as high as 6 grams. For any changer. Only \$15.75

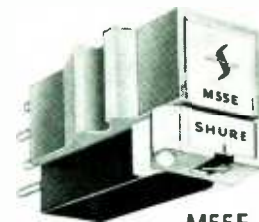
MUSICAL BEST-BUY



MODEL M7/N21D

Top-rated cartridge featuring the highly compliant N21D tubular stylus. Because of unusually clean mid-range (where most music really "happens") it is especially recommended if your present system sounds "muddy." For 2-gram optimum tracking (not to be used over 2 1/2 grams). Only \$17.95 (Also, if you own an M3D or M7D, you can upgrade it for higher compliance, if tracking force does not exceed 2 1/2 grams, with the N21D stylus for only \$12.50.)

ALL THE MOST WANTED FEATURES



M55E

15° TRACKING, ELLIPTICAL STYLUS

Professional performance at a modest price. Compares favorably to the incomparable Shure V-15, except that it is produced under standard Shure quality control and manufacturing techniques. Remarkable freedom from IM, Harmonic and tracing distortion. Will definitely and audibly improve the sound of monaural as well as stereo records. A special value at \$35.50. Upgrade M44 cartridge (if you can track at 1 1/2 grams or less) with N55E stylus, \$20.00

THE "FLOATING" CARTRIDGE



M80E GARD-A-MATIC® WITH ELLIPTICAL STYLUS

Bounce-proof, scratch-proof performance for Garrard Lab 80 and Model A70 Series and Dual 1009 automatic turntables. Especially useful where floor vibration is a problem. Spring-mounted in tone arm shell. Stylus and cartridge retracts when force exceeds 1 1/2 grams . . . prevents scratching record and damaging stylus.

Model M80E
For Garrard turntables. \$38.00
Model M80E-D
For Dual 1009 turntables. \$38.00

THE ULTIMATE!



V-15 WITH

BI-RADIAL ELLIPTICAL STYLUS

For the purist who wants the very best, regardless of price. Reduces tracing (pinch effect), IM and Harmonic distortion to unprecedented lows. 15° tracking. Scratch-proof, too. Produced under famed Shure Master Quality Control Program . . . literally hand-made and individually tested. In a class by itself for mono as well as stereo discs. For manual or automatic turntables tracking at 3/4 to 1 1/2 grams. \$62.50

"THE BEST PICK-UP ARM IN THE WORLD"



SHURE SME

Provides features and quality unattainable in ANY other tone arm. Made by British craftsmen to singularly close tolerances and standards. Utterly accurate adjustments for every critical factor relating to perfect tracking . . . it realizes the full potential of the cartridge and record. Model 3012 for 16" records \$110.50; Model 3009 for 12" records \$100.50

SHURE

Stereo Dynetic®

High Fidelity Phono Cartridges . . . World Standard Wherever Sound Quality is Paramount
Shure Brothers, Inc., 222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, Illinois

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HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT REPORTS

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

AMPEX PR-10-4 TAPE RECORDER

THE EQUIPMENT: Ampex PR-10-4, a stereo tape recorder (transport and two-channel record/playback preamp). Supplied in carrying case, 20 by 15 by 9½ inches; units may be removed for standard 19-inch rack-mounting. Price: \$1,295. Manufacturer: Ampex Corp., 401 Broadway, Redwood City, Calif. 94063.

COMMENT: The Ampex PR-10-4 is the quarter-track model of the PR-10 series. PR-10 machines originally were (and still are) offered for professional applications where portability and compactness are needed. The new four-track version is aimed at tape enthusiasts who are interested both in the precision and high performance of the PR-10 and in the quarter-track head configuration that has become the standard for high-fidelity and advanced hobbyist use. The deck is supplied actually with four separate heads: quarter-track erase, record, playback—and half-track playback,



so that optimum results also can be obtained when playing older two-track tapes.

The equipment may be custom-fitted into cabinets, rack-mounted in studio fashion, or used in its carrying case. A separate mixer is also available which may be added to the transport and preamp in a larger carrying case.

The transport is a ruggedly built, handsomely finished, superbly running mechanism. It is available in tape speed pairs of 15/16 and 1-7/8, 3-3/4 and 7-1/2, or 7-1/2 and 15 ips. The model chosen for this report was the 3 3/4- and 7 1/2-ips type, easily the most popular speeds among tape-minded fidelitarians. It handles up to 7-inch-diameter reels. Operation is by push buttons which control an elaborate system of electrical clutches, braking, and speed change assemblies. The tape path from supply to take-up reels runs past three fixed tape guides, the pinch-roller and drive capstan, and a swinging arm which is associated with an automatic shutoff. The head assembly is protected by a lift-up cover which permits full access to the heads for cleaning and degaussing. Operating controls include the push buttons for stop, rewind, fast-forward, play, and record (the last one colored red). There is also a power off/on switch. The speed control is just to the left of the take-up reel.

The left-hand side of the preamp contains dual sets (one for each channel) of accurately calibrated VU meters, record level controls, record indicator lamps, and stereo headphone jacks. In addition there are controls for low and high speed equalization, a channel selector for recording, and an output selector for each channel which selects either the input signal (being recorded) or the signal off the tape for indication on the VU meter and for monitoring at both the headphone jack and the line output. A hinged lid on the preamp covers a number of touch-up and service

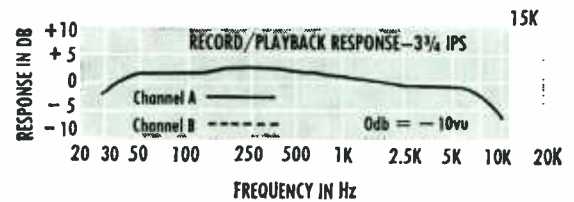
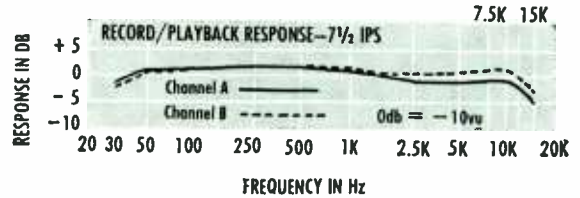
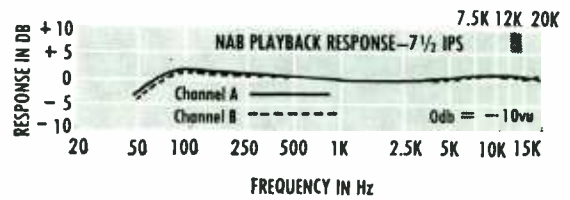
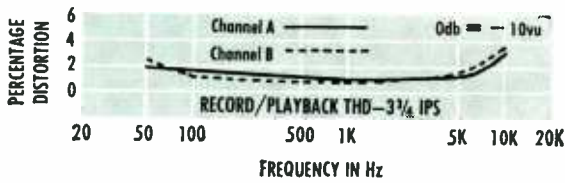
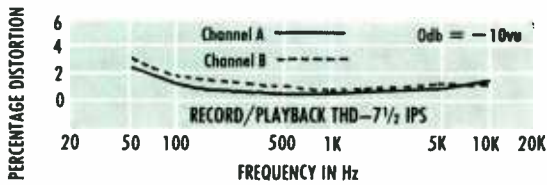
AN ANNOUNCEMENT

Beginning this month, HIGH FIDELITY's test reports of new equipment will be based on tests conducted at CBS Laboratories of Stamford, Connecticut, an organization of international renown which for years has been a leader in electronic and audio research. The testing program will be under the over-all supervision of Benjamin B. Bauer, Vice-President of the Laboratories in charge of Acoustics and Magnetics Research. The new arrangement places at our disposal some of today's most advanced laboratory test instruments and techniques. Standards of the Institute of High Fidelity and of other professional organizations will be used wherever applicable. As in the past, laboratory measurements will be correlated with listening and use tests.

By engaging the services of CBS Laboratories, we are ensuring that a level of professional expertise second to none will be brought to bear on new audio products—which have themselves been growing steadily in excellence and technical sophistication.

REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Laboratories, Stamford, Connecticut, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., one of the nation's leading research organizations. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Manufacturers are not permitted to read reports in advance of publication, and no report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. All reports should be construed as applying to the specific samples tested; neither HIGH FIDELITY nor CBS Laboratories assumes responsibility for product performance or quality.



Ampex PR-10-4 Recorder

Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Speed accuracy, 7 1/2 ips 3 3/4 ips	0.33% fast, any line voltage 0.11% fast, any line voltage
Wow and flutter 7 1/2 ips, playback 7 1/2 ips, record/playback 3 3/4 ips, playback 3 3/4 ips, record/playback	0.03% & 0.05% respectively 0.03% & 0.07% respectively 0.08% & 0.09% respectively 0.08% & 0.11% respectively
Rewind time, 7-in., 1,200-ft. reel	1 min., 16 sec.
Fast-forward time, same reel	1 min., 10 sec.
NAB playback response, 7 1/2 ips (ref. Ampex test tape No. 31321-01) l ch r ch	+1.5, -2 dB, 50 Hz to 15 kHz +1, -2.5 dB, 50 Hz to 15 kHz
Record/playback response (with -10 VU recorded signal), 7 1/2 ips, l ch r ch 3 3/4 ips, l ch r ch	+1.25, -5 dB, 30 Hz to 15 kHz +1.75, -3 dB, 30 Hz to 15 kHz +2, -5 dB, 30 Hz to 8.5 kHz +2, -5 dB, 30 Hz to 8.5 kHz
S/N ratio (ref 0 VU, test tape) playback record/playback	l ch: 59 dB; r ch: 60 dB l ch: 51 dB; r ch: 51 dB
Sensitivity (for 0 VU recording level), line input	l ch: 91 mV; r ch: 82 mV
Nominal output level with 0 VU signal	1.2 V; may be adjusted for higher outputs
THD, record/playback (-10 VU recorded signal) 7 1/2 ips, l ch r ch 3 3/4 ips, l ch r ch	under 2.4%, 50 Hz to above 10 kHz under 3%, 50 Hz to above 10 kHz under 3%, 50 Hz to 10 kHz under 3%, 50 Hz to 9 kHz
IM distortion, record/playback 7 1/2 ips, -10 VU level 3 3/4 ips, -10 VU level	l ch: 3%; r ch: 2.8% l ch: 3.5%; r ch: 4%
Recording level for max 1% THD	0 VU
Accuracy, built-in meters	each reads 0.2 dB high

adjustments normally found on professional recorders and used to keep the machine at peak performance. These include, separately on each channel, fine adjustments for equalization for both speeds, reproduce (playback) level, recording calibration, and recording bias in conjunction with a set of meter jacks for reading bias voltage. By using additional equipment, such as an Ampex test tape and a VTVM, these controls can also be used for head alignment, and for checks of frequency response and signal-to-noise ratio. Detailed instructions and a calibrated scale referring to the machine's VU meters are included in the owner's manual (an enormous volume of over 100 pages and dozens of fold-out charts and diagrams). Actually, these adjustments can be ignored for the most part by the average user. They are pre-set at the factory, and in our tests proved to yield optimum performance in the as-received condition.

Signal connections are made at the rear of the machine. These include stereo line inputs and outputs, made by heavy-duty lock-in connectors (supplied). There also is a special connection for a remote control unit, also available as an accessory. The line cord, a fuse-holder, and a convenience AC outlet are found at the rear.

As shown on the accompanying graphs, based on data obtained in tests at CBS Laboratories, the response and distortion characteristics of the PR-10-4 are about as smooth and low respectively as one could wish for in any tape recorder. The measurements, and subsequent use tests, indicate the unit's eminent suitability for accurate playback of commercially made (prerecorded) tapes and for rendering near-perfect copies of any program fed into it. The unit's electronic characteristics are such that it takes a relatively small input signal to reach recording levels which themselves furnish adequate voltage, with very low noise and distortion, to drive any external amplifiers. The built-in VU meters are accurately calibrated to within 0.2 dB and are sensitive enough to respond to fairly weak input levels. It is possible, incidentally, to drive the PR-10 preamps with a high-output microphone connected directly into a line input, but for best results with a machine of this caliber one would logically turn to low-output mikes which then would require using either the accessory mixer or plug-in preamps, available as accessories.

For other recording, such as from a tuner or audio system preamp, connections are made directly into the PR-10's line inputs.

The splendid electronics of the PR-10 are complemented by one of the most silent, responsive, and smooth-running transports we've yet had the pleasure to use. Wow and flutter, at both speeds, were very low and utterly insignificant in listening terms. The push buttons make operation fairly simple, yet are so arranged, in conjunction with other controls, as to make it virtually impossible to accidentally erase a recorded tape. For editing and cuing, a special arrangement permits the user to hold down a combination of buttons which reduces tape speed and which may be alternated to change tape direction.

To say that the PR-10-4 is one of the best tape recorders yet offered to the consumer market would be stating the obvious. Don't look to it for built-in echo effects, sound-on-sound, or slide synchronization (these all require additional accessories). However, for the serious tape hobbyist, or the professional seeking a compact but precision setup, the PR-10-4 shapes up as a second-to-none audio product.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

DYNACO PAS-3X PREAMPLIFIER

THE EQUIPMENT: Dynaco PAS-3X, a stereo preamplifier-control unit. Dimensions: 13 $\frac{1}{8}$ by 4 by 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep (including knobs and connectors). Price: in kit form, \$69.95; factory-wired, \$109.95. Manufacturer: Dynaco Inc., 3912 Powelton Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

COMMENT: The PAS-3X is a preamp-control designed for use with a separate basic amplifier. It is, essentially, a modified version of the Dyna preamp that was introduced some years ago (see HIGH FIDELITY, May 1960) and which has been very popular among kit builders and/or those who prefer the two-piece type of amplifier.

The change in the new version has to do with the tone controls (on which Dyna patents are pending): they are the continuously rotating type, yet when in the flat position, their phase- and frequency-discriminating elements are removed from the circuit. Thus, they offer the convenience and the infinite resolution

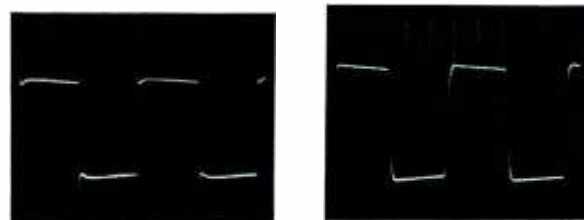
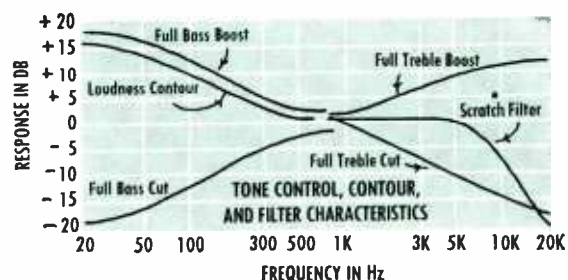
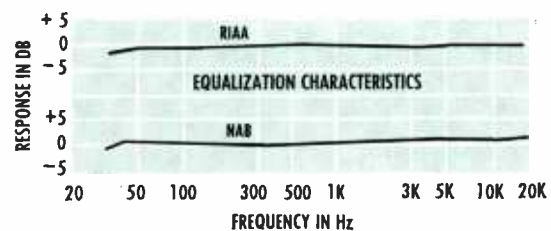


capability of continuous controls, while boasting the advantage of switch-type or stepped controls (often found on costlier or on professional equipment) which are electrically out of the circuit at their mid-rotation positions. The effect of this removal is to render the preamp much less critical of load termination and thus to enable it to be matched efficiently to virtually any amplifier input. It also lowers the output impedance so that connecting cables to the basic amplifier can be quite long without incurring loss of signal. Finally, this new configuration is credited with a general lowering of (the already low) distortion in the preamp, especially in the bass region.

The front panel of the PAS-3X contains eight knobs and four slide switches. There is a program selector, a volume control, a stereo/mono control, a channel balance control, separate treble and bass tone controls for each channel, a tape monitor switch, a loudness contour switch, a scratch filter, and the power off/on switch. The stereo/mono knob has six positions, including three that offer varying degrees of stereo separation (and so serve as a channel blend control), as well as an A-plus-B position (for playing monophonic records with a stereo cartridge), and positions that feed either channel A or B inputs through both speakers at once.

The rear of the preamp contains seven pairs of stereo input jacks and two pairs of output jacks. Low-level inputs include magnetic phono and tape head and a special pair for an additional phono cartridge, microphone, or tape head—the owner may use these jacks at his own option, depending on how he wires them (as supplied they provide correct equalization for most 78-rpm discs). The high-level inputs accept signals from tuners, tape playback preamplifiers, and similar program sources. There is also a pair of jacks for feeding a tape recorder, and of course the pair for connecting to the basic amplifier. Four AC outlets are provided; two are switched, two are unswitched.

The circuit of the PAS-3X employs four twin-triode amplifying tubes, a rectifier tube, and a full-wave selenium rectifier. The amplifying and control stages all use the same tube type, a 12AX7, so only one tube need be kept on hand for replacement in any stage,



Square-wave response to 50 Hz, left, and to 10 kHz.

should it be needed. The high-voltage rectifier is a 12X4. The selenium rectifier is used to supply DC voltage for the tube filaments, a practice in tube designs that reduces the chance of hum. Most of the circuitry is laid out on two printed circuit boards.

In tests run at CBS Laboratories, the Dynaco PAS-3X shaped up as a first-class performer. At its rated output of 2 volts (more than enough to drive any known basic amplifier), IM distortion was literally nonmeasurable, and harmonic distortion was a mere 0.3 per cent. Signal-to-noise figures were among the lowest we've seen, and sensitivity on all inputs was well suited for any of today's program sources. The curves for frequency response, RIAA (disc) equalization, and NAB (tape head) equalization turned out to be extremely linear. Frequency response, in fact, could virtually be drawn with a ruler across the audio band; it obviously extends well beyond the normal 20-Hz to 20,000-Hz limits. Square-wave response, to both high and low frequencies, was exemplary: very flat tops and scarcely any tilt, indicating solid bass and clean highs with fine transient characteristics. The scratch or high-frequency noise filter in the PAS-3X has an excellent response characteristic for its intended purpose.

In use, the PAS-3X leaves little to be desired. It is not the fanciest, or most de luxe type of equipment, but its performance—transparent, responsive, and versatile—is of an order that could recommend it to the aficionado—especially so in view of its relatively low cost.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Dynaco PAS-3X Preamp

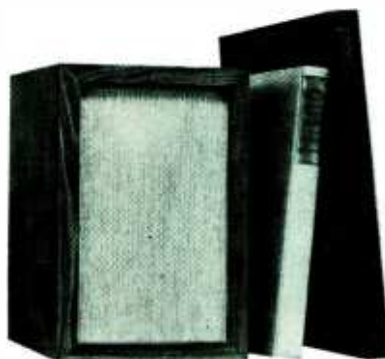
Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement	
Maximum output level	in excess of 10 V, either ch	
IM distortion for rated output (2 V)	too low to measure accurately 0.4% for 4 volts output	
Harmonic distortion	under 0.3%	
Frequency response	+0.25, -0.5 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
RIAA characteristic	+0, -1.25 dB, 30 Hz to 15 kHz	
NAB characteristic	+1.5, -1 dB, 30 Hz to 15 kHz	
Input characteristics	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
mag phono; special	1.4 mV	86 dB
tape head	2.8 mV	80 dB
all high level (incl. monitor)	170 mV	76 dB

AUDIO DYNAMICS ADC 404 SPEAKER SYSTEM

THE EQUIPMENT: ADC 404, a compact speaker system in integral enclosure. Dimensions: 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ by 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ by 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Price: \$56. Manufacturer: Audio Dynamics Corp., Pickett District Rd., New Milford, Conn. 06776.

COMMENT: We are by now accustomed to surprises in the form of small speaker systems that sound better than mere size would suggest, yet something



like the new ADC 404 still has the power to impress us. Not much larger than a few ordinary books, it puts out an astonishing amount of clean, wide-range, well-balanced sound.

The 404 consists of a 6-inch woofer crossed over via a network to a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch dome tweeter. Both speaker units and the network are housed in a sealed cabinet, the interior of which is stuffed with sound-absorbent material. The system thus functions as a tiny air suspension, direct radiator. The woofer is of high compliance, with a loosely suspended, heavy cone driven by a large ceramic magnet. The tweeter is ADC's best, the same as used in its more expensive systems. In keeping with ADC's speaker design philosophy, the network provides a very gradual crossover with considerable overlap on both sides of its nominal dividing frequency of 1 kHz.

The enclosure is solidly built, finished in oiled walnut, and faced with a neutral-tint grille. It may be positioned vertically or horizontally. Input impedance is 8 ohms; efficiency is moderate and the ADC 404 can be driven by just about any size or type of amplifier.

The response of the ADC 404 was, for a system of its size and cost, quite remarkable. At the low end, the bass held up firmly and cleanly to just below 60 Hz, with some doubling apparent at about 56 Hz. By reducing the power fed to the speaker, doubling could be forestalled down to about 50 Hz, and so at normal listening levels (with the speaker installed in, say, an average-size room), its useful bass output could be estimated to extend to just below 50 Hz. At the high end, a very gentle slope seemed to start above 11 kHz, increasing slightly above 13 kHz and extending to beyond audibility. The range between these extremes was smooth and uniform with only the few minor peaks and dips apparent in most speaker systems.

Midrange and highs have a fair degree of spread, and directional effects increase very gradually as you go up the scale. However, from about 5 to 10 kHz there seems virtually no lessening of the spread. A 10-kHz tone can be heard loud and clear well off axis of the speaker, and it is not until 12 kHz that any real beaming becomes apparent. White noise response is somewhat on the bright side, with a tendency to hardness on axis; it is smoother off axis or back a few feet from the system.

A single ADC 404, on program material, sounds fairly tight, well-defined, and somewhat close-up. A pair, handling monophonic material, begins to impart a greater sense of air and space to the sonic presentation, and this "opening up" is more pronounced on stereo. The effect, then, of a pair of ADC 404s is to provide a sonic output that is much bigger-sounding than one would suspect could emanate from systems of such small dimensions. We would say indeed that for best results these speaker systems should definitely be used in pairs (even for a mono playback system), and in fact they

are sold just that way, even to being packaged in a common carton with a carrying handle—a sort of audio twin-pack. That there are grander-sounding speaker systems goes without saying; but we have yet to hear one in this size and price class that sounds better. The ADC 404s seem very well suited for a modest installation in a small to average-size room, or as extension speakers for any system.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HEATHKIT AR-13A RECEIVER KIT

THE EQUIPMENT: Heathkit AR-13A, a stereo receiver (tuner and control amplifier on one chassis) in kit form. Dimensions: 17 by 5½ by 14¾ inches. Price: \$184 (includes walnut cabinet). Manufacturer: Heath Company, Benton Harbor, Mich. 49023.

COMMENT: The Heathkit AR-13A combines stereo and monophonic FM, AM, and twin-channel control amplifiers in one compact, stylish, popularly priced unit that is available only in kit form. Wiring and assembly take time (about 40 hours) but are not overly difficult, thanks to the clearly written and well-illustrated manual that comes with the kit.

The top portion of the front panel is divided between the FM and AM station dials, with a tuning meter centered between them, and a stereo indicator just under the FM scale. The main control knobs occupy the large center section of the panel. These include the AM tuning knob, a program selector, a stereo-mono and reverse-channel control, the volume control, bass and treble controls (the latter combined with the power off/on switch), and the FM tuning knob.

In addition to these controls there is a set of



secondary controls and adjustments, hidden behind a hinged cover that runs across the bottom portion of the panel. This array includes input level adjustments; channel balance control; speaker-phasing switch; FM-stereo circuit adjustments for balance, separation, and phase; interstation muting control; AFC switch; local/distant FM switch; and FM stereo filters. Normally, these secondary controls need be set only once, during installation. The total roster is quite impressive and exceeds what is normally found on sets in this price range. The only feature lacking is the facility for direct monitoring from a tape recorder which itself has separate record and playback heads. Tapes of course can be played from the recorder's own preamp by hookup to one of the auxiliary jacks on the AR-13A.

Inputs at the rear are provided for magnetic pickups and two auxiliary (high level) sources. Outputs include 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speaker taps, and tape recorder feed jacks for each channel. A switched and an unswitched AC outlet and a fuse-holder also are at the rear. The antenna FM terminals are the 300-ohm (twin-lead) type. The set employs a total of 46 transistors and 17 diodes. The stereo indicator light is part of the multiplex FM circuit and so if it should

Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement	
Tuner Section		
IHF sensitivity	3.5 μ V at 98 MHz; 3.25 μ V at 90 MHz; 3.6 μ V at 106 MHz	
Frequency response, mono	+2, -1 dB, 20 Hz to 17 kHz	
THD, mono	0.59% at 400 Hz; 0.75% at 40 Hz; 0.51% at 1 kHz	
Capture ratio	4.2	
S/N ratio	56 dB	
Frequency response, stereo, l ch r ch	+0.5, -5 dB, 20 Hz to 14 kHz same	
THD, stereo, l ch r ch	0.7% at 400 Hz; 0.9% at 40 Hz; 0.7% at 1 kHz 0.75% at 400 Hz; 0.95% at 40 Hz; 0.7% at 1 kHz	
Channel separation, either channel	better than 30 dB at mid-frequencies; better than 20 dB to 11 kHz	
19-kHz pilot suppression	-29 dB	
38-kHz subcarrier suppression	-36 dB	
Amplifier Section		
Power output (at 1 kHz into 8-ohm load)		
l ch at clipping	18 watts at 0.43% THD	
l ch at 0.7% THD	22.7 watts	
r ch at clipping	18 watts at 0.4% THD	
r ch at 0.7% THD	19.5 watts	
both chs simultaneously		
l ch at clipping	18 watts at 0.43% THD	
r ch at clipping	18 watts at 0.4% THD	
Power bandwidth for constant 0.7% THD	30 Hz to 19 kHz	
Harmonic distortion		
18 watts output	under 0.6%, 35 Hz to 10 kHz	
9 watts output	under 0.5%, 25 Hz to 20 kHz	
IM distortion		
8-ohm load	under 1.3%, 1 to 25.5 watts output	
16-ohm load	under 1%, 1 to 14.5 watts output	
Frequency response, 1-watt level	+2, -0 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
RIAA equalization	+1, -1.5 dB, 30 Hz to 15 kHz	
Damping factor	10	
Input characteristics	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono	6.6 mV	33 dB
aux 1	260 mV	72 dB
aux 2	260 mV	72 dB



Square-wave response to 50 Hz, left, and to 10 kHz.

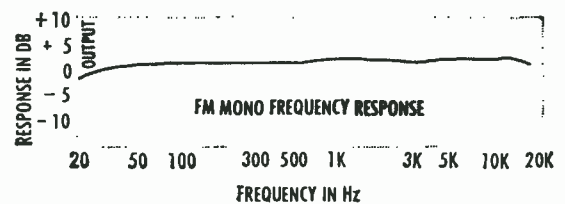
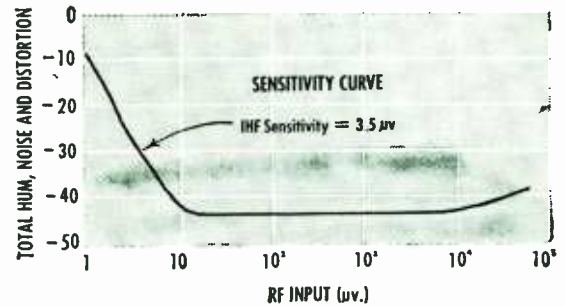
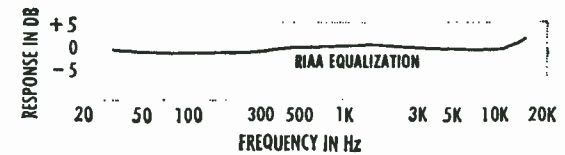
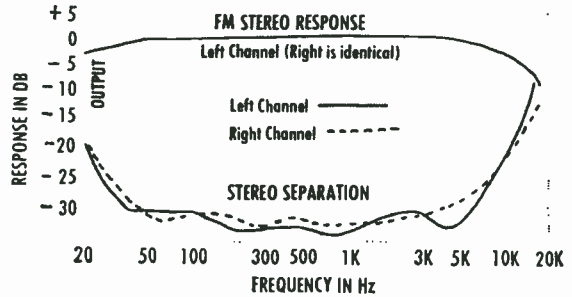
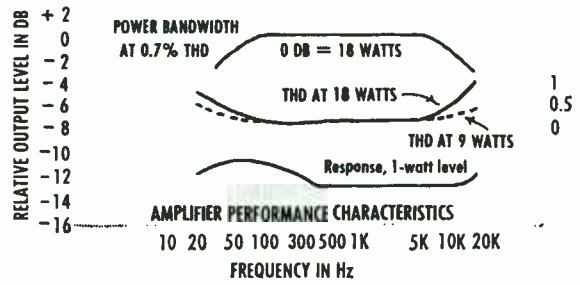
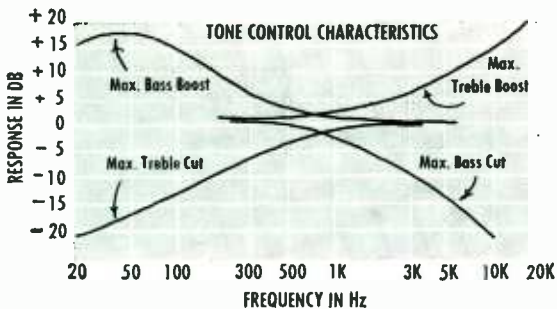
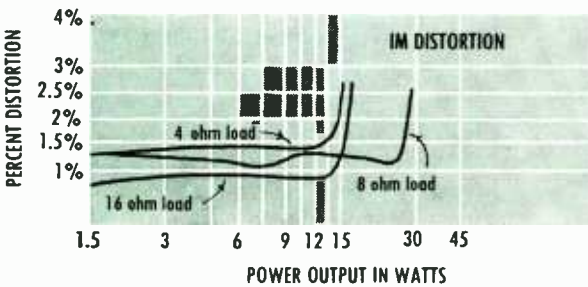
burn out, replacement is necessary for stereo FM.

Tests of a kit-built AR-13 "as is" (without additional alignment) at CBS Laboratories produced very satisfactory results. FM sensitivity was fairly high and uniform across the band. Response in monophonic mode exceeded published specifications; in stereo operation it just met them. Both channels were extremely well balanced. Separation also was within specifications, and well suited for normal FM/stereo broadcasts. Distortion was low; capture ratio and signal-to-noise figures were about average for this class of equipment. In all, fed with a good antenna, the AR-13A should provide clean reception of all but the weakest signals in just about any locale.

The amplifier section of the AR-13A is rated by Heath for 20 watts at 0.7% harmonic distortion. As the accompanying figures show, it came in very close to this rating on one channel and actually went better than that on the other channel. The significant thing in these figures is that there is no power decrease at the clipping level when both channels are driven simultaneously, which bespeaks a well-designed power supply as well as an honestly rated unit. The distortion level, incidentally, in our tests proved to be lower than the specified distortion. The power bandwidth for rated distortion just about covered the full audio band, which is a good mark for a low-priced combination set. Low-level frequency response varied by no more than a normal 2 decibels over the range. RIAA equalization was quite accurate; damping factor, at 10, was comfortably high. The IM distortion characteristics, for all three output impedances, were fairly linear for a budget-priced all-in-one. For an 8-ohm load (the most widely used) IM remained under 1.3 per cent to nearly 26 watts output. Square-wave response was in keeping with the set's design, indicating some rolloff at the very low end, but fairly good transient behavior at the high end.

The AR-13A, in sum, offers a good deal in a compact format. From the standpoint of performance, it represents a nice functional balance of characteristics. From the standpoint of control features it offers more than one would expect in a set in this price class. It is, in any case, an attractive project for the kit builder seeking a well-mannered tuner and control and power center for his home music system.

CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



REPORTS IN PROGRESS

Magnecord 1020 Tape Recorder

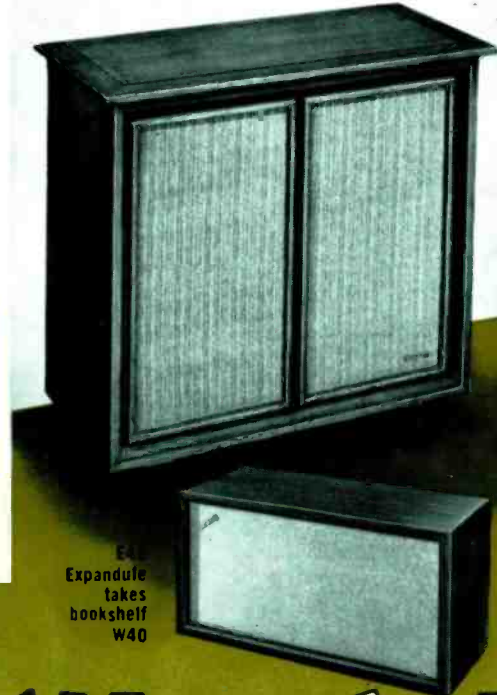
Thorens TD-124 Series II Turntable

Harman-Kardon SC-440

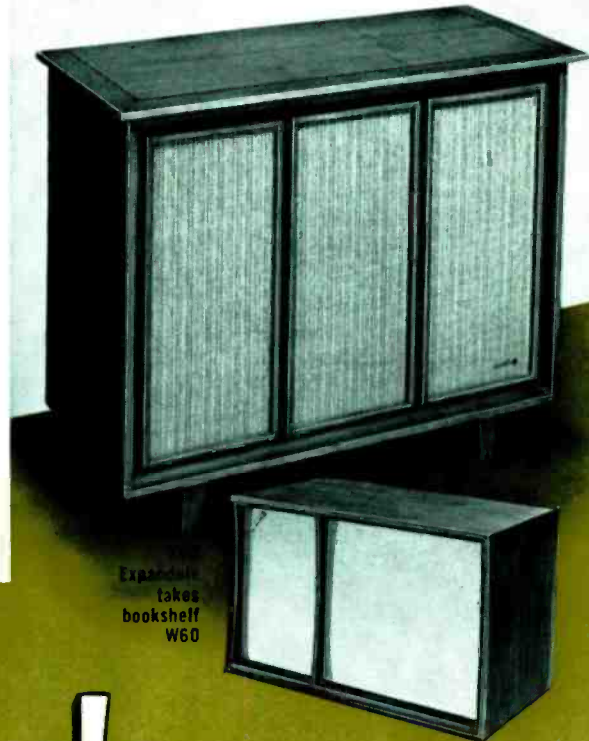
Modular System



E35
Expandule
takes
bookshelf
W30



E45
Expandule
takes
bookshelf
W40



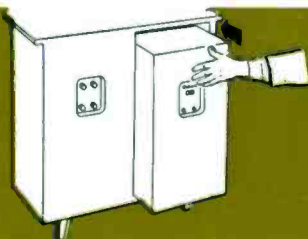
E65
Expandule
takes
bookshelf
W60

Wharfedale

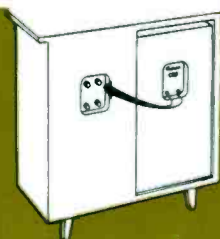
gives small speakers big futures with new, investment-guarding

E-X-P-A-N-D-U-L-E-S

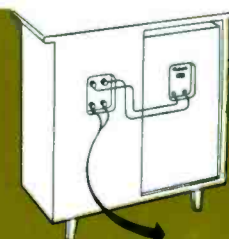
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convert your present
bookshelf speaker to
a full-size system
in three simple steps.



1. Slip bookshelf speaker into back of Expandule.



2. Connect leads from bookshelf speaker to Expandule.

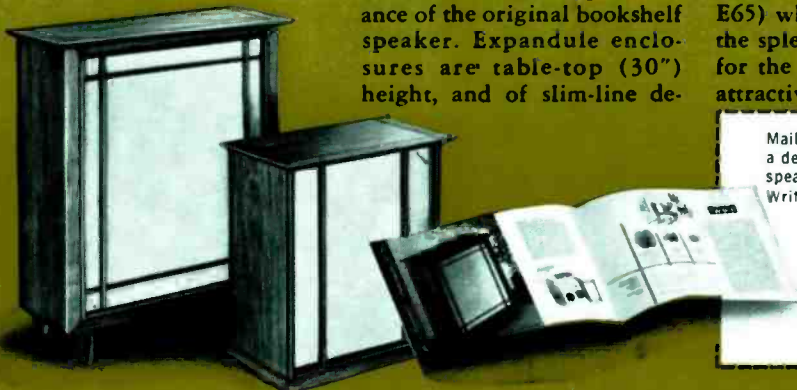


3. Connect leads from Expandule to amplifier.

Wharfedale's exclusive Expandules convert bookshelf speakers into magnificent-sounding floor models, preserving your investment when you are ready to improve upon the original speakers in your music system. Each Expandule contains a high-compliance, low-resonance woofer of appropriate size, plus the correct matching network to extend bass response and improve sound projection into the room... complementing the performance of the original bookshelf speaker. Expandule enclosures are table-top (30") height, and of slim-line de-

sign. Finished in oiled or polished walnut, they blend perfectly with present home-decorating trends. The handsome appointments and tasteful styling completely conceal the fact that the Expandule also contains the bookshelf speaker. Matching legs are optional.

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W90

W70

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If you think the
 "Little Russian" is a dwarf—
 it's time you heard
 a giant performance
 —by Previn

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 Tchaikovsky
SYMPHONY No. 2, "LITTLE RUSSIAN"
 Liadov
EIGHT RUSSIAN FOLK SONGS

Undeservedly dwarfed by some of Tchaikovsky's darker or more "tragic" works, the "Little Russian" Symphony, Tchaikovsky's Second, is no more "little" than Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony is about a planet. In strong hands it reveals its full splendor as one of the sunniest of Tchaikovsky's works. Under the baton of André Previn, conducting one of the world's great orchestras, the "Little Russian" is given a monumental reading, bustling with excitement and lyrical in its folk-like charm. Liadov's "Eight Russian Folk Songs" complete a fascinating program. Previn's understanding of the Russian idiom is equally evident in his powerful performance of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony, recently released on RCA Victor Red Seal. Both albums, in Dynagroove sound, were recorded in London's acoustically magnificent Walthamstow Town Hall.

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SHOSTAKOVICH: SYMPHONY NO. 5
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reviewed by NATHAN BRODER

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R. D. DARRELL

PETER G. DAVIS

SHIRLEY FLEMING

ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN



HARRIS GOLDSMITH

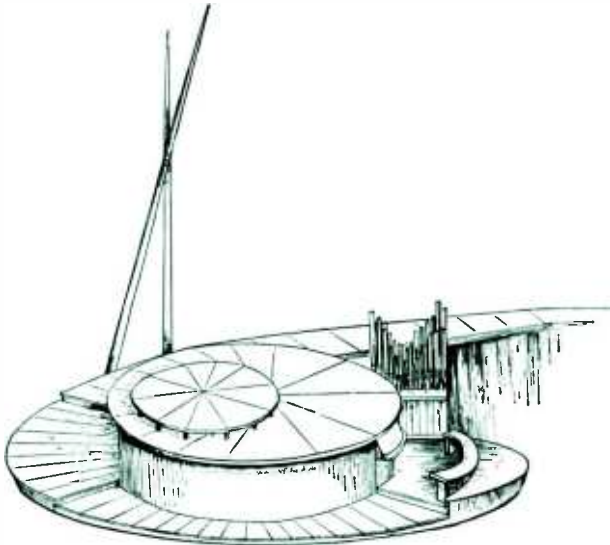
PHILIP HART

BERNARD JACOBSON

CONRAD L. OSBORNE

ERIC SALZMAN

JOHN S. WILSON



Drawing by Alix Stone of Colin Graham's stage set for *Curlew River*

Colin Graham's set for the original production.

by Alfred Frankenstein

Britten's Curlew River—“Burnished Bronze Solemnity”

BENJAMIN Britten's *Curlew River* may well be the most beautiful dramatic work he has written. Certainly it is the most distinctive in style, and its infinitely sad, Orient-colored pages haunt one's memory for many days after each hearing.

Described in the score as “a parable for church performance,” the work runs about seventy minutes, requires relatively small forces (although it is intensely rigorous in its demands upon them), and goes on where Britten left off in his other dramatic piece for churches, *Noye's Fludde*. Like that earlier opus, *Curlew River* was first performed (in 1964) at Orford Church, in Sussex, as part of Britten's annual Aldeburgh Festival. Its libretto, by William Plomer, is based on a fifteenth-century Japanese *No* play. Although the story has been Christianized and the work opens and closes with Gregorian chant, Japanese coloring is still very strong—in the music, in the libretto, and, to judge

from the directions for performance supplied with the score, in the recommended style of presentation as well.

The story is so simple as to seem simple-minded in synopsis, as is often the way with Oriental dramas. An abbot and his monks present a mystery play. It centers in a ferryboat that plies back and forth across the Curlew River. The Ferryman announces that on this day many people will need his boat to go to pray at a miraculous grave dug just a year before. First aboard is a Traveller, who has come a long and weary way. Next is a Madwoman, who goes everywhere looking forlornly for her lost child. As the boat crosses the river, the Ferryman tells the Madwoman how a barbarian had come to those parts with a twelve-year-old boy he had stolen, how the boy had died of abuse and been buried there, and how the people near the river regard the boy as a saint and seek healing at his tomb. The Madwoman knows that she has found her son at last. She begs that the tomb be opened, and the boy's voice is heard, re-

assuring his mother that they will meet again in heaven. At the end, the three actors resume their monks' habits and join their brethren in singing the final plingsong.

There is more to it than just that. Each principal character has a somewhat discursively poetic passage of self-introduction, there is much choral commentary on the action, and much of the music's most important business is taken up with these matters, which have no direct bearing on the plot.

In general, the score has the burnished bronze solemnity of Gagaku, the ancient ceremonial court music of Japan. The three actors wear masks and perform on a circular stage derived from that of the *No* theatre. Each gesture, according to the directions, must be heavily stylized: so it is also with the music. The vocal lines for the soloists are in a supple *arioso* style recalling the Monteverdi of Orpheus' lament. The choral parts are more obviously tuneful, and the contrast between the two is extremely effective. The score calls only for seven instru-

Illustration above reprinted by permission of G. Schirmer Inc., sole agent for Faber Music Ltd., London. Drawing by Alix Stone.

mental soloists, playing flute and piccolo, horn, viola, double bass, harp, percussion, and a chamber organ. The percussion used is a set of four small drums of different approximate pitches and, at the point at which the spirit of the dead boy speaks, those marvelous little bells that scintillate throughout *The Play of Daniel*.

In this work Britten achieves a unique, unprecedented relationship between the instruments and the voices. Each of the instrumentalists is a virtuoso playing at the top of his bent. For long stretches little is to be heard below the voices but smoky, convoluted flourishes rather roughly played on the horn; elsewhere there are extended passages of strange, slightly dizzying glissandi on the double bass; later the flute mocks the Madwoman (but not at all in the manner of *Lucia di Lammermoor*), and so on. The entire orchestral score is open in texture and brilliantly soloistic. The chamber organ plays sustained, dissonant chords in a high, luminous registration; in other words, this instrument is made to sound as much as possible like the small Japanese reed organ called the Sho which plays so important a role in Gagaku. The constant use of the drums underlines the Japanese analogy. Very Japanese also is the frequent use of the instruments in octaves that do not precisely coincide on the beat but may be an eighth or a sixteenth apart.

The metrics of *Curlew River* are quite remarkable. For page upon page the solo voices and the instruments have no bar lines at all; they are told to play and sing freely and not worry too much about coming together except at certain phrase or period endings. At other times a different meter will be employed in each line of the score. Rhythmically speaking, the work is nearly as untrammelled and nearly as complicated as if it had been written by Charles Ives. The purpose of this texture is to permit the music to breathe, and to clash and then to clarify in a manner that has strong Oriental analogies.

One of the major reasons for writing the work as a mystery play performed by monks is, one suspects, that it made it possible for the role of the Madwoman to be sung by Peter Pears. The strange colors and eerie, almost unhuman but heart-rending sounds Pears can produce are wonderfully effective in the Madwoman's music, but his associates of the cast are equally brilliant. The recording is superb.

BRITTEN: *Curlew River*

Bruce Webb (boy soprano), Spirit of the Boy; Peter Pears (t), Madwoman; John Shirley-Quirk (b), Ferryman; Bryan Drake (b), Traveller; Harold Blackburn (bs), Abbot; Richard Adeney, flute; Neill Saunders, horn; Cecil Aronowitz, viola; Stuart Knussen, double bass; Osian Ellis, harp; James Blades, percussion; Philip Ledger, organ; Benjamin Britten and Viola Tunnard, musical directors.

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Conductor Bernstein.



Conductor Gould.

New Stereo Discs for a Further Look At Ivesian Questions and Answers

by Eric Salzman

CRITICS ARE ALWAYS COMPLAINING about the absence of this or that piece from the catalogue, but the long neglect of the *Ives Unanswered Question* really has been a national disgrace. Now here is the *Question* posed twice for us, along with some other Ivesian questions and answers: a first recording of the First Symphony and useful new recordings of the Third, of *Central Park in the Dark*, and of *Decoration Day*.

At this point the most notable thing we can say about Ives—with his one-hundredth birthday not so many years away—is that we're learning, we're learning. We're learning, I hope, to stop looking at Ives as the Grandma Moses of music, as a crude if inspired primitive, snowbound in a Thoreau-ian New England wilderness and producing raw, rugged, original music in utter isolation. Ives was, in fact, born in a middle-sized Connecticut manufacturing town which was even something of an intellectual center. His musical education began under his father, a Civil War bandmaster and a musician of thorough training and considerable originality, and was continued at Yale under Horatio Parker, a leading light of the day. Later, Ives played the organ professionally, was a member of various theatre orchestras, and did band and theatre arranging. Throughout most of his adult life he resided principally in New York City, where he was one of the heads of a very successful insurance firm. Ives started composing at an early age—the original of the organ piece *America*, here played in an orchestration by William Schuman, dates from his teens—and he left off in his forties, devoting most of the rest of his life to arranging and ordering his music in something like performable shape.

Most of these facts about Ives are not unknown, but in view of the popular Ives mythology they are perhaps worth repeating. Especially we need reminding

that the composer was perfectly conversant with the traditions of Western tonality—not only the New England traditions of hymn tunes and popular music but also the Central European classical symphonic-contrapuntal tradition. He chose to stand apart from that tradition but he used it—taking what he needed, rejecting at will. What he envisioned was a new totality of experience in which tradition formed a significant, if varyingly significant, role.

The case for Ives's mastery of tradition receives its most obvious support from the First Symphony. It is, if you like, a student work, written under the guidance of Horatio Parker in the Dvořák manner: Dvořák was at the time the approved high-style model in American music. Parker is said to have made Ives rewrite the first movement (he disapproved of the free modulations in the original), transpose the second from G flat to F (closer to the home key of D), and substitute a new "formal" coda to the last movement (Ives said that he insisted on the superiority of his original ending but the fancy and rather bombastic Tchaikovskyan coda that now stands is surely the Parker-inspired version). In spite of its derivativeness, this is really a work of great charm and of a good deal of coherence and even individuality. The first movement, with its simple accompaniment figure and motto motif, suggests Bruckner; the way the first theme flickers for a moment into a B minor area is a perfectly original stroke and this is neatly reinforced by the way the subsidiary theme constantly suggests B before turning to the classical and expected F; the movement, although a little dull rhythmically, is worked out with complete ease and assurance. The point of reference in the second movement and in the following Scherzo is obviously Dvořák, but both sections are certainly skillful and the hesitant, ardent trio of the Scherzo is an invention of real

character. The busy, exultant last finale, although not entirely successful in its length, is in many ways the most individual of all. Even taking into account the rather amusingly frantic coda, it has tremendous drive and continuity; ideas like the 3/4 bar that interrupts the 4/4 flow and the marvelously restless, romantic second subject are real felicities. It is hard to understand why Ives was not immediately recognized as the freshest, ablest, and most remarkable talent of his day.

The Third Symphony originated in the series of organ pieces that Ives wrote or improvised around the turn of the century when he was organist of New York's Central Presbyterian Church. The work is subtitled "The Camp Meeting," and Early High Camp it certainly is. Its movements are called "Old Folks Gathering," "Children's Day," and "Communion," and it has its Ivesian quota of old hymn tunes. Camp or no, we are faintly embarrassed by all this, put off by the utter simplicity and directness. But this disarming triadic music is the piece that Mahler saw and wanted to perform (alas, he died too soon), and it is a profoundly original work in its way. Mahler could perfectly well understand what Ives was trying to do. Mahler was standing inside the tradition and carrying its implications out to their farthest extension; Ives operates from the outside (a spiritual distance of more than 3,000 miles) and everything is simplified and condensed—but the parallels are nonetheless significant. Ives uses only strings, two horns, trombone, and four solo winds; at the end there are off-stage bells—what would have been a huge apotheosis in Mahler is in Ives just a tentative suggestion in the score. Nothing is really developed in the usual sense but each idea is extended melodically and connected with the others in a remarkable continuity. The shifting, restless, constant reaching outwards towards some new, higher, elusive goal imparts a remarkable sense of motion and aspiration; typically, there is never any real resolution, never any sense of arrival, but simply constant striving which eventually shades off into a kind of tranquility.

Perhaps the most characteristic and striking achievement of Ives comes in what we might dub his characteristic short, empirical form. In these pieces we find Ives the revolutionary as well as Ives the traditionalist. Here are generally juxtaposed different kinds of music—often in free, simultaneous layers—in a way that proposes clear analogies to actual experience.

The most famous of the short works is *The Unanswered Question*: the distant, beautifully laid out string chorale always revolving imperturbably on its own spatial, harmonic, and dynamic axis; the disturbing question itself, constantly iterated by the persistent trumpet; and the independent, querulous flutes who, in a series of interjections that constantly increase in speed and anxiety, wretchedly tangle, babble, and squabble. Eventually, the trumpet simply repeats its question, and the strings—always impassive, exquisite, and distant—simply continue turning on their paths out to infinity.

Central Park in the Dark is based on a very similar idea, this one a little more pictorial perhaps and not quite as cosmic, but almost equally effective. Here again are the strings, set endlessly on their course—this time in close, mysterious, dissonant harmonies full of a curious sense of both calm and anxiety; against this, distant woodwind sounds can just barely be made out: then there is a far-off piano, a ragtime clarinet, a hot trombone and trumpet; a wild ragtime music gathers tremendous velocity and strength until it splits the ears and then suddenly, like a vision, a hallucination, it is gone; the strings carry on out to infinity. Things that go bump in the night? If you like. Another image of fleeting human existence? If you like. It does somehow add up to a rather remarkable musical experience.

Decoration Day, one of the series of pieces grouped together as the *Holidays Symphony* (they can be played together or separately), is an explicitly literal evocation: a meditative opening eight pages mainly for strings but with fragments and echoes in the winds—linear, intense, dissonant, it constitutes one of the most moving and exquisite passages in all of Ives. After a slight pause the tempo increases and the fragments of familiar melodies—already present in the opening section—begin to take on life and clear profile. Now a remarkable series of acoustical effects begins: an ostinato of bells, little clusters in the strings, acoustical reinforcements in the

winds. After this, a hymn takes shape, "taps" rings out. Then, around the endless bells (now linked with a string tremolo and a continuation of "taps") an agitated figure begins, quickly bursting forth into the all-time spine-tingling, heart-throbbing, pulse-beating, goose-pimpling, banners-flying, crowds-cheering quickstep march of all time. Suddenly, in an incredible flash, all this is gone; only a distant echo of the old melody is left—a tiny string cadence, an echo of bells, then nothing.

It is useless to pretend that these discs, both reviewed from test pressings, are definitive recordings and performances: they are not. Morton Gould begins his record with the William Schuman orchestration of *America*, an amusing and somewhat blasphemous work set forth in a clever and rather confectionary arrangement. The performance of the First Symphony that follows will do (for the time being it will have to do) although, in all candor, it would not pass muster if the subject were Schubert or Mendelssohn or Bruckner. Gould's performance of *The Unanswered Question* is slow (seven minutes to Bernstein's five). About the Columbia set too I have reservations. The concert performance of the Third Symphony by Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic last fall lingers more favorably in the memory than does this recorded version made at the time. *The Unanswered Question*, taped in 1964, *Decoration Day*, recorded the previous year, and *Central Park in the Dark*, conducted by Seiji Ozawa and Maurice Peress in 1962 when they were both assistant conductors at the Philharmonic (all three pieces presumably recorded at Manhattan Center), fare far better. The sense of space (probably artificially achieved) is part of the message and, although the sound from one piece to the next is inconsistent—for instance, I would have preferred maximum clarity and brilliance in the chaotic quickstep—the recordings and performances come off at least to a degree.

In general, let's give thanks and overlook the fact that Ives still has to undergo a measure of carelessness that would never be permitted in Brahms. The recordings are fair, the performances are serviceable, and Ives's second hundred years will surely be better.

IVES: *Variations on "America"* (arr. Schuman); *Symphony No. 1, in D minor*; *The Unanswered Question*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Morton Gould, cond.

- RCA VICTOR LM 2893. LP. \$4.79.
- • RCA VICTOR LSC 2893. SD. \$5.79.

IVES: *Symphony No. 3 ("The Camp Meeting")*; *Central Park in the Dark*; *Decoration Day*; *The Unanswered Question*

New York Philharmonic, Seiji Ozawa and Maurice Peress, assistant conds. (in *Central Park in the Dark*); Leonard Bernstein, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 6243. LP. \$4.79.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6843. SD. \$5.79.

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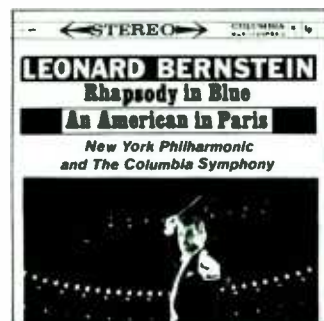
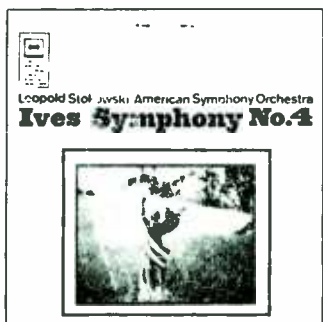
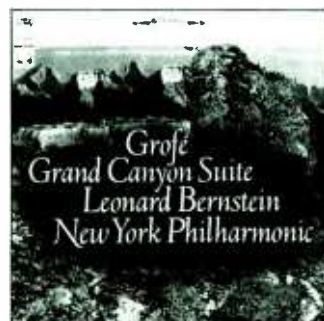
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BACH: *Cantata No. 170, Vergnügte Rub'*

†Scarlatti, Domenico: *Salve Regina*

Maureen Forrester, contralto; Wiener Solisten, Anton Heiller, cond.

• BACH GUILD BG 683. LP. \$4.79.

• • BACH GUILD BGS 70683. SD. \$5.79.

It has been almost a decade since a new recording of Cantata 170 has come our way, but this one was worth waiting for. Miss Forrester's rich, bright-edged contralto, employed with taste and feeling, is a joy to listen to, and here it has some lovely music to deal with. Two of the three arias are very fine. The second of these is one of the rare instances when Bach abandons the continuo for an entire movement; here he gets a special color by giving the violins (with violas) the lowest line. The elaborate organ part is well played by either Anton or Erna Heiller (it is not clear which). Except for a moment or two in this aria when voice and organ are not together, the performance seems entirely satisfactory.

Of special interest is the *Salve Regina*, for voice and strings, which according to Kirkpatrick may be Scarlatti's last composition. It is a beautiful work. The first section is broad and melodious, the second changes abruptly in mood and character from phrase to phrase according to the text. The third ("*O clemens, o pia*") is especially expressive, and the work is rounded off by a joyful "Amen." We are reminded throughout that Domenico wrote a number of operas, in addition to all those harpsichord pieces. Miss Forrester is equally effective in the long sustained lines of the beginning, the dramatic contrasts of the "*Ad te clamamus*," and the cheerful figurations of the "Amen." Excellent sound in both versions. N.B.

BACH: *St. John Passion, S. 245*

Agnes Giebel, soprano; Wilhelmine Matthes, contralto; Richard Lewis, tenor; Heinz Rehfuss, bass; Bach Chorus; Orchestra of the Amsterdam Philharmonic Society, André Vandernoot, cond.

• NONESUCH HC 3004. Three LP. \$7.50.

• • NONESUCH HC 73004. Three SD. \$7.50.

This, one of the least expensive of the stereo *St. Johns*, is by no means the least in quality. It can boast several excellent elements. One is the Evangelist of Richard Lewis. His singing of that role, and of the tenor arias, is solid,

well focused, attractive in tone, and varied in color. He has no difficulty spinning out in one breath the long, chromatic melismas describing Peter's weeping for his denial of Jesus. Although Heinz Rehfuss does not, it seems to me, recapture the moving sweetness of his portrayal of Jesus in the old Scherchen *St. Matthew*, his voice is still very appealing and he sings the bass arias effectively. Miss Matthes reveals an alto that is dark, steady, on pitch. In "*Es ist vollbracht*" she strikes the right mood and color. What keeps this from being a first-class performance of the aria, in my opinion, is a lack of bravura in the middle section and a routine performance of the obbligato gamba part. Miss Giebel is in good form in both of her arias, the tendency of her voice to grow white above the staff being more evident in "*Zerfließe mein Herze*" than in her earlier solo. The unnamed singer who does Pilate is good too.

But now we come to the less attractive aspects of the set. The chorus, which sounds large, is for once heavily weighted on bottom. Tenors and basses come forward with clarity when they should, but the sopranos are seldom on an equal footing with the men and the altos never. Vandernoot's tempos are usually plausible, but he does all of the crowd's utterances in the same stiff, bouncy rhythm, a rhythm that conveys little of the acrid feeling immanent in the music. Finally, the realization and recording of the continuo seem unsatisfactory. Jesus is accompanied by the organ and everyone else by a harpsichord, which is all right in principle, no doubt, but in ariosos and arias where the harpsichord is needed it can be heard only faintly or not at all. Moreover the solo cello that sustains the bass notes in recitative is too close to the microphone and demands more attention than it needs. There is still room in the domestic catalogues for a *St. John* that is strong in every division, but until one appears, the present set deserves as much consideration as most of the others available. N.B.

BACH FAMILY: *Chamber Music*

C. P. E. Bach: *Trio Sonata in D*. W. F. Bach: *Trio Sonata in A minor* (a fragment). J. S. Bach: *Trio Sonata in G*. J. C. Bach: *Quintet in D*.

Ars Rediviva Ensemble (Prague).

• PARLIAMENT PLP 619. LP. \$1.98.

• • PARLIAMENT PLPS 619. SD. \$2.98.

A good spectrum of the Bach family talents is spread before us here, ranging from the highly contrapuntal church sonata of Sebastian to the songful, social quintet of his most songful, social son, John Christian. The latter's work strikes me as particularly interesting because we hear relatively little of it. The present Quintet has two notable features: a lovely, romantic aria in the second movement (mostly for flute, with the viola following up), and several concertante passages for the harpsichord, here no

longer a bass drudge but showing decidedly debutantish possibilities. Somewhere in between the pieces of Johann Sebastian and John Christian falls the Trio Sonata of Carl Philipp, showing his usual capacity for setting an easy-breathing lyric theme into a fairly contrapuntal texture. The finale contains some fast footwork for flute and oboe, along with some telling comments from the continuo. Wilhelm Friedemann, altogether denser in texture than C.P.E., leaves me—as usual, I'm afraid—without much to say. He does well what he sets out to do, which usually seems to be to imitate Papa. Performances are occasionally a bit pedantic (the slow movements tend to sound sluggish because of inflexible phrasing), but the fast movements travel at a convincing clip. S.F.

BEESON: *Symphony No. 1, in A*—
See Ives: *Robert Browning Overture*.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in C, Op. 15; Bagatelles, Op. 119 (11)*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 6238. LP. \$4.79.

• • COLUMBIA MS 6838. SD. \$5.79.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in B flat, Op. 19*

†Mozart: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 27, in B flat, K. 595*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 6239. LP. \$4.79.

• • COLUMBIA MS 6839. SD. \$5.79.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in C, Op. 15; Fantasia for Piano, Chorus, and Orchestra, in C minor, Op. 80*

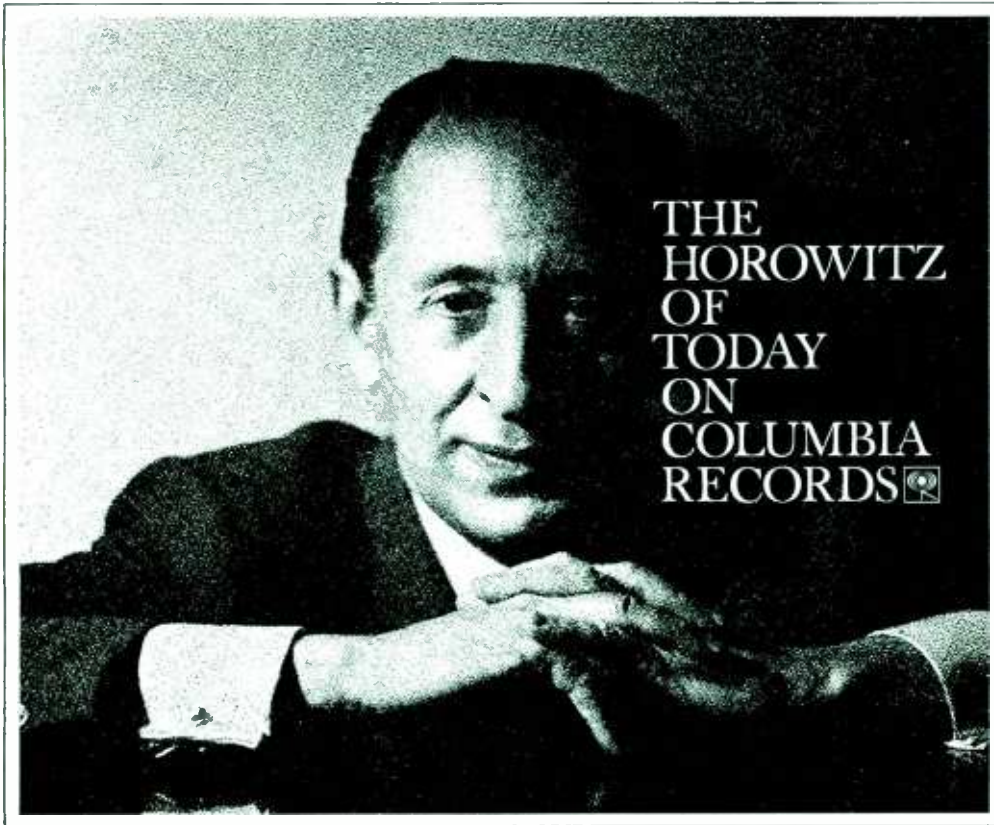
Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Chorus (in the Fantasy) and Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond.

• LONDON CM 9451. LP. \$4.79.

• • LONDON CS 6451. SD. \$5.79.

With these concurrent releases, two more recorded cycles of the five Beethoven piano concertos reach completion. In addition to the separately available Serkin discs listed above, his edition (which divides orchestral honors between Ormandy's Philadelphians and Bernstein's New Yorkers) is newly issued—without the Op. 119 *Bagatelles* and Mozart K. 595 but with the *Choral Fantasy*—in an economically priced four-disc set (D4L 340 or D4S 740).

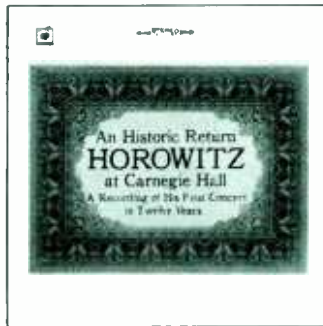
Outstanding here is the new Serkin/Ormandy version of No. 1, which I recommend in its single-disc form because of its inclusion of the fine performance of the Op. 119. Serkin gives a magisterial, Promethean account of the early work, characterized by all sorts of slightly novel insights and rephrasings which add impressive individ-



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uality to his reading. As on his earlier 1953 disc (also with Ormandy), he opts for the tornadolike Beethoven cadenza No. 3 in the first movement, and adds a completely convincing preface to the shorter third-movement one (also by the composer). His tempos seem less breathless than of old, unless memory fails me. Ormandy's boldly accentuated, thoroughly vigorous framework is magnificently alive. If the Philadelphia brass are, as always with this conductor, urged to play a shade timorously, the timpani and strings have more than usual gusto. Furthermore, the sonority, as reproduced in resplendent stereo, is convincingly solid, with the firm chording of the woodwinds especially impressive and Beethovenian. In every way then, this is an edition to rate with the militant Fleisher/Szell (Epic), the biting and headlong Gould/Golschmann (Columbia), and the divergently lyrical essays with this music by Schnabel (Angel COLH), Kempff/Leitner (DGG), and Arrau/Haitink (Philips). With the profoundly searching integral set of the great Op. 119 *Bagatelles* as a very substantial makeweight, Serkin/Ormandy might be the most recommendable of all.

I am less happy about Serkin's remarks of the two B flat Concertos. The Beethoven suffers from Ormandy's blowzy, grand-orchestra approach to a work that calls for compactness and charm above all else. Serkin's treatment of the solo part too is erratic, varying between light-footed wit and soggy *martellato*. As in sections of the artist's recently issued Fourth Concerto for the same company, I am disturbed by certain technical holes in the passagework. How odd to find this usually pianistic cyclone permitting impetus to sag (as in parts of the finale)! For this work, then, the versions of Schnabel/Dobrowen (Angel COLH) and Fleisher/Szell (Epic) win hands down. Both Mr. Serkin and Mr. Ormandy are on far better terms with the overside Mozart, but though there is nothing actively wrong with the present orchestral accompaniment, I find much more detailed phrasing and sensitivity in that led by Alexander Schneider on the older, deleted monophonic Serkin edition. Moreover, I personally prefer a more coloristic approach to this nostalgic, sentiment-laden music (such as the reading Clara Haskil and Ferenc Fricsay gave on a DGG disc never released in the U.S.A.). Columbia's orchestral reproduction here is velvety (*too* velvety for my liking).

To turn finally to the Katchen/Gamba readings, I can find nothing but praise for London's ultraclear reproduction and Katchen's sparkling, cultivated fingerwork. In contrast to the regal Serkin approach, this artist prefers to keep his tone nimble and slender—much in the manner of Gieseking. It's all a bit on the superficial side, though; and if you favor a lightweight patrician reading for the C major Concerto and *Choral Fantasy*, Kempff's DGG disc, for one, and Daniel Barenboim's Westminster record, for another, provide the essential Katchen approach allied to greater interpretative distinction. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 36; Overtures: Fidelio, Op. 72; King Stephen, Op. 117*

London Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond.

- RCA VICTROLA VIC 1170. LP. \$2.50.
- • RCA VICTROLA VICS 1170. SD. \$3.00.

Listening to this admirable disc, I was struck anew at the parallels between Monteux's Beethoven and Weingartner's. Naturally the treatment of detail differs but in over-all effect one hears the same kind of sturdy, granitic structuralism in the two conductors' approaches. The Second Symphony (which Monteux recorded earlier in San Francisco) receives a hearty, genial reading. The tempos are rather brisk, but as the rhythmic inflection is easygoing rather than strenuously driven, a certain gregariousness of spirit suffuses the entire interpretation. As on the older record, Monteux sets a slower speed for the third-movement trio than he does for the surrounding scherzo. That practice (also consistent with Monteux's way with the Fourth and Seventh Symphonies, incidentally) is in sharp rebuke to the Toscanini philosophy of one tempo (with slight modification) per movement. The first-movement exposition repeat, observed on the older San Francisco version, is bypassed on this one.

Even more instructive are the two overtures which here receive premiere recordings from the Monteux baton. *Fidelio* opens with vital, explosive energy and then settles down to a steady, easy allegro, vivified by a violent *accelerando* at the coda. *King Stephen* crackles with racy humor and crisp energy. It is akin to Janos Ferencsik's excellent Parliament edition with the Czech Philharmonic.

Orchestral playing throughout is admirable, though the rugged attention to bass lines and the unwillingness to emasculate the inherently uncouth physical sound of brass and percussion instruments produce an effect far removed from the superslick sheen favored by most present-day directors (another similarity with Weingartner's outlook, by the way). The sound is very bright, even at times a bit hard and metallic. I found the stereo to be notably more effective than its single-channel counterpart. Only the Fifth Symphony is needed now to complete the full Monteux cycle of Beethoven's Nine. H.G.

BERLIOZ: *Orchestral Works*

Overtures: Le Carnaval romain, Op. 9; Béatrice et Bénédicte; Le Corsair, Op. 21; Benvenuto Cellini, Op. 23; La Damnation de Faust, Op. 24; Marche hongroise; Danse des sylphes; Menuet des follets.

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

- LONDON CM 9439. LP. \$4.79.
- • LONDON CS 6439. SD. \$5.79.

It is an event of more than passing interest to encounter for the first time the approach of a major conductor of French

orientation to the founding father of modern French orchestral music. This is apparently the first recording of Berlioz's music by Ernest Ansermet: at least the current Schwann contains no Berlioz by him and I can recall none from the past.

Of two major approaches to Berlioz—the emotion-charged, almost hysterical one of Charles Munch, and the more reserved, patrician view of Monteux—Ansermet predictably takes the latter. He combines orchestral clarity and distinctness of color with innate musicality and a gift for elegant lyric line in a manner most appropriate to Berlioz. Indeed, his achievement here with admittedly minor Berlioz warrants the hope that he will eventually explore the larger works of this composer. The most successful performances on the record are of Berlioz's most characteristic music: in the *Benvenuto Cellini* and *Roman Carnival Overtures* the subtle shading of phrase and controlled shifts in dynamics come off exceptionally well; and in the *Dance of the Sylphs* the gossamer texture of the sound is enchanting. He is less successful in the more bombastic pieces—the *Corsair Overture* and the *Hungarian March* from *The Damnation of Faust*. Unaccountably, the more subtle musical conception of the Overture to *Beatrice and Benedict* eludes Ansermet and this is the weakest performance on the record.

Sonically, the recording provides a realistic balance of room acoustics and instrumental detail. The sequence in which the works are presented is, however, rather strange: three Overtures on one side are hardly conducive to continuous listening; and an arbitrary attempt to gain programmatic coherence on the other side has necessitated changing the order of the excerpts from *The Damnation of Faust* to conclude the side with the *Hungarian March*. P.H.

BERLIOZ: *Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14*

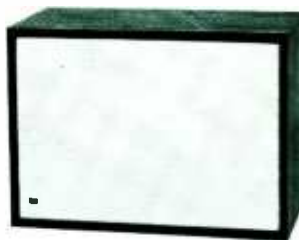
London Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis, cond.

- PHILIPS PHM 500101. LP. \$4.79.
- • PHILIPS PHS 900101. SD. \$5.79.

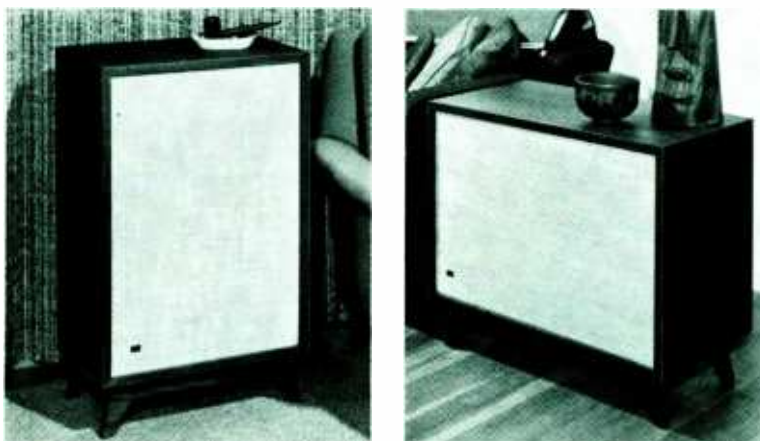
This is the best *Fantastique* I have ever heard—a large claim, when a glance at Schwann will show more than twenty rival recordings, but soberly made, and backed by two or three years' acquaintance with this version in its previous Dutch and English pressings. The English release spoiled the sound by squeezing the whole of the last three movements into Side 2, but the new American pressings restore the original Dutch arrangement with the turn coming in the middle of the *Scène aux champs*. Of course, the side break is a pity, but the wonderfully rich reproduction, at once warm and clear, offers ample compensation.

Davis has an unsurpassed way with Berlioz. He understands that this composer's textures must never clog, and he achieves precisely that well-ventilated lucidity of line which proclaims that the archromantic was also a classicist. Furthermore, he observes all the repeats

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—which pays rich dividends formally in the first movement and dramatically in the *Marche au supplice*—and, unlike many conductors, he takes the trouble to use cornets for the cornet parts, thus imparting a gloriously creamy consistency to the waltz movement.

Everything is right in this interpretation, and the orchestral playing is even finer than that of the Philadelphia Orchestra when they played the work with Davis at Philharmonic Hall in January.

B.J.

BRAHMS: *Folk Songs* (complete)

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Gerald Moore, piano.

- ANGEL 3675. Two LP. \$9.58.
- • ANGEL S 3675. Two SD. \$11.58.

This set takes on a bit of an archival aspect—the Brahms folk song settings are not a cycle, after all, but only a gathering, and I doubt that anyone is much interested in hearing them at one swell foop, either in a recital hall or on records.

The thing is, only a few of them are really great songs—*Maria ging aus wandern*, with its harmonic and atmospheric shadowings of the Wolf Spanish spiritual songs; *In stiller Nacht*; a few others. There are many that are, taken by themselves, engagingly light and fresh (*Mein Müdel hat einen Rosenmund*, *Dort in den Weiden*, and some others). But there are also many that are quite ordinary, and far too many of one or two sorts (lovers showing up under windows and being told to go away; narrators going on endlessly about the fortunes of young ladies whose self-control is not exemplary, etc., etc.) to make more than a few palatable at a time. I spread the album over two evenings, a disc at a time, but even then, the doses were stiff. This is nothing against the album, of course, for nothing compels one to listen to more than four or five at once—which is my suggestion.

All forty-two songs are present, though verses have been omitted from some, generally in the cases of multi-verse narrative songs. I can't get terribly worked up over a missing verse here and there. What does occasionally disturb me is the division of labor. With very, very occasional exceptions, I think the apportionment of dialogue between two singers within a song weakens, not strengthens, the dramatic frame. These are not duets, or scenes from an opera, but songs, in which one singer is expected to project the varying moods and personalities of the characters—otherwise, why not four singers for *Erlkönig*? I recall that DGG undertook this sort of arrangement for a *Spanisches Liederbuch* disc about five years ago, with misbegotten results, and I find it a drawback here. Especially ridiculous is the case of *So wünsch ich ihr ein' gute Nacht*, in which we have musical thoughts being divided in two by alternation. Roughly a third of the songs are handled this way, in no case to any positive advantage, and when Schwarzkopf takes *Es war ein Markgraf über'm Rhein* all to

herself (presumably because Fischer-Dieskau would have sounded pretty silly in falsetto) and creates the drama of the song precisely through her ability to differentiate between the two sisters, she demonstrates the emptiness of the device.

The performances are somewhat uneven, embracing some truly magical interpretations and some badly miscalculated ones. Gerald Moore is the one absolutely steady element, gauging the weights of the songs and his singers perfectly, and bringing off moments that are really spellbinding, as in the wonderfully delicate differentiations of movement in *Jungfräulein, soll ich mit euch geh'n*. Many of the accompaniments simply play one hand against the other, and it is a constant source of pleasure to hear the balance and clarity of Moore's playing.

Of the two singers, Schwarzkopf comes off somewhat better here; nothing could be better than her young, bouncy *Dort in den Weiden* (a perfect collaboration with Moore) or her very touching *Es steht ein Lind* or *In stiller Nacht*. Once in a while, she oversteps—the last phrase of *Es ging ein Maidlein zarte*, for instance, rather hits us over the head with the “*bittrer Angst und Schmerz*” of it all. But it happens only once or twice. In the many songs in which her lips are supposed to say no, but her eyes yes, she sounds like a very practiced tease. The voice itself sounds round and fresh.

Fischer-Dieskau is, I think, a victim of overmiking here. He is not one to underplay a song, and many of these interpretations are terribly overblown and puffy, with simple, sweet little songs becoming great dramatic monologues. When he keeps it relatively simple, the effect is splendid, as in *All mein Gedanken* or *Des Abends kann ich nicht schlafen geh'n*. But *Es reit ein Herr und auch sein Knecht*, for instance, becomes a *gran scena ed aria*, and I suspect much of the difficulty is that of proximity. It is a dramatic song, and the interpretation would probably work in a large hall, with distance to soften it. Certainly I have seldom felt at Fischer-Dieskau's live recitals what I often feel about his recordings—that they are overstated, overinterpreted. Either he must tone down, or the engineer must back up, or both. Probably the worst example is *Mein Müdel hat einen Rosenmund*, which is distorted something awful—explosive attacks, viciously sharp tone much too close up, preposterous accelerandi at the ends of verses, and an embarrassing cuteness at the end. Back to the simple, outgoing boyishness of Lotte Lehmann.

C.L.O.



BRITTEN: *Curlew River*

Peter Pears, et al.; various instrumentalists; Benjamin Britten and Viola Tunnard, musical directors.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 69.

BRITTEN: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, in C, Op. 65*

†Kabalevsky: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, in B flat, Op. 71*

Stanislav Apolin, cello, Radoslav Kvapil, piano (in the Britten); Sasa Vectoniov, cello, Josef Palenicek, piano (in the Kabalevsky).

- ARTIA ALP 709. LP. \$4.98.
- • ARTIA ALPS 709. SD. \$5.98.

This is Britten's “Rostropovich Sonata” and it is not only the work that made the English composer famous in Eastern Europe but also one of the most Eastern-sounding of his works; there is a clear Bartók-Kodály strain almost from beginning to end. While this aspect of the music bothers me not a little (it turns up in other recent “Russian works” of Britten and never seems quite sincere), the Cello Sonata has other sources of strength—a kind of austere rigor underpinning an attractive surface of great on-going skill and wit. The present performance is a good one but really not competitive in a field where the rival team is Rostropovich-Britten. For my taste, the corny Kabalevsky Sonata on the overside—no matter how pleasantly played and recorded—helps matters not a jot.

E.S.

BRUCKNER: *Symphony No. 9, in D minor; Te Deum*

Maria Stader, soprano; Sieglinde Wagner, contralto; Ernst Häfliger, tenor; Peter Lagger, bass; Wolfgang Meyer, organ; Chorus of the German Opera (Berlin); Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 39117/18. Two LP. \$11.58.
- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 139117/18. Two SD. \$11.58.

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

Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond. [from Decca DXL 139, 1956].

- HELIODOR H 25007. LP. \$2.49.
- • HELIODOR HS 25007. SD. \$2.49.

It's not often that two different versions of a work by the same conductor arrive for review together. The Heliodor is a reissue of Jochum's older performance, and its stereo version is a reprocessing from mono originals. Although I am aware that my colleague Peter G. Davis has serious reservations about Heliodor's electronic stereo [see “Repeat Performance,” May 1966], it seems to me that the touching-up works better here than in

many such attempts. There is some lateral distribution of frequencies; but, more important, the sound is clean, spacious, and an improvement on an already good quality of reproduction. Jochum's interpretation is a distinguished one, giving due weight to details without obscuring the over-all line of this profound and powerful work.

The new performance with the Berlin Philharmonic is, predictably, along the same general lines. The tempos are similar, and there is the same deeply felt but firmly channeled emotion. (There is also the same irritating prolongation of the horns' G flat in meas. 504 of the first movement.) The orchestral playing is splendid, but not appreciably better than that of the Bavarian orchestra. The one respect in which Jochum's reading has developed is in its firmer control of tempo in the Adagio, and this is a decided gain, but on the whole it may be said that the differential in standard of performance is much smaller than the differential in price. Deutsche Grammophon's new recording is admirably warm and sonorous, and contains the broad orchestral effects with ease. It suffers, however, from a curious spot of excessive resonance around B flat in the bass stave which is probably an acoustic peculiarity of the hall where the recording was made.

The Berlin version spreads the three movements of the Symphony (the finale was never completed) over a side piece, and the fourth side is used for a performance of the Te Deum. This imposing setting was suggested by Bruckner himself as a possible finale for the Symphony when he realized that he would not be able to complete the bigger work; but the Te Deum's earlier style unfits it for this position. Still, it is a sensible fill-up for a recording, and Jochum conducts it with great conviction. The choral/orchestral balance is good, and the solo quartet sings strongly, with the exception of Maria Stader, who sounds uncomfortable in a part unsuited to her voice.

Furtwängler's performance of the Symphony remains the most deeply satisfying, and Mehta's, which I reviewed in these pages last January, is also a fine one, exquisitely detailed and rich in musical sap, if slightly diffuse over-all. Either of Jochum's performances would be a good choice if you want a version that combines some of the virtues of both approaches, the dynamic and the lingering.

The Heliodor is the first bargain-label release of the Ninth Symphony. This does not excuse the extraordinary mess that has been made of its documentation. For some curious reason, the mono pressing splits the Scherzo over two sides, while the stereo edition accommodates it all on the first—another distinct advantage. But the labels and jackets of both versions indicate a split, and the timings given are pure moonshine. This, however, is a marginal grump. The disc is an excellent buy, and I rather prefer it to the full-price set, with the exception of that point about slow-movement tempos. B.J.

BYRD: *Madrigals, Motets, and Anthems*

Saltire Singers. Roy Jesson, organ.

- LYRICHORD LL 156. LP. \$4.98.
- • LYRICHORD LLST 7156. SD. \$5.95.

There is some gorgeous music on this record, mostly well performed, but the collection is rather a grab-bag. There are a few sacred and secular part-songs (one or two certainly conceived as solo songs for performance with viols but here performed only with voices), an accompanied solo anthem with verse refrains, a Christmas carol of a similar type, three Latin motets of exceptional scope and beauty, and several keyboard pieces from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book (here played on the organ, an instrument obviously unsuited for these galliards and giggs).

Except for the totally unsuccessful organ solos, the performances are of great beauty and expressive care. I have one small qualification: a certain kind of Olde English madrigal-singing sound—a kind of bland tone, mainly in the higher voices, which tends to flatten out and nasalize the vowels and occasionally adds a coy little scoop up to the pitch; from this side of the Atlantic at least it sounds a little mannered.

One suspects that this disc, like a number of such recent items, was originally prepared as a BBC program and this may account for its somewhat miscellaneous character; with so much of this repertoire now being recorded, it would make more sense to explore the different facets of a single composer's output in more depth. But these comments should be taken in perspective; for the most part this is a charming record, with good sound. E.S.

CANTELOUBE: *Chants d'Auvergne* †Ravel: *Trois chants hébraïques*; *Chansons madécasses*

Madeleine Grey, soprano; Maurice Ravel, piano (in the *Chants hébraïques*); instrumental trio, Maurice Ravel, cond. (in the *Chansons madécasses*); orchestra, Elie Cohen, cond. (in the Canteloube) [from various originals, 1930–32].

- ANGEL COLC 152. LP. \$5.79.

This release stirs mixed feelings. One is glad to see recordings of historical importance kept in circulation, and the credentials of this material are beyond question—Madeleine Grey “created” the Canteloube Auvergne settings (those heard here, at least) and was also the first to sing both of the little Ravel cycles. In addition, we have Ravel himself as accompanist in one set of his songs and as conductor of the flute-cello-piano trio in the other.

Purely as a listening experience, though, I don't consider the record much of a treat. The sound is mostly tubby and scratchy (indeed, the music/noise ratio was considerably better on the 10-inch Odeon pressing of the Auvergne songs, which circulated in this country six or seven years ago). The poor re-

production wreaks havoc with the Auvergne accompaniments, which attain their flavor only in the solo passages and frequently sound like junky cocktail music. If one knows the sweep and color and charm of these orchestrations, or the intimate atmosphere created by the instrumental timbres in the *Chansons madécasses*, one can hardly be satisfied with what is to be heard here.

The Auvergne performances themselves have always inspired my respect, but not the devotion and affection I know some collectors feel towards them. I like Grey's musicality and simplicity, and I find the straight, boyish timbre of her voice admirably suited to a couple of the songs, namely *Bailero* and *Passo del prat*. I don't think anyone since has gotten more fun out of *Malurous qu'o uno femmo*, either. However, there is nothing sensuous or beautiful about the voice, which is in fact rather thin and hard-sounding (“full and rich,” say the booklet notes, but if these adjectives are really applicable, then the recordings are far worse yet than they seem), and she seems to command only one timbre and a very narrow dynamic range. For most of the songs, I will go with Netania Davrath, who is equally musical and sensitive, and who has a lovely voice and irresistible femininity to go along—not to mention good recording of the accompaniments.

I have never before heard these performances of the Ravel pieces, which seem to me to be in the same boat. Grey does well with the second and third of the Hebrew songs, capturing just the right flavor for the father/son dialogue of *Mejer'ke*, and the shrug of the shoulders for *L'Enigme éternelle*. *Kaddisch*, so far as I am concerned, requires a richer, more authoritative, and more reposeful sound, however right the singer's interpretative instincts.

The *Chansons madécasses* I find successful only in terms of musical understanding and rhythmic strength, which helps especially towards the end of *Aoua!* But the voice just doesn't have the lush, soft beauty for *Nahandove*, or the range and command for *Aoua! Repos* comes off better, and there is no questioning Miss Grey's understanding and musicality. As usual, Angel has provided texts, translations, notes, and discographic material. C.L.O.

CHABRIER: *Une éducation manquée*

Liliane Berton (s), Hélène de la Cérésaie; Jane Berbié (ms), Gontran de Boismasif; Jean-Christophe Benoit (b), Maître Pausanias; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Jean-Claude Hartemann, cond.

- • PATHE ASTX 337. SD. \$6.79.

Chabrier's chief operatic work is *Le Roi malgré lui*; the one-act operetta *Une éducation manquée* preceded it (first performance, May 1, 1877) and helped make his reputation. It is hardly ever heard outside France nowadays, though it was given a workshop performance in New York City recently.

The piece is supposed to be charming

and sophisticated, but I find it pretty leaden. It's about a young couple who have just gotten married but who haven't much idea of how to, tee-hee, consummate the union. Somebody's grandfather who is supposed to show up and tell all can't make it, and the old tutor Pausanias also isn't of much help, but in the end there is a thunderstorm and the newlyweds get together anyway. I don't know how the French regard this work now, but if they're still smirking over adolescent would-be lovers who don't know the facts of life, we can stop looking that way for instruction in worldly matters. I'm reminded of the late Wolcott Gibbs's delightful comparison of French love-making to a girls' basketball game: lots of squealing and jumping up and down, but not much in the scoring department.

The music is tired-sounding too; one or two pleasant melodies, but in general a great deal of self-conscious effort at being bright, witty, and romantic. Except in academic compositional terms (Chabrier *does* know how to write his music down and orchestrate it), I should not put the score much above that of the average Broadway musical. Well, I take that back, but you see the point.

The performance is first-class. Jane Berbié sounds freer and steadier here than on any of her previous recordings, and the delectable Liliane Berton uses her fresh high soprano to good effect. Jean-Christophe Benoit, a pleasant light baritone, does what he can with the drearily clichéd role of Pausanias. The orchestra plays beautifully under Hartemann. The sound is also first-rate, natural and well balanced, except that the registration seems a bit out of whack, since voices occasionally shift position with changes in pitch. There are liner notes in French, but no texts. C.L.O.

CHOPIN: *Berceuse in D flat, Op. 57; Fantasy in F minor, Op. 49; Preludes, Op. 28 (complete)*

Jeanne Marie Darré, piano.
 • VANGUARD VRS 1151. LP. \$4.79.
 • • VANGUARD VSD 71151. SD. \$5.79.

Mme. Darré is in happier estate here than she was for the Liszt recital issued by Vanguard a short while ago. Although her treatment of some of the Preludes may be a trifle perverse and arbitrary, and her account of the consummate *Berceuse* is decidedly plebeian and directionless when measured against such achievement as Solomon's (on a well-remembered 78-rpm disc), she clearly has ideas and facility. When in the vein, as she is intermittently in the present collection, this performer can, indeed, draw sparks from the sounding board of her instrument. Her reading of the tremendous F minor Fantasy—stately in its opening march, sonorously full-bodied in bravura episodes, pellucid in the B major chorale section—is nothing if not impressive and compelling. Darré's sense of architecture in this work is notably more sure-handed than she has shown in any other interpretation of

comparable scale. Purists, however, had better be forewarned that the French virtuoso thinks nothing of amplifying bass sonorities by adding octaves with fifths in them, a practice beloved of "Grand Manner" exponents.

First-class piano reproduction, both monophonically and in stereo. H.G.

CHOPIN: *Waltzes (complete)*

Tamás Vásáry, piano.
 • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPEM 19485. LP. \$5.79.
 • • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPEM 136485. SD. \$5.79.

Vásáry has recently recorded for DGG a great deal of Chopin piano music, issued on the Continent in a de luxe multiple-record set and to be released in this country as single discs. The present collection upholds the superlative pianistic standards already set by this distinguished young Hungarian artist. His fingerwork is remarkably deft and accurate, the tonal gradations are consummate (although some listeners may prefer a darker, more bass-oriented sonority for this music), and his instinctive feeling for graceful accent and line are always in evidence despite little rhythmic hesitations and exaggerations.

Vásáry is here apparently striving for a compromise between the linear, objectively rhythmic expositions of Lipatti (Angel and Columbia) or Werner Haas (Epic-deleted) and the more personalized, "traditional" view espoused—in different ways—by Cortot, Malcuzyński, Novaes, and Rubinstein. I'm not sure that the attempt is not mistaken. Both Haas and Lipatti—my own personal favorites in the Chopin Waltzes—projected a swinging metric continuum, a constant *dance* rhythm which served as a basic pulse in terms of which they shaped phrases and modified tempos with telling success. Vásáry—who normally displays an excellent sense of timing and accentuation—on this occasion is sometimes guilty of abrupt and mannered shifts of tempo. A good example of what I am referring to can be heard in the A flat Waltz, Op. 64, No. 3: the piece is fragmented by a series of caesuras and personal indulgences in Vásáry's performance, whereas in the versions by Lipatti and Haas it moves with its genial, "beer barrel" atmosphere intact. Throughout, Vásáry's readings also seem to me just a trifle too smooth and overly subtle.

The disc gives us all seventeen of the waltzes, and is recorded in acceptable, if a trifle overbright, sound. While I

have, as indicated above, some reservations about the performance, it is certainly a respectable contender in the Chopin waltz sweepstakes. H.G.

CORELLI: *Concerti grossi, Op. 6: No. 1, in D; No. 3, in C minor; No. 6, in F; No. 7, in D*

Slovak Chamber Orchestra, Bohdan Warchal, cond.
 • PARLIAMENT PLP 610. LP. \$1.98.
 • • PARLIAMENT PLPS 610. SD. \$2.98.

Once or twice when I first played this record I thought I discerned the distant tinkling of a harpsichord, but I finally concluded that this was wishful thinking. These are not stylish performances. Their sonority, intensified by a recording of greater richness than clarity, is too heavy for the music, and some good playing in the solo passages is offset by articulation and ornaments unsuitable to the period. B.J.

DEBUSSY: *La Mer; Khamma (orch. Koechlin); Rhapsody for Clarinet and Orchestra*

Robert Gugholz, clarinet; Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet.
 • LONDON CM 9437. LP. \$4.79.
 • • LONDON CS 6437. SD. \$5.79.

This recording has had an unusual effect on me. The first time I played it I thought it rather dull, but a second hearing conveyed a much more favorable impression, and subsequent playings are steadily increasing my pleasure in it. It has all the analytical accuracy for which Ansermet is famous, without ever sinking into pedantry. *La Mer* is, after all, the last work in which dryness would be pardonable, and this performance has abundant atmosphere of sea and sky, wind and water, scurrying waves and glinting sunlight. I have not been able to make a detailed comparison with Ansermet's previous recordings, but to the best of my recollection they are far surpassed by this new reading. Toscanini's recording on Victor (mono only) remains a classic alternative; Karajan's is one of the best things he has done, but it is too soft-edged for an ideal presentation of this supremely unromantic piece; Szell on Epic, though workmanlike and often brilliant, rides roughshod over some of the subtler dynamic distinctions in the score.

The new Ansermet has the advantage of an otherwise unavailable coupling, in the ballet *Khamma*—composed in 1912, orchestrated by Charles Koechlin, and premiered in Paris as a concert piece in 1924. Without the reinforcement of a stage action, the music is somewhat thin; but with the help of the stage directions in the score (some account of which will, I hope, be given in the liner) the delicate understatement of the piece is evocative enough, and Ansermet plays it very well. The Clarinet Rhapsody provides an appropriate fill-up. B.J.



DONIZETTI: *Lucia di Lammermoor*

Anna Moffo (s), Lucia; Corinna Voza (ms), Alisa; Carlo Bergonzi (t), Edgardo; Pierre Duval (t), Arturo; Vittorio Pandano (t), Normanno; Mario Sereni (b), Enrico; Ezio Flagello (bs), Raimondo; RCA Italiana Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Georges Prêtre. cond.

• RCA VICTOR L.M. 6170. Three LP. \$14.37.

• • RCA VICTOR LSC 6170. Three SD. \$17.37.

There is nothing very surprising here—the performers are all familiar quantities, and they are in representative form. If anything, I should say that the sum totals more than I had anticipated: Prêtre turns out to be an interesting *Lucia* conductor, and Miss Moffo appears to better advantage than in her recent appearances and recordings.

The complete score is presented (as it is in the London recording), which means that the burden on the leading lady is not quite as great as it is in the normal performance edition: we have the Wolf's Crag Scene between Edgardo and Ashton, the Raimondo/Lucia scene with the bass aria "*Cedi, cedi*," the Mad Scene shirt-tail wherein Raimondo banishes Normanno, and the many additions to ensembles and cabalettas along the way. I have now listened to the opera in this unexpurgated form a number of times, and the experience has convinced me that most of the cuts usually made do nothing but reduce the work's stature. Most important is the long cut in the Act II finale: this is not only vital structurally, but is magnificently developed ensemble writing—I cannot imagine who first decided that the opera was better off without it. The Wolf's Crag Scene is, at the least, lots of fun, and I will admit to thinking that portions of it—the concluding duet and the introductory storm music with Edgardo's fine recitative—are passages of considerable power. I haven't much use for "*Cedi, cedi*," but it is dramatically essential, since one of the problems with *Lucia* has always been to motivate sufficiently her decision to give in to Enrico. I don't feel the same way about the recitative following the Mad Scene: it ruins the big curtain effect, and I don't think it is of the slightest significance whether or not Normanno gets his comeuppance. At this point, who cares about anything except the fates of Lucia and Edgardo?

As is the case with so many nineteenth-century Italian operas (*Trovatore* is another example), there are also, traditionally, brief cuts made apparently for musical reasons, but which have no basis except in pedantry of the pickiest sort—one sees four bars out here, a line there (I have a mental picture of an aging Kapellmeister in charge of such matters back in the Damrosch/Grau era, irascibly scratching out bars of Italian trash—bad enough that Mme. Sembrich insists on singing the thing at all). An instance is a two-line excision made in Enrico's first long solo in the scene with Lucia (lines two to four, p. 67 of the



Prêtre: much at home with Donizetti.

Schirmer vocal score). a perfectly solid bit of development with some interesting off-beat accents and a fine chance for the voice to open out on the ascent to the E natural. There is simply no reason to cut it; yet the only times I have heard the music are in the London and Victor recordings, and when one asks a conductor why it is cut, one will get "Oh, that's never done" for an answer. A poor reason.

I like Prêtre's work here. He gives the recitative accompaniments a good measure of thrust and gets a lot of rhythmic steadiness into the duets and finales. He knows how to use seemingly unimportant passages to highlight the rest—Alisa's lines between the two verses of "*Quando rapita in estasi*," for example, are used to stir up some tension before relaxing back into the *a tempo* at the beginning of the second verse. He also refrains from overdoing certain effects that can become downright sleazy (I am thinking of two instances in the sextette: the horn sforzando in the last bar of the introduction, and the cymbal crashes at the two big climaxes, which frequently are smeared all over the music). The aggregation which Victor calls the RCA Italiana Orchestra continues to impress as a group of first-rate musicians; they produce a sound of some color and variety, and when one of them gets some prominence, he makes the most of it—listen to the splendid trumpet work in the opening bars of the first scene, for instance. If I have a criticism, it is that some of the more subdued effects are toned down too much (which may be an engineering problem, not a musical one). The harp prelude at the beginning of Scene 2, for example, refines itself right out of existence, and it is difficult to tell where the blame belongs. In addition (though this is largely a matter of taste), I would like more consistency in the handling of the vocal lines—the elements of emulation and competition in the big exchanges are, I think, valid ones in this kind of music, and when Miss Moffo executes a *portando* which is then ignored by Mr. Sereni at the equivalent point in his response, or when Miss Moffo sings an elaborate cadenza but Mr. Sereni does not answer with one of his own, something is lost. Small points, but for me these things contribute to the finish and style of a performance.

Moffo comes off very well—the top of her voice, especially, sounds much better here than it has for some time. "*Regnava nel silenzio*" is particularly lovely, and so is the "*Ardon gl'incensi*" section of the Mad Scene, which captures a personal feeling and a communicativeness sometimes lacking elsewhere. The one significant vocal difficulty is a lack of real abandon—something I have noted in Miss Moffo's coloratura work before. She stops too often to "set" her voice before attacking runs and cadenzas, and is in general too careful to give a feeling of much spontaneity or release. Complementing this is a tendency to feel her way into phrases rather than attacking them cleanly from the first note. As a result, the cantabile portions are fine, the rest somewhat lacking in urgency, and I cannot say that this Lucia seems a very specific person—just a pleasant lady who sings attractively.

Carlo Bergonzi displays all his familiar virtues—beautifully controlled line singing with a fine command of dynamic shading, and extraordinary musical taste. There is no denying that some excitement is missing—his denunciation of Lucia in the wedding scene is pretty tame, and there are other points where one wishes for a tone that did not narrow towards such a carefully scaled top. But the final scene is close to being great singing, with an especially fine rendition of "*Fra poco a me ricovero*," a beautiful but very difficult aria.

Mario Sereni's Enrico makes a good, solid effect in the second and third acts—nothing individual or striking, but firm Italian baritone singing of a traditional sort. The first scene, however, which is for all practical purposes a solo scene for Ashton, makes small impact; his reading of "*Cruda, funesta smania*" is square and colorless, with a muffled-sounding top and an unmusical shouting of accents. The engineering may again be at fault, for Sereni seems placed in an unsatisfactory position relative to the orchestra, and Vittorio Pandano, the Normanno, may as well have stayed home and collected a featherbedding check, for all we can hear of him. If we can't agree that *Lucia* is a singers' opera, I guess there just ain't no such beast any more.

Ezio Flagello sounds wonderful in his reinstated scene—big and steady, with some wonderful *messa di voce* effects on the lead-ins to phrases. But somehow he misses the fine opportunity afforded by "*Dalle stanze*," where he fails to capture the dignity which can be imparted by true, on-going line singing. An effort has been made to give Arturo his due importance by casting Pierre Duval, the leading tenor of the London *Puritani*, in the role, but unfortunately he comes off pretty much the same as everyone else in this role—blatly and forced-sounding. The truth is that "*Per poco fra le tenebre*" is not an easy little piece of music to sing.

The sound is bright and full, but, as I have indicated, not always advantageous to the singers, and not without traces of pre- and post-echo. Though no credit is accorded, Victor has apparently

borrowed London's large resident company of giggling party guests. They sound equally silly under both labels.
C.L.O.

ELGAR: *The Dream of Gerontius*, Op. 38

Janet Baker, contralto; Richard Lewis, tenor; Kim Borg, bass; Hallé Choir; Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus; Ambrosian Singers; Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond.

- ANGEL 3660. Two LP. \$9.58.
- • ANGEL S 3660. Two SD. \$11.58.

Sir John has been closely associated with *The Dream of Gerontius* for many years, and he has now produced a recording which will fulfill the dreams of Elgar lovers too. The music itself is one of the finest choral products of late romanticism, at once sumptuous and sensitive in its treatment of Cardinal Newman's text, which tells of the death of Gerontius and the passage of his soul through judgment to Purgatory. If it has to be said that this is a flawed masterpiece, its flaws are integral to the text itself, and stem not from any failure on Elgar's part but rather from his *too* successful identification with Newman's words, not only in their nobler moments but in their more mawkish and banal aspects. Those who have a taste for this particular late-nineteenth-century brand of High Church mysticism will not feel them as flaws; the rest of us must simply make allowances, and there is ample reward in the music to make this worthwhile, especially in the exquisite serenity of the opening of Part II, where Gerontius awakes to consciousness of eternity, and in the Angel's music a little later.

Two of the three soloists are ideal. It is impossible to imagine a finer Gerontius than Richard Lewis, who has sung the part about seventy-five times. His response to the varying moods of the music combines generosity of feeling with impeccable taste; and he places every note—literally every note—with effortless clarity and accuracy of intonation. I had the feeling that if every copy of the score were to be lost, it would be possible to reconstruct the part of Gerontius from Lewis' performance—what greater compliment can one pay a singer? Janet Baker, the Angel, is a fully worthy partner. For several years this young English contralto has been more than the equal of the late Kathleen Ferrier, and her preëminence is clear in every line of this wonderful performance. Kim Borg, who sings the smaller roles of the Priest and the Angel of the Agony, is the only disappointment: he sounds ill at ease singing in English, and he biffs out one or two of the quieter passages with distressing heartiness. However, he has a beautiful voice, and the defects of his performance are not such as to spoil the whole.

Barbirolli's account of the score is profoundly satisfying in conception, and it is backed by some splendid choral work and by alert playing from the

Hallé Orchestra. Great care has been taken, both in performance and in recording, over balance, and all the more problematical passages have been solved with complete success. The sound of the recording is rich, warm, and clear, and Angel has provided a useful booklet with articles and full text and a box handsomely and aptly decorated with a reproduction of Turner's *Angel Standing in the Sun*. An admirable release in every way.
B.J.

HAYDN: *Symphonies: No. 34, in D minor; No. 54, in G; No. 75, in D*

Little Orchestra of London, Leslie Jones, cond.

- NONESUCH H 1106. LP. \$2.50.
- • NONESUCH H 71106. SD. \$2.50.

There was a time not long ago when the phrase "early Haydn symphonies" uttered in the business offices of a record company stood for a repertory that was to be avoided like the plague. After all, only a few highbrows—musicologists and suchlike—were interested in this music, and how many records did *they* buy? Well, early (or middle) Haydn is still not up there among the big money-makers, and we all know how very expensive it is to record with an orchestra. Nevertheless, adventurous souls among the recording companies occasionally experiment in this corner of the repertory too, and one can only hope that it turns out to be financially worthwhile for them to continue to do so. For in addition to the fifteen symphonies that are available in several recordings each, there is a vast treasure-trove of music, the products of an original and enormously skilled master, waiting to delight any open-minded listener.

The three works on the present disc could serve as excellent samples. No. 34 starts with a serene Adagio, proceeds to an *opera-buffa* Allegro, and ends with a gay, Italianate finale. It is written almost exclusively for strings. Nos. 54 and 75 call for a larger orchestra. Outstanding in No. 54 are the portentous Introduction followed by a brilliant Presto and a lovely Adagio, in No. 75 the dramatic development section of the first movement and a fine set of variations. The orchestra plays with verve and precision, it is nicely balanced, and it can sing well. Good sound in both versions.
N.B.

HAYDN: *Symphonies: No. 96, in D ("Miracle"); No. 101, in D ("Clock")*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 6212. LP. \$4.79.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6812. SD. \$5.79.

Ormandy's approach to these mature masterpieces suggests more warmth than Münchinger and Paray in No. 96, and more elegance than is present in some of the older versions of the *Clock*. His closest rival is perhaps Monteux, though

even the Vienna strings lack the finesse of Philadelphia. Ormandy favors tradition in texts, tempos, and timbre, but there is genuine pleasure to be found in his handling of the slow movements and the crisp rhythms of the finales. In the first movement of No. 96 his eminently zestful reading evokes the brilliance of a London premiere, and the cohesion of the orchestra is especially commendable. As a coupling without present parallel in the catalogue, this issue is welcome in every way.
DENIS STEVENS

HUMMEL: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 85; Concerto for Piano and Violin with Orchestra, in G, Op. 17*

Martin Galling, piano; Susanne Lautenbacher, violin; Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra, Alexander Paulmüller, cond.

- TURNABOUT TV 4028. LP. \$2.50.
- • TURNABOUT TV 34028S. SD. \$2.50.

If I were a concert pianist, I would bribe or blackmail an orchestra into "putting on" Hummel's Piano Concerto: it may not offer new spiritual insights into the plight of man, but it is grand and luxurious and elaborate and marvelously pianistic. The long opening tutti has in it everything but a Rossini crescendo (it suggests Rossini in a number of ways, actually), and any woodwind section would prosper in the almost Turkish second section introduced by a solo bassoon. When the piano finally enters, it is to revel in the good things of life; there is nothing lean, hungry, or economical in the soloist's part. Perhaps it is the minor mode which lends extra weight to the work; it is not grossly exaggerating to say that the second movement suggests Beethoven, and in the finale the orchestra even undertakes a brief fugue. What more could one ask of a "secondary" nineteenth-century composer? Galling plays the work in the grand manner: the Stuttgart strings aren't to be mistaken for those of the Philadelphia or the Cleveland, but they do well enough.

The Double Concerto is altogether paler stuff, but the two instruments are surprisingly compatible. It is characteristic of Hummel that he should pair two rather unlikely concerto partners and show them off in good fashion. The recorded sound does not flatter Susanne Lautenbacher's tone, but she executes her duties with a flair.
S.F.

IVES: *Robert Browning Overture* †Beeson: *Symphony No. 1, in A*

Polish National Radio Orchestra, William Strickland, cond.

- COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 196. LP. \$5.95.
- • COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 196SD. SD. \$5.95.

Ives planned a whole series of overtures named after men of letters, but only *Robert Browning* was finished—if a piece left in such chaotic condition that

several sections of it had to be recomposed by Henry Cowell and Lou Harrison can be said to have been finished at all. The work is really a short symphony, lasting twenty minutes and comprising four movements—two long-breathed, rather somber and autumnal slow movements and two wildly dissonant, thick, knotty, and complex fast ones. In other words, vintage Ives—here well played but not particularly well recorded.

The Symphony by Jack Beeson on the other side is conservative in idiom, but warmhearted, beautifully shaped, superbly orchestrated, highly distinguished in thematic material and general facture, and many times worth the price of admission. The sound of the Beeson recording is markedly better than that of the Ives. A.F.

IVES: Variations on "America" (arr. Schumann); Symphony No. 1, in D minor; The Unanswered Question

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Morton Gould, cond.

IVES: Symphony No. 3 ("The Camp Meeting"); Central Park in the Dark; Decoration Day; The Unanswered Question

New York Philharmonic, Seiji Ozawa, Maurice Peress, Leonard Bernstein, conds.

For a feature review including these recordings, see page 70.

KABALEVSKY: Sonata for Cello and Piano, in B flat, Op. 71—See Britten: Sonata for Cello and Piano, in C, Op. 65.

LISZT: The Christmas Tree (complete)

Erno Szegedi, piano.
• MACE M 9006. LP. \$1.98.

Put this record on your phonograph and see if your friends can guess the composer! Written between 1874 and 1876 for Liszt's eldest granddaughter, the *Christmas Tree* is a cycle containing traditional Christmas carols and a few prophetic excursions into the impressionistic and Bartókian-expressionist movements still to come. Of the typical virtuosic Liszt there is none, and little of the composer's extravagant romanticism. Everything is jewel-like, concisely stated, almost ascetic.

Erno Szegedi plays with a fine grasp of the cycle's lyricism and tender strength. The recording, originally a product of Hungarian Qualiton, is only fair, being a mite jangly. Still, the disc offers a welcome bit of esoterica and, at the price quoted, provides attractive value. H.G.



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G MINOR (K.550)

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C MAJOR

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LONDON *ffrr?*
FULL FREQUENCY RANGE RECORDING

MENDELSSOHN: *Octet for Strings, in E flat, Op. 20*

†**Mozart:** *Concertone for Two Violins and Orchestra, in C, K. 190*

Jaime Laredo and Alexander Schneider, violins, Samuel Rhodes, viola, Leslie Parnas, cello, Guarneri String Quartet (in the Mendelssohn); Jaime Laredo and Michael Tree, violins, Marlboro Festival Orchestra, Alexander Schneider, cond. (in the Mozart).

- COLUMBIA ML 6248. LP. \$4.79.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6848. SD. \$5.79.

Another addition to the ever growing catalogue of recordings from the Marlboro Music Festival, the present disc offers two superbly coordinated performances. The Mendelssohn Octet starts out at a fast tempo—similar to that heard on the recent Heifetz/Primrose/Piatigorsky account for RCA Victor—but with a far greater feeling of rhythmic solidity. The present interpretation also offers much more in the way of romantic flexibility and tempo variation within a given movement. In short, it has comparable whip-lash attack and virtuosity, plus considerably deeper musicality. As sound, the Marlboro-made edition is well balanced though a trifle wiry.

The Mozart Concertone must have been recorded several years ago, before the formation of the Guarneri String Quartet. Since the advent of that aggregation, Michael Tree has concentrated more on viola than on the violin. He is a first-class player on either instrument, with a characteristic focus and dead-center, kinetic attack. Jaime Laredo's gentler, more sweetly lyric sound blends well with Tree's energy, however, giving the lie once and for all to the fallacious notion that to play well with a partner one must play exactly as he does at all times. The additional *concertante* oboe and cello parts are handled with faultless aplomb by Leonard Arner and David Soyer respectively, while the orchestral playing under Alexander Schneider's direction is a paragon of pointed refinement and exciting comprehension. The sound is a bit fuller and more expansive on this side.

Highly recommendable in every respect. H.G.

MOREL: *Antiphonie*—See Somers: *Passacaglia and Fugue*.

MOZART: *Andante for Flute and Orchestra, in G, K. 315; Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, No. 1, in G, K. 313*—See Vivaldi: *Concertos for Flute and Strings, in D, P. 155* ("Il Cardellino"); *for Piccolo and Strings, in C, P. 79*.



MOZART: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 14, in E flat, K. 449; No. 17, in G, K. 453*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Schneider, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 6244. LP. \$4.79.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6844. SD. \$5.79.

MOZART: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 9, in E flat, K. 271; No. 14, in E flat, K. 449*

Alfred Brendel, piano; Solisti di Zagreb, Antonio Janigro, cond.

- VANGUARD VRS 1154. LP. \$4.79.
- • VANGUARD VSD 71154. SD. \$5.79.

MOZART: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 14, in E flat, K. 449; Serenade for Strings, No. 13, in G, K. 525* ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik")

Maria Michaela Cuvay, piano; Salzburg Mozart Players.

- MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 671. LP. \$2.50.
- • MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 671. SD. \$2.50.

MOZART: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 19, in F, K. 459; No. 26, in D, K. 537* ("Coronation")

Lili Kraus, piano; Orchestra of the Amsterdam Philharmonic Society, Gianfranco Rivoli, cond.

- MONITOR MC 2089. LP. \$1.98.
- • MONITOR MCS 2089. SD. \$1.98.

MOZART: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 11, in F, K. 413; No. 15, in B flat, K. 450*

Peter Frankl, piano; Württemberg Chamber Orchestra (Heilbronn), Jörg Faerber, cond.

- TURNABOUT TV 4027. LP. \$2.50.
- • TURNABOUT TV 34027S. SD. \$2.50.

On the Columbia disc the orchestral opening of K. 449, a delightful and poetic work, sounds a little rough and hard-driven; but as soon as the soloist enters, things settle down and continue in a highly satisfying fashion. Serkin maintains the verve of this movement while at the same time keeping the listener's attention riveted by the subtlety and musicality of his phrasing. His treatment of the largely unmarked solo part in the charming finale is an object lesson in the sensitive application of detached and legato articulation. The slow movement, a lovely aria, is beautifully sung by both the soloist and the fine orchestra. The only other recordings of this work in the domestic catalogues worthy of comparison with this one, it seems to me, are Alfred Brendel's, also to be discussed here, and Walter Klien's, on Vox. As for K. 453, a composition that is pure joy from start to finish, the present recording is obviously intended to replace the older one made by Serkin with Szell and the same orchestra. I am not convinced that

it does, entirely. It has, to be sure, a better balance between woodwinds and the piano, and the stereo version has the usual advantages of good directionality. Moreover, the playing of both soloist and orchestra in the slow movement and finale is irreproachable. But the orchestral beginning again needs a lighter hand, and I feel that both Serkin and Schneider tend to exaggerate the accent on the first note of the slurred eighth-note pair that is an important element in the opening Allegro.

If Schneider's opening of K. 449 seems a little overwrought, Janigro's, for Vanguard, strikes me as perhaps too relaxed. But here too the entrance of the piano serves to set everything on an even keel, and the performance picks up pace and spirit. Brendel may not have the penetration and authority of Serkin, and the tone of his piano is not as velvety as it could be, but his is highly laudable playing just the same. There is plenty of give-and-take, without twisting the music out of shape, in the way he molds a melodic line. Both soloist and orchestra play the Andantino poetically and the finale crisply. In the remarkable K. 271 Brendel's only rival is the old Serkin (Mme. Novaes was not up to her own high standard in her recording), and Brendel has the advantage not only of stereo but of better orchestral playing than Serkin was favored with. The younger pianist's performance throughout this work is tasteful, and in the great Andantino especially eloquent. Janigro and his expert little ensemble have sometimes seemed to me too intense in their readings of baroque compositions, but here in Mozart the nervousness is gone, though they remain as alert as ever.

There is a novel aspect in Musical Heritage Society's recording of K. 449. This work was written so that the winds could be omitted and only a small body of strings used. That is what is done here, perhaps for the first time on records. The "orchestra" consists of a string quintet. Unfortunately, the interest generated by this experiment is dissipated in the performance. Miss Cuvay plays pleasantly enough, but the whole work hardly ever departs from a single level of dynamic intensity. A half hour of unrelieved mezzo forte will dampen even Mozart. *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* is handled in the same monochromatic and unimaginative way.

Lili Kraus is coming back with a bang. Very recently, after a long absence from the domestic catalogues, she was presented by Epic in a three-disc set announced as Volume 1 of the Mozart Piano Concertos. Now Monitor comes along with the *Coronation*, which was also in the Epic set (with a different orchestra and conductor), and the beautiful K. 459, which was not. In the latter Miss Kraus gets off to a rather nervous start, with sudden loud bursts, but she soon gets rid of the kinks and in the rest of the work plays with skill and insight. In the *Coronation*, again, she turns in a satisfying performance, on the whole, though here, as in the Epic version, she plays a big cadenza at a spot in the finale where a short improvisation would have

been thought sufficient in Mozart's time. The sound, regrettably, is not up to the best modern standards. The piano is too far forward, the bass is boomy, and the orchestral middle and top are thin. In the first movement of K. 459 important woodwind passages are sometimes inaudible, and some orchestral byplay is lost in the finale of K. 537.

It is a pleasure to be able to say that the Turnabout disc is good enough to take a place with rivals that cost twice as much. Indeed, I am not sure that this version of the charming K. 450 is not the best available here, now that the fine performance by Leonard Bernstein is no longer listed; and as regards K. 413 Frankl is surpassed only by Serkin. Frankl, a young Hungarian artist who has been making a name for himself, plays with delicacy and finesse where those qualities are needed and with power where it is called for. He has a nicely singing tone, a smooth legato, and musicianly phrasing. He starts all his trills on the main note, and there might be some disagreement about an ornament or two, but otherwise his playing in this well-balanced and well-sounding recording is thoroughly enjoyable.

N.B.

MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 27, in B flat, K. 595—See Beethoven: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in B flat, Op. 19.

MOZART: Concertone for Two Violins and Orchestra, in C, K. 190—See Mendelssohn: Octet for Strings, in E flat, Op. 20.

MOZART: Dances and Marches, Vols. 4 and 5

Vienna Mozart Ensemble, Willi Boskovsky, cond.

• LONDON CM 9459/60. Two LP. \$4.79 each.

• LONDON CS 6459/60. Two SD. \$5.79 each.

These discs continue to divide Mozart's dance music chronologically and rhythmically into fragrant bouquets. Among the highlights of Vol. 4 are a contradance called *La Bataille*, with piccolo and side drum (K. 535); another one based on tunes from an opera by Anfossi (K. 607); and a delightful set of five (K. 609), the first of which uses the theme of "*Non più andrai*." There is also a March (K. 445) and twenty Minuets (K. 107), a few without trios. K. 107 is a remarkable set to be written by a fifteen-year-old composer, but not particularly remarkable for a fifteen-year-old Mozart. The players wisely split it up into four groups, with other things between, and add interest in the trios for strings alone by sometimes adding an oboe or a flute in a repetition, or using a solo violin, or—in No. 5—substituting oboes and a bassoon for the strings. In such cases the soloist occasionally embellishes his

part. On the whole the disc offers jolly listening.

In Vol. 5 there is, of the fourteen-year-old prodigy, traveling with his father in Italy, a delightful contradance, K. 123; of the thirty-five-year-old master, destined not to live the year out, there is a set of big minuets for full orchestra, K. 599, and a fine contradance titled *Les Filles malicieuses*, K. 610. K. 599 is full of high-grade material, and so is K. 571, *Six German Dances*, in the last of which Mozart has some fun with the "Turkish" music. The Ensemble maintains the high standard of polished and lively performance it established at the beginning of the series, and London continues to supply fine engineering. N.B.

MOZART: Serenade for Strings, No. 13, in G, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"); Divertimento No. 15, in B flat, K. 287

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 19004. LP. \$5.79.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 139004. SD. \$5.79.

Add another to the numerous excellent available recordings of the *Kleine Nachtmusik*. Karajan's does not differ in any marked way from the other good ones. Its finale may be more deliberate than usual but it remains lively just the same.

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for the Connoisseur

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The Divertimento receives a gorgeous performance. Here the melodies are molded with a loving touch, the splendid Berlin strings sing exquisitely, and Karajan conveys all the grace and poetry of this delightful music without indulging in any orchestral tricks. Some may find the Minuets too slow, particularly since they flank an Adagio, but otherwise this seems to me a flawless performance, enhanced by wonderfully warm, bright, and life-like sound. If you like this work played by a chamber group, with one player on a part, you will find the London recording very fine too; but if you prefer an orchestral performance, this is, to me, the best now available in the domestic catalogue. N.B.

NIELSEN: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 33

Tibor Varga, violin; Royal Danish Orchestra, Jerzy Semkow, cond.
 • TURNABOUT TV 4043. LP. \$2.50.
 • • TURNABOUT TV 34043S. SD. \$2.50.

First performed in 1912, this is the earliest of Nielsen's concertos. It is also the biggest in scale, and I think the most attractive. Laid out in two movements, each of the pattern slow-fast, and nearly forty minutes in length, it is unrestrainedly romantic in manner yet always characteristic of its composer. The thematic development may sometimes be a little thin, but the harmony has all of Nielsen's crisp, open-air nobility. At first, the final Rondo, marked *Allegretto scherzando*, may seem trivial; on closer acquaintance, however, a subtlety of mood reminiscent of some emotionally equivocal passages in Mahler and Shostakovich makes itself felt. Occasionally too there are echoes of Dvořák, but the individuality of the whole is unimpeachable.

Tibor Varga has the technique to cope with the very difficult solo part, and he gives an impassioned and perceptive performance. I have been unable to lay hands on a score of the work, but the Royal Danish Orchestra's playing under Jerzy Semkow sounds pretty good. The brass is particularly enthusiastic. Apart from an occasional patch of roughness and an excessively forward balancing of the soloist, the recording is satisfactory. B.J.

POULENC: Songs

Le Bestiaire; Les Banalités (Chanson d'Orkenise, Hôtel, Fagnes de Wallonnais, Voyage à Paris, Sanglots); Le Pont: Montparnasse; Reine des mouettes; C'est ainsi que tu es; Main dominée par le coeur; Les Ponts de Cé; Tel jour telle nuit; La Fraîcheur et le feu.

Bernard Kruszen, baritone; Jean Charles Richard, piano.
 • WESTMINSTER XWN 19105. LP. \$4.79.
 • • WESTMINSTER WST 17105. SD. \$5.79.

At the very least, Westminster rates pub-

lic acknowledgment of virtuous intent with respect to this release—it's about time some serious and comprehensive attention were paid the songs of Poulenc by recording companies, and this is the first LP in the domestic catalogue to be devoted entirely to them.

In fact, the record would be well worth the price just for the Eluard side (*Tel jour telle nuit* and *La Fraîcheur et le feu*); and more particularly for *Tel jour telle nuit*, which is one of the major achievements of French song literature, and which we almost never get a chance to hear in this country. It is a sort of cycle—all one poem, but one in which the alternation of obsessive address to a loved one with images of great vividness (mostly images of decay, but once of nascent life in the form of a blade of grass) allows Poulenc to create what amount to individual songs. It is some of the composer's darkest and strongest music, building tremendous force in the penultimate section ("*Figure de force brûlante et farouche/Cheveux noirs où l'or coule vers le sud*") and becoming oddly exalted and moving at the end ("I marvel at the unknown you are becoming/An unknown like yourself, like/Everything I love/Who is always new."). This is a Poulenc who has put banalities and *Banalités* behind him, and who has arrived at full maturity as a great composer of songs and a great setter of modern poetry.

The same is true, on a somewhat more modest scale, in *La Fraîcheur et le feu*: the verses of the onetime surrealist Eluard evidently forced Poulenc to get down to cases.

The other side brings us more familiar Poulenc—the Apollinaire songs are among his best known. *Le Bestiaire*, with its perfectly evoked crab scuttling and carp pond stillness, remains delightful—it's just cleverness, of course, but genuine cleverness. *Le Pont* is perfect from beginning to end, and though *Sanglots* is for me somewhat compromised by cocktail piano arpeggios, it is a well-constructed song. I've never been enthusiastic about creations like *Hôtel* or *Voyage à Paris*—you don't take the curse off something insignificant by putting the title of *Banalités* on it, and who cares, anyway? But for many people these songs are the essence of Poulenc, and they belong in a survey-course disc of this kind.

Bernard Kruszen is a Swiss-born baritone who has done most of his singing in Holland. I first heard his work four years ago, when I listened to his splendid disc of Debussy songs, never available here except as an import. He is without doubt a fine artist, but the challenges of these songs expose his vocal weaknesses. Like Souzay, he frequently has resort to a falsetto-ish half voice in the upper part of his range. Both these singers tread a very thin line between mezza-voce and falsetto, or between different mixtures of falsetto, and such a very light, crooned tone becomes extremely tiresome when it is used constantly. It robs the songs of much of their potential strength and seriousness, and in the long run seems only an evasion of the technical problem.

which is to find a means of grading dynamics throughout the range. Kruszen can sing a top *forte*, to be sure, even up into the very high tessitura demanded by parts of *Tel jour*, but it is a dry, unresonant sound, and there is nothing between this and the wispy pianissimo. Below the E flat or so, he produces a most attractive, mellow baritone sound, often strikingly similar to Souzay's. Of his musical and interpretative sensitivity there is no doubt, and in songs that do not demand too much variety above the staff, he is unexceptionable.

The accompaniments of Jean Charles Richard are superb throughout. The recording is well engineered, and though the jacket offers only the sketchiest of note-text presentations, Westminster will send along the complete texts and translations for the asking—and they are absolutely essential. C.L.O.

RAVEL: Daphnis et Chloë

Choeurs de la Radio Romande (Lausanne); Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
 • LONDON CM 9456. LP. \$4.79.
 • • LONDON CS 6456. SD. \$5.79.

Up until now the generally preferred reading of the complete *Daphnis et Chloë* has been the second Munch version, made for RCA Victor in 1961. Although I would hesitate to say that it is surpassed by the new Ansermet (also this conductor's second recorded edition), the latter performance strikes me as more relaxed, buoyant, and poetic than the dramatically tense and passionate Munch interpretation. From an executive point of view, both orchestras sound at their best (which is surely well-nigh ideal in each ensemble's individual way), but the wordless vocal parts by the Swiss chorus seem to me a shade sweeter and better "orchestral" integrated than those by the New England singers.

Technically, the new release has two decisive advantages. One is that it capitalizes on present-day processing's ability to get a bit over thirty-one minutes on a single disc side without inner-groove distortion, thus avoiding the particularly awkward Munch side break. The other advantage is stereo recording that quite miraculously reconciles the conflicting demands of ultraclarity and of atmospheric evocation. Fine as the Munch/RCA Victor sound still is, it is now outclassed by the magical translucence of the Ansermet/London sonics, their more piquant coloring and more incisive ring, and by the wider over-all dynamic range. Hence, while the Ansermet reading of the final dance is decidedly less exciting in itself, its scintillating sound makes an even more thrilling impact than that of the Munch recorded performance. More significantly, though, the extraordinary audio technology displayed here reveals innumerable "new" felicities of detail in the score. R.D.D.

RAVEL: Trois chants hébraïques; Chansons madécasses—See Cante-loube; Chants d'Auvergne.

ROUSSEL: Symphonies: No. 3, in G minor; No. 4, in A

Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, André Cluytens, cond.

- ANGEL 36327. LP. \$4.79.
- • ANGEL S 36327. SD. \$5.79.

Lamoureux Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.

- EPIC LC 3918. LP. \$4.79.
- • EPIC BC 1318. SD. \$5.79.

A curious and unexpected Roussel rush; Munch wins handily. Roussel's early years were spent in the French navy, and at some of the more distant ports of call he picked up a taste for the Oriental, of which an exotic trace or two still remains even in these busy neoclassical works written late in life. The early influences of D'Indy and Debussy, however, have here been left behind in favor of a pulsing, mildly dissonant, contrapuntal, firmly tonal symphonic style that has individuality. For French music this is not very elegant—its best qualities are, rather, a brusque, stomping vigor and a kind of empirical, *ad hoc* tonal structure of some originality—and except for occasional flashes of wit, notably in the scherzo of the Fourth, I find the conceptions heavy-handed, more dependent on weight of statement and pulse than on significance of idea.

Oddly enough, neither one of these "Gallic" performances has much finesse, with the result that the less appealing aspects of the music are emphasized. Cluytens does not even have the benefit of good playing or good sound, and the already problematic orchestration has difficulty penetrating the murk. Munch gets somewhat better playing and the rather rough, hard-driving treatment has the advantage of vigor; the sound here—reviewed on a test pressing—is close and not pleasant but at least it has presence and clarity. E.S.

SCARLATTI, DOMENICO: Salve Regina—See Bach: Cantata No. 170, Vergnügte Rub'

SCHUBERT: Quintet for Piano and Strings, in A, Op. 114, D. 667 ("Trout")

Elly Ney, piano; Max Strub, violin; Walter Hans Trampler, viola; Ludwig Hoelscher, cello; Hermann Schubert, double bass [from HMV DB 4533 37, c. 1936].

- ODEON E 80838. LP. \$5.79.

For the majority of record collectors, the version of the Trout Quintet in 78-rpm days was another HMV set, by Artur Schnabel and the Pro Arte with Claude Hobday as the double bassist. It is more than probable, however, that if the present performance had been afforded as widespread circulation, it would have seriously challenged the su-

premacny of Schnabel/Pro Arte. For the level of playing is fully comparable, and in certain ways actually superior.

Elly Ney, like Schnabel a Leschetizky pupil, plays with a feathery, crisp whimsicality every bit as appropriate and Schubertian as the more massive and regal style of her renowned opposite. The string playing of the Strub members is considerably more fine-grained and less frilly than that of the Pro Arte (who failed to provide the kind of structured framework suggested by Schnabel's pianism). The Ney/Strub approach provides an interesting amalgam of "old school" emotionalism and modern, controlled terseness. The fusion between these seemingly antagonistic elements is

highly, indeed completely, successful. Tempos are fast and rhythmic, but never impersonal or rigid. A sense of easy momentum is present at all times, and every movement seems to propel itself with beguiling graciousness. I particularly admire the handling of the fourth, which allows the unique personality of each instrument of the ensemble its head in a different variation, and which strikes a wonderful synthesis between casualness and sentiment (without ever degenerating into perfunctoriness or sentimentality). All told, this is one of the most buoyant and integrated readings it has ever been my pleasure to hear. It sounds both profound *and* like great fun.

If Walter Hans Trampler is, indeed,

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the selfsame violist whom present-day American audiences know so well, the recording (made in Germany) would have to date from the mid-Thirties. One would never guess that fact from the sound, which is clean and true, and which could easily pass for twenty years later were it not for a slight bit of surface noise. A most distinguished version, worthy of consideration alongside the reissued Schnabel/Pro Arte (Angel COLH 40) and the recent Peter Serkin/Alexander Schneider for Vanguard. Curzon's London record is also fine. H.G.

SCHUBERT: Sonata for Piano, in A, Op. posth., D. 959

Rudolf Serkin, piano.

- COLUMBIA ML 6249. LP. \$4.79.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6849. SD. \$5.79.

This expansive, fervent, granitic reading of Schubert's wonderful posthumous A major Sonata was recorded just before Serkin played it at Hunter College at the end of February, and the disc was released, along with previously taped material, to commemorate the performer's birthday in March. As always with this artist, the performance affords us a new look in depth at the work itself, in this case one of Schubert's still far from understood masterpieces. Serkin's approach differs considerably from both Schnabel's account (reissued on Pathé COLH 84 recently) and Charles Rosen's tersely analytical rendering (Epic LC 1855/BC 1255). Its most striking feature is the tremendous, even Olympian, grandeur that the sometimes lyrically treated music assumes. This outlook is emphasized by the observation of the first-movement repeat, and by the strongly accentuated rhythmic pulse. In the first and last movements particularly, Serkin's measured, pounding momentum leaves no doubt whatsoever that Schubert specified four-four time—not *alla breve*, as so many performances would lead one to suspect. The Andante second movement too is a trifle broader than we often hear it, though still infinitely more *con moto* than the somber adagio heard in Pavel Stepan's otherwise distinguished Supraphon recording. Serkin does not possess the cushioned legato and sheer tonal allure available to Schnabel, but within Serkin's bleaker palette one finds much diversity and atmosphere. His storm section is a paragon of unleashed fury, and—like Rosen—Serkin opts for the recently rediscovered alternative reading at measure 142 that replaces the G sharp of the older editions with the startlingly original G double sharp.

I will always cherish the Schnabel recording, which still sounds well, and is one of the finest examples of that great master's playing. Serkin's, however, comes reasonably near that landmark and, of course, his disc has an advantage of twenty-nine years of progress in recording technique. The sound he has been accorded here, by the way, is some of the finest Columbia has given this pianist. H.G.

SCHUBERT: Symphonies: No. 3, in D, D. 200; No. 6, in C, D. 589

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond.

- LONDON CM 9453. LP. \$4.79.
- • LONDON CS 6453. SD. \$5.79.

The tender and luscious delights of Schubert's early symphonies fall gratefully on only the patient ear. One must, in order to unearth those delights, accept without question a language that is garrulous, repetitive and, above all, leisurely. One must wait patiently while the young romantic interrupts his saunter to sample a fragrant blossom by the wayside, thus being forced to start his discourse over again from the beginning. The discourse itself makes such forbearance well worth the while.

Sir Thomas Beecham, the first to explore this repertory on records, understood this very well. He made a few impatient cuts in his traversal of the Sixth, but on the whole his sense of pacing, the ease and suppleness of his phrasing, are the standards against which this music is best measured. And the Beecham spirit exists (without cuts) in the recent RCA Victor Schubert album by his disciple Denis Vaughan.

Münchinger's performances have many virtues, but ease and suppleness are not among them. By adopting faster tempos and a sharper articulation he actually makes both symphonies sound longer than they are. His tempos in both slow movements are fatally animated, to the point where the music begins to sound trivial. There is fine spirit in his exposition of the tarantellalike finale of No. 3 (a clear prophecy of the finale of No. 9, by the way), but this is the only really successful spot on the record.

The orchestra plays well, and the balance honors Schubert's delectable wind scoring to a better degree than on the Vaughan discs (perhaps because the players themselves are better). Otherwise, however, the justice to these wholly lovable works is incomplete. ALAN RICH

SCHUMANN: Carnival, Op. 9; Kinderszenen, Op. 15; Papillons, Op. 2

Alfred Cortot, piano [from various HMV originals, 1928, 1935, and 1947].

- PATHE COLH 306. LP. \$5.98.

The virtues and drawbacks of Cortot's way with Schumann are equally on exhibition in this intriguing anthology. The late master was the typical embodiment of what we like to call "the old school." While his intellectual capacities far outstripped those of many of his confrères (Cortot was a scholar, a conductor, a teacher, and—in his special way—a highly analytical player), one will encounter in much of his playing details that are highly arbitrary. Moreover, certain aspects of pianistics—big skips and left-hand fingered octaves most patently—evidently presented enormous problems, even in the artist's prime. Then too, his habit of toying with meter and of emphasizing inner voices by an-

icipation may at times seem to impede the logical flow of the music. On the other hand, Cortot's masculine way of structuring a phrase group can be admirable, and he possessed an explosive dramatic sweep, an introspective lyricism, and often a genuine magnetism. And of great importance, he was a unique colorist, and a most imaginative user of the sustaining pedal.

The 1930 *Papillons* recording shows how beguiling Cortot's work could be when he was in the vein. The customary *leggiero* elements of this whimsical composition are fully conveyed, but there is also surprising assertiveness in the interpretation. *Kinderszenen*, which Cortot recorded three times, was a *spécialité de la maison* with the pianist. I question the choice here of the 1947 in preference to the second edition which was presumably made around the same time as the *Papillons*—some of the spontaneity and grace of the earlier version had been lost in Cortot's later years—but there is still much to delight. I confess to being bitterly disappointed, however, by this 1928 *Carnaval*. Having already discovered the enormous superiority of Cortot's 1928 *Symphonic Etudes* over his 1953 account, I had surmised that the 1953 *Carnaval*—which I have known since its publication—would be similarly eclipsed by the earlier exposition. Some of the tempos, it is true, are more animated in the 1928 edition, but for the most part one finds the same stop-go mannerisms, the same refusal to let the cumulative aspects of the delightful work have their head. And in place of the many 1953 sloppinesses, one finds here different but equally obtrusive sloppinesses.

The sound is best in the 1953 *Papillons*, decent enough in the others, although the *Carnaval* is blemished by surface scratch inherited from the original shellacs. Incidentally, Cortot persists in playing the "sphinxes" in *Carnaval*. So did a few other exponents of the work—Rachmaninoff most notably. Clara Schumann, however, considered this a *gaffe* of major proportions. H.G.

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

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

- PHILIPS PHM 500092. LP. \$4.79.
- • PHILIPS PHS 900092. SD. \$5.79.

Szell's performance of this often played, often misunderstood symphony gets to the heart of the matter with dead-center aim. His is a conception of icy fervor and superb intelligence, realized in this recording by the burnished magnificence of the Concertgebouw's playing and by the scrupulously detailed, wonderfully brilliant recorded sound. The biting clarity of the balance reveals countless felicities in the music, the execution, and the conducting. Szell obviously led this recording with true relish and the result is easily the most bracing, idiomatic Sibelius Second in stereo (nearest competitor: Montoux's for Victor). H.G.

✓ **SOMERS:** *Passacaglia and Fugue*
 †**Morel:** *Antiphonie*
 †**Toch:** *Jephtha*

Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney, cond.

- LOUISVILLE LOU 661. LP. \$7.95.
- • LOUISVILLE LS 661. SD. \$8.45.

Canadian music is so little known on our side of the line that a disc containing two distinguished Canadian pieces is of very special interest and importance. Harry Somers' *Passacaglia and Fugue* is a grandly scaled, powerful work, obviously traditional in form but exhibiting a complete mastery of contemporary contrapuntal resources. The *Antiphonie* of François Morel, on the same side, is very short, based on Gregorian chant, and is actually a study in diaphanous, dissonant textures.

Jephtha, by the late Ernst Toch, on the flip side, is described both as a "rhapsodic poem" and as its composer's fifth symphony. It is certainly rhapsodic enough. It proceeds by a series of short episodes, alternately plaintive and tempestuous, all adding up to a musical experience of considerable force. What it all has to do with the Biblical general and his famous daughter is not immediately apparent, but perhaps it needn't be.

The recording is far and away the best the Louisville Orchestra has yet brought forth, and the performances are presumably authoritative. A.F.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Fantasy Overtures: Romeo and Juliet; Hamlet, Op. 67*

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Lorin Maazel, cond.

- LONDON CM 9463. LP. \$4.79.
- • LONDON CS 6463. SD. \$5.79.

Since there are other manifestly better performances of *Romeo and Juliet* (among them the newest Ormandy—see page 92), the main interest here is the *Hamlet*, currently available only in sonically inferior readings by Boult and Stokowski. *Hamlet* is a less successful Fantasy Overture than the overpopular *Romeo and Juliet* or the much respected *Francesca da Rimini*. Thematically and dramatically it flounders in an effort to combine heroic, romantic, and tragic ideas, and neither programmatic nor musical coherence is achieved.

Maazel's reading does little to overcome the episodic nature of *Hamlet*, and, even in *Romeo and Juliet*, where Tchaikovsky's ideas are better ordered in a simpler conception, the conductor's approach is fragmentary. While he elicits from the Vienna Philharmonic playing that is precise, well balanced, and (except for some forcing by overdriven strings) warm and clear, he gives little evidence of musical or emotional involvement on his own part. To play this music one must really believe in it, and such conviction is absent here.

The Vienna Philharmonic sound is generally warm and open (with the exception noted), with well-spaced stereo effect but reasonably sharp focus on individual players and sections. P.H.

TELEMANN: *Water Music (Overture in C, "Hamburger Ebb und Flut"); Musique de table, 2nd Production: Concerto for Three Violins, Strings, and Continuo, in F*

Robert Gendre, Jean-Pierre Wallez, Nicole Laroque, violins; Collegium Musicum of Paris, Roland Douatte, cond.

- NONESUCH H 1109. LP. \$2.50.
- • NONESUCH H 71109. SD. \$2.50.

This is not one of Nonesuch's more distinguished achievements. The delightful *Water Music* suite is vigorously played, but it is shorn of its final *Canarie* depicting "the jolly sailors"—and why, oh why, will so many conductors (French conductors, at that) not double-dot French-overture rhythms as they should? The first and last movements of the Concerto for Three Violins on the other side are well enough done, but the central Largo is taken at a dragging tempo that inflates it out of all proportion and all stylistic propriety.

The recording of both works is big, bright, and blowzy, rather like Toulouse-Lautrec's *Danseuse anglaise*. The best version of the *Water Music* remains Wenzinger's on Archive ARC 3198/73198, by a clear margin over the Barshai/Moscow Chamber Orchestra recording on Angel. The Concerto for Three Violins appears to be otherwise available only as part of complete versions of the *Musique de table* 2nd Production: the first choice here is Brüggén on Telefunken. B.J.

TOCH: *Jephtha*—See Somers: *Passacaglia and Fugue*.

VERDI: *Arias*

Un Ballo in maschera: Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa. Macbeth: Una macchia—è qui tutt'ora. Don Carlo: O don fatale; Tu che le vanità. Aida: Ritorna vincitor!

Régine Crespin, soprano; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Georges Prêtre, cond.

- ANGEL 36311. LP. \$4.79.
- • ANGEL S 36311. SD. \$5.79.

I've been a devotee of Régine Crespin ever since I heard the French pressing of her first aria disc about eight years ago; and despite the vocal unevenness she has displayed in some of her recent appearances, she still seems to me one of the handful of present-day singers who have the size and beauty of voice, and the authority of manner, to fill *prima donna* shoes.

This recital, however, impresses me as only a partial success. First off, it is not well recorded, being one of those bits of stereo engineering that sounds as if it emanated from an empty nave. As a result, notes run together in a blur and *tuttis* become mere noise, with pitches barely distinguishable. This affects the orchestra more than it does the solo voice, which merely sounds echoey—but it seriously mars one's enjoyment.

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Nor do I understand the selection of either the *Macbeth* Sleepwalking Scene or the Eboli aria: it is not as if these pieces stood shamefully neglected by contemporary singers. The *Macbeth* is a very special item—no point in doing it unless there is something uniquely compelling to be found in a new version. (We have, after all, the two complete recordings, the separate version by Birgit Nilsson, the recent effort by Grace Bumbry, and the entire LP side of Maria Callas' *Lady Macbeth*.) Crespin's strong suit, temperamentally, is her unmistakable womanliness, a quality which can be used to good effect here and there in the Sleepwalking Scene but which must be set off by very different characteristics if the scene as a whole is to be a success. She chooses to slather the whole piece with a flat, white sound which is effective if used at one or two right places, but which here becomes simply a substitute for genuine penetration and specific interpretation. There is no scorn (listen to Callas at "*Non osi entrar?*"), no sense of *Lady Macbeth's* past strengths, no reliving of the situations about which she is supposedly dreaming; it is merely sad. Matters aren't helped by the overaccented accompaniments of Prêtre, by the shifting position of the voice near the end of the scene (if she is supposed to be heading off-stage, it doesn't work), or by the substitution of a very pretty floated A flat for the D flat at the end of the scene—one might accept it from a mezzo, but it isn't an option or an inserted cadenza, and it ought to be observed by sopranos, at least.

Dramatic sopranos are seemingly compelled to venture into mezzo territory of late, and vice-versa—we get soprano arias from Mmes. Gorr and Bumbry, and we get "*O don fatale*" from Mmes. Nilsson and Crespin. Granted Crespin does have an unusually rich and easy low register, but her timbre is still soprano, not mezzo or contralto, and there is nothing so startling about her interpretation, which is vigorous and traditional, as to make us feel her recording of the aria was essential.

Of the remaining arias, I should say she scores two out of three. The *Ballo Amelia* is a fine role for her, and both the recitative and the aria are well animated, the mood and situation well captured. The top climaxes are not as easy as one would like, but in the main the singing is big, round, and beautiful. The same can be said of "*Tu che le vanità*"; it starts rather tentatively, but the middle section (her reminiscences of France) is ravishing, and the concluding pages have the sweep and grandeur they need. She would make an interesting Elisabetta.

The *Aida* scene starts off with the slowest, sludgiest statement of the *Su! del Nilo* theme from the orchestra I can remember hearing, and maintains a heavy, tramping motion throughout. Crespin has moments of great effectiveness, but falls into a crooned sort of tone (not only in *piano* passages but at full voice too—it's sort of like a blues note) often enough to compromise the music's movement, at least for me, even

though the voice is basically a great instrument for the role.

A text leaflet is supposed to be enclosed, but my sealed copy had none—probably an isolated packaging error. I'm sorry to be so negative about the work of such a fine artist, but the record has a slapdash, recording-arias-for-the-sake-of-recording-arias atmosphere, and I think we can expect more where Mme. Crespin is concerned. C.L.O.

VIVALDI: *Concertos: for Flute and Strings, in D, P. 155 ("Il Cardellino"); for Piccolo and Strings, in C, P. 79*

†**Mozart: *Andante for Flute and Orchestra, in G, K. 315; Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, No. 1, in G, K. 313***

Julius Baker, flute; Solisti di Zagreb, Antonio Janigro, cond.

• VANGUARD VRS 1153. LP. \$4.79.
• • VANGUARD VSD 71153. SD. \$5.79.

Julius Baker and the Solisti are made for one another, and it would be hard to find more expert and sensitive performances of the Vivaldi *Il Cardellino* and the Mozart G major Concerto in particular. The fast movements are delicate and precise, the slow movements beautifully paced—the gentle, spacious Mozart Adagio is something special, both intrinsically and in its rendition here. Janigro's accompaniment is highly articulate (note the clean-etched string counterline, for example, in the Mozart finale). Baker even brings me somewhat closer to an appreciation of—if not a positive yearning for—the piccolo as a solo instrument; his manipulation of the wildly florid finale is a triumph. Stereo is not much emphasized; the sound on both versions is exceptionally clean. S.F.

Recitals & Miscellany

LEONARD BERNSTEIN: "*The Great Romantic Symphonies*"

Schubert: *Symphony No. 8, in B minor, D. 759 ("Unfinished")*. Mendelssohn: *Symphony No. 4, in A, Op. 90 ("Italian")*. Franck: *Symphony in D minor*. Dvořák: *Symphony No. 9, in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World")*.

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

• COLUMBIA D3L 337. Three LP. \$9.59.
• • COLUMBIA D3S 737. Three SD. \$11.59.

The title of this collection is only approximate—I would hardly call the Mendelssohn "romantic" or the Franck "great"—but it makes an agreeable

package. Only the Schubert performance is new. The Mendelssohn was originally released in 1959 on ML 5349/MS 6050 (coupled with Haydn's *Symphony No. 104*); the Franck in the same year on ML 5391/MS 6072; and the Dvořák in 1963 on ML 5793/MS 6393. I shall not usurp the realm of my colleague Peter Davis further than to say that the three reissued performances seem to me to be good, competitive ones.

The Schubert too takes its place among the more recommendable versions of this inexhaustible work. Bernstein's performance is indeed romantic, but not to any inappropriate degree. The strong delineation of the pizzicato bass from measure 9 onward compels attention, and the interpretation maintains a high level of drama throughout, without ever degenerating into melodrama. The orchestral playing and recording are fine, and it is good to have the first-movement repeat. B.J.

CHOIR OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY: "*Westminster Abbey's Famous Composers*"

Whyte: *In nomine; Christe, qui lux es et dies*. Gibbons: *Organ fantasia; O clap your hands together*. Blow: *Salvator mundi; God Is Our Hope and Strength; Organ Voluntary*. Purcell: *Remember not; Organ Voluntary; O Lord God of Hosts*. Croft: *Organ Voluntary*.

Simon Preston, organ; Choir of Westminster Abbey, Douglas Guest, cond.

• • ODEON CSD 1603. SD. \$5.79.

All of the gentlemen whose names are listed above were masters of the choristers at the Abbey and they account for the largest and best portion of that venerable institution's musical history between 1570 and 1727. Two great musical periods are represented, the late Renaissance (Whyte and Gibbons) and the baroque (Purcell and Croft). Blow actually falls somewhere in between; he was really a baroque composer (he was the teacher of Croft and Purcell and, ironically, served at the Abbey both before Purcell and again after the latter's death). There is, however, something archaic and independent about Blow's music (both in the deeply chromatic *Salvator mundi* and in the more conventionally modal anthem) that is appealing today. Gibbons and Purcell are, of course, something more like known quantities; Blow, more enigmatic, emerges with distinction in this company.

The organ playing is good and the boys' choir is, in the English tradition, well trained; but there is an imbalance between the boys' and men's voices and a general fuzziness in the ensemble which seems to go a little beyond what is necessary for the illusion of cathedral space. E.S.

OSCAR GHIGLIA: "*Guitar Music of Four Centuries*"

Bach: *Prelude and Fugue, in D* (tr. Segovia). Weiss: *Fantasia in E minor*

(arr. Kennard). Frescobaldi: *Aria con variazioni* (tr. Segovia). Dowland: *Fantasia No. 7, in E minor*. Falla: *Homage à Debussy*. Ponce: *Sonata No. 3, in D minor*. Villa Lobos: *Etude No. 11, in E minor*.

Oscar Ghiglia, guitar.

- ANGEL 36282. LP. \$4.79.
- ANGEL S 36282. SD. \$5.79.

Oscar Ghiglia, an Italian, is a twenty-eight-year-old Segovia pupil who, to judge from this recording, has all the equipment necessary to carry on the distinguished tradition now being furthered by the "new generation" of young guitarists. His technique is superb, his musical instincts sound, his way with the contrapuntal textures of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century lutanists easy, clear, and natural. On the "modern" side of the disc—in the course of the fifteen-minute Ponce Sonata, for example—he occasionally seems to me a shade less free in rhythm, less rhapsodic, than he might be. But this is a minor criticism, and his projection of the coloristic effects—almost electronic in sound—of the Villa Lobos is impressive on any count. Angel's recorded sound is full, close, and luminous. S.F.

JOHN KENNEDY HANKS: "The Art Song in America"

John Kennedy Hanks, tenor; Ruth Friedberg, piano.

- DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS DWR 6417B. Two LP. \$10.00.

For me, there are four marvelous songs among the thirty-nine recorded here. Roy Harris' *Fog*, to Sandburg's cat-footed text, is as subtle and telling a bit of musical impressionism as the literature affords. (Incidentally, it is by a composer one never thinks of in connection with the song.) Charles Griffes' *Lament of Ian the Proud* is a masterpiece of Celtic drama and lyricism, and his *Symphony in Yellow*, to a text by Oscar Wilde, defines the era of Whistlerian aestheticism as perfectly in its medium as any lithograph by Whistler himself. The fourth of these great songs is Ives' *Paracelsus*, with its formidable piano part and its long-spun, philosophical vocal line.

There are some other good things too, but of lesser interest for one reason or another. The Emily Dickinson songs of Aaron Copland are the work of a very distinguished mind, but there are better performances of them on other records. There is a nice, malicious wit in Ross Lee Finney's settings of poems by Benjamin Franklin, and Samuel Barber's lyricism is occasionally plausible. For the rest, Mr. Hanks tends far too much in his selection here to identify the "art song" (whatever that is) with the genteel tradition.

The composer most richly represented here is the respectable but unexciting Smith College academician, John Duke, with five songs. MacDowell, Chadwick, and Loeffler may have been included as a gesture towards history, but they are

not nearly such good history as the songs, say, of Francis Hopkinson, Henry Clay Work, or Stephen Foster. There is simply no excuse, in an anthology published by a great university, for such obvious and much recorded trash as Richard Hageman's *Do Not Go, My Love* and John Alden Carpenter's *When I Bring You Colored Toys*; and the songs of Werner Josten, Paul Bowles, Celius Dougherty, Paul Nordoff, and Norman Dello Joio included here are very little better. Even Ives is genteelized; except for the great *Paracelsus*, he is represented by the early, suave, uncharacteristic *Canon* and that dreadful *Charlie Rutlage* thing which is fast becoming the *Danny Deever* of the 1960s. Meanwhile such major modern song composers as Theodore Chanler, Lester Trimble, Virgil Thomson, John Edmunds, and John Cage find no place in this collection.

Hanks is a very acceptable if not tremendously exciting singer. He has a nice tone, projects a lyric line well, has a fair command of nuance, gets in trouble with his intervals now and then. Ruth Friedberg is a superlative pianist, and one would like to hear her in an album of her own. The sound throughout is excellent. A.F.

IGOR KIPNIS: Italian Baroque Music for Harpsichord

A. Scarlatti: *Tocatta for Harpsichord, No. 7, in D minor*. Pasquini: *Three Arias; Cuckoo Tocatta*. Cimarosa: *Sonatas for Harpsichord: No. 29, in C minor; No. 31, in G; No. 23, in A minor; No. 24, in C*. Frescobaldi: *Balletto terzo*. Rossi: *Tocatta for Harpsichord, No. 7, in D minor*. Galuppi: *Sonata for Harpsichord, No. 4, in C minor*.

Igor Kipnis, harpsichord.

- EPIC LC 3911. LP. \$4.79.
- • EPIC BC 1311. SD. \$5.79.

This is a very well-made record, but I must confess to being rather less than captivated by the music itself. The rhythmic squareness of the Cimarosa sonatas (the originals of Arthur Benjamin's factitious Concerto for Oboe and Strings) neatly pinpoint the difference between a genius like Mozart and a competent workman. The Galuppi has little more character, and both the Alessandro Scarlatti Tocatta (in spite of the motoric excitement of its Fugue) and the one by Michelangelo Rossi degenerate too readily into the kind of keyboard coruscations that must be fun to play but are tiresome to listen to. Not all that is baroque is good, and I feel a lack of memorable melody, rhythm, or harmony in these pieces. Pasquini's equally simple-minded but more individual *Cuckoo Tocatta* and his three Arias are on a higher level; and several cubits again above these is the *Balletto terzo* of Frescobaldi—this is a wonderful piece, which perhaps proves something about Italian keyboard music, since the term "baroque" has to be stretched a good many years backward to include it.

Kipnis plays attractively, with good

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style and appropriate registration. He is not Rafael Puyana's equal in rhythmic verve, but there is a relaxed quality in his approach that largely compensates for this. The recording—I have heard only the stereo—is impressively lifelike and colorful. B.J.

MUSIC OF THE HIGH RENAISSANCE IN ENGLAND

Gibbons: *O God, the King of Glory; Great Lord of Lords; Lord Salisbury's Pavan*. Ferrabosco II: *Dovehouse Pavan*. Byrd: *O Lord, How Vain; Lord Salisbury's Pavan; Elegy on the Death of Thomas Tallis; In Nomine a 5*. Weelkes: *As Vestas Was from Latmos Hill Descending*. Morley: *Hard by a Crystal Fountain*. Bull: *Prelude and In Nomine*. Tomkins: *Lady Folliot's Galliard*.

Simon Preston, harpsichord and organ; Purcell Consort of Voices; Jaye Consort of Viols; Grayston Burgess, cond.

- TURNABOUT TV 4017. LP. \$2.50.
- • TURNABOUT TV 34017S. SD. \$2.50.

Even at twice the price this record would be a bargain. The program intelligently intermingles vocal with instrumental, solo with ensemble pieces; the quality of performance ranges from good to superb; the recording is clear and lifelike; and every one of the twelve works included is worthy of the golden age through which English music passed in the half-century around 1600.

Alfred Deller's performance (on Bach Guild 557) of Byrd's great *Elegy* on the death of his master Thomas Tallis has for years been required listening for my most favored guests. But on this new record a young English tenor named Ian Partridge succeeds in singing it even more beautifully and movingly. The ease and evenness with which he produces a lovely lyric voice are as impressive as the sensitivity of his phrasing. The other solo song, *O Lord, How Vain*, is done almost as well by soprano Barbara Elsy: in her concern for purity of line, she sometimes thins her tone excessively, but she too is an artist of high accomplishment. The other members of the Purcell Consort—Christina Clarke, soprano; Grayston Burgess (who also directs) and John Whitworth, countertenors; and Christopher Keyte, a fine resonant bass—are just as admirable, both technically and interpretatively, whether in the serene beauty of Orlando Gibbons' anthem style, or in the Weelkes and Morley madrigals from *The Triumphs of Oriana*, with their blend of subtlety and naive pictorialism.

At the harpsichord, Simon Preston plays the two *Lord Salisbury's Pavans* and the John Bull and Thomas Tomkins pieces cleanly and in good style, though he sounds a shade less at home on this instrument than on the organ, and though I should have preferred a slower, more expressive tempo for the Gibbons piece. The Jaye Consort provide excellent support in the Gibbons and Byrd vocal pieces and also give fine performances of a Pavan by the younger Alfonso Ferrabosco and an *In Nomine* by Byrd.

Their five instruments—treble, alto, two tenors, and bass—are, I believe, the actual instruments of an authentic Elizabethan chest of viols, and they produce a wonderfully rich and homogeneous sound.

The Gibbons anthem *Great Lord of Lords*, with which the record ends, is a curiosity. It was originally composed to words referring to King James I's journey to Scotland, but, to quote John Buttrey's informative liner, "new words in honour of the Trinity were provided in 1893 by H. R. Bramley," and it is with these that it is sung here. It was kind of H. R. Bramley to go to so much trouble; but though I am far from canvassing any preference for King James I over the Trinity, his effort merely serves to show that you cannot fit good vocal music to new words without damaging it: it is fascinating—and strongly illuminates Gibbons' skill—to compare the very approximate phrase correspondences of this reworded piece with the supremely natural word setting of *O God, the King of Glory*. No doubt someone will come along and prove that this too was originally written for different words, and I shall look a fool; but while my credit on the point is still undamaged, I urge everyone to buy this lovely record. B.J.

NEW YORK PRO MUSICA: *Early Baroque Music of Italy*

Monteverdi: *Cantate Domino; Laetaniae della Beata Vergine; Nisi Dominus; O come sei gentile; Lamento della ninfa*. Frescobaldi: *Toccata nona; Canzona settima detta la Superba; Canzona quinta*. Turini: *Trio Sonata*. Dalla Casa: *Alix avoit*.

New York Pro Musica, Noah Greenberg, cond.

- DECCA DL 9425. LP. \$4.79.
- • DECCA DL 79425. SD. \$5.79.

It is melancholy to think of the director of this record as "the late Noah Greenberg," and small consolation to be able to welcome it as typical of the achievements which will make him so sadly missed. Such, however, it is. Whether or not "baroque" characterizes the music accurately is a point about which Charles Canfield Brown's liner note has some interesting things to say. What is not in doubt is the beauty of almost all these pieces. The loveliest is Monteverdi's *Lamento della ninfa* from the 8th Book of madrigals, a pastoral piece with a subtle dramatic interplay between solo soprano and men's trio. Elizabeth Humes sings it beautifully, though her Italian is in need of polishing. *O come sei gentile*, from the 7th Book, is almost as good. Among the religious pieces, *Cantate Domino* and the *Laetaniae della Beata Vergine* are impressive in a more formal fashion, but *Nisi Dominus* is as passionately expressive as most secular music.

There is ample variety of mood and texture in these works, and the record is further diversified by some attractive instrumental pieces by Frescobaldi, Francesco Turini, and Girolamo dalla Casa. The recording is admirably

smooth, and the album includes full texts and translations. B.J.

EUGENE ORMANDY: *"The Art of Eugene Ormandy"*

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 8, in F, Op. 93*. Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod*. Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet, Fantasy Overture*. Debussy: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. Ravel: *La Valse*.

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA M2L 338. LP. \$9.59.
- • COLUMBIA M2S 738. SD. \$11.59.

After several records featuring first-desk players in the Philadelphia Orchestra, we now have a two-record tribute to the master virtuoso of Philadelphia himself. And rightly so, for Eugene Ormandy is celebrating thirty years as director of the Philadelphia Orchestra and twenty-eight years' association with Columbia Records.

The brochure accompanying this album and advertisements for it both take pains to give Ormandy credit for what has popularly been known as the "Philadelphia Sound"—quite rightly, for the orchestra as we know it today is very much Ormandy's creation and it produces a sound quite different from that of the ensemble he inherited from Stokowski in 1936. Both "sounds" centered on purely sensuous quality, but Ormandy's is richer and more relaxed. This effortless quality, this feeling of infinite sonic resources, and an incomparable smoothness of texture and attack are among the distinguishing qualities of Ormandy's Philadelphia Orchestra as heard both on records and in the concert hall. But the recordings introduce elements not heard in the Academy of Music or Carnegie Hall: the resonant ambience surrounding the orchestra is deliberately balanced with a moderately detailed emphasis on solo players and sections in the orchestra. This can be achieved only with a multiple-microphone system and is quite different from the more open texture and more clearly focused perspective of the concert hall. However, this recorded acoustic is quite compatible with the Ormandy affinity for the sensuous aspect of music.

Any such miscellaneous collection as this will have both strong points and weak ones. Among the former here is a performance of *La Valse* in which Ormandy's peerless orchestral ear perfectly complements Ravel's exploitation of the modern symphony orchestra. Almost as successful is the Debussy piece, though some may cavil at the weighty texture of sound (which may be due in part to the fact that this performance was first released six years ago). At the other end of the qualitative scale is the Beethoven Eighth Symphony, in which Ormandy's energy and the rich Philadelphia sound are not equal to bringing the work to meaningful life in symphonic terms. The texture is perilously close to muddy and Ormandy is too much involved in sheer kinetic energy

to enhance the total structural effect with attention to significant details.

Ormandy conceives the *Prelude and Love-Death* in symphonic as opposed to operatic terms—a quite justifiable approach since Wagner himself devised this concert piece as a sort of “epitome” of the whole opera. But by building this two-part work towards the climax of the *Love-Death*, Ormandy misses the essential dramatic sense of the music. This was most eloquently realized in the still incomparable prewar record of Furtwängler, who conceived the last quarter of the *Prelude* and all of the *Love-Death* as a resolution of the almost intolerable tension reached at the climax of the *Prelude*. Nevertheless, Ormandy's is a valid, if somewhat commonplace, conception, and it is magnificently played here. Equally successful is the performance of the Tchaikovsky *Romeo and Juliet*, where Ormandy's sense of the importance of significant detail to the over-all conception is of crucial importance. This fresh approach to what must be for this conductor an overplayed warhorse, plus the gorgeous sound of the orchestra itself, does much to minimize Tchaikovsky's rhetoric and crude orchestration.

Despite the variability in Ormandy's affinity for the music here, the main interest of this release is in the conductor himself. His energetic sense of movement, his keen regard for the pacing of a whole work, and his unequalled gift for orchestral sonority continue to be projected with an ever youthful verve and exuberant delight in the sheer glory of orchestral sound. Those who admire these qualities and are devoted to Ormandy's unique mastery of the orchestra will rejoice in this release. (The Debussy and Ravel performances have been previously issued, in 1960 and 1963 respectively; the remaining three sides of the album contain newly recorded performances.) P.H.

AULIKKI RAUTAWAARA: *Operatic Arias and Songs*

Puccini: *Madama Butterfly: Un bel di; Tosca: Non la sospiri la nostra casetta.* Mozart: *Die Zauberflöte: Ach, ich fühl's; Le Nozze di Figaro: Porgi amor.* Schubert: *Du bist die Ruh; Tod und das Mädchen.* Brahms: *Sapphische Ode; Mädchenlied.* Melartin: *Gib mir dein Herze.* Finnish folk songs. Grieg: *Peer Gynt: Solveig's Song.* Lehár: *Die lustige Witwe: Vilja-Lied.*

Aulikki Rautawaara, soprano; Franz Rupp, Ferdinand Leitner, pianos; Berlin Philharmonic, L. L. Borchard, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, conds.; Grosses Belegorchester, Peter Kreuder, cond. [from various Telefunken originals, 1934-38]. • TELEFUNKEN HT 28. LP. \$5.79.

During the five years that preceded World War II, the Finnish soprano Aulikki Rautawaara began to draw international attention. Born at Helsinki in 1906, she made her debut at the Finnish State Opera in 1932, went to Berlin for study the next year, and in

1934 was chosen by Fritz Busch for the role of the Countess in his Glyndebourne production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Bruno Walter engaged her for the Salzburg *Figaro* of 1937 (I heard Rautawaara at the time and have a vivid recollection of her tasteful singing and of her beauty on stage). She toured Scandinavia regularly in concert, made many recordings in Berlin, and then, with the outbreak of war, returned to Finland. Since then, she has—except for a few festival appearances—remained in Helsinki.

One bears the impression from this disc that Mme. Rautawaara was a musical singer, an accomplished artist, one of those who gave pleasure without thought of cheers to make the rafters ring. Her *Tosca* and *Butterfly* arias, sung in German, are passable; both of the Mozart excerpts are very beautiful; the Schubert *Du bist die Ruh* is projected with a lovely, silvery quality that is the hallmark of the true lyric soprano; and the “*Solveig Song*” of Grieg is stripped of banality and tenderly sung. On the lighter side, the *Merry Widow* excerpt (“*Vilja*”) comes off pleasantly.

ROBERT LAWRENCE

KARL STUMPF: “*Virtuoso Compositions for Viola d'amore*”

Ariosti: *Sonata No. 3, for Viola d'amore and Continuo.* Vivaldi: *Concerto for Viola d'amore and Strings.* Hracek: *Sonata No. 12, for Viola d'amore and guitar.* Stamitz: *Concerto for Viola d'amore and Orchestra.*

Karl Stumpf, viola d'amore; assisting soloists: Prague Chamber Orchestra, Jindrich Rohan, cond.

- PARLIAMENT PLP 613. LP. \$1.98.
- • PARLIAMENT PLPS 613. SD. \$2.98.

For those who reserve a special spot of affection for the slightly nasal, slightly nonresonant, rather intimate voice of the viola d'amore, this recital will be welcome. Karl Stumpf is a fine player, and entices a certain amount of coloration from an instrument not so rich in that respect as members of the violin family; there are a couple of forays into the low register here which make one wonder why they occur so rarely—why composers seemed generally to confine themselves to the middle and upper ranges of the instrument. I found the Ariosti and Vivaldi works most pleasurable; the former opens with a grand, choral, stately slow movement very becoming to the d'amore, and in the third movement the continuo cello converses with the higher instrument almost in the manner of a trio sonata. Vivaldi first plays on the d'amore sonorities, with a wealth of elaborate broken-chord figuration, and proceeds to a slow movement full of beautiful open-work texture in the tutti with the solo voice unwinding over it like a silken thread. The sonata by Ireneus Hracek is quite jolly in its hunt motifs and bright closing dance; Stamitz, in his usual thorough, pedantic fashion, gives the solo plenty to do and keeps him doing it long past quitting time. S.F.

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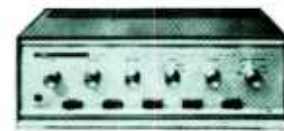
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A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

Repeat Performance

BRAHMS: *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Op. 45; *Alto Rhapsody*, Op. 53; *Fest-und Gedenksprüche*, Op. 109. Teresa Stich-Randall (s), Grace Hoffman (ms), James Pease (b); various choruses; Norddeutscher Rundfunk Orchestra, Carl Bamberger, cond. Nonesuch HB 3003/HB 73003, \$5.00 (two discs) [from Concert Hall Tapes HX 39 and RX 45, 1958].

Even at a bargain price, this *German Requiem* cannot compete with either the Karajan or Klemperer readings. The chorus has a good tone but phrases indifferently, the orchestral accompaniment is pedestrian and indistinctly recorded, and Stich-Randall and Pease are in poor voice. The set is worth having only for Grace Hoffman's superb singing in the *Alto Rhapsody* and for the virtually unknown but pleasing little antiphonal *a cappella* chorus which fills out Side 4. Sonics in these latter items are warm and luminous, the surface whispers quiet.

GLUCK: *Orpheus and Eurydice* (excerpts). Anny Schlemm (s), Rita Streich (s), Margarete Klose (c); various orchestras, Arthur Rother, cond. Heliodor H 25005/HS 25005, \$2.49 [from Urania 223-3/5223-3, early 1950s].

Most of this material is presumably identical with Urania's complete—and still available—recording (the exception is the presence here of Anny Schlemm, who sings the brief Eurydice/Happy Shade aria from Act II—Erna Berger is the Eurydice on Urania). The noble contralto of Margarete Klose is reason enough to invest in these excerpts. A voice of less majestic amplitude and creamy richness would probably be defeated by Rother's leaden tempos, but this speed allows Miss Klose ample time to unfurl some truly glorious organlike tones. Fortunately she dominates the proceedings in three lengthy solo scenes (sung, of course, in German); also included is the overture, the Dance of the Furies, the Dance of the Happy Shades, arias for Amor and Eurydice, and the final chorus of Act II. The enhanced stereo works well enough for the orchestra but plays hob with the singers, who sound as if they are trapped in a reverberant sewer pipe.

MOZART: *Mass No. 19, in D minor, K. 626 ("Requiem")*. Irngard Seefried (s), Gertrude Pitzinger (ms), Richard Holm (t), Kim Borg (bs); Chorus of the Vienna State Opera; Vienna Symphony, Eugen Jochum, cond. Heliodor H 25000/HS 25000, \$2.49 [from Decca DL 9835, 1956].

This recording of Mozart's Requiem, originating from a live performance, is still available on two Archive discs com-

plete with the spoken liturgy (which explains the occasional intrusion of an altar boy's bell). What we have here is somewhat less than ideal: the chorus is poorly balanced; the sopranos tend to be shrill; and the soloists, save for some exquisite work from Seefried, are only adequate. Jochum, however, is constantly finding many lovely orchestral details and his pacing of the work is just right. Mono is the preferred version.

PROKOFIEV: *Symphony No. 5, Op. 100*. Paris Conservatory Orchestra, Jean Martinon, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 1169, \$2.50/VICS 1169, \$3.00 [from RCA Victor LM/LSC 2272, 1959].

This is a good, level-headed reading if a bit too safe and sane for such personality-plus music. That Martinon knows exactly how the music should sound is made apparent from the first notes, but Prokofiev's special blend of passion and ice often eludes him. The nameless dread that smolders under the sinuous melodic lines of the third movement is hardly hinted at, nor does the finale ever work up much excitement. The glacial glitter of movements one and two finds the conductor more responsive: the former in particular moves in impressive, weighty blocks of sound. Splendid orchestral playing throughout and first-rate sound.

SCHUBERT: *Quartet for Strings, No. 14, in D minor, D. 810 ("Tod und das Mädchen")*. Koeckert Quartet. Heliodor H 25003/HS 25003, \$2.49 [from Decca DL 9567, 1952].

I doubt if there is a more gorgeous performance of Schubert's great Quartet in the catalogue. Although the recording shows its age, it can't disguise the beauties uncovered here by the Koeckert Quartet. Tempos are comfortably correct, intonation warm and true, the ensemble work letter-perfect. There may be more spacious and dramatic readings, but none captures better the melting lyricism and poignancy of this music.

SCHUBERT: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 7, in E flat, D. 568; No. 13, in C minor, Op. posth., D. 958*. Beveridge Webster, piano. Heliodor H 25014/HS 25014, \$2.49 [from M-G-M 3711, 1958].

This recording was the sole result of a quickly abandoned M-G-M project to record Beveridge Webster in all the Schubert Piano Sonatas. A pity—for Webster is an exceptional Schubert interpreter. In the C minor Sonata the constructional subtleties and dramatic values of the frequent harmonic side-stepping characteristic of this work are carefully projected; into the balance the pianist draws songful lines that are absolutely winning. Op. 122 is no less finely played. The piano has been well recorded, but the low-level

response only accentuates the excessive surface noise.

TELEMANN: *Concertos: for Four Violins, in D; for Trumpet, Two Oboes, and Continuo, in D; Sonata for Viola da gamba and Continuo (Lute), in F sharp; Quartet for Flute, Oboe, Violin, and Continuo, in G.* Hamburg Camerata Instrumentale. Heliodor H 25006/HS 25006, \$2.49 [the Trumpet and Two-Oboe Concerto and the Quartet from Archive ARC 3119, 1959].

This music impresses me more by its friendly anonymity than by its inspiration, but the unusual instrumental combinations help to fend off monotony. Some striking textures arise in the Concerto for Four Solo Violins and the raspy viola da gamba pairs off well with the lute in the F sharp Sonata. All performances are graceful, stylish, and rhythmically lively. The Hamburg Camerata Instrumentale, by the way, includes trumpeter Adolf Scherbaum, who achieves some outstandingly delicate pianissimo effects in the Trumpet and Two-Oboe Concerto. Fine sound.

DAVID and IGOR OISTRAKH: *Trio Sonatas for Two Violins and Continuo by Bach, Tartini, Handel, and Benda.* David and Igor Oistrakh, violins; Hans Pischner, harpsichord; Vladimir Yampolsky, piano. Heliodor H 25009/HS 25009, \$2.49 [the Bach and Tartini from Decca DL 9950, 1958; the Handel and Benda from Decca DL 9962, 1958].

Oistrakh and son etch out suave and songful lines in this unexciting repertoire. The Bach Sonata (S. 1037), now thought to be spurious, offers the most musical nourishment; happy melodic and contrapuntal ideas abound in each of its four movements. I would be hard put to distinguish Igor from David on this disc—both play with rich, vibrant tone, clothing the Adagios with a mournful yet appealing intensity but giving all the gigues just the right buoyancy. The keyboard instruments are rather too distant for ideal balance but in general the sound is fine.

MADO ROBIN: *"Opera and Song."* Mado Robin, soprano; various orchestras, Richard Blareau and Anatole Fistoulari, conds. London 5925, \$4.79 [from various London originals, 1953-54].

An extraordinary extension of the upper register was the late Mado Robin's chief claim to notability, and her highest flight here is a B flat above high C in Lucia's "Mad Scene." It's not an unpleasant sound but, like the rest of her voice, somewhat artificial in quality. Miss Robin had a little-girlishness that could be attractive in French ingénue roles such as Lakmé or Mireille (the finest moment on this record is her touching rendition of Mireille's little pastorelle "Heureux petit berger"). But in the Italian repertoire her birdlike coloratura sounds curiously out of date, and her florid technique just passes muster. In short, a curio.

PETER G. DAVIS



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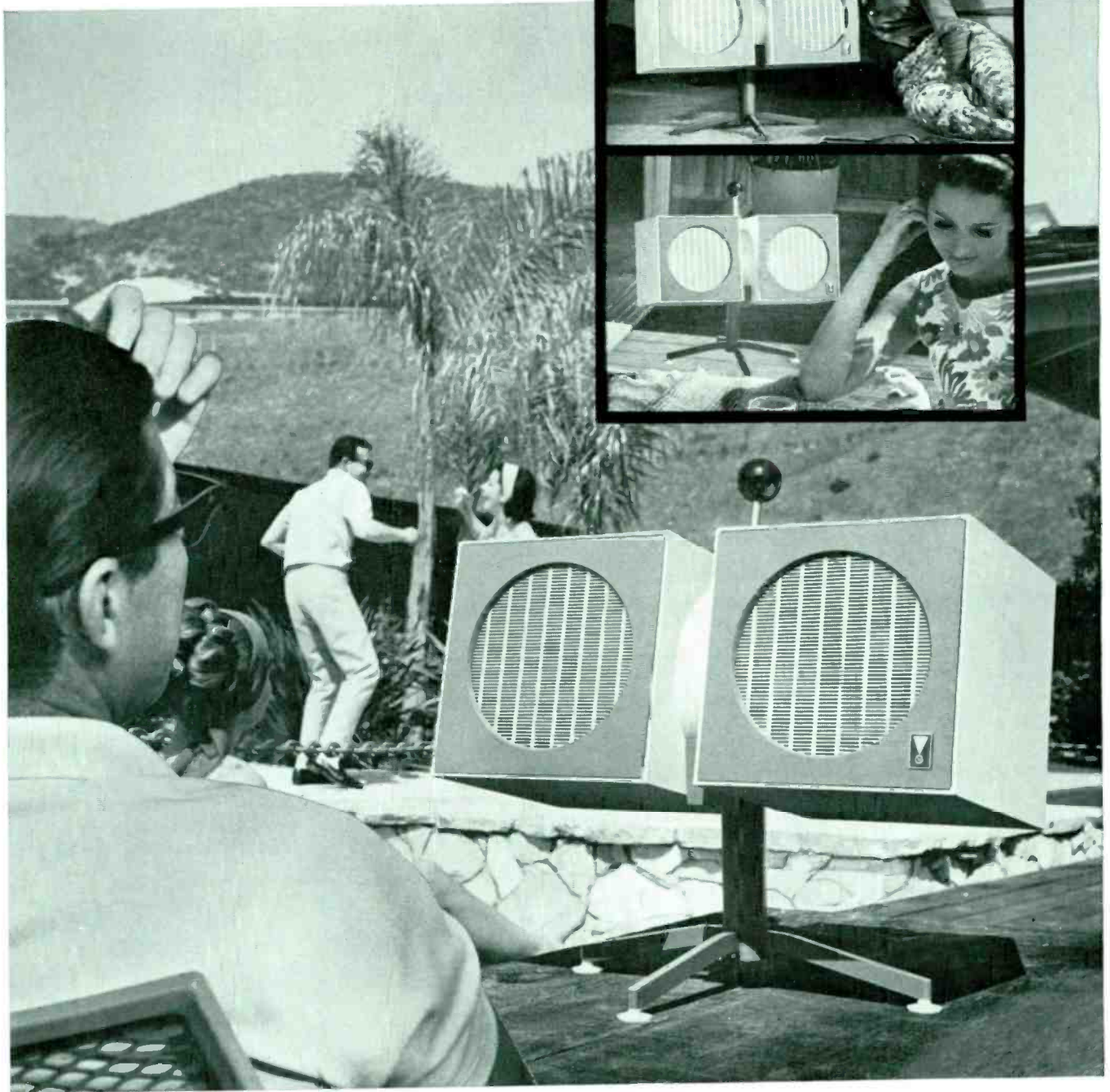
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The Lighter Side



"Harold Sings Arlen (with Friend)." Columbia OL 6520, \$4.79 (LP); OS 2920, \$5.79 (SD).

IRVING BERLIN'S *Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better* might well have been written with Harold Arlen in mind. Arlen is not only one of the most exceptional composers for Broadway and film musicals (with scores for *Bloomer Girl*, *House of Flowers*, *St. Louis Woman*, and *The Wizard of Oz* to his credit), but he can also sing his songs better than most professionals.

Arlen has been singing off and on for over forty years. He came to New York in 1926 as the pianist and singer in a dance band called The Buffalodians (from Buffalo, of course). In the 1930s he could be heard singing on records by Benny Goodman, Red Nichols, and Joe Venuti. With the bands of Leo Reisman and Eddy Duchin, he recorded some of the songs he wrote for the Cotton Club revues. Since then he has been lured into a studio from time to time, most recently to make this collection of songs he composed between 1941 and the present.

Arlen's voice is not the type that immediately seizes the listener's attention. At first it seems a small, inadequate vehicle—just about what you'd expect from a song writer. But Arlen uses this small resource so artfully, drawing from it all kinds of unsuspected responses by what often seems to be a sheer force of will, that the initial unfavorable impression is soon forgotten. There is such total devotion to every single sound he makes—the direction of each musical phrase, the full value of every syllable of the lyric—that a sort of inner force emerges

from his singing. The result is a distinctive and personal style. His manner of savoring a lyric, of appearing to taste each sound, lifts one of his more ordinary songs, *My Shining Hour*, from its usual banal level of presentation; and, on *Little Biscuit*, he implies a strong, outgoing attack without disturbing the intimate mood.

Arlen reserves this personal style for slow and moderately slow pieces. When the beat picks up, as on *Hit the Road to Dreamland* and *Today I Love Everybody*, and Arlen wants to open up vocally, his singing shimmers with ghosts of the Jolson era—a sound compounded of Jolson, Harry Richman, Georgie Jessel, and others of that period. There is one interesting exception—on *Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive* he adopts the jaunty style of Johnny Mercer. Since Mercer wrote the lyrics for this song, he presumably made them such a complete reflection of his own way of singing that Arlen can find no other suitable approach.

When he performs his songs, Arlen rarely sits down at the piano and plays his music. Somebody else plays while he sings his collaborators' lyrics. In this case he is working with arrangements by the imaginative Peter Matz, who also conducts the orchestra. The "friend" of the disc's title is Barbra Streisand, who joins Arlen in a spirited duet on *Ding-Dong the Witch Is Dead* and sings *House of Flowers* alone. Arlen was one of Miss Streisand's earliest advocates and it is fascinating to discover, as one hears them in duet, that her now familiar singing style is actually very similar to his, particularly in the strong, fully rounded way she projects every aspect of a song.

J.S.W.



New pro Barbra Streisand joins old pro Harold Arlen in a singing fest.

Noel Harrison: London. LL 3459, \$3.79 (LP); PS 459, \$4.79 (SD).

Noel Harrison, Rex Harrison's son, is experiencing difficulties common to sons of famous fathers: avoid it as he may, the shadow of his father follows him. A year or so ago he attempted to shake the jinx by joining the folk singing fraternity and this disc is an expanded outgrowth of that effort. He covers a fairly broad slice of contemporary popular music by not only performing the songs of Bob Dylan, as a proper contemporary folk singer should, but also the songs of the Beatles, Billie Holiday, Miles Davis, and Charles Aznavour. Like his father, Noel Harrison has a modest voice—and, as someone remarked in another connection, he has plenty to be modest about. But for all his vocal limitations he manages to bring several of these songs to life through the sheer warmth of his very engaging personality. His singing inflection is an amusing mixture of his father and Rudy Vallee, influences one is most apt to notice in his less successful performances. Georgia Brown comments on his difficulties in carrying off a song in some delightfully candid liner notes; she describes one selection as "a good song well goofed . . . I have a whole side like this on my George Gershwin album. My motto is 'we all have the right to fail.'" Despite its faults the record as a whole is far from a failure: the material is well chosen, the arrangements (by Reg Guest) are unusually good, and the performer seems an uncommonly civilized person.

Ray Charles: "Crying Time." ABC-Paramount 544, \$3.79 (LP); S 544, \$4.79 (SD).

Singer, pianist, and organist Ray Charles (not to be confused with the Ray Charles who conducts the Ray Charles Singers) had been in virtual retirement in California for over a year undergoing medical treatment before he recorded this collection of songs, most of which fall into the "weeper" category. Despite the lugubrious nature of these ballads and blues, Charles sounds refreshed and relaxed after his layoff. His voice has lost the heaviness that marred some of his last albums, in which he dragged his way through popular standards and country and Western songs. There is vibrancy in his projection here, setting up glistening colors. Charles ranges all the way from a rollicking bounce in one piece to actual sniveling in another—which is really going a little too far. But in between there are strong ballad performances, a long and exemplary treatment of *Drifting Blues*, and a Charles original, *Peace of Mind*, which, if autobiographical, certainly helps to explain the new vitality in his singing.

"Wait a Minim!" Original cast recording. London 58002, \$5.79 (LP); 88002, \$6.79 (SD).

This South African miscellany of song, dance, and gags (visual and musical) opened in Johannesburg in 1962 and reached Broadway this past season. The recorded version concentrates on the songs—mostly folk songs of Africa with a few from England, the United States,

and other lands thrown in. In the process a good deal of the fun has gone out of the production. Two of the most diverting members of the cast, Kendrew Lascelles, a comedian with a remarkably expressive face, and April Olrich, a dancer with a magnificent body, have—understandably but lamentably—been left out along with the brief humorous bits which keep brightening the show. The songs are left but they are not performed with enough distinction to make a satisfactory disc. By themselves, they would scarcely make a satisfactory show, either. Nigel Pegram and Dana Valery, who do most of the singing, have pleasant, open voices and do well with three or four pieces. Such familiar ditties as *I Know Where I'm Going* and *I Gave My Love a Cherry* suffer by comparison with other performances. As for the African songs, despite the spirit with which they are sung (and Miss Valery's skill in producing the requisite "click" sound for the Xhosa songs), one cannot completely escape the realization that these are white South Africans trying to interpret songs native to black Africans.

Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy: RCA Victor LPV 526, \$4.79 (LP).

The crest of the Camp furor may have passed but this set of reissues by two idols of the Camp world is still timely. Actually neither Miss MacDonald nor Mr. Eddy was as bad as satirical memory would have them. The main problems, as I recall, were those hats that Eddy wore—the boy scout hat, the coon-skin hat—and the fact that his acting was in the finest tradition of solid wood. His singing was also sturdy but somewhat better—not a whole lot better, but better. Most of the recordings in this collection were made in the mid- and late Thirties and come from the MacDonald-Eddy epics of those years—*Naughty Marietta*, *Rose-Marie*, *Maytime*, *The Girl of the Golden West*, *The New Moon*. Only four of the sixteen selections are duets. Miss MacDonald has little trouble in carrying off the vocal honors in these pairings and through most of the rest of the collection, although Eddy rises successfully to the demands of Sigmund Romberg's charming *Who Are We To Say*. The performances can be appreciated best, I think, if they are viewed not just as period pieces (their period had really passed by the time of the MacDonald-Eddy collaborations), but as the final flowering of the operetta tradition.

Fred Astaire: "Nothing Thrilled Us Half As Much." Epic 13103, \$3.79 (LP); 15103, \$4.79 (SD).

Frank Sinatra: "The Early Years." Columbia CL 2474, \$3.79 (LP); CS 9274, \$4.79 (SD).

There are some records in the popular repertory that should be kept available at all times. Both these sets fall into this category, although for different reasons. Astaire danced and sang his way through a series of remarkable films in the Thirties and this recording captures the best aspects of his classic performances. The Astaire voice, which at the beginning of

his career had been a wistfully reedy instrument, had taken on body and assurance by the time these movies were made. The songs that George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, and Jerome Kern wrote for his films were some of their finest work—*A Foggy Day*, *Cheek to Cheek*, *A Fine Romance*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, *Change Partners* are all in this collection. In the fashion of the Thirties, many of them are performed as orchestra pieces with Astaire moving in for one or two vocal choruses or a little tap dancing. It is marvelous dance music but, for heaven's sake, the orchestras are not identified, much less the flavorful pianists, trombonists, and trumpeters who take solos. This reissue, first released several years ago as *The Best of Fred Astaire* (Epic LN 3137), has been brought back unchanged, even to the liner notes which still do not include a word of information about the actual performances.

The Sinatra collection deserves a permanent place in the disc repertory, not because it embodies the perfections of the Astaire set, but because it documents some of the peak moments of his early style and suggests some of the problems that contributed to the decline of that first phase in his career. Sinatra's early artistry is exemplified by his memorable *I've Got a Crush on You* and the song Phil Silvers wrote about the little girl who is now a popular singing star herself, *Nancy*. Then, in *Five Minutes More* and *The Coffee Song*, we can hear Sinatra, still in good voice, battling empty songs and busy, mechanical arrangements. The change was actually gradual but this disc, by juxtaposing highlights, helps to point up exactly what happened to The Voice during those years.

Pat Dahl: "We Dig Pat Dahl." Audio Fidelity 2157, \$3.79 (LP); 6157, \$4.79 (SD).

An impressive number of musical "names" have been corralled to write and conduct the arrangements sung by Pat Dahl, a well-constituted English blonde whose idol, we are told, is Betty Grable. Benny Carter, Billy May, Pete Rugolo, Shorty Rogers, Marty Paitch, and Lyn Murray have been rallied to Miss Dahl's assistance and she has certainly tried to live up to what they had in mind. But she tries too hard and, whether she is being dramatic, seductive, emotional, or just "Camping," the mood is apt to be overplayed into the obvious. There are hints here and there that she might be quite effective if she were more relaxed—the broadest hint comes in Shorty Rogers' simple, easy arrangement of *Someone To Watch Over Me*. One of the minor points in favor of the disc occurs in Lyn Murray's treatment of *Ten Cents a Dance*, the Rodgers and Hart song which Ruth Etting introduced. In contemporary versions, arrangers have shown a perverse tendency to accompany the line "Loudly the saxophones blow" with a blast from a trumpet. Murray has the audacity actually to use a saxophone. It's touches of this sort that keep the flame of hope burning in a follower of pop discs.

JOHN S. WILSON

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the tape deck

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

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta, cond.

• • LONDON LCL 80170. 64 min. \$7.95.

Back in November 1956 I reviewed a long since deleted monophonic Phonotapes-Sonore release of the Horenstein/Vox version of this magnificently expansive, eloquently songful work. What a joy it is to have it again on tape, now in truly superb stereoism which alone can do full justice to the densities and breadths of Bruckner's scoring! It would be hard to imagine more completely satisfactory recording—or, for that matter, tape processing—than we are given here; and nearly as admirable is the present orchestral playing. As for Zubin Mehta's reading, this young Indian conductor is extraordinarily good, and individually distinctive, in the Scherzo (here included complete on Side 1 rather than broken as it is in the disc version). While occasionally in the first movement and more often in the Adagio his deliberation loses momentarily the essentially Brucknerian long-line continuity, in compensation, however, he endows other passages with a passionate intensity worthy of the best Bruckner authorities.

GILBERT & SULLIVAN: *The Mikado (or, The Town of Titipu)*

Elsie Morison (s), Yum-Yum; Monica Sinclair (c), Katisha; Richard Lewis (t), Nanki-Poo; Geraint Evans (b), Ko-Ko; Owen Brannigan (bs), The Mikado; et al.; Glyndebourne Festival Chorus; Pro Arte Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.

• • ANGEL Y2S 3573. 3¾-ips, double-play. 91 min. \$11.98.

It's in the revival of such early stereo recordings as this one, which otherwise

might never find their way to tape, that possible technical limitations of slow-speed tape are either nonexistent or at least not audible. If there's some hollowness and bottom-heaviness here, as well as more marked channel separation than we usually hear nowadays, these qualities were inherent in the original stereo disc edition of 1958; and while no audiophile would take this recording as of recent vintage, its only serious defect is that it lacks (as it lacked from the beginning) the more theatrical immediacy of the D'Oyly Carte Company's equally old version (taped as London LOH 90001, May 1960, from which a reel of highlights was released only last fall as LOL 90099). The same criticism also applies to the performance, since Sargent's direction seems overly easygoing in comparison with Godfrey's galvanic vitality. What gives the present version its main distinction is the uncommonly high level of the singing provided by such fine voices as those of Morison, Lewis, Evans, and Brannigan. Since neither of the two tape versions includes the spoken dialogue, a choice boils down to one's preference for vocalism or for showmanship.

KODÁLY: *Háry János: Suite; Peacock Variations*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2216. 46 min. \$7.95.

Kodály fans will welcome the first appearance on tape of his sixteen variations on a Hungarian folk song, *The Peacock* (1938-39), but I must confess that this music strikes me—ordinarily a warm admirer of Kodály's works—as curiously lacking in distinctive character. The piece is colorfully orchestrated—and it is beautifully played here by the Bostonians—but for me, at least, there is no magnetic appeal exerted. On the other side, Leinsdorf's too brisk, tense, and humorless run-through of the *Háry János* Suite is interpretatively no match for the Kertesz/

London taping of July 1965, and for all the technical brilliance of the present recording (noticeably more marked than that of the Variations) it is scarcely more scintillating or opulent than the recent Ormandy/Columbia reel. What does make the BSO version uniquely distinctive is its cymbalom part—both in the poetic delicacy of Toni Koves-Steiner's playing and in the sound given the instrument itself, which surely has never before appeared to better advantage.

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 10, in F sharp*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

• • COLUMBIA H2M 7. 3¾-ips, double-play. 70 min. \$9.95.

So much has been written about the Deryck Cooke "performing version" of Mahler's Tenth that I will here simply express my own view that it not only sounds like Mahler, in the hitherto unorchestrated movements as well as the well-known opening Adagio, but often like Mahler at his very best—as in the implacably hard (muffled) drum strokes in the Scherzo No. 2 and in the Finale, or in the latter's poignantly moving coda. Ormandy's performance is an impressively eloquent one in most respects, with perhaps only an occasional excess of vehemence or slight lack of expansiveness really open to objective criticism (although, more subjectively, I find the conductor sometimes less than completely involved emotionally).

Fortunately, the choice of the slow-speed tape medium strikes me as doing no serious injustice to the recording. The sonics are generally vivid, warm, and wide in dynamic range, while the tape itself is excellently processed with quiet surfaces and freedom from pre-echoes. The demanding passages for percussion, especially in the Scherzo No. 2, come off very well indeed, but some of the *ff* high-register string passages in the

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THE TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

Adagio and elsewhere have an unpleasantly penetrating quality which probably must be ascribed to the engineering, although one often hears the same thing in the concert hall when the string choirs are pressed too hard.

MASSNET: *Hérodiade* (excerpts); *Thaïs* (excerpts)

Régine Crespin (s), Salomé, Albert Lance (t), Jean, Michel Dens (b), Hérode, et al. (in *Hérodiade*); Jacqueline Brumaire (s), Thaïs, Michel Dens (b), Athanaël, et al., René Duclos Chorus (in *Thaïs*); Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris, Georges Prêtre, cond. (in *Hérodiade*), Pierre Dervaux, cond. (in *Thaïs*).

• • ANGEL Y2S 3674. 3¾-ips double-play. Approx. 98 min. \$11.98.

Since poor Massenet's music seems to have few proponents nowadays, it's surprising to find even highlights of his operas appearing on tape. Yet for all the salon sentimentality of even the best arias and scenes here (the famous "Il est doux," "Vision fugitive," and "Adieu donc, vains objets," etc., from *Hérodiade*; "Voilà donc la terrible cité," "Dis-moi que je suis belle," the "Meditation," etc., from *Thaïs*), their sheer mellifluousness is very disarming, and the occasional moments of genuine dramatic power carry considerable conviction. Except for Régine Crespin and possibly Albert Lance, the present soloists are not particularly outstanding vocally, but they all possess a sound sense of French style; Michel Dens, in both works, and Rita Gorr as Hérodiade enact their roles notably well; and both conductors, together with the engineers, make the most of the scores' coloristic potentials. In both works, though, the well-differentiated stereoism is exploited only for static soloists' spacings—there are no stereogenic *action* enhancements.

NIELSEN: *Symphony No. 4* ("The Inextinguishable")

Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond.

• • VANGUARD EVERYMAN CLASSICS VTB 1709. 35 min. \$6.95.

Badly as we need a taping of this magnificent work (an even more striking one than the fine *Sinfonia espansiva* issued on a Bernstein Columbia reel last February), this Barbirolli reading is tantalizingly less than completely satisfactory. However the blame may be proportionately assigned to the conductor and his (British Pye) engineers; there is an unmistakable lack of proper balancing between the plangent brass and inadequately substantial string choirs, and there are frequent lapses in clarity—in the woodwind parts perhaps in particular. In the distinctive timpani parts too—which are prominent throughout but especially so in their antiphonal passages in the finale—something seri-

ously detracts from the effectiveness of the cross-fire (i.e., stereoisitic) duel so imaginatively devised by the composer. And even the tape processing is imperfect, with some whispers of reverse-channel spill-over in the very long Side 1 leader; to say nothing of the fact that, properly, the work should have been issued as half of a double-play reel to ensure the continuity, uninterrupted by a side break between movements.

Nevertheless, even after so long a catalogue of complaints, I find Nielsen's music so gripping and at least parts of Barbirolli's performance so moving that I cannot advise passing this reel up entirely.

SCHOENBERG: *Gurrelieder*

Inge Borkh (s), Tove; Hertha Töpfer (ms), Waldtaube; Herbert Schachtschneider (t), Waldemar; et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Rafael Kubelik, cond.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON DGP 8984 (double-play). 98 min. \$11.95.

One of the most ambitiously conceived and scored musical works of all time, this mighty cantata, or dramatic symphony, has been too easily dismissed by those who have never heard it properly performed as a product of romanticism *in extremis*. Romantic, grandiose indeed, it surely is, and of course the Wagnerian—and many other—influences are unmistakable. Nevertheless, it has genuine originality, balladic heroism, and a warmth of feeling which most listeners are unlikely to find in Schoenberg's later compositions. Certainly the present taping is an incomparably thrilling experience.

The performances by every one of the vast forces concerned are extremely good (although even the poetic restraint and moving feeling of Miss Töpfer's Wood Dove can't efface the memory of Rose Bampton's 1932 performance with Stokowski); and the recording itself (which is also ideally processed) is so extraordinarily successful in general that it's hard to believe it was made at live performances. I suppose that if I had a full score at hand I'd be able to spot a number of lost or covered-up details, but the primary impression is of outstanding auditorium naturalness, achieved without any spotlighting of vocal or instrumental soloists. In short a near-miraculous first tape edition of the *Gurrelieder*.

WAGNER: *Lohengrin*

Elisabeth Grümmer (s), Elsa; Jess Thonias (t), Lohengrin; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), Friedrich; Gottlob Frick (bs), King Henry; et al.; Chorus of the Vienna State Opera; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Rudolf Kempe, cond.
• • ANGEL Y5S 3641. 3¾-ips, quintuple-play. 209 min. \$29.98.

This first *Lohengrin* on tape, as well as in stereo, is an impressive reminder of what truly magnificent moments the pre-*Ring* Wagner was capable . . . and also, alas! (to adapt Philip Hale's famous Brucknerian wisecrack) of what dreadful half-hours. The music at its best is

further enhanced here by the exceptionally fine voices commanded by all the major participants and also by ringingly sonorous, powerfully recorded orchestral playing. But the boring stretches, especially those endless declamations in the first act, are unfortunately exacerbated by a lack of dramatic dynamism, for which the conductor probably is primarily responsible, and also by the somewhat static quality of the recorded production itself.

Then there are other, minor perhaps but decidedly annoying, shortcomings. The vital choral passages are neither as well sung nor as prominent as they should be. The very beginning of the Act I Prelude has been processed at too high a modulation level (with consequent background amplification noise) for the properly ethereal effect intended by the composer. And there have been three cuts made in Act II here which—while brief and conventional enough, and necessitated by the exceptional length (209 minutes) of tape on a single reel—nonetheless represent an inferiority in this edition vis-à-vis its disc equivalent.

There are, however, thrillingly great moments here; and the tape's technical shortcomings do not seem to be specifically ascribable to its slow speed—indeed, this is in general one of the sonically more impressive examples of 3¾-ips technology. But be sure you get a properly processed copy; the first one I received had a built-in wow in the first part of the second side.

LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI: "Walt Disney's *Fantasia*"

Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond.

• • BUENA VISTA BVF 101. 3¾-ips, double-play. 105 min. \$9.95.

History indeed may be "the bunk," as Henry Ford was ridiculed for claiming. I'm almost inclined to believe so when I compare what I hear here with what I remember hearing at a *Fantasia* roadshow in 1940. Even if the present sonics were objectively true to the originals (and they can't possibly be, since the original multichanneling has been reduced to two only and—far worse—a whole gang of editors seems to have been monkeying with the engineering), what one hears now still would be a subjectively inaccurate simulacrum. In any case, it's highly ironic that a work once considered a masterpiece of pioneering audio technology should be brought to tape for the first time only in a slow-speed form which couldn't do justice to genuinely wide frequency and dynamic ranges if these were present. This edition seems to be the same monstrously uneven one issued on discs some seven years ago. At least it has most of the same faults except—in some selections—for somewhat better-marked channel differentiations. (There is still a lot of sound-source-location shifting and ambiguities, however.) And just as shocking as ever are the barbarous (even by 1940 standards) cuts in the Stravinsky *Sacre*

and the Beethoven *Pastoral* Symphony, in particular, to say nothing of the mawkish schmaltz injected into the Ponchielli *Dance of the Hours* (remember those ghastly dancing elephants!) and the miscegenation of the coda of Mussorgsky's *Night on Bald Mountain* with Schubert's *Ave Maria*.

Youngsters will do best to accept the *Fantasia* legends on faith alone. Older people, however, need this set in their libraries as a monument (as I wrote in my review of the stereo disc) to "twentieth-century audio genius and folly . . . and as an object lesson in the price that must be paid for an overindulgence in sheerly sonic intoxications."

"Baja Marimba Band"/"Baja Marimba Band Rides Again." A & M AMF 104. 3¾-ips, double-play, 64 min., \$9.95.

Hitching a ride on the tailgate of Herb Alpert's "Tijuana Brass" bandwagon, another, somewhat more conventional Mexican ensemble provides a double cornucopia of better than usual mood music. There are a few North-of-the-Border pop tunes included (*More, Walk on By*, etc.), but most of the materials are genuinely or imitatively Latin American (Alpert's *Acapulco, Pedro's Porch Part 2, Hecho en Mexico*, etc.) in which occasional passages for wordless choruses seem much more incongruous than the ones that briefly break into Dixieland idioms. The program may sound something of a hodgepodge, but it actually turns out to be highly engaging—probably thanks in considerable part to the rich recording of a wide range of atmospheric tonal qualities.

"Broadway Spectacular." London Festival Chorus and Symphony, Stanley Black, cond. London LPL 74071, 43 min., \$7.95.

Another typical "Phase-4" sonic blockbuster. For impressively recorded symphonic apotheoses of hit show tunes, the sonorities here are a fair match for similar Boston Pops "big" scorings. Unfortunately, Stanley Black, talented as he is, simply doesn't have Arthur Fiedler's sense of idiomatically appropriate readings. It's for this reason that the longer works here, an *Oklahoma!* medley and *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*, lack interpretative conviction. Most of the shorter pieces seem overinflated in their Black/Phase-4 treatments, but there is considerable atmospheric as well as coloristic attractiveness in *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Bali Ha'i*. The tape processing itself warrants praise for a freedom from preëchoes achieved despite fairly high modulation and extremely wide dynamic performance levels.

"Chic Chic Chico." Chico Hamilton Sextet and Octet. Impulse IT 2007, 37 min., \$7.95.

"Dear Heart" and Other Favorites." Living Jazz, Phil Bodner, cond. RCA Camden CTB 377, 27 min., \$4.95. Here are two welcome examples of

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THE TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

the lighthearted, inventive, unpretentious "chamber-music" type of jazz for which I have a special fondness. Chico's performances, featuring a couple of his own compositions (*Carol's Walk* and *St. Paddy's Day Parade*) and four by his guitarist Gabor Szabo (*Corrida de Toros*, *Tarantula*, *Swampy*, and *Fire Works*), are the more picturesque—sometimes rather odd, but always marked by the drummer-leader's vitalizing rhythmic pulse. Bodner's New York all-stars ring some delectable changes on bossa-nova materials: most infectiously so perhaps in *Red Roses for a Blue Lady*. Sonny Rollins' *St. Thomas*, *Up a Lazy River*, *Never on Sunday*, *Paris Original*, and Bodner's own *Bossa Nova I A.M.* The Impulse tape is recorded with bright clarity, Camden's ultraclearly, with bigger sonics and more marked channel differentiations.

"Guitar Forms." Kenny Burrell, guitar; orchestra, Gil Evans, cond. Verve VSTC 327, 38 min., \$7.95.

I've always admired Burrell's guitar playing, but I've never heard him in better form or more imaginatively varied materials than he is on this transparently recorded, flawlessly processed tape. He does well with a solo transcription of the Gershwin Prelude No. 2 (in part); still better in three brisk selections, topped by *Broadwinner*, accompanied by a rhythm-section alone; and perhaps best of all in several more ambitious pieces, especially a poetic *Greensleeves*, impressionistic *Last Night*, and oddly Spanish-flavored *Lotus Land*. Gil Evans' scorings of these larger works and Rudy van Gelder's engineering throughout are of an excellence comparable with the soloist's outstanding musicianship.

"Man of La Mancha." Broadway cast recording, Neil Warner, cond. Kapp KTA 41109, 45 min., \$8.95.

"On a Clear Day You Can See Forever." Broadway cast recording, Theodore Saitenberg, cond. RCA Victor FTO 5038, 45 min., \$8.95.

Both these reels of Broadway hit shows provide first-rate home entertainment, but they differ radically in almost every other respect. For sheer novelty and originality, it's the musical based on *Don Quixote* all the way. Indeed, for all that Mitch Leigh's music is cast in popular idiom, this work is essentially a poor man's opera, rising at times to a gripping pitch of dramatic intensity. Yet the imaginativeness of both the music and book probably wouldn't seem nearly as impressive if it were not for the powerful magnetism of Richard Kiley, who is simply magnificent in the title role, and of Irving Jacobson in the extremely tricky part of Sancho Panza. With the possible exception of Joan Diener's singing of *Aldonza/Dulcinea*, everything else here is admirable too, not excluding an exceptionally well-turned orchestral score and boldly brilliant recording. The show may be a minor masterpiece, but it's a

genuine one in a field where masterpieces are rare indeed.

On a Clear Day . . . never could be taken for a masterpiece, and the main appeal of Burton Lane's tunes probably lies more in their easy accessibility than in any originality. But they are fine tunes of a kind too few Broadway composers seem able to provide nowadays. And, in any case, this show would be a must if only for its projection of the unique personality of Barbara Harris. No one else in the cast can approach her for sheer mesmerism, but in pleasing vocal qualities she is well matched by John Cullum, a leading man who, for once these days, can really sing. The recording is Dynagroove's brightest and cleanest, and first-rate tape processing adds further to the over-all attraction of a work in which the various parts add up to considerably more than the whole.

"Rubber Soul"/"The Beatles' Second Album." The Beatles. Capitol Y2T 2467. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -ips, double-play, 57 min., \$9.98.

The coupling exigencies of double-play here combine in direct contrast the Beatles' current hit, "Rubber Soul," with a program that dates back to mid-1964 on an American I.P. and undoubtedly considerably earlier in its original British release. The difference in recording qualities is certainly noticeable, for while the older program is not bad technically, the latest one is exceptionally scintillating—listen to Ringo's cymbal sizzle before you belittle the high-end capabilities of slow-speed tape technology! But what is far more fascinating, and instructive, is in the difference in the materials used and in the expertise (and sense of authority) of the performers themselves. Whatever else you may say about the Beatles, you certainly can't accuse them of resting on their laurels. Indeed the remarkable expansion of their range now goes so far as to include such atmospheric, even poetic, performances as the present ones of *Michelle* and *Norwegian Wood*. Listening to them, it's hard to believe one's own ears!

"Stay Awhile." The Kingston Trio. Decca ST74 4656, 31 min., \$7.95.

Suddenly realizing that I hadn't reviewed a tape by these early leaders in the recorded "folk" movement for some three years, I grabbed for this latest one with alacrity. And to my surprise it reminds me all over again that either I'm particularly susceptible to the Kingstons or reports of their crass commercialization have been greatly exaggerated. Perhaps their zest is just a bit synthetic at times, but what's more important is their genuine skill both in their singing and playing and in their knack for picking effective materials. Tom Paxton's *Bottle of Wine* and *Where I'm Bound* are engagingly done here, as are Rod McKuen's *Rusting in the Rain*, the *Three Song*, and the title song. The recording itself is characteristic of current Decca engineering in that its sonic weight on first hearing makes the tape seem a bit bottom-heavy, but soon it comes to sound most satisfactorily natural.



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PROKOFIEV'S OPERAS

Continued from page 49

Soloists of the Belgrade National Opera; Vienna Chamber Chorus; Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Werner Janssen, cond.

- M-G-M 3 GC-2. Three LP. \$17.37.
- • M-G-M S 3 GC-2. Three SD. \$20.37.

MK's recording is splendid, both artistically and technically, a complete performance of Prokofiev's last version of the opera—a project, I suspect, of vast complexity and difficulty. Among the numerous leading performers I must single out at least the baritone Kibbalo (André), admirable for the unified beauty of timbre, the clear phrasing, the aristocratic expressiveness; Petrov (Pierre Besukov), a warm, fresh tenor, with noble style; the insinuating, excellent Maslennikov (Anatol); the vivid, extraordinary Sichegolkov (Rostov); the majestic Krivchenia (Kutuzov), and last but not least the celebrated Vishnevskaya (Natasha), with her exemplary expressiveness, her limpid vocality, purity of style, especially in the intimately lyrical parts.

Alexander Melik-Pashayev was one of the leading interpreters of the great Russian repertory; here he achieves an extraordinarily unified performance, faithful, intensely poetic. Technically, the recording is excellent. It never has recourse to deforming dynamic exaltations, but has a phonic "presence," an admirable vocal and orchestral realism.

The M-G-M edition of Prokofiev's epic opera is not complete. In addition to the grandiose choral epigraph, two scenes—the seventh and the eleventh—have been omitted. Despite these omissions, the undertaking is still a bold and a serious one. To perform an opera of these proportions and this complexity with forces coming from different countries cannot have been easy. The results can be considered appreciable, beyond any doubt. The cast of singers proves not only coherent, homogeneous, but also a group of interpreters who can be compared with the Soviet cast. The orchestra and chorus need no introduction, and the conductor, Janssen, displays a sure, expert knowledge of the monumental score.

Still, the Bolshoi edition remains an unsurpassed model, in the rigorous unity of style, the poetic refinement, the expressive intensity, and the general grandeur of the execution.

The Story of a Real Man

G. Deodivova (Olga); V. Smirnova (Wassilissa); A. Ivanova (Petrowna); M. Zvezdina (Zinovchka); E. Kirbalo (Alexei); V. Kurguzov (Fedya); A. Susonov (Serionka); G. Panhov (Andrej); M. Miglan (Vanja); Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre (Moscow), M. Ermler, cond.

- ULTRAPHONE 14789. Three LP. \$14.94.

Of the three recordings discussed, this is the least good, both by reason of its mediocre technical level and of the inaccurate and unconvincing performance. This score doesn't possess the massive, choral passages, the strong dramatic contrasts of *Semyon Kotko*, nor the refined mastery of *War and Peace*. Nevertheless, it should be given greater attention than this set evidences.



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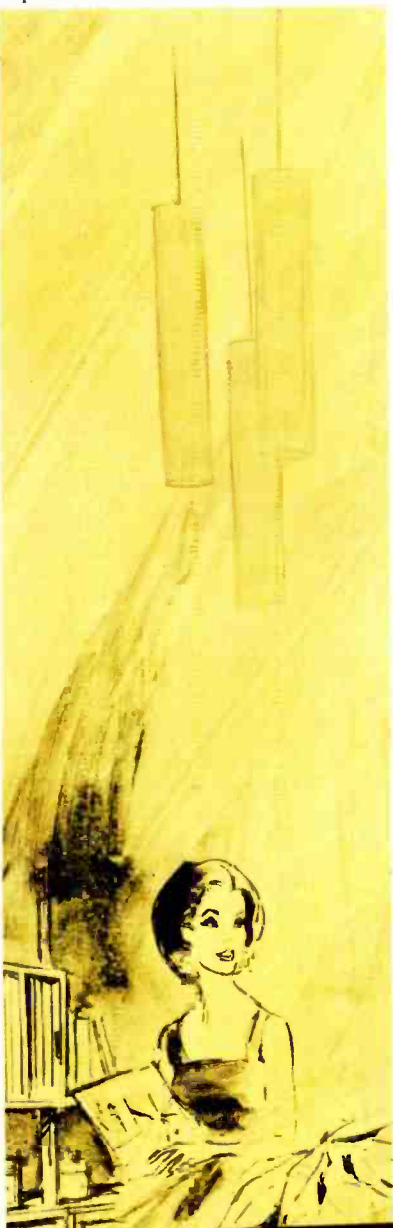
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Sherwood S-8800	S	140	1.6	\$ 359.50	\$ 2.57
Altec 711A	S	100	2.2	378.00	3.78
Bogen RT8000	T	70	2.5	319.95	4.57
Dyna FM-3, PAS-3 & S-70	V	90	4.0	394.85	4.38
Fisher 600T	V&T	120†	1.8	459.50	3.82
Fisher 440T	T	70	2.0	329.50	4.70
Harman-Kardon SR-900B	T	100	1.85	449.00	4.49
McIntosh 1500	V&T	85	2.5	499.00	5.87
Marantz 8B 7, & 10B	V	75*	2.0	1170.00	15.60
Scott 348	V&T	120	1.9	479.95	4.00
Scott 342	T	65	2.5	299.95	4.61

References "T" or "V&T" (above) may include some silicon transistors. †(at 8 ohms), 4-ohm rating not specified
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